

Excellence in Interacting with Parents

Obligation to one's parents is immediately next to one's obligations to Allah.

by Ayub Hamid

Allah has enjoined upon us excellence in our interaction with our parents. In the Holy Qur'an, one's behaviour with one's parents has been placed immediately after mentioning Tawheed (oneness of God) and pure submission to Allah.

Allah says in the Qur'an: "Your Lord has decreed that you do not

worship except Allah and deal with your parents in an excellent manner. If one or both of them reach old age in front of you, do not express any annoyance to them, do not raise voice to them and speak pleasantly, say only respectable things. And lower yourself in humility with kindness in front of them and pray: O Lord have mercy on them as they brought me up when I was young." (17:23)

Similarly, when reporting Luqman's admonition to his son about not associating any partners with Allah or equating anyone in any respect with Him, Allah interrupts the flow of what Luqman had said in order to emphasize one's obligation to his parents, saying: "We have exhorted man (human beings) about his parents. His mother bore him enduring difficulty after difficulty, nursing (suckling) him for two years, so thank Me and your parents." (31:14)

The same style of commanding Ihsaan towards parents immediately after emphasizing Tawheed as our duty to Allah is repeated in the following verses:

"And remember when we took a promise from Israelites that: Dedi-

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Why Love the Prophet ?

He did not leave behind any material wealth.

However, he left a Divine Book and his own role model

Muslims will be marking the birthday of Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, around the middle of the month of May. Whereas Muslims love the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) only next to the God Almighty, there are usually no worldwide celebrations to mark his birthday.

But why has Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) been loved by billions of Muslims and respected by millions of non-Muslims for the last 1,400-plus years? Muslims do not worship Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). But they love him because, with the Divine Word, he had introduced humanity to noble ideals. And he was a living example of these ideals, which include:

1. Universal Monotheism: "There is One God and everyone and everything is His creation." This was the same universal message delivered by all of God's Messengers and Prophets before Muhammad (pbuh), including Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, may God's peace and blessings be upon them all. Today, Islam is the only faith that teaches universal monotheism. Any one can embrace Islam, irrespective of his/her origin.

2. Freedom: The freedom to worship, to seek knowledge, to make a living, and to live in peace and security are human rights. Everyone is responsible for his/her faith and deeds. There is no superiority because of family, gender, race, colour, nationality, or social status. God loves those who have more piety and do more good deeds.

3. Knowledge: To seek knowledge is a religious duty. Every useful type of knowledge is highly regarded. Every learned person, irrespective of religion, gender, race, colour, nationality, or social status is highly respected.

4. Fellowship: There is a fellowship between people. They all come from the same male and female: Adam and his wife. This fellowship is intensified even further from people's country of origin, religion, community, language, etc. However, the basic fellowship is maintained.

5. Moderation is the Norm: We

all must seek moderation in enhancing our physical, mental, and spiritual well being.

6. Commonwealth World Order: It is God's Will to create us into different races, colours, and nationalities. We must seek co-existence and achieve peace and justice in a commonwealth of world order.

7. Rights and Responsibility: Everyone has individual rights and responsibilities. Collectively, we should seek to establish both equally.

8. Life and Death: Life and death are real. Everyone's Hereafter can be either better and everlasting or worse and everlasting than this life. Final justice is completed in the Hereafter. Faith and deeds are necessary and sufficient.

9. Men and Women are Complementary: Any man and any woman can achieve the highest status in the sight of God Almighty based on faith and deeds. They have complementary roles, rights, and responsibilities. Motherhood is highly re-

garded. Family life is a cornerstone for everyone's well being.

10. Religious Duties are Inclusive: Religious duties include every decent act. The value of each act is according to its intention. Making a living, seeking an education, praying, giving charity, keeping a smile, and helping others are only a few. Enjoining good and stopping evil are collective duties.

11. Justice, Kindness, Forgiveness, Love, Patience, Tolerance, Gratitude, Perseverance, Sincerity, and Hope: The practice of these qualities will bring us closer to God Almighty. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the perfect husband, son, father, leader, friend, judge, neighbour, and above all, he has always stressed in humility that he was only a human messenger from the Creator to all of His creations. He did not leave behind any material wealth. However, he left a Divine Book and his own role model. You do not have to be an Angel to live a life like the one he lived.

Ten Things Every Muslim Should Do

by Yahiya Emerick

I've often been confronted with people who are really motivated to do something for Islam, but who were aimless. You know what I'm talking about. Sometimes we are so filled with feelings of wanting to help but we don't really know where to begin.

Doesn't it seem like there's just too much that needs to be done? Muslims are starving in war zones all over the world; kings and dictators rape our lands; misinformation about Islam is rampant; our children are succumbing to the non-Muslim way of life; maybe half our family members don't practice Islam, even if they say they're Muslim; the Masjid needs funds; Muslims need to be taught the difference between

what's Islam and what's cultural, etc...

I'm sure many of you could add endlessly to this list. Have you ever felt like the problems are just too great to solve? Have you ever blocked it out of your mind because if you really thought about it you would become depressed? If so, then you're not alone. I've met tons of believers, real sincere people, who lament that they don't know what to do or how they can really help.

Of course, there are some people who will make one specific issue their focus and they'll work to help in that direction. For example, someone might make the support of the local Masjid their cause. Another person may support wholeheartedly an Islamic school or the activities of a relief agency, etc... But most of us don't have time to do justice to those types of goals like we should.

But the alternative, sitting at home and watching TV is hardly worth our time when there are real Muslims out there who need us, and a cause that we must support. So in view of all the variables that affect most of our lives in the modern world,

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Please treat this Islamic Journal with respect!

Five Good Reasons to Advertise in The Ambition

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| 1. The Ambition goes to thousands of Muslims regardless of their ethnicity. | 2. Unlike most ethnic papers, it has fewer ads and yours catches more attention. | 3. It has Islamic knowledge so people don't throw it away after reading it once. | 4. Your ad has a long life of two months, not just one week or so. | 5. With The Ambition , your money goes a long way. |
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Editorial

Where is the Ummah?

As a child, I remember my father telling us a fable about a farmer who called his children to his deathbed. The farmer told them to bring a whole bunch of sticks and tie them together in a bundle. Then he asked them to try to break the sticks. No matter how hard they tried, none of the children was able to break them. Then the father untied the bundle and asked them to try again. Now, it was a piece of cake! Within no time, the twigs were not only broken, but also reduced to tiny pieces like hay! The dying father had given a practical lesson to his children: Unity has strength.

Today, we boast about being some 1.2 billion in number. But that is **ALL** we are: *1.2 billion people!* We are the most disunited and consequently, the most non-influential people in the world. We have no say over our own affairs. There is no central authority and not a single issue on which we have a unified position.

This attitude of non-cooperation starts at home — the family does not operate as a unit anymore — and is translated into our national and international affairs. As long as we are safe, we don't care about others' suffering. A lot of the time, we even stab each other's back to prove our own "righteousness" and "liberalism."

We are divided into tribal, racial, and lingual groups. We are obsessed with cultural and trivial differences. It is my personal observation that if, in a group of Muslims, there is 99% agreement on a matter, they will split because of that 1% difference and will not try to work out a cohesive plan of action.

History can be the best teacher if we want to be students. A quick glance at the account of nations shows that whenever people were divided, they suffered a downfall. It was true in the medieval times of the Christian era when Islamic forces captured about one third of the world. Today, the Muslim world is facing the same fate. For the last couple of centuries, it seems that Muslims have been living the life of a group of orphaned and abandoned children. There are scores of Muslim countries but not a single Muslim voice.

Today, the Muslim Ummah is bleeding all over. Be it Chechnya or India, Palestine or the Philippines, Kashmir or anywhere else in the world, Muslim blood seems to be cheaper than water. It's like open season on Muslims. Our hearts are crying but we can't do anything to alleviate the suffering of our brothers and sisters in faith.

We cannot deny the physical results of each and every action. Unity brings about victory and achievement of goals. United forces — whether good or evil — stand victorious, even though, sometimes, we don't want to admit it. After all, even the "world's only superpower" had to muster an alliance in order to bring about the destruction of Iraq and the fall of Afghanistan.

Allah has directed our attention to learn from as little objects as ants. Look how steadfast and co-operative they are. Together, they can move a piece of food hundred times their own size. Indeed it's the united struggle and perseverance that brings about the desired results.

We must learn from other nations like the Sikhs and Jews. Look how few in number, but how influential they are! Jews suffered annihilation at one point and there was no hope for them. But today, they stand as the strongest nation in the world. Even America, the world's strongest power, seems to be helpless in the face of their defiance. What is the secret? Unity is the secret.

There are three things that Allah has told us in the Qur'an: One, to hold tightly the rope of Allah and do not fight among each other: *"And hold fast all together by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love so that by His grace ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of fire and He saved you from it. Thus doth Allah make his signs clear to you: that ye may be guided."* (3:102).

Two, that Allah doesn't change the condition of a people unless they change it themselves first as mentioned in the Qur'an, *"... Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)..."* (13:11.)

Finally, three, that Allah changes the state of people when they show humility towards God. *"Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that He will of a surety grant them in the land inheritance (of power) as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state) after the fear in which they (lived) to one of security and peace: 'They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me.' If any do reject faith after this they are rebellious and wicked."* (24:55)

So there is no need to despair. There **WILL** be another day after a long night. He **WILL** change our condition. But first we have to unite, make an honest struggle with steadfastness, and then depend on Allah. Ask only Him for help. All this, of course, has to start from our individual effort at home, with our families.

Then, we won't need "over a billion." Only a few million Muslims, dedicated and the best in their Iman, will bring about the change in the course of history.

The big question is: Are you going to be one of those millions?

Asma Warsi

Letters / Opinion

Jenin — Remember This Word

By Ramzy Baroud

Jenin. Remember this word, for every time you lose faith in humanity, all you need to do is to recall it. Repeat inside of you, slowly, when you are down and frail. It should give you vigor and lift your spirit. It's a symbol of courage, courage beyond these times of despair and degradation, courage that's legendary, almost mythological. How else can we explain that a small refugee camp, less than a kilometer sq. length and width stands for days in the face of hundreds of tanks, Apache helicopters and thousands of trained killers, they call soldiers?

Established in 1953 as a makeshift tent city to host thousands of Palestinian refugees, this small camp breeds tenacity and defiance. Many of those Palestinians who were uprooted from their villages in Palestine to live in the most humiliating conditions were still able to see the land that once was theirs, by simply gazing west.

For nearly five decades they looked west. Now, when their elders die, their children who are raised in the same impoverished yet proud Palestinian camp, also learned to gaze west. West is Palestine, their home, where they were told stories by aging grandmas of how wonderful life once was. It was a reminder of their dire hardship and life under occupation.

Thirteen thousand refugees lived in the Jenin refugee camp, located near the city of Jenin in the West Bank. Their dream was beyond paved roads, functional sewer systems and good schools. Their dream was returning home. Many held the deeds to their land in Palestine, some even held the large old keys of their ravished homes, and most of them knew too well what UN Resolution 194 meant: it was their right to return.

But for decades those refugees remained without homes, without rights, and for decades they were subjected to never ending cruelty. In 1967, Israel added insult to injury when it invaded the West Bank and Gaza, the refugees are now under military occupation.

In recent years, the young population in the camps have grown to reach 44 percent of the total number of refugees. Yet with little means, many managed to attain a proper education at nearby Universities, Bir Zeit, Bethlehem and Najah. A young, educated yet defiant generation was born and raised in the small camp, a population that never forgot to look west, where Palestine is, a population that never feared to carry on the torch of a dying generation. That

Kind words from a reader

I visited a restaurant last weekend and found a copy of the current "The Ambition". Alhamdulillah I really enjoy reading the contents of this newspaper. It is very well written. I visited your website and was happy to find that you have an archive of the previous issues.

May Allah help you to continue to produce this newspaper

Khairun Nissaa

dying generation taught them one valuable lesson: never forget our land, our rights, our pride and our dignity. And they never did.

