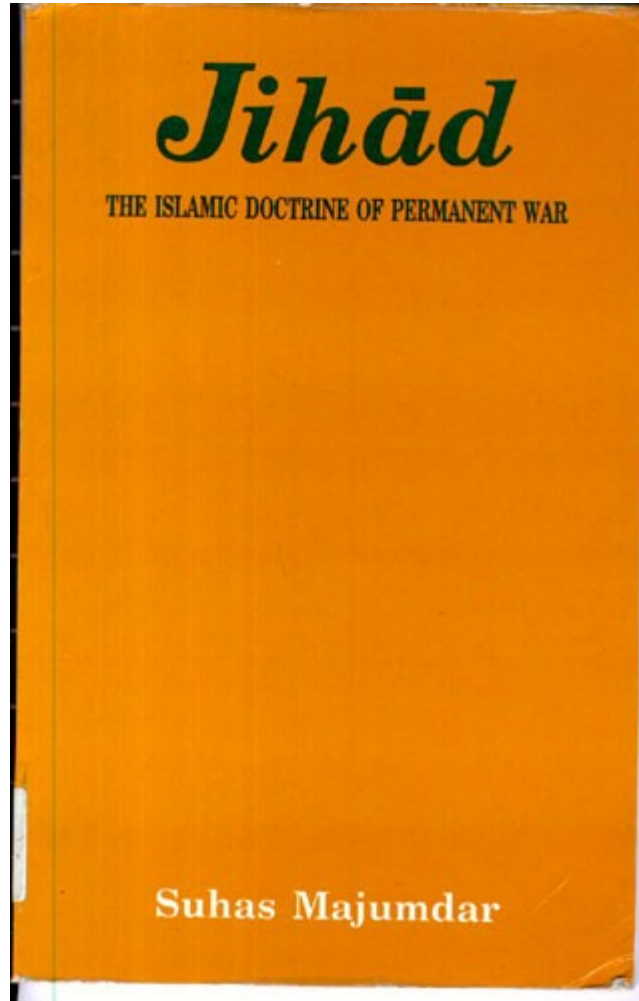


JIHĀD

THE ISLAMIC DOCTRINE OF PERMANENT WAR

Suhas Majumdar



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Foreword

There was a time, not so long ago, when the exponents of jihād minced no words and pulled no punches. They were brutally frank in spelling out what *jihād* really meant.

But times have changed, particularly after the collapse of Christianity in the West and the rise of modern rationalism and humanism. Standards of moral judgment have increasingly tended to become universal, and no statement of faith can escape scrutiny simply because it is made in a book hailed as holy by some people. Defenders

of *jihād* have been forced to develop an apologetics. They are now trying to protect by means of scholarship a doctrine which has so far been sustained by means of the sword.

In the present study, Professor Suhas Majumdar has seen through this ❖scholarship❖, and demolished it brick by brick. He has rescued the doctrine of *jihād* from under the mass of pretentious verbiage, and made it stand in its pristine purity. Let no one say any more that *jihād* does not mean what it has meant all along in the blood-soaked history of Islam, and what we are witnessing today in Kashmir.

At the end of it all, however, I wonder why scholarship should be needed for making people see what the ordinary common sense can see straight away. There is plenty of evidence that the common sense of the Pagans of Arabia had seen Islam for what it was worth when Muhammad proclaimed his prophethood. For common sense is after all a combination of natural reason and natural moral conscience which all human beings share in greater or lesser measure.

The story of why common sense had to keep quiet wherever and whenever the prophetic creeds came to prevail (and among prophetic creeds I would certainly place Christianity as closest in tie and kindred to Islam) is yet to be pieced together. There is no better place than India for piecing together this story. For India❖s yogic spirituality has never worked counter to man❖s natural reason and natural moral conscience. On the contrary, yogic spirituality has raised that reason and that conscience to their highest stations.

A hoary and hallowed Hindu tradition recognises six types of gangsters. The ❖loka in which gangsterism stands defined, occurs frequently in the Itihāsa-PurāNa and the Dharma❖āstras. It says:

*agnidah garda❖caiva❖ astrapāNirdhanāpahah
kSetra-dāra-hara❖caiva, SaDêtê ātatāyinah*

(He who sets fire to (other people❖s properties), he who poisons (other people), he who wields weapons (for committing murders), he who robs (other people❖s) wealth, he who forcibly occupies (other people❖s) lands, and he who forcibly carries away (other people❖s) women - these six are gangsters.)

The same tradition prescribes a punishment for acts of gangsterism - the gangster should be killed as soon as he is sighted. The Gita, which deals with this subject among many others of high spiritual import, calls for this punishment when it says, ❖*jahi mā vyatiSthā* (kill them, do not hesitate).