When Palestinian streets exploded with anger in a loud cry for freedom, the uprising was just getting started, and the Jenin refugee camp was there, leading the crowd, chanting the loudest, demanding jus-

Arabs pledge solidarity - Is the dream coming true?

DUBAI — Notwithstanding the deterioration of the Middle East crisis in recent days, last week's Arab summit in Beirut proved to be a success at least on one count — thanks to Iraq. While the summit's final statement "categorically" rejected a military strike against Baghdad, bigger gains came by way of a well-orchestrated series of diplomatic coups that President Saddam Hussein's regime unfolded in the presence of 22 countries in the Lebanese capital.

First, in the face of U.S. threats, Iraq sought to consolidate reconciliation efforts with its Gulf neighbours by pledging in writing, for the first time, never to repeat its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

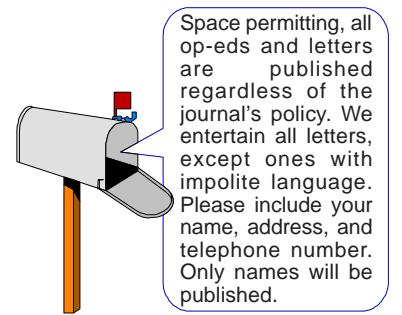
Second — and equally, if not more significant in the immediate context — Iraq's presidential envoy Izzat Ibrahim and Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz hugged and kissed, again the first such high-level public contact since the 1990 Gulf crisis, when Iraq had threatened to oust all "illegitimate Gulf monarchies" and Riyadh had allowed the United States to use its base to raid Baghdad.

The breakthrough came after Iraq and Kuwait reached a landmark rapprochement agreement and Ibrahim and the head of the Kuwaiti delegation, First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al Ahmad al-Abah, nodded at each other and shook hands.

Hailing mediation efforts by Oman and Qatar, the agreement said Arab leaders "welcomed Iraq's confirmation to respect the independence, sovereignty and security of the state of Kuwait and guarantee its safety and unity to avoid anything that might cause a repetition of what happened in 1990." Kuwait had long insisted that Iraq admit that its invasion was in violation of all international charters and norms. The U.S.-led Gulf War ended the Iraqi occupation in 1991.

Later, the Kuwait foreign minister said that the handshake was merely a "protocol" courtesy but admitted that he was "100 percent satisfied" with the agreement. He also hinted that Kuwait no longer demanded an apology from Iraq for the 1990 invasion. Under the declaration, Iraq was urged "to cooperate in order to find a prompt and final solution to the issue of the Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons and for its restitution of properties in line with the relevant international resolutions."

But the prospect of the agree-



Space permitting, all op-eds and letters are published regardless of the journal's policy. We entertain all letters, except ones with impolite language. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Only names will be published.

letters@theambition.com

tice, human rights and return.

Israel knew too well what Jenin meant for its military aspirations, that

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ment sticking rests on how Kuwait and Iraq resolve the prisoners of war issue. Kuwait maintains that more than 600 of its and other countries' nationals disappeared during the Iraqi occupation and charges that the missing are still being held in Iraq. Baghdad has admitted taking prisoners but said it lost track of them during a Shi'ite Muslim uprising in southern Iraq that followed its eviction from Kuwait in 1991. Iraq also says around 1,140 of its own nationals are still missing since the conflict.

Obviously, the process of reconciliation, coupled with the summit's rejection of use of force against an Arab country, has to be seen against what is widely believed as the U.S.'s determination to launch military strikes against Iraq as part of Washington's war against terrorism.

Even though Ibrahim stressed that Iraq was holding out its olive branch as a sign of goodwill, not "out of fear of the United States, Britain or any other enemy, "there is little doubt that Iraq carried out a third diplomatic win with its move at the Arab League summit — by inserting 'another thorn in Washington's hegemonic designs.'"

In Baghdad, Salim al-Kubaisi, head of the Iraqi parliament's foreign and Arab relations committee, hailed the agreement as "a big step toward foiling [American] hostile schemes against Iraq."

Mustafa Alani, an Iraqi analyst, said Baghdad has finally woken up to the Bush administration's avowed intention to topple Saddam Hussein and is trying to internationalize its standoff with Washington. "Iraq may have been able to add Arab backing to European opposition to a U.S. attack on the grounds that it would throw the Middle East into turmoil, but Washington feels that ousting Saddam is a goal worth defying world opinion for," he explained.

"Seen in its entirety, the summit's rejection of any attack on Iraq and call for the lifting of UN sanctions imposed against that country in 1990 should serve as the strongest-yet message that the Arab world is united in rejecting the U.S. approach to Iraq," says P.V.

Vivekanand, editor of a Gulf daily. What facilitated that approach was "adopting... moves to settle differences and burying the hatchet in the Iraq-Kuwait and Iraq-Saudi stand-offs," he adds.

Vivekanand also says that it was clear that the Arab summit was in no mood for any horse-trading over Iraq,

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Why I love the Ten Commandments

by Hesham A. Hassaballa

One of my all time favourite movies is the Ten Commandments starring Charlton Heston. Although I am of Egyptian ancestry, I root for Moses and Israel throughout the entire movie. The depiction of the bondage the Children of Israel suffered pains me each time I watch the film. I love the parts showing the Nile turning to blood, the hail starting on fire, and the "night of death" when all the first born of Egypt die. By and large, however, my absolute favourite part is the splitting of the Red Sea. Despite the story in the movie differing quite a bit from the Islamic version, I try not to miss the Ten Commandments when it airs each year. Surprised? Don't be. Moses plays a very prominent role in Islamic belief.

Moses, like Jesus and Abraham, is highly revered in Islam. He is considered one of the five mightiest Prophets of God, along with Adam, Noah, and Muhammad (peace be upon them all). The Qur'an highly regards Moses, describing him as "the chosen of God" (7:144), "sincere" (19:51), and "honourable" (33:69). In addition, Moses is even more highly regarded because "God spoke directly" to him (4:164). There are over 170 verses in the Qur'an which speak indirectly of Moses or mention him by name.

There are many stories about Moses in the Qur'an as well. The story of how Moses came to be raised in the house of Pharaoh is mentioned at least twice. There are several passages in the Qur'an which detail Moses' confrontation

with Pharaoh after being commissioned to take the Children of Israel out of Egypt. In addition, the story of the golden calf (20:82-99), the splitting of the Red Sea (2:50), and the Exodus out of Egypt (7:133-137) all feature prominently in the Qur'an. Far from being prominent in the Qur'an only, Moses is mentioned countless times in the traditions of Prophet Muhammed (pbuh). In one tradition, the Prophet rebuked one of his companions saying, "Do not give me superiority over Moses..." because all Prophets are equally honoured in Islam.

As a mandatory part of faith, a Muslim must believe in and respect all prophets including Moses.

As Passover begins, when Jews commemorate the night that "death passed over" the Children of Israel

in Egypt, it is unfortunate that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has caused tension between American Muslims and Jews. While the particulars of Muslim and Jewish belief may not be the same, Islam and Judaism still do have much in common, and the differences in beliefs should not preclude the two from having a good relationship. I hope and pray that the common belief of the two faiths in Moses can serve as a much needed bridge of understanding. It is also my hope that the common bond of Moses will help Jewish and Muslim Americans work together to finally end the bloodshed and bring peace to the Middle East. By the way, despite his current role as the NRA president, Charlton Heston will always be "Moses" to me.

[Hesham A. Hassaballa, a physician, is a columnist based in Chicago.]

Muslim 9/11 hero finally recognized

By Larry McShane, Associated Press/Chicago Tribune, 4/6/2002

For six months after Sept. 11, the family of Salman Hamdani had to endure the rumors that he was a fugitive terrorist or that he was in federal custody. On Friday, he was remembered for what he truly was: a

hero who died in the rubble of the World Trade Center. His remains in a flag-draped coffin at a Manhattan mosque, the 23-year-old

Muslim was praised at his long-delayed funeral for a selfless and fatal choice: heading to ground zero to help his fellow Americans. "We

don't know how many people he helped, how many lives he saved," Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly told several hundred mourners at the Islamic Cultural Center of New York. "But if you look at his life, you know he was determined to make a difference—and he did. He was indeed a hero."

On Sept. 11, Hamdani left his Queens home and apparently saw the disaster in lower Manhattan unfold from the elevated tracks of the subway train. He immediately headed toward the scene. In the weeks after his disappearance, a newspaper linked him to the terrorist attacks, and a flier with his picture was circulated among city police officers, saying an FBI-Police Department joint terrorist task force wanted to speak with him. The fliers were unauthorized, and their source was unclear, police later said. But the rumors about his involvement in the attack spread. On Friday, his mother blasted the news reports, saying "If your name was David, the story would have been very differ-

ent..."

Mayor Michael Bloomberg joined the police commissioner in consoling the family.

"We have an example of how one can make the world better," he said. "Salman stood up when most people would have gone in the other direction. He went in and helped people."

Muslim journalist honoured

Haroon Siddiqui wins the National press Club of Canada 2002 World Press Freedom Award, The Toronto Star reported.

"Siddiqui's outspoken critique put a much-needed national spotlight on a serious and growing impediment to freedom of expression, particularly press freedom, in Canada. He made Canadians think about this urgent and important issue" complimented PEN Canada which nominated Siddiqui for the award.

PEN also cited his critique of Ottawa's anti-terrorism bill, including its provisions to curb free speech through increased surveillance of citizens.

"I feel honoured, obviously, but it is not really a personal award," said a humble Siddiqui. "They are really honouring the idea that we cannot have creeping censorship in Canada."



From the Qur'an

"Say ye: 'We believe in God and that which is revealed to us; and what was revealed to Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac), Ya'qoob (Jacob) and their descendants, and that which was given to Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus) and other Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and it is unto Him that we surrender ourselves.'"

Ch. 2, Verse 136

From the Hadith

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: "Both in this world and in the Hereafter, I am the nearest of all people to Jesus, the son of Mary. The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one."

Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 4, Hadith 652

Br. Haroon's award is an honour for all the Muslims in Canada. His courageous and timely columns in the Star present clear perspective of the political scene abroad and at home.

Mr. Siddiqui was the Editorial Page Editor of The Star between 1990 and 1998, and was responsible for the paper's editorial board, its editorial policy, cartoons, letters to the editor and columns in the Opinion page. He writes a regular column on international issues.

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The Ambition

7224 Harwick Drive
Mississauga, ON L4T 3A4

Tel & Fax: (905) 673-2181
editors@theambition.com
www.theambition.com

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Publisher
Asma Warsi

Editors
Asma Warsi
Muhammad Basil Ahmad

Assistant Editor
Asiya Amir

Department Editors
Aneesa Lakhi
Farheen Zehra

Coordinator & Staff Reporter
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This Journal is dedicated to:

Professor Syed Aley Ahmad Abdi, Former Principal, Government Education College, Multan, Pakistan

Ten things Every Muslim should do

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I've come up with a list of ten easy things that every Muslim family should do so that they can contribute to the betterment of Muslims and the establishment of Islam in the West.

Anyone can do these ten things and I've selected activities that are not overly time-consuming, nor expensive. I expect that you'll agree and will tape a print out of these ten "to do's" to your refrigerator door. (Before grabbing that snack you can be reminded about what is more important than filling your belly!)

1. Sponsor an Orphan

Before anything else, there are hungry Muslim children everywhere who have needs right now. There are several reputable relief agencies who offer orphan sponsorship programs that only cost from \$20-\$40 a month. You and I know that's nothing expensive on your part - so do it. Some agencies even offer automated withdrawal so you can send a letter once with a voided check and never have to fill anything out again. Doing this can make you close to the Prophet in Paradise.

2. Subscribe to at least three Muslim magazines

This is practically the only way you can keep abreast of issues important to the Muslims in the West. It also supports the budding Muslim media. Even if you don't intend to read the magazines, subscribe anyway. Someone around you will read or you can leave them with others. Make it at least three and try to subscribe for 2-3 years at a time.

3. Go to the Masjid at least once a week for Salah

In the West today, nearly all of us have a Masjid within driving distance. Even if you don't go to the local Masjid for Jumu'ah because of

your job, then go for at least one Maghrib a week or for Zuhr on Sunday. Whatever, just go at least once a week — WITH YOUR FAMILY. It's the only way that you and your family will consider the Masjid to be your place.

4. Give your children an Islamic Education

If your children go to public school, and there is no Islamic school nearby, then make sure they either get into some Sunday school program, or, if the local Masjid doesn't run it right, then pool together with some like-minded families and run your own program at somebody's house every Saturday or Sunday and conduct it the way you think it should be done. This is the minimum requirement for not losing your children to secular society.

5. Buy books, cassettes and videos on Islam

Buy at least one book, audio or video produced by a Muslim company or author per month. Have you ever wished that there were better items for you and your family's pleasure? Unfortunately, Muslims don't support their own writers and artists very well. No one can make even a decent living if they want to write or produce for the Muslim market. That must change if you want to see wonderful products for you and your children. Just buy one thing per month. Either out of a catalog or from your local Muslim bookstore. For you it's only \$5-\$10 bucks, but collectively, it can encourage our creative and talented brothers and sisters to do more.

6. "Adopt" a convert

If you see any new Muslims at your Masjid, then partially "adopt" them into your family. The convert experience is basically one of isolation

and loneliness. You'd be surprised to know that most converts are outright ignored by the people in the Masjid. Beyond a few pleasantries and handshakes, they are usually never made to feel welcome or accepted. They are often cut off from their non-Muslim friends and relatives so they are doubly vulnerable. A new convert should be invited into various peoples home for dinner a minimum of six times a month. Get together with others and make sure you all put the new convert on your guest list for any sort of gathering.

7. Give the gift of the Quran

Keep three extra Qur'an translations and some literature in your home at all times. You never know when you'll find someone interested who wants to know more. Besides, your children read only and understand only English. (You wouldn't believe how many Muslim families don't have an English Qur'an translation in their homes! How will the child read it if they don't understand Arabic (and they never understand Arabic, even if their parents are Arabic speaking!)

8. Go to one convention a year

Even if you have given up on them, you have to go. It's the only way your children will feel a part of a greater community of believers. Think about it and realize that you don't just go to a convention for your personal enrichment. It's about Muslim solidarity. Go to at least one every year. Couple it with your vacation plans or something. Just go.

9. Eat only Halal or Kosher Food

Besides all the religious aspects I could mention, which are the most important, by the way, there is another advantage. You solidify your identity and introduce to your family the concept that animals should not die cruelly (like they do in all American slaughterhouses) and that Muslims eat cleaner food. If there are no Halal meat stores nearby, you'll probably find a Kosher store. At least many of the Jews are not shy about Allah's commandment there and have established kosher markets everywhere.

10. Create an Islamic environment in your home

Lastly, make sure you and your family have cultural-type items in your home in abundance that are associated with Islam or Islamic culture. Everyone in your home should have prayer beads, prayer rugs, kufis, Hijabs, (even if they're worn only for prayer), gowns, posters, wall plaques, stickers, logo-shirts, Islamic screen-savers on the computer, and on and on. You want to establish an identity in your home. Everything outside is totally un-Islamic. At least let the Islamic flavor be present inside.

Originally, there were only ten things on this list, but then a very important item came to mind but I just couldn't bring myself to delete any of the preceding items. But in the interest of simplicity, I'll keep the upper ten intact and mention this item as a separate issue because it's something that you don't really need to list with the other things.

This is extremely crucial:

Resolve to raise your family as

IMAP - Bringing Muslims together for Marriage

IMAP (Islamic Matrimonial Assistance Program) is a non profit organization, working under the umbrella of the IMO (International Muslims Organisation, Rexdale, ON). IMAP's main purpose is to bring Muslims together in a formal Islamic environment for them to be able to interact and meet their prospective spouses.

They have been around for over two years, and in that time, have had many successes in their program where people have met and gotten married through the program (Alhamdulillah).

IMAP has had many good Imams and renowned Islamic speakers speak about marriage, its benefits, as well as other aspects of it relating to the society we live in. Past speakers include Sh. Hamid Slimi (previously with the London community, currently with the IMO), Sh. Faisal Abdur Razzak, (previous president of Taric Mosque, currently with the Islamic Forum of Canada), Sh. Abdool Hamid (Toronto), Br. Ashraf Zaghoul and Br. Jeewan Chanicka are amongst others who have spoken at their event.

"We have been successful in helping people of all age groups ranging from students to working professionals who don't have the time to find a spouse," says Urzurum, one of the IMAP organisers. "We also have many older individuals who are widowed and divorced attend the event. Singles/Divorced/Widowed/Parents are amongst our participants in the audience and our events usually range from 150-300 people each time (and steadily increasing)."

The events are held about 4-5 times a year and currently, IMAP houses a database of about 500 to

Muslims

Don't be passive. Don't sit around and watch your spouse and children drift further and further away into disbelief and kufr. Would any of you like to be on their deathbed and then realize that they only left non-Muslims behind them? Imagine entering the great sleep with that realization on your heart!

These ten things can be done, with minimal trouble and fuss, by each and every Muslim family. Through these ten points nearly every purpose of Islam is served and you can finally feel that you're doing something in an organized fashion to help promote your healthy way of life and also to fulfill your responsibility to your Creator. Give it a try and see how easy these things really are. Then stick with it. You have no excuses for inaction anymore.

600 candidates upholding privacy in their information.

"The format of our events comprises of a lecture, some workshops on related issues pertaining to the audience," says Urzurum. "Topics in the past have been on issues of culture, compatibility, rules of engagement, parent issues, youth issues etc.

Then we have a dinner at which point if anyone wants to make a direct contact with others, may do so within the Islamic environment that we provide. Knowledgeable people may be asked questions, organizers may be requested to help in making contacts etc. Our program is unique in its kind as it is not to benefit our own purpose to make any profit. We charge only to cover the cost of having the event. As well, we strive to stay within Islamic confines in order to accomplish this mission of bringing people together. Many Imams and mosques have endorsed our program throughout North America, from BC to Halifax, from Florida to New York. We have their support and their kind words," she concluded.

The core members comprise of a small group of community members who work many hours to help the other Muslims in the community in this cause. They understand there is a lot of social pressure driving our youths and elders towards arranged/forced marriages, and also, people are resorting to clubs/pubs to find their spouses, etc... People who aren't able to find spouses are falling into cases of depression and some even suicide. They want to try to help all people so they don't succumb to the social illnesses of the Secular society.

The task in front of IMAP is huge, and all work is done *fe sabilillah* (for the sake of God) towards these events. Many of the organisers are employed full time and yet spend hours volunteering their time towards this cause. They implore all mosques to arrange for programs like this to benefit their community.

The foundation of the Muslim society is our family. Our family stems from two people uniting for the sake of Allah in marriage. We need to encourage our Muslims to look within in a halal environment. To look within, (community leaders/organisations) such programs in our mosques should be encouraged.

If you, or someone you know is looking to meet other Muslims, be sure to attend the next event on June 8th, 2002, inshallah. Visit their website at www.imaponline.org for more information on IMAP and their next event.



Canadian MP becomes voice of the voiceless

Mr. Svend Robinson was there during the first Intifada, and he was there during the recent massacre in Jenin. He is the only Canadian MP who went to get a first-hand account of the situation in the Occupied Palestine, in the refugee camps, meeting with the people. He reported of the appalling conditions he witnessed in the camps, of the Israeli atrocities, loud and clear, and as a result, lost his Middle East portfolio for the NDP.

The stories he related from refugees were absolutely shocking. "When I speak of torture and murder, there is no other word for it," said Mr. Robinson, speaking to an audience very diverse in origin — from Muslims to Jews, Black to White — packed to capacity, and standing in the hallways, on this rainy afternoon. "The land in Ramallah belongs to Palestinians and not Israel," he said in a thunder of applause.

Svend was stopped and rebuked by the Israeli army at the checkpoints, but he defied and proceeded to the Palestinian territory anyway. Interestingly, the Spanish PM was also blocked by the Israeli army a day

before Svend's visit, and had to go back.

Talking of Mary Robinson's plea in Geneva to send a delegate to Jenin to probe human rights violations, Mr. Robinson expressed his "shame and anger" that out of 53 members only two voted against the resolution, and Canada was one of them.

According to him, peace-seeking

of Jenin Inquiry and must observe the 4th Geneva convention; and that Palestine has to be a 'viable' state and refugee question must be ad-

ressed with justice.

"Root of the problem is occupation," he said "and it must end. Israel must withdraw from every inch it stole in 1967."

The path ahead is not easy to follow but Canadians must speak for the truth about the



occupation. We must say NO to this silencing of criticism.

"I'll speak from one end of this country to the other for justice and peace," he said. "Neutrality is not an option. I'll take side of oppressed over oppressor, life over death, justice over tyranny and dehumanization."

The speech was throughout punctuated by applause and approval of the audience — a true reflection of our peace-loving, multi-ethnic society.

Pakistani fundraiser for Ontario hospital

At a hospital fundraiser in Markham, there were tell-tale signs of something different afoot, reported The Globe and Mail. There were the speeches, the political dignitaries (including federal Heritage Minister Sheila Copps), the \$2,500 corporate tables and the 800 guests. There was no alcohol and no dancing. Early in the event, there was a reading from the Koran, and later a 10-minute break for Muslim prayers at sunset.

More important than the \$31,000 cheque presented — an amount raised in less than two months — was the fact that this fundraiser was happening at all.

For the first time, the growing Pakistani community in this suburb northeast of Toronto is raising money for the Markham Stouffville Hospital — not just for charities back home.

The fundraiser is all about "building bridges," said Markham Councillor Khalid Usman, one of two co-

Conferences set to create a stir in Ottawa and Montreal

A series of conferences on the scientific refutation of the theory of evolution is to be held by the Science Research Foundation between 24 May and 2 June.

The theory of evolution, which is based on the denial of God and claims that living things came into existence as a result of coincidences and that man evolved from apes, has lost all its adherents now that its superstitious façade has been revealed. In many countries, it is now officially accepted that evolution is a disproved theory, and many states in the U.S. are accelerating their attempts to remove evolution from state science curricula or reduce the emphasis on evolutionary concepts. This worldwide movement has enabled people to become more conscious of the fallacy of evolution, which contradicts the scientific facts, has led many evolutionist scientists to see the truth and came as a great shock to the advocates of Darwinism. The scientific evidence against evolution clearly shows that there are no longer any grounds left for Darwinism to survive.

The Science Research Foundation, one of the leading organizations in this campaign against Darwinism, has been engaged in wide-ranging activities for the last 12 years with the numerous conferences it has organized in Turkey and all around the world. The book *The Evolution Deceit*, written by Adnan Oktar under the pen-name Harun Yahya, the honorary president of the foundation, is a prime source on the subject of Darwinism, which has been translated into 10 languages and had a great impact in many countries all over the world. The impact of *The Evolution Deceit* has also been acknowledged by standard-bearers of the opposing

chairmen. "More and more this will happen as we realize that people are settling down here," said Mr. Usman, a chartered accountant who emigrated from Pakistan in 1970 and has lived here since 1977. "A lot of us feel we must pay back and help the community."

The fundraiser was part of celebrations for Pakistan National Day.

view. The leading popular Darwinist periodical *New Scientist* noted in its 22 April, 2001, issue that Harun Yahya "is an international hero," airing its concern that his books "have spread everywhere in the Islamic world." *Science*, the leading periodical of the general scientific community, emphasized the impact and sophistication of Harun Yahya's works and stated in an 18 May, 2001, article that the SRF "has developed one of the world's strongest anti-evolution movements outside of North America and has been making inroads in other Muslim nations." In the same article, *Science* writer Robert Koenig remarked that *The Evolution Deceit* has "created a stir" in the world.