There is, however, another tradition which we meet in the Bible (at least in some of its books) and the Quran. This tradition has been elaborated endlessly and spelled out in unmistakable terms in the theologies of Christianity and Islam. In this tradition, the above-mentioned acts of gangsterism are supposed to have been sanctioned by no less an authority than Almighty God himself. And the persons who perform these acts or advocate their performance, stand hallowed as apostles, prophets, saints, sufis, and the rest.

This tradition also prescribes a punishment. But not for those who practise or advocate

gangsterism. On the contrary, it lays down that those who object to advocacy of gangsterism or resist gangster acts, should be put to death.

This second tradition arrived in India at first in the guise of Islam, and later on in the guise of Christianity, particularly in its Portuguese incarnation. Hindus were not slow to identify Islamic and Christian practices for what they were. The only point at which Hindus failed was to trace the Islamic and Christian behaviour patterns back to their systems of belief. It was a great failure indeed. For, in course of time, Hindus were led to believe, mostly by their own scholars, that Islamic and Christian behaviour patterns were not enshrined in the Bible and the Quran, and that Muslims and Christians could be brought round by appealing to them in the name of ♦true Islam♦ and ♦true Christianity♦. Mahatma Gandhi became the most eminent embodiment of this Hindu illusion, which has now become the stock-in-trade of one school of Secularism in this country - that of *sarva-dharma-samabhāva*.

Votaries of *sarva-dharma-samabhāva* are not likely to relish the charge that for all practical purposes they become passive accomplices of gangsterism when they equate Hinduism with Islam and Christianity, and advocate equal respect for the two predatory creeds. But that is the truth, and it has to be told in order to cure them of their smug self-righteousness.

As for the second school of Secularism, namely, that which is rooted in Marxism and allied ideologies imported from the modern West, it does not practise *samabhāva* between Hinduism on the one hand and Islam and Christianity on the other. It is openly hostile to Hinduism, and stands unashamedly allied with Islam and Christianity. That is but natural, and this stance should be understood rather than assailed. For, in the ultimate analysis, Marxism is the same as the other two creeds. All of them have their source in the Bible. Those who have applauded the gangsterism of Lenin, Stalin, and Mao, cannot be expected to thwart the other sort, particularly when it is aimed against Hindus whom they regard as the main enemy. They are bound to be active accomplices of Christian and Islamic gangsterism.

New Delhi

SITA RAM GOEL

15 July 1994

Preface

This is a slightly enlarged version of a small monograph I wrote in Bengali on the important Islamic subject of *Jihād fi Sabilillah* (war in the way of Allah). *Jihād* has five clear components, and a complete understanding of the subject requires a discussion of each one of them. Thus *jihād* stands for (1) Forcible expansion of Islam; (2) Destruction of infidels; (3) Establishment of *jizyah* on the subdued infidel population; (4) Plunder in the form of properties wrested from infidels; and (5) Plunder in the form of enslaved female and child population acquired from the vanquished infidels. In the Bengali

monograph I discussed at length only the subject of plunder, which in Arabic is known as *ghanîmah*. I discussed and explained the other divisions from the text of the Koran alone, without illustrating them from the career of the Prophet. In this enlarged version I have devoted separate chapters to these divisions, highlighting the Prophet's activities in connection with each of them, and added some new appendices. It is my hope that, though increasing the size but slightly, I have left out nothing of real importance, and the theoretical aspects of this important Islamic doctrine have been treated here in full. I have not indeed described the numerous historical *jihāds* undertaken by Islamic zealots over the centuries; but I have discussed two of the *ghazwahs* (=jihadic campaigns) of the Prophet - his conquest of Mecca and his destruction of the Jewish clan of Kuraizah; these two form part and parcel of the theoretical apparatus of *jihād*. The Prophet's life and works form the bedrock of Islamic theology and are known as Sunnah. This, with Koranic sayings attributed to Allah and known by the Arabic title *wahy* (=revelation), are the final sources of Islam.

My ignorance of the Arabic language notwithstanding, I have tried to be as accurate as possible, and depended on the best translations of the Koran and the Hadis. The Koranic verses I have cited are mostly from Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall's well known translation, but I have not failed to consult other reliable versions to ascertain Pickthall's faithfulness to the original. By all accounts, this faithfulness seems to be of a very high order, and though I have detected one or two small errors - not to mention his somewhat disconcerting affectation of an archaic English style -, I have on the whole stuck to his version even when alternative versions have seemed to render the meaning of the original clearer. This is because Pickthall was an Englishman who became a Mussalman by choice, and his rendering brings out his conscientious orthodoxy at every page of his version.