Members of the SRF, who are waging a momentous and effective campaign throughout the world by announcing "the collapse of the theory of evolution," will now hold a series of conferences with the same aim in several universities in Ottawa and Montreal between 24 May — 2 June, 2002. Three main topics will be discussed at these conferences, to which entrance will be free of charge:

- The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution

- Miracles of the Qur'an

- The Creation of the Universe

The conferences will be held in English and French, and there will also be an evolution exhibition and video presentation. The conferences will be addressed by Ali Sadun Engin and Dr. Cihat Gundogdu, and will be held at the following universities:

- Concordia University

- McGill University

- UQAM

- University of Montreal

- Vanier University

- Dawson University

- Champlain University

- John Abbott University

Your attendance at these conferences is of great importance to become fully aware of the dangerous ramifications of the theory of evolution and to see the evidence for the fact of creation.

Detailed information about Harun Yahya works is available at www.harunyahya.com.

The REH'MA Foundation holds 3rd annual Elders' Forum

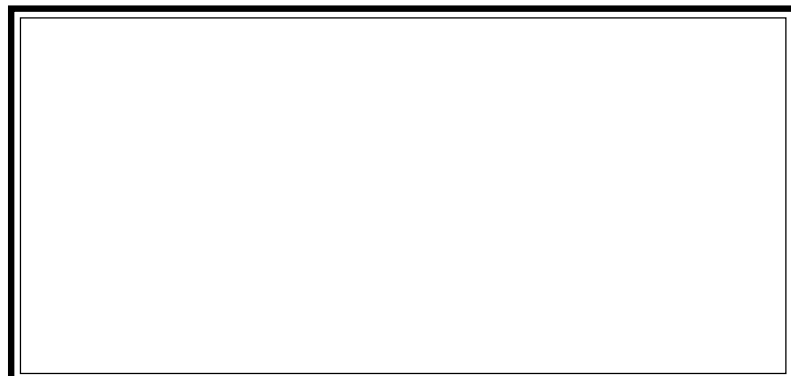
The REH'MA foundation honoured leaders from the community for their inspirational and dedicated community service at its annual Elders' Forum III, held at City Hall on Sunday, April 28, 2002.

A not-for-profit organization engaged in providing community development, information, educational events and services for Muslim seniors amongst others in Toronto, REH'MA is proud to have received the support of numerous organizations and respected community members. Among these are Elder Connections, The Don Mills Foundation for Senior Citizens Inc. and the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens Organizations. REH'MA also receives funding from the Trillium Foundation that supports a community development initiative aimed at empowering and serving Muslim seniors.

The elder Forum, an event that is very well received and attended, provided an opportunity for seniors and their caregivers to attend workshops on a variety of topics addressed by noted professionals and experts. It also provided an opportunity for community members to socialize over lunch and browse through information on health and other topics at the information booths set up at City Hall.

This year, REH'MA announced the opening of its new office in North York where volunteers will be mobilized and trained to provide outreach, information and referrals to seniors in the Muslim community. This exciting initiative is the first of its kind in serving the Muslim community in Toronto, where there is a real paucity of sensitive services for its seniors. REH'MA receives funding for this project from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which is an agency of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. With \$100 million in annual funding the Trillium foundation provides grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts, culture, sports, recreation, environment and social service sectors.

REH'MA Foundation can be reached at (416) 510-1100 ext. 41 or (416) 510-0880.



Around the World

The Middle East

What does Israel have to hide?

By James O. Hacking, III

U.S. envoy George Mitchell went to the Middle East a year ago to try and bring peace to the region. At that time, Mitchell's committee raised the issue of whether U.N. monitors should be brought in to help stabilize the situation and to protect human life – both Israeli and Palestinian. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat readily assented; however, the Israelis refused to allow an independent, third-party into the region.

I found Israel's reluctance to have an outside monitor checking abuses by both sides to be very telling. What did the Israelis not want us to see? Fast-forward to recent events in the West Bank. Israeli Defense Forces have gone to great lengths to thwart the efforts of international news agencies to report on the situation. Earlier this week, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists ("CPJ") joined many other organizations critical of Israel's policy of prohibiting journalists from occupied cities in the West Bank. The organization sent a letter to Ariel Sharon protesting Israel's efforts to block reporters from Bethlehem, Ramallah and Qaliqilya.

The Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists and the Foreign Press Association in Israel have also protested the Israeli media policy. The CPJ was also highly critical of the fact that Israeli soldiers shot at NBC Middle East Correspondent Dana Lewis, despite the fact that Mr. Lewis' automobile was clearly marked as a media vehicle. In a similar story, BBC reporter Orla Guerin has charged that Israeli soldiers shot at her and her television crew while they were merely covering a peaceful protest in Bethlehem. You might be thinking that shooting at journalists and denying reporters access to a war zone are isolated incidents and not actual Israeli policy. If that is the case, then why did Israel's Government Press Office threaten legal action and send written complaints to CNN and to NBC for allowing reporters to continue broadcasting from Ramallah after Israel declared the city a "closed military zone" and off limits to journalists? Is there something

they don't want you to know?

An even more troubling story involves Israel's decision to revoke the media credentials of two television journalists from Abu Dhabi. Israeli military officials apparently did not like the fact that the two had filed a report detailing Palestinian allegations that a group of 22 Palestinian policemen, seeking to surrender during intense gun battles in the city, followed Israeli orders to strip to their underwear and lay down their weapons. The Abu Dhabi report claimed that after the policeman walked out of the building where they had taken refuge, the Israeli soldiers opened fire, killing five men and wounding others. If the Israeli government and its military is allowed to dictate what news you receive, do you think you will be able to formulate accurate opinions on this very important issue?

Unfortunately, members of the press corps are not the only group to find themselves looking down the barrel of an Israeli gun. News reports indicate that Israeli Defense Forces have been denying physicians and emergency personnel access to the numerous Palestinians wounded and killed during Israel's latest incursion into the West Bank. A press release issued by the International Red Cross noted "the frequent and often serious instances in which medical personnel were prevented from performing their life saving duties," IRC delegates, "were regrettably prevented from working because of a sudden degradation of the usual lines of communication between themselves and the Israeli authorities."

Shooting at members of the media is abhorrent enough; but there is no excuse in denying medical care to the wounded, many of whom are unarmed, Palestinian civilians. As the IRC rightfully explained, "[t]he most basic humanitarian precondition in a situation of violence, is that all medical staff and volunteers be allowed to function unmolested." This principle should be inviolate and involves issues much more important than media access. Or perhaps Israeli Defense Forces are afraid we may learn that the wounds suffered by Pal-

estinian civilians are inconsistent with stories spun by Israeli military leaders.

Israel frequently refers to itself as "the only democracy in the Middle East." Whether Israel is a democracy for all individuals living within its borders is certainly debatable. But I am confident that we can all agree that in order to truly understand what is happening in the West Bank today and in the future, the international media has to be granted unfettered access to all areas and to be allowed to report back to the rest of the world what is really happening on the ground. Democratic principles require such access. Because Israel is unrelenting in its efforts to thwart accurate news coverage - and now apparently to deny doctors access to the wounded - we are left to ask, "what does Israel have to hide?"

[James O. Hacking, III, is an American-Muslim attorney living in St. Louis, Missouri.]

Archbishop slams apartheid in the Holy Land

South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu accused the Israelis of treating Palestinians in the same way the apartheid South African government treated blacks.

In a commentary published on Monday by The Guardian, Tutu said: "I've been deeply distressed in my visit to the Holy Land; it reminded me so much of what happened to us black people in South Africa", Tutu said during a conference this month in Boston, Massachusetts, extracts of which were published as a commentary under the headline "Apartheid in the Holy Land".

"I have seen the humiliation of the Palestinians at checkpoints and roadblocks, suffering like us when young white police officers prevented us from moving about," said the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner.

"I say why are our memories so short? Have our Jewish sisters and brothers forgotten their humiliation? Have they forgotten the collective

Israeli siege of Jesus' birthplace unites Palestinian Christians

Israel's campaign in the West Bank, and especially the siege of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, has united the dwindling number of Palestinian Christians.

Each day, as the curfew is lifted briefly in this Israeli-occupied town, groups of people gather in front of the city's churches. A humanitarian aide is distributed, voices rise in condemnation of the army. "The Israeli offensive, notably at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem unites all the Christians in the West Bank and upsets those abroad," says one man at the Greek Orthodox Convent of the Transfiguration.

Churchgoer Rabab Sous says "the Nativity is not just a building of stone, but a sacred place that they (the Israelis) do not respect."

Yacoub Khoury, a priest, says "this war has united us all the more."

Just over a century ago, Christians made up about 13 percent of the population of what are now Israel and the Palestinian territories, but emigration has reduced that figure to only about two percent today.

Most of them are Palestinian Arabs. There are about three million people in the Palestinian territories, but only some 50,000 Christians.

Ramallah is an exception to the general rule. Khoury says Christians were in a majority there until the war that followed the creation of Israel in

1948 drove many Muslims out of their homes. But even today, there are an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 Christians out of a total population of about forty thousand.

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Anti-Israel marches

More than 1,500 demonstrators called for "jihad" (holy war) against Israel in a protest outside the United States embassy in **Malaysia**.

As Malaysia has no diplomatic relations with Israel, the demonstrators targeted the embassy of the US, which is seen as supporting the Israeli action.

A memorandum was submitted condemning the "failure of the US to put an end to terrorist acts upon the Palestinian people. "The Malaysian people condemn in the strongest terms Israel's acts of terror on the Palestinian people, particularly when the global community is making efforts to stop terrorism," the memorandum said.

"We urge the United States to immediately take firm action by ceasing all forms of assistance and support to Israel, whether economic, moral or military."

Meanwhile, in **Germany**, Police sources report that more than 20,000 people demonstrated to protest Israel's latest military offense in the Palestinian territories. Germany has traditionally given unwavering support to Israel, in large part due to shame over the Holocaust that left six million European Jews dead during the Second World War. But the taboo on criticizing Israel has weakened in recent weeks. A number of political leaders have voiced doubts about Israeli policies, although the German government has avoided any direct criticism.

1948 drove many Muslims out of their homes. But even today, there are an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 Christians out of a total population of about forty thousand.

The apartheid government was very powerful, but today it no longer exists. Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Pinochet, Milosevic, and Idi Amin were all powerful, but in the end they bit the dust.

"Injustice and oppression will never prevail," Tutu declared.

"In our struggle against apartheid, the great supporters were Jewish people. They almost instinctively had to be on the side of the disenfranchised, of the voiceless ones, fighting injustice, oppression and

Continued on page 12

India — Cry, The Beloved Country

Reflections on the Gujarat massacre by a serving IAS officer.

by Harsh Mander

Numbed with disgust and horror, I return from Gujarat ten days after the terror and massacre that convulsed the state. My heart is sickened, my soul wearied, my shoulders aching with the burdens of guilt and shame.

As you walk through the camps of riot survivors in Ahmedabad, in which an estimated 53,000 women, men, and children are huddled in 29 temporary settlements, displays of overt grief are unusual. People clutch small bundles of relief materials, all that they now own in the world, with dry and glassy eyes. Some talk in low voices, others busy themselves with the tasks of everyday living in these most basic of shelters, looking for food and milk for children, tending the wounds of the injured.

But once you sit anywhere in these camps, people begin to speak and their words are like masses of pus released by slitting large festering wounds. The horrors that they speak of are so macabre, that my pen falters in the writing. The pitiless brutality against women and small children by organised bands of armed young men is more savage than anything witnessed in the riots that have shamed this nation from time to time during the past century. I force myself to write a small fraction of all that I heard and saw, because it is important that we all know. Or maybe also because I need to share my own burdens.

What can you say about a woman eight months pregnant who begged to be spared? Her assailants instead slit open her stomach, pulled out her foetus and slaughtered it before her eyes. What can you say about a family of nineteen being killed by flooding their house with water and then electrocuting them with high-tension electricity? What can you say? A small boy of six in Juhapara camp described how his mother and six brothers and sisters were battered to death before his eyes. He survived only because he fell unconscious, and was taken for dead.

A family escaping from Naroda-Patiya, one of the worst-hit settle-

ments in Ahmedabad, spoke of losing a young woman and her three month old son, because a police constable directed her to 'safety' and she found herself instead surrounded by a mob which doused her with kerosene and set her and her baby on fire.

I have never known a riot which has used the sexual subjugation of women so widely as an instrument of violence in the recent mass barbarity in Gujarat. There are reports every where of gang-rape, of young girls and women, often in the presence of members of their families, followed by their murder by burning alive, or by bludgeoning with a hammer and in one case with a screw driver.

Women in the Aman Chowk shelter told appalling stories about how armed men disrobed themselves in front of a group of terrified women to cower them down further. In Ahmedabad, most people I met — social workers, journalists, survivors — agree that what Gujarat witnessed was not a riot, but a terrorist attack followed by a systematic, planned massacre, a pogrom. Everyone spoke of the pillage and plunder, being organised like a military operation against an external armed enemy.

An initial truck would arrive broadcasting inflammatory slogans, soon followed by more trucks which disgorged young men, mostly in khaki shorts and saffron sashes. They were armed with sophisticated explosive materials, country weapons, daggers and trishuls. They also carried water bottles, to sustain them in their exertions. The leaders were seen communicating on mobile telephones from the riot venues, receiving instructions from and reporting back to a co-ordinating centre. Some were seen with documents and computer sheets listing Muslim families and their properties. They had detailed precise knowledge about buildings and businesses held by members of the minority community, such as who were partners say in a restaurant business, or which Muslim homes had Hindu spouses who should be spared in the violence.

This was not a spontaneous upsurge of mass anger. It was a carefully planned pogrom.

The trucks carried quantities of gas cylinders. Rich Muslim homes and business establishments were first systematically looted, stripped down of all their valuables, then cooking gas was released from cylinders into the buildings for several minutes. A trained member of the group then lit the flame that efficiently engulfed the building. In some cases, acetylene gas which is used for welding steel, was employed to explode large concrete buildings. Mosques and *dargahs* were razed, and were replaced by statues of Hanuman and saffron flags. Some *dargahs* in Ahmedabad city crossings have overnight been demolished and their sites covered with road building material, and bulldozed so efficiently that these spots are indistinguishable from the rest of the road. Traffic now plies over these former *dargahs*, as though they never existed.

The unconscionable failures and active connivance of the state police and administrative machinery is also now widely acknowledged. The police are known to have misguided people straight into the hands of rioting mobs. They provided protective shields to crowds bent on pillage, arson, rape and murder, and were deaf to the pleas of the desperate Muslim victims, many of them women and children. There have been many reports of police firing directly mostly at the minority community, which was the target of most of the mob violence. The large majority of arrests are also from the same community that was the main victim of the pogrom.

As one who has served in the Indian Administrative Service for over two decades, I feel great shame at the abdication of duty of my peers in the civil and police administration. The law did not require any of them to await orders from their political supervisors before they could organise the decisive use of force to prevent the brutal escalation of violence, and to protect vulnerable women and children from the organised, murderous mobs. The law instead required them to act independently, fearlessly, impartially, decisively, with courage and compassion. If even one official had so acted in Ahmedabad, she or he could have deployed the police forces and called in the army to halt the violence and protect the people in a matter of hours.

No riot can continue beyond a few hours without the active connivance of the local police and magistracy. The blood of hundreds of innocents is on the hands of the police and civil authorities of Gujarat, and by sharing in a conspiracy of silence, on the entire higher bureaucracy of the country.

I have heard senior officials blame also the communalism of the police constabulary for their connivance in the violence. This too is a thin and disgraceful alibi. The same forces have been known to act with impartiality and courage when led by officers of professionalism and integrity. The failure is clearly of the lead-

ership of the police and civil services, not of the subordinate men and women in khaki who are trained to obey their orders.

Where is — amidst this savagery, injustice, and human suffering — the 'civil society', the Gandhians, the development workers, the NGOs, the fabled spontaneous Gujarathi philanthropy which was so much in evidence in the earthquake in Kutch and Ahmedabad?

The newspapers reported that at the peak of the pogrom, the gates of Sabarmati Asram were closed to protect its properties; it should instead have been the city's major sanctuary. Which Gandhian leaders, or NGO managers, staked their lives to halt the death-dealing throngs? It is one more shame that we as citizens of this country must carry on our already burdened backs that the camps for the Muslim riot victims in Ahmedabad are being run almost exclusively by Muslim organisations.

It is as though the monumental pain, loss, betrayal and injustice suffered by the Muslim people is the

Muslim women brutalized in India's Gujarat.

According to the report by a coalition of women's groups, many Muslim females suffered the most "bestial forms of sexual violence" including rape, insertion of objects into their bodies and burning in the violence.

The six-member team of women's activists spoke to hundreds of witnesses and survivors of the religious mayhem to prepare the report, entitled "How has the Gujarat Massacre Affected Minority Women: The Survivors Speak."

"Many of the women who were raped were then burnt to death," Malini Ghose, a member of the team, told Reuters on Thursday.

But survivors and witnesses had horrific tales to tell the panel.

Saira Banu, living in a refugee camp in Ahmedabad, Gujarat's main city which bore the brunt of the violence, says a group of men cut open her nine-month pregnant relative's stomach, took out her fetus with a sword and threw it into a blazing fire.

Medina Mustafa Sheikh, another refugee in an Ahmedabad camp, says she heard her young daughter screaming for help as a group of men raped her in a maize field where her family had hidden to escape a blood-thirsty mob of 500 people.

"My daughter was screaming in pain asking the men to leave her alone. My mind was seething with fear and fury. I could do nothing to help my daughter from being assaulted sexually and tortured to death," Medina told the women's panel. "My daughter was like a flower, still to see life...the monsters tore my beloved daughter to pieces," she said.

Activists working at a relief camp in Ahmedabad said many women arrived naked at the camp. One woman was brought to the camp uncon-

cern only of other Muslim people, and the rest of us have no share in the responsibility to assuage, to heal and rebuild. The state, which bears the primary responsibility to extend both protection and relief to its vulnerable citizens, was nowhere in evidence in any of the camps, to manage, organise the security, or even to provide the resources that are required to feed the tens of thousands of defenceless women, men and children huddled in these camps for safety.

The only passing moments of pride and hope that I experienced in Gujarat, were when I saw men like Mujid Ahmed and women like Roshan Bahen who served in these camps with tireless, dogged humanism amidst the ruins around them.

There are no voices like Gandhi's that we hear today; Only discourses on Newtonian physics, to justify vengeance on innocents. We need to find these voices within our own hearts, we need to believe enough in justice, love, tolerance. There is much that the murdering mobs in Gujarat have robbed from me.

source: <http://www.indianmuslims.info/index.php>

scious, bleeding profusely, her body covered with bites and marks and relief workers dressing her wounds said they had to removed pieces of wood that had been pushed up her vagina...

Pakistan's High Commissioner tortured in India

On the morning of April 16, Mr. Ali Abbas, an official of the High Commission of Pakistan in India, was abducted and detained by at least 12 Indian intelligence operatives.

"He was severely beaten up and taken to an undisclosed location, where he was subjected to severe torture including electric shocks. As a result of the torture inflicted on Ali Abbas, he has been passing blood in his urine," a spokesman from Pakistan's Foreign Office stated. This is the second reported incident of the Indian government's torture of a Pakistani diplomat in the past 4 months.

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Newsroom

Canadians Rally for the Palestine

About 10,000 people, from a wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives, took to the streets of Montreal on Saturday April 27, 2002 in support of the Palestinian people. There has been 5 pro-Palestinian rallies in Montreal, each drawing thousands of supporters, in the past month and a half. More than 30 large organizations endorsed Saturday's rally, including two major trade Unions named Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN) and Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ), and also the Fédération des femmes du Québec (The Federation of Quebec Women). Among their list of demands included withdrawal of Israel from the 1967 occupied territories, sending a UN investigation team to investigate what took place in the Jenin refugee camp, the right of return of all Palestinian refugees to their homes and lands, and the dismantling of all Israeli settlements. They also called on the Canadian government to "end its policy of complacency towards Israeli aggression, occupation, and colonization." At the following links are a collection of photos from the Saturday rally.

Reports have come from other parts of Canada and US including Toronto, London, and Kitchener of huge demonstrations against Israeli attacks and brutality in Palestine.

An estimated 100,000 Americans from diverse ethnic, religious and political backgrounds turned out on



Rally in Montreal, April 27

April 20, in the nation's capital to call for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. The largest-ever national rally in support of the Palestinian people filled the White House Ellipse and poured into streets leading to Capitol Hill during the six-hour gathering.

Number of Palestinians killed during Al-Aqsa Intifada

September 29, 2000 - March 2002
<http://www.jmcc.org/banner/banner1/listmartyr.htm>

List of Palestinians killed during Al-Aqsa Intifada from September 29, 2000 - March 2002

<http://www.jmcc.org/banner/banner1/killed/>

List of Palestinian children killed (Age under 18) September 29, 2000 - March 26, 2002

<http://www.jmcc.org/banner/banner1/childaqsa.htm>

Foreign Minister Graham meets with Arab, Muslim and Christian representatives

Ending the occupation is key to peace, says CIC

Adam Amen, Ottawa region director of the Canadian Islamic Congress, was among a group of Canadian Muslim, Arab, and Christian leaders who met on April 12, 2002 with the Rt. Hon. Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to discuss the current events in the Middle East.

Alok Mukherjee abandons NDP

Reported by Tarek Fatah

Alok Mukherjee, a veteran of Canada's NDP and a former Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, who was for many years the guru of the Party's South Asian activists, severed all links with the NDP in protest at Leader Alexa McDonough's bowing to the Israeli lobby, and her decision to demote MP Svend Robinson, an outspoken supporter of the Palestinians.

In his letter of resignation to Alexa, Alok laments her failure and that of her NDP Caucus. Addressing the NDP caucus, he writes: "I am not saying byD any means that violence against a civil population should not be condemned. I am saying, however, that that violence must be put in context and attention focused on its cause. That violence must not be used to divert attention from the kind of ethnic cleansing that the present

government of Israel has embarked upon in settlements such as the one that existed in Jenin. What kind of civilized behaviour is it that prevents families from recovering and burying their dead? Are they not members of a civil population too? Would it not be even-handed to call this murderous behaviour of the Sharon government for what it is? Or are we all so mesmerized by the prevalent rhetoric of fighting terrorism that we have lost all perspective?"

"They [NDP] need a careful enunciation of the issues from a perspective that recognizes that Canada is no

longer an extension of Europe, and that not all Canadians are white, Christians and Jews. The diversity that multiculturalism claims to celebrate needs to be reflected in the way we think about ourselves and the world, in the positions we take, in the way we articulate a distinctly Canadian position."

Mr. Amen reiterated the Congress's position on the urgent need for Canada to work for peace with justice in the region. Along with other Canadian faith groups, the CIC believes that a key first step towards achieving this is for Israeli to end its 34-year-old illegal occupation of Arab lands.

Minister Graham said the Canadian government will do its best to help stop the current hostilities and encourage a restart of the peace dialogue.

Canada rejects a human rights mission to protect Palestinians

The Canadian office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-CAN) denounced Canada's recent decision on April 5th, 2002, to reject an immediate human rights fact-finding mission to Israel headed by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson.

Canada and Guatemala were the only two countries that voted against the resolution, which condemned "the frightening increase in the loss of life, the invasion of Palestinian cities and villages, the arrest and detention of Palestinians," as well as the suffering of Palestinians and the restrictions on journalists and aid organizations.

In a statement released today, CAIR-CAN Board member and Islamic scholar Jamal Badawi stated: "It is shocking and shameful that Canada rejected an attempt by the UN's leading human rights body to monitor and investigate human rights abuses taking place under Israel's war of terror against Palestinian civilians and refugees.

"Noted human rights organizations like Amnesty International and the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem have documented Israel's deliberate targeting of civilians; wanton destruction of property; collective curfews and confinements; deliberate denial of food, water and medicine; arbitrary arrest, torture and other degrading treatment; attacks on ambulances and medical facilities; and the closure of areas under siege to journalists, aid workers and humanitarian organizations.