As regards the Hadis,¹ available English versions are by no means numerous. I have used the English version of the second most important collection, *Sahih Muslim*. This version is by Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, a Pakistani scholar. For cross - checking I have used a Bengali rendering of the important collection, *Mishkāt-ul-Masabih*. This rendering is by a Bangladeshi theologian, M. Aflatoon Kaisar. *Mishkāt* is a compendium of various canonical collections including *ahādīs*(=traditions) not reckoned canonical but recognised as important source materials to settle matters of dispute. On the whole, I have found that Abdul Hamid Siddiqi's version and that of Maulana Kaisar agree rather closely.

I have quoted rather generously from Sir William Muir's classic biography of the Prophet and also the painstaking work of Professor D. S. Margoliouth.

In India, critical studies of Islam are few and far between. Muslim scholars have done important work in translating the canonical literature, but they have shied away from critical studies of Islam for obvious reasons. It is thanks to Shri Ram Swarup of Delhi giving a lead that Islam has started being studied in India in a critical manner in recent years. I could not use his pioneering study, *Understanding Islam through Hadis*, as this work has been banned by the Delhi Administration through a fiat which was aimed against nothing less than the freedom of scholarship itself. But without Shri Ram Swarup's guidance, I could not have started looking for the Hadis collections and the invaluable stock of information contained in them regarding the theory and practice

of *jihād*. Warmest thanks are due to him, and I take this opportunity to acknowledge my indebtedness to him.

Sita Ram Goel's *The Calcutta Quran Petition* is a mine of information regarding the historical *jihāds* that took place in medieval India. His discussion of the theoretical aspects of *jihād* is not large in volume, but it has helped me in my research at every step as a sure guide.

Calcutta,

SUHAS MAJUMDAR

June 20, 1994

Footnotes:

¹ In the book I have uniformly used the capital letter when referring to the literature of the Prophet's traditions as distinguished from an individual tradition, *hadīs* (pl. *ahādīs*).

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SOME IMPORTANT ARABIC WORDS

The best introduction to any Islamic topic is some familiarity with Arabic technical terms related to it. Islam has a large assortment of such technical terms for every aspect of its doctrinal structure, and the doctrine of *jihād* is no exception. Knowledge of some general terms is also necessary for a clear understanding of Islam.

General Islamic Terms

Wahy : Revelation with a capital R. Every verse of the Koran is *wahy*. The one and only

source book of *wahy* is the Koran.

Sunnah : Literally practice, in Islamic parlance it means practice of the Prophet regarded as canonical and co-equal with injunctions proffered in the Koran. The source book of Sunnah is the Hadis. It must be remembered that not every practice of the Prophet is Sunnah. His having nine wives at a time, for example, does not constitute Sunnah; but his practice of enslaving the children and wives of vanquished infidels is Sunnah par excellence. Again, the bloodless conquest of Mecca is not Sunnah, but the massacre of Banu Kuraizah is.

S°rah : A chapter of the Koran.

√yat : A verse of the Koran.

Hadīs : Literally a report, technically a report of some action or some saying of the Prophet regarded as Sunnah.

Ahādīs : Plural of *hadīs*.

Sharīat : Generally, anything derived from the Koran and the Hadīs. In the restricted sense used in this book it refers to the literature of Islamic schools of jurisprudence.

Kāfir : An infidel, a non-Muslim against whom *jihād* is permanently established.

Mushrik : A non-monotheist Kāfir or an idolater, a term of strong vituperation in the Koran.

Munāfiq : A Muslim not wholly devoted to the cause of Islam or a renegade lukewarm in *jihād*, a term of full-throated abuse.

Kitābi or Ahl-ul-Kitāb : Jews and Christians whose scriptures (*Kitāb* in Arabic), *Taurāt* (Old Testament) and *Injīl* (New Testament), are recognised by the Koran as *wahy* (=revelation), but superseded by the Revelation in Arabic.

Terms Relating to *Jihād*

Jihād : Literally effort or striving, doctrinally aggressive war for spreading Islam. The full Koranic expression is *Jihād fi Sabilillah* (that is, *jihād* in the way of Allah).

Mujāhid : A soldier engaged in *jihād*.

Ghazwah : Jihadic war undertaken by the Prophet in person.

Ghāzī : Literally warrior, technically a victorious, infidel-slaying soldier of Islam.

Shahīd : Literally witness, technically a martyr killed in *jihād*.

Ghanimah : Literally good fortune, technically plunder accruing from the

successful conclusion of *jihād*. It has two parts: (1) Plunder of the vanquished infidels' property; (2) Plunder of the vanquished infidels' women and children.