"In giving a tacit thumbs-up to Israel's continued war against civilians and refugees, Canada has betrayed its proud and lasting tradition of peacekeeping and human rights advocacy."

longer an extension of Europe, and that not all Canadians are white, Christians and Jews. The diversity that multiculturalism claims to celebrate needs to be reflected in the way we think about ourselves and the world, in the positions we take, in the way we articulate a distinctly Canadian position."

Canadian university accommodates Muslim prayer room request.

Decision a model for other universities, says CAIR-CAN.

The Canadian office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-CAN) is asking community members to thank Concordia University in Montreal for accommodating the request of its Muslim students for a larger and permanent prayer space which they had attempted to acquire since October 2001.

The new room accommodates about 200 worshippers. Bilal Hamideh, President of the Muslim Students' Association at Concordia said, "The university administration was very accommodating to our request. Alhamdulillah (praise be to God), we are very pleased with the new arrangement." "CAIR-CAN's educational series 'Know Your Rights' was excellent and their advice about our rights regarding a prayer space was very helpful and informative," he added.

Both federal and provincial human rights legislation guarantee freedom from religious discrimination and oblige service-providers to accommodate religious needs to the point of undue hardship. "Muslim students need to frame their requests with knowledge of their legal rights. We hope the case of Concordia will serve as a model for other universities where Muslims lack proper prayer facilities," stated CAIR-CAN Executive Director Riad Saloojee.

MSUJ at U of W

Muslim Students for Universal Justice was formed as a students' club at the University of Waterloo in the fall of 2001. The aims of this students' group is to promote a healthy exchange of ideas so that both Muslims and non-Muslims can benefit from the Islamic perspective and solutions to humanity's problems. While maintaining Islam as the only way of life, MSUJ cherishes exposure to different opinions and viewpoints.

The organization plans various activities to discuss paradigms, ideologies and general topics such as spirituality, social justice, racism, discrimination, democracy, secularism, socialism, globalization and poverty. Specific issues such as labour laws, energy prices, stockmarkets, banking systems, environmental challenges, political conflicts, wars, cell and human cloning are also discussed.

Their most recent event "leadership of Humanity: Islam vs. Secularism," held on March 16, 2002, was attended by over 200 people who came from the GTA, Guelph, Cambridge, as well as Kitchener-Waterloo and Ohio. The event consisted of a mini-debate between Dr. Jan Narveson, a well-known philosophy professor at U of W, who argued in favour of secularism, and Mr. David Livingstone, a Canadian revert to Islam and author of "The Dying God: The Hidden History of Western Civilization," who presented the Islamic perspective.

The organization can be reached at uwmsuj@hotmail.com or call Br. Faisal Mohammad at (416) 418-3342.

Detainees in Sept. 11 probe say they were abused in top security

Inside the Special Housing Unit of the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, dozens of detainees held for months in connection with the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks have been confined to their cells nearly 24 hours a day.

The lights are always on, making it difficult to sleep. The prisoners are subject to body cavity searches after each meeting with their attorneys.

They are transported in shackles, handcuffs and waist chains. In some cases, the detainees have been subject to harassment by prison guards and rough treatment that has left them bloodied.

The conditions were described by three detainees recently released from the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) who offered a rare glimpse of life inside the federal prison's maximum security unit, supposedly reserved for some of the most important suspects in the government's terrorism investigation...

Although the Justice Department has conducted its investigation in total secrecy, the government has announced no terrorism-related charges against any of those held under maximum security conditions at MDC...

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A62853-2002Apr16.html>

Muslims honour "bridge builder" priest

Rev. Robert Stoudt was honored Saturday by leaders of the local Muslim community as a bridge builder between their communities. His church, Penbrook United Church of Christ, was the first to invite local Muslims to speak in the wake of Sept. 11 — and he helped to arrange contacts with other congregations.

In the days that followed the terrorist attack, he began to worry about the Muslims in his community and reached out to them.

"For me, it was easy to recognize the fact that you were not the enemy," he told local Muslims last week. "I had been in your midst. I had prayed with you on a number of occasions. ... I had been the beneficiary of your hospitality."

His sympathy, he said, came of an "informed felt kinship."

Parvez Ahmed, president of the Central Pennsylvania Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations, gave Stoudt a plaque before a capacity crowd of more than 100 at the Aangan restaurant in Susquehanna Twp. The dinner honored bridge builders and local residents who have returned from the recent annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

Stoudt cautioned that the two communities must not stop short at "polite comfortableness" and seek instead a greater goal "of being able to embrace each other authentically as brothers and sisters."

Source: <http://www.patriot-news.com/>

Civil rights group to sue over U.S. handling of Muslim men

In a new challenge to the Bush administration's prolonged detention of hundreds of Muslim men after Sept. 11, a civil rights group says it will ask a federal court to declare the government's treatment of the men biased and unconstitutional.

A class-action lawsuit prepared by the group, the Center for Constitutional Rights, accused the government of arbitrarily holding Muslim detainees in prison for months on minor immigration violations, with no hearings to determine whether the government had probable cause to hold them.

They have also been subjected to excessively harsh treatment in jails in New Jersey and Brooklyn, the complaint said, and in some cases could not practice their religion, contact

Activism works! — Eid stamp gains support in magazine

CAIR News bulletin: An onslaught of online voting for the Muslim "Eid" stamp caused the magazine Linn's Stamp News to separate e-mail from mailed ballots in its annual poll of the most popular U.S. stamps.

A colorful 20-stamp sheet of art by American illustrators won the traditional mail-in voting, collecting 368 votes, and prompting Linn's to declare it the overall favorite in its April issue.

In the online balloting the Eid stamp, celebrating Muslim holidays, collected 13,815 votes. Carnivorous plants were second with 241.

The powerful turnout came after the American Muslim Council e-mailed its members asking them to vote for the stamp, which is dark blue with gold calligraphy. "Given the stamp's importance to them, we can understand their desire to generate votes for it," Linn's editor Michael Laurence wrote in a column on the balloting. "But in the end their efforts were just too successful."

Asked about the effort, Faiz Rehman, communications director of the council, said: "That's what activism is all about..."

Iranian tow truck driver beaten up in US out of ethnic hatred

When two men in a pickup started waving at the tow truck driver on the Capital Beltway in Fairfax, the tow truck driver willingly pulled over, thinking the men needed some sort of assistance. It happens all the time, the tow truck driver said, and he's happy to help.

But after they pulled to the side of busy Interstate 495, one of the men in the pickup truck walked over to the tow truck driver and said, "I have a license to kill you." The tow truck driver, who is Iranian, said he was confused. The assailant then head-butted the tow truck driver in the forehead, and he and his friend repeatedly punched the man and then choked him into unconsciousness as traffic whizzed by...

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A23297-2002Apr10.html>

their families or seek the help of their consular officials.

"We want the world to know that we are treating students, tourists, people here for short period of time, as criminals," Ms. Olshansky said. "We're putting them into arbitrary detention, just like the worst totalitarian regimes we cry out all the time about in this country."

About 1,200 Muslim men were arrested in the first weeks after the terror attacks, most eventually charged with minor immigration violations such as overstaying a visa...

Detainees complained that they were pushed and kicked in the face by the guards at the Metropolitan Detention Center, were called a terrorist and their religion was insulted. One said a guard at the federal prison slammed his head against a wall, loosening some of his teeth...

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/04/17/national/17MUSL.html>

Department store chain settles complaint of discrimination against Muslim

A national department store chain in Washington has settled a discrimination complaint by two Muslim shoppers in Connecticut who say they were falsely accused of shoplifting because of their Islamic attire.

May Department Stores Company, the parent company of the Meriden, Conn., Lord & Taylor store in which the incident took place, reached the settlement with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic advocacy group. That settlement includes an apology and monetary compensation.

In September 2000, the two female shoppers were accused of shoplifting after exiting a ladies' fitting room. The Muslim women said that even after store security realized they had not stolen any merchandise, a security guard continued to accuse them of theft and attempted to remove the religiously-mandated headscarf of one of the women.

"Although many companies have clear non-discrimination guidelines, the real test for any policy comes when an incident such as this takes place. May Department Stores passed that test by demonstrating that they value Muslim customers," said CAIR Civil Rights Manager Joshua Salaam.

Tobacco-free kids

A free, one-day event for kids and the community will be held on Saturday, May 1, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at 33 Cecil Street, (Steelworkers Hall), in Toronto, Ontario.

THE TOBACCO companies are shopping for new victims. Their goal is to get young people addicted to their lethal products in order to replace the more than 400,000 smokers who die each year. Our goal is to make sure that it doesn't happen. The CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO-FREE KIDS seeks

CAIR-CALIF Town Hall forum a success

CAIR Northern California and the Department of Justice successfully held a Town Hall Forum on April 4 with officials from the FBI, INS and US Attorney's office. The meeting addressed issues and concerns of Muslims living in the Bay Area.

More than 800 community members packed the Muslim Community Center to listen to panel guests Larry Mefford, Associate Special Agent in charge of San Francisco Department of FBI, David Still, INS Director, Matthew Jacobs, Asst US Attorney and Martha Boersch, Lead Attorney on Terrorism from the US Attorney's office.

Other organizations in attendance were the ACLU, NAACP, National Lawyer's Guild, AMA, ING, Lawyer's Committee on Civil Rights, and many more.

The speakers provided attendees information on the current climate, laws, and activities of the operating agencies in the Department of Justice post September 11, 2001 and how they are affecting the Muslim community. "This event is part of CAIR's mission to empower Muslims and build coalitions with public officials to improve the quality of life for all," said CAIR California President Fouad Khatib

Young Muslims wear their faith with pride

New clothing line declares 'way of life'

Mubashir Jamal was different from the other teens he knew in high school. At a time when many of his peers were partying at clubs and losing their virginity, Jamal, now 18, refrained from drinking alcohol or smoking marijuana. A practicing Muslim, Jamal spoke of prayer, and engaged in lively debate over religion and western society during English class. "Religion became a real taboo in high school," he recalled. "When you enter an environment like that it makes it even more difficult when people don't understand."

Now a student at Dawson College, Jamal continues to stand out because of his religious beliefs. He displays them on the black knit tuque on his head, and on his sweatshirt. Jamal is wearing Muslim Gear, a clothing line launched to promote greater understanding of a religion he says is frequently misunderstood. Just below the Muslim Gear logo, the shirt refers to Islam as "more than a religion." "The main intention is to raise awareness about Islam," Jamal said. "When we have statements like this...it invokes questions in people's minds..." For additional information, go to: www.muslimgear.com

AMJ announces solidarity with Palestinians delegation

Reserve Your Spot Today! Pray In Al-Aqsa; Rebuild Palestinian Homes; Replant Olive And Fruit Trees; See Occupation With Your Own Eyes & Tell The Story

Dates: June 14th - 24th, 2002

Cost: \$1,000 (includes airfare, food, lodging and in-country transportation)

Email solidarity@amjerusalem.org to request an application form today!

American Muslims for Jerusalem is pleased to announce the first American Muslim solidarity delegation to Occupied Palestine. **This summer, 50 American Muslim university students and young professionals will spend 10 days in Occupied Palestine.**

The trip will include home stays with Palestinian families, days in refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Occupied Jerusalem, as well as time in 1948 Palestine. We will also put you to work! The delegation will show solidarity with Palestinians by helping to rebuild Palestinian homes that have been demolished, to replant olive and fruit trees that have been uprooted and by distributing aid to needy Palestinian families.

Thorough orientation and training will be provided prior to departure. Training will also be provided for delegates to return and tell their stories - to the media, on campuses, in community centers and to members of Congress. See with your own eyes and tell Americans what life under Israeli military occupation is like for 3 million Palestinians. Do your part to help free Palestine! Delegation leaders have extensive experience working and traveling in Palestine. All travel and program activities will be coordinated closely with Palestinian activists and organizations to maximize security at all times.

North America to help expose the industry's deceptions and manipulation. We're also working to pass effective laws to protect kids and reduce the death and disease caused by tobacco.

Each day, 3,000 kids become regular smokers. One-third of them will die prematurely - from lung cancer, emphysema, heart disease or other tobacco-related illnesses. It's no mystery why this happens. The tobacco industry spends more than \$7 billion U.S. each year (more than \$18.6 million every day) to advertise and promote its deadly products. In

short, by featuring happy and beautiful people in its ads, the industry seeks to make a dangerous, addictive habit like smoking, appear fun, sexy and cool to youth. The fact is that without youth, the tobacco industry can't accomplish its goals — to replace dead customers and stay in business!

The CAMPAIGN, in partnership with other public health organizations and dedicated youth, is fighting back and working to stop the tobacco industry's deadly lies. For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.cbtu.ca>.

Jenin—Remember ...

Continued from page 2

particular refugee camp was a deal breaker for Israel's attempt to suppress the Palestinian population, to kill their spirit.

Last March Israel carried out "Operation Colorful Journey" against the Jenin and Balata refugee camps. Like its name, the 'Operation' was colorful, bloody colorful, as scores of Palestinians were killed and hundreds wounded in the refugee camp. Many homes were destroyed, but the spirit remained strong. Israeli officials said that their mission in Jenin was like 'picking up terrorists with tweezers.' But even the "tweezers" of the fourth strongest army in the world, one of the most powerful nuclear powers, was hardly enough to bend the will of Jenin. Jenin fought hard, and as the soldiers were pulling out, Palestinians emerged from their homes, carrying their dead, and chanting about Palestine and freedom.

But General Sharon never forgets his unfinished battles. Revenge is his game, even if launched against refugees, fighting with old rifles and kitchen knives. As he recently deployed his forces to invade West Bank towns, he spared nearly 300 tanks, thousands of soldiers and many Apaches to invade the Jenin refugee camp.

Until the writing of this article, 8 days after intensive bombings, horrendous killings and indescribable massacres, the camp is yet to fall. Hundreds of homes have been destroyed, mass graves have been opened, scores of dead have been buried in haste, men and women smothered under the rubble of their homes, and the camp is yet to fall.

Frustrated with the small size of the poor camp, Israeli tanks began stepping on everything, homes and mosques to find a way for themselves, to open a new battlefield with the defiant refugees, and the camp is yet to fall.

The head of the Israeli military Shaul Mofaz, embarrassed by the blunder, led the 'operation' himself to carry out a massacre, as the whole world stood and waited while the refugees battled the tanks, and fought the Apaches.

Over fifty missiles were fired on

the camp within an hour; hundreds of people are said to be buried under the rubble; many bodies were scattered in the streets; Israeli troops began a systematic bombardment of the entire camp, the wounded bled to death, with no medical attention, just broken hearted mothers screaming in vain. With little means, the small camp, not only resisted, but inflicted heavy losses on the army that once claimed to be 'invincible'.

From inside the camp, using a cell phone with a dying battery, a Palestinian fighter reached Al Jazeera satellite television. "I just wanted to let the proud people of world know, not to worry, we are resisting and will fight to the last drop of blood." In the background, a proud population stood listening to the speaker, maybe thinking that the world really listened or cared. They all chanted in one voice for freedom and Palestine, before the battery died, maybe not to

be charged again.

By the time this article is published, maybe the Jenin refugee camp will be bulldozed, maybe hundreds more will be killed, maybe the fighting will still continue; but under no circumstances will the remaining refugees of Jenin be coerced to abandon their fight for freedom, their vow to return.

Israel is yet to be convinced that even with the most sophisticated US manufactured weapons, the people of Jenin refugee camp will never abandon their honorable fight, they will never cease to look west, where their land and pride are, where Palestine is calling on its people to come home.

[R a m z y Baroud, of Washington, is Editor of Palestine Chronicle.com.]

Archbishop slams Israel

Continued from page 8
evil," he said.

Meanwhile, SA president Thabo Mbeki has urged the Non-Aligned Movement to be relentless in its efforts to find a lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East.

"I need not remind you that our brothers and sisters in Palestine are still fighting the scourge of occupation. Our movement must not relent in its support for a just and lasting solution to this conflict. In the true spirit of non-alignment therefore, the path to enduring peace must be taken through dialogue rather than either acts of occupation or terrorism," Mbeki said.

Source: <http://www.mg.co.za/mg/za/news.html#slam>

Inter-faith peace rally brings 2,000 to London's Victoria park

From CIC files

A crowd of 2,000 people braved the rain on April 12 for a peace rally in London's Victoria Park to denounce violence in the Middle East. The predominantly Muslim crowd waved Palestinian flags as local Islamic leaders, Christian clergy, and politicians spoke about peace.

The crowd cheered in approval when most of the politicians started their speeches with Arabic greeting phrases.

Anglican minister Greg Smith said that cross-religious cooperation is important, especially now. "If we're not talking, we don't know how to solve problems," he said. "There are strong emotions and that's a reaction that crosses religious boundaries."

The rally was emotional for some Londoners, who

worry about relatives living in the Middle East. Kelly Raba, who has been in Canada for only 10 months, said Jews and Muslims lived together peacefully in her area for years. Raba said he wasn't at the rally to show contempt for anyone. "All our religions come from God," he affirmed. "We came to this land (Canada) looking for peace."

Voice of a destitute and paraplegic person.

Please help J. Iqbal, a legal Canadian entrant on a **Minister's permit** who became paraplegic in a car accident. By the Grace of God he survived after long hospitalization. The insurance company has exhausted all the specified fund on his treatment.

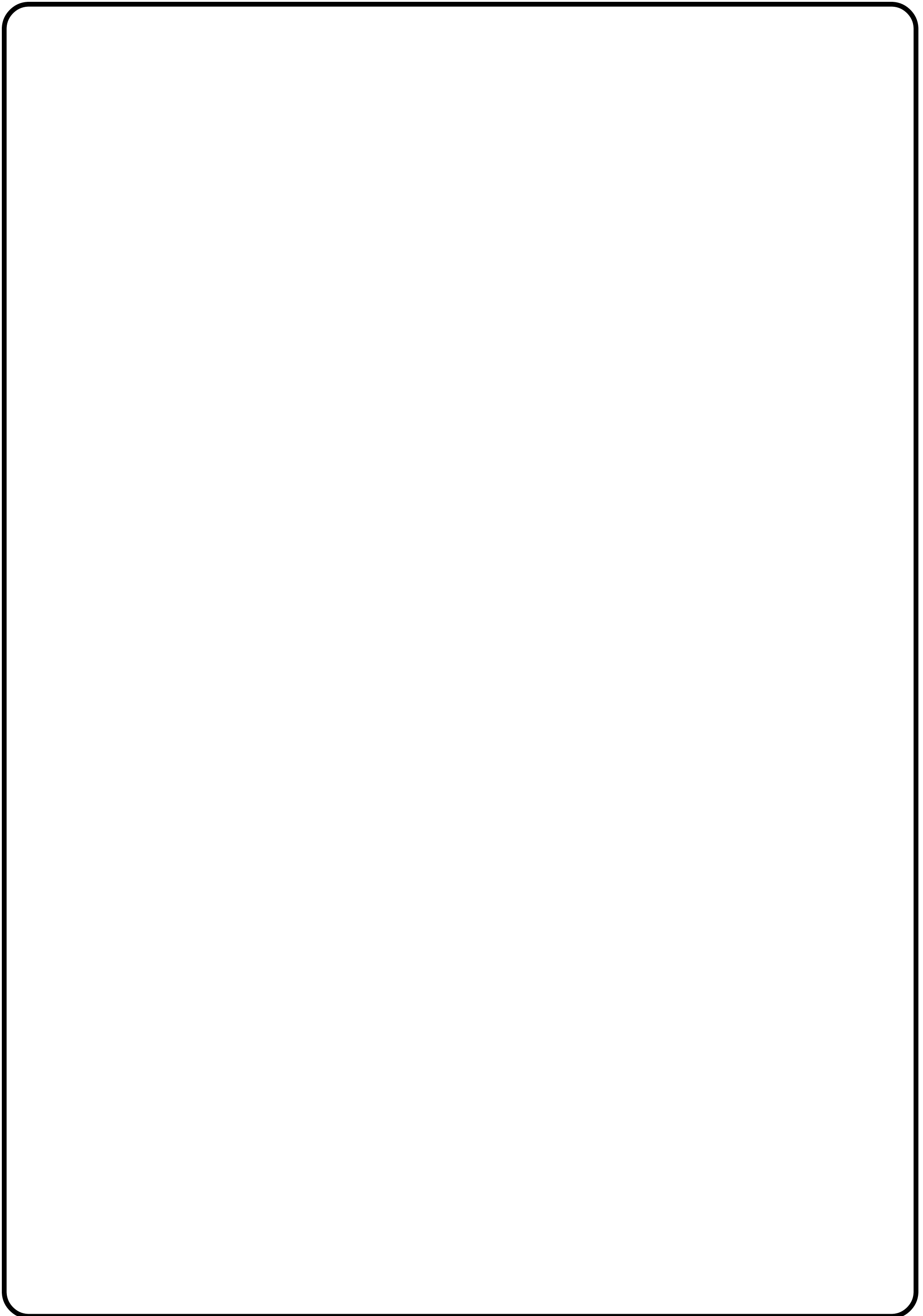
Now he totally depends on the community for help. He does not have any access to the OHIP or assistance until 2003.

Please generously spare even a dollar for him. May God help you, bless you and reward you in this world and in the Hereafter.

Please make cheque payable to:

Javed Iqbal
900 Dufferin St., P.O. Box 24147
Toronto, Ont. Canada M6H 4H6

You may send it **directly** to his bank account no. 3140340, transit no. 16042-004, TD Bank, 948 St Clair Ave. W., Toronto, Ont. M6C 1C8



Excellence in Interaction with Parents

cate your servitude exclusively to Allah and be good to your parents, to close relatives, to orphans and to the poor; and talk nicely to people, establish Salaah and pay Zakaah." (2:83)

"And serve Allah, do not equate anyone or anything with Him and treat parents superbly. And be nice to close relatives, orphans, the poor, close neighbours, farther neighbours, a fellow traveller, and the wayfarer." (4:36)

"Say: Come, I will recap what inviolable duties your Lord has obligated on you:

"Do not equate anything or anyone with Allah; be excellent to your parents; do not kill your children fearing poverty because we provide for you and for them; do not go near lewdness or shameful things, whether it is open or hidden; and, do not take a life, which Allah has made sacred, except for the administration of justice. Thus does he command you so that you can attain wisdom" (6:151).

This suggests that in terms of importance and status of one's responsibilities, obligation to one's parents is immediately next to one's obligations to Allah.

One of the special characteristics of Yahya (John, the Baptist) and Isa (Jesus), peace be upon them mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (19:14 and 32) is that they were very respectful and dutiful in fulfilling their obligations to their parents/mother.

Serving and obeying parents is also a topic that has been very strongly emphasized in the Traditions of the Prophet (pbuh).

'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood asked the Messenger about the actions Allah loves the most. He said, "Salaah at its time." Asked, then what, he said, "Serving the parents well." Asked then what, he said, "Jihad in the way of Allah." [Muslim, kitaabul-iman]

Fighting in the way of Allah and migrating for that purpose are the most virtuous actions to gain the pleasure of Allah. However, if someone has old parents who are dependent on him for their living and their survival, the serving of the parents takes precedence over migration and fighting in the way of Allah: A per-

son came to the Messenger of Allah, leaving his parents crying, to make a commitment for migration to Madinah. The Prophet sent him back saying, "Return to them and make them happy just as you caused them to cry." [Bukhaari].

A person came to the Messenger of Allah to seek permission for Jihad. The Prophet (pbuh) asked if his parents are alive. On receiving a positive answer, he said, "Perform Jihad (work hard) in their service." [Muslim, Bukhaari]

A person came from Yemen to the Prophet (pbuh) and was asked if he had left behind some relatives in Yemen. When he said that his parents were there, the Prophet (pbuh) asked, "Did you seek their permission for migration?" On receiving a negative response, the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Go back and seek their permission. If they allow, then participate in Jihaad. Otherwise, keep serving them well." [Abu Dawood]

Jaahimah, the father of the narrator, who had a very old mother at home depending on him for her survival, came to the Messenger of Allah and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I want to go for Jihad and am seeking your advice in this respect." The Prophet (pbuh) asked if his mother was still alive. When he confirmed that she was, the Prophet (pbuh) responded, "Dedicate yourself to her service because your paradise is at her feet." [Musnad Ahmad]

At the time of the Messenger, sons were closer to, more attached to, and more subservient to, the father than the mother, and there was a chance that father may be favoured at the expense of mother. Hence, the Messenger of Allah emphasized that if someone has to choose between father and mother, the mother deserves three or four times more servitude than the father. A person came to the Prophet (pbuh) and asked who had more right on his companionship and service. The Prophet (pbuh) indicated it to be his mother. He was repeatedly asked "Then who?" The Prophet repeated three times, "Your mother". Then the fourth time, he said, "Your father". [Bukhaari, Muslim]

Sometimes, we may feel that we have done enough in the service of

our parents. Here is something to ponder for those who may think so:

A person came to the Messenger of Allah and narrated, "O Messenger of Allah! I carried my mother on my back from Yaman for Hajj, performed Tawaaf of the House, performed Sa'yy between Safaa and Marwah, stayed in Arafaat, brought her to Muzdalfah, stoned the pillars in Minaa. I did all this carrying her on my back, as she is too old even to move. Have I fulfilled my obligations to her?" The Prophet (pbuh) responded in the negative. The person wondered why. The Prophet said, "Whatever she did when you were little, she did with a strong desire for you to live. Whatever you have done for her, you have done while desiring her death." [Al-Sunnatul-Khaamisah]

The Messenger of Allah also gave strong warnings to those who disobey or disrespect their parents or do not serve them lovingly: Once the Messenger of Allah exclaimed, "May he be humiliated! May he be humiliated!" He was asked, "Who? O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "Who finds one or both of his parents grown old, but he does not avail the opportunity to gain entry into Jannah." [Muslim]

"He who keeps reminding after doing someone a favour, he who is disobedient to parents or he who is an alcoholic, cannot enter Jannah (paradise)." [Nisaa'i]

"Allah curses anyone who curses his parents." Reported from 'Ali in Muslim, and "Cursed is one who uses abusive words to his father or his mother." Musnad Ahmad.

"Allah forgives whatever sins he wants except the disobedience to the parents which is punished in this world even before death." [Mishkaah]

Another Hadith in Muslim reads, "The following are major sins: Equating others with Allah in obedience or worship, disobeying the parents, taking a life, and telling a lie.

The kindness, humility and service to one's parents is incumbent on Muslims regardless of whether the parents are Muslims or non-Muslims, guided or misguided, right or wrong. However, obedience to

them is only in the things that are in accordance of Islamic teachings. In the matters of Deen, it is our duty to Allah that we believe and practice only what is right and we follow only the person who helps us to the right path to Allah. In the ordinary worldly matters, the obedience and Ihsaan to the parents must continue in all circumstances. Allah says in Qur'an: "And if they coerce you to equate with Me others, of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them, but continue to provide them good companionship in the world, and follow the path of the person who leads to Me." [31:15]

If the parents are not Muslims or are misguided, part of the Ihsaan is to earnestly pray to Allah for their guidance.

How to serve the parents if they have already died? A person asked the Messenger of Allah if there was any obligation that he could fulfill to serve his deceased parents. He replied, "Yes, there are four ways: Praying for them; seeking forgiveness for them; fulfilling their words and commitments; maintaining the relationships that emanate from them (uncles, aunts, cousins, etc.); and, respecting (honouring) their friends." [Abu Dawood.]

"The greatest virtue is to be friendly to the people loved by one's father." [Muslim]

Those who keep their parents happy can immensely benefit from their Dua'a: "Three supplications (Dua'a) are answered without doubt: A Father's dua'a, a traveller's dua'a and an oppressed person's dua'a." [Aboo Dawood].

Arabs pledge ...

Continued from page 2

such as linking American efforts to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian crisis with Arab support for anti-Iraq U.S. action. "The summit sent an unambiguous message to Washington that the crisis in Palestine and any military action against Iraq are two different issues and could not be linked together in whatever context except for the cause of stability and security in the region," he argued.

The United States said it was "profoundly sceptical" of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti non-aggression pact. U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Baghdad has "a deplorable record of flouting its international obligations and UN security resolutions."

In trying to build on the new camaraderie, Kuwait said it was toning down its media rhetoric against Iraq. Kuwaiti editors held a meeting with the foreign minister and took note of the sudden changes in Iraq's state-controlled media, with references being made to "brotherly ties" between the neighbouring countries.

The latent message in the rapprochement is that the Arabs, including the immediate region around Iraq, do not feel any threat from Iraq. It also has an unasked question — why the United States insists on seeing such a threat when the potential targets of that "threat" fail to see it.

All eyes are now on how Washington will respond to the message that the Arabs see the worsening situation in Palestine and the repercussions of possible military attacks against Iraq as equally destabilizing to the region.

[Source: CIC Friday bulletin]

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Kidz Korner

Hijab: A Priceless Gift from Allah

By Aziza

I walked into the doors of LS feeling like a new person. I felt as though hundreds of eyes were fixed on me, yet it was merely my wild imagination. My heart skipped a beat and my face flushed, but these signs of nervousness disappeared as people began to say "hey Aziza" like any other day. My fears of being rejected vanished and I felt the same again — well not the same, for I was different; I was now wearing a Hijab.

Many of my friends knew I was Muslim because I was constantly asked why I wasn't eating during the month of Ramadan. I would explain to them what Ramadan was, but that was all my friends knew about Islam. I had never bothered to educate them further.

Since the last Ramadan, I had been thinking about Islam and my duties of a Muslim more than usual. I began contemplating Hijab and thought to myself, "I'll start it when I go to college." Why then? Because it would be a new environment, a new stage of my life, the start of a new beginning; it seemed like a good time to make a big change.

As Ramadan passed, I was constantly fighting a battle with myself. I was still pondering over Islam and my life in general. "Four years is a long time to wait (to start wearing Hijab)," I kept telling myself. I became distressed just thinking about how long four years were in reality.

I then decided I would start after freshman year was over, so I had the summer to adjust. I would start sophomore year as a new person. "Sophomore year," I thought to myself, "that's still quite a few months away." I was still frustrated and did not want to wait so long to start covering myself.

As April began, I thought, "I am going to do it. I am going to start Hijab and nothing is stopping me!"

Thank God for my open-minded teachers. I asked them if they could give me five minutes to speak to the

class about what I was about to do: start wearing a scarf over my head. They excitedly agreed with warm, encouraging smiles. In each class, I walked to the front of the room and slowly began to talk. I told them about Islam and how it is very important to me. I explained what the Hijab is and why Muslim women are commanded to wear it. My peers sat listening, quietly and attentively, amazed by what I was saying. They sat in awe interested in my beliefs. Many asked questions and begged to see what I looked like with a Hijab on. I happily put it on to show them. Their smiles showed they approved of it and liked it; they were happy I was going to wear it permanently.

My classmates told their friends, who told their other friends, and soon the whole school knew about me starting Hijab. People I didn't even know were constantly approaching me and telling me how much they appreciated what I was doing, how much they admired me, how much they supported me and how they wish they had the will power I did. All this before I even started wearing it. The following Friday on April 13, 2001, I put on the Hijab for life.

The decision I made that day is one I will never regret insha'Allah. Since then, despite some of the obstacles that were thrown in my path, I have been the happiest girl alive. Many other Muslim girls have told me how I've inspired them and they wish to be more practicing. These positive comments only motivate me to work harder and become an even better Muslim, for these comments show me I am on the right path and insha'Allah (God willing), will stay on it. I thank Allah for the strength to do this, the guidance He has given me, and the personality, which has helped me have these qualities where people respect me, admire me and look up to me.

And I also thank Him for giving me the mentality in which I do not care what others think; I solely care what He thinks.

A page from the Life of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

The Continued Loyalty of the Ansar

The Muslims had migrated from Makkah to Madinah to be free of persecution and be able to live and practice Islam freely, however this would not happen. The Quraish were still angry that the Muslims had been able to get away and even angrier that Islam was spreading so quickly. The Jews were unwilling to accept that any other nation opposed Islam. And to make matters even worse, there were munafiqun (hypocrites) amongst the Muslims; they would pretend to be religious and devoted to Islam but would secretly plot against the Muslims with the non-Muslims.

The Quraish wanted to see Islam end. Small parties of the Quraish were beginning to gather around Madinah and threats of attack on the Muslim people

were becoming widespread. When the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) heard of this all, he called a meeting of the Muslims. He told the people of the situation and talked to them about the possibility of having to defend Islam by going to war against the Quraish. Although the Muslims had few resources compared to the Quraish, Abu Bakr and the other Muhajirs readily announced that they were willing to fight and give up their lives in the name of Allah.

Although the Prophet (pbuh) was happy to hear this response, his focus was on the Ansars (helpers of Islam) because when the Muslims had first arrived, the Ansars had promised to fight only if Madinah was attacked first.

However, over time the

Ansars had not only accepted Islam but grown to love it. And Sa'd Ibn 'Ubada, head of the Khazraj tribe, showed this love and willingness to defend Islam when he rose and said "Is it we you mean? Then order us, and, by Allah, we will jump into the sea." (Sahih Muslim)

Upon hearing this, the Prophet's (pbuh) face lit up. He not only had the support of Allah but of the Muhajirs and the Ansars. Although he knew the army of Quraish would be much larger and powerful than his, the Prophet (pbuh) knew that his people's love and loyalty towards Islam was stronger than any other force and that Allah would surely help the Muslims and lead them towards victory.

The new bike



"I was in a customer's home one afternoon and while I was talking to the customer, their 4-year-old little girl whose name was

Fatima, tugged on my pants leg and excitedly exclaimed, "I got a new bicycle, do you want to see it?"

I said, "Sure Fatima."

So off to the backyard we went. Upon getting into the backyard, I saw a

brand new girl's bicycle.

"Wow, Fatima! That's a beautiful bicycle." I complimented. "Can you ride

it?"

"Yeah, I can ride it," she said, then with a sad face she pouted, "but it's broke."

I looked at the new bicycle and couldn't see anything wrong with it, so I asked her, "What's wrong with it?"

"I don't know," she shrugged, "but every time I ride it, it falls down!"

HEY KIDZ.... SUMMER IS COMING!

Do you have any tips or ideas how to make summer even more fun?

Perhaps you did something really awesome last year and want to share it with others.

Or maybe you have some tips on exciting activities and cool things to do.

We'll feel free to share all your thoughts with us!

Write to kidzkorner@theambition.com and share the **FUN!!**

THE EARTH

I'm the earth
 I'm the source of human
 I'm the album of history
 I'm the pouch of dead ones
 I'm a place provider for life
 I wonder the fools fight for a land that they don't own so long
 I wonder the fools take no heed for their relative's leave while they are still in process of leaving
 I wonder if the humans have a sign from the kings, queens, dictator, and presidents lived on me.
 I wonder if the oppressors still know that reward comes from action
 I wonder if the humans still recognize that I be long their final
 I wonder why the knowledge seeker still don't have the knowledge
 I feel pity for the cravers of desires, when their desires get shortage
 How a wonderful it is! I have you on my back, and your relatives inside me.

By Hawo Mursal
 Central Commerce Collegiate
 18 years old

5,000 copies of The Ambition have been distributed free of charge at several mosques in and around Metro from as far as Kingston and Oshawa in the east to Brampton, Burlington, Kitchener, and Hamilton in the west. You may also pick up your copy at many Muslim grocery stores.