Ma Malakat ayman-u-kum : Literally that which your right hand possesses, technically infidel prisoners captured in *jihād*, in particular captive infidel women sold into slavery and used for concubinage.

Khums : Literally the holy one-fifth, technically the one-fifth of the jihadic plunder due to the Prophet or his latter-day representative.

Fai : The whole plunder accruing to the Prophet (or his representative) when the infidel army surrenders without a fight. *Jizyah* is a species of *Fai*.

Jizyah : The poll-tax extorted from infidels vanquished in *jihād* but suffered to reside in their dwellings without loss of limb or life. The tax has to be paid in person and in a posture of abject humility. According to the *Hidāyah*, *Jizyah* literally means retribution money for obstinately clinging to one's ancestral religion.

Kharājguzār : General expression for an infidel residing in an Islamic state indicating that he is a payer of the poll-tax.

Zimmī : Literally a person under tutelage, technically it indicates the status of the *kharājguzār* in an Islamic state. The status is that of a resident non-citizen wearing out his life in a condition of semi-slavery.

Important Ghazwahs Mentioned in this Study

1. Raid of Nakhla (Late 623 AD) - The first blood shed in the cause of Islam.
2. Battle of Badr (624 AD) - The first full-fledged war against the Koreish of Mecca.
3. Expulsion of Banu Kainuka (624 AD) - The first Jewish tribe evicted from Medina.
4. Battle of Uhud (625 AD) - Defeat and setback for *mujāhids* under the Prophet by the Koreish of Mecca.
5. Expulsion of Banu Nazir (625 AD) - The second Jewish tribe expelled from Medina. The plunder of their properties was reckoned *Fai*.
6. *Jihād* against Banu Mustalik (626-627 AD) The Mustalik were an Arab tribe.
7. Battle of the Ditch (627 AD) - Also called Battle of Ahzāb in which the besieging Koreish were repulsed from Medina by the Prophet's superior generalship.
8. Destruction of Banu Kuraizah (627 AD) - The third Jewish clan of Medina consigned to wholesale slaughter, their women and children being sold for buying horses and arms.
9. Expedition of Hudaibiyah (628 AD) - Presented as a pilgrimage because the Koreish did not permit the Prophet and his horde to enter Mecca.

10. Conquest of Khaibar (628 AD) - Surprise attack mounted on a non-Medinese Jewish tribe, which was reduced to the status of the first *kharājguzārs* in Islam.
11. Conquest of Mecca (630 AD)
12. The Battle of Hunain (630 AD) - A battle fought after the conquest of Mecca and followed by the siege of Taif.
13. The Tabuk campaign (630 AD) - The last *ghazwah* led by the Prophet.

Introduction

Jihād is one of the basic doctrines of Islam, but the average Indian's knowledge of it is both superficial and unsatisfactory. Hindus usually render the term as *dharmayuddha*, but this rendering is totally misleading. *Dharmayuddha* means war fought according to rules laid down in the *Dharmashāstras* such as not attacking a person who does not have a weapon or has dropped it, not molesting an adversary who has surrendered, not pursuing a defeated enemy who has run away, not attacking the non-combatants in the enemy camp, not harming the women and holy people and places in the enemy's territory, etc. Hindus have never known the concept of a religious or holy war, a concept which is characteristic of the monotheistic creeds. Therefore, to the common Hindu, in particular to those who are ignorant of the history of the many religious wars waged by monotheistic creeds of Asia and Europe, *jihād* is a lofty conception. It is nothing less than war aimed at establishing what they consider righteousness in the world. Very few Hindus care to remember that the boy-emperor Akbar had become a *ghāzī* by slaughtering his helpless and fatally wounded prisoner Himu at the bidding of Bairam Khan in 1556 AD. Actually, even those Hindus who remember the story do not know that the title *ghāzī* is conferred only on victorious, *kāfir* - slaughtering *mujāhids*.¹ In truth, *jihād* is war for the destruction of infidels (*kāfirs*) and infidelity (*kufr*). To obviate prevailing misconception, it is important to explain the meaning of *jihād* from the Koran, the Hadis and the corpus of theological works collectively going by the name of Shariat. As *jihād* is a basic doctrine of Islam and as its focus is on the infidel, it is not fit that Hindus should go on cherishing their deep-seated delusion regarding its meaning.

For the matter of that, even the average Muslim's knowledge of this doctrine is superficial. Every Islamic tenet is spread over the 6,000 and odd verses of the Koran in a desultory, haphazard manner. Few Muslims are competent enough to assemble the relevant verses enjoining *jihād* in order to get a systematic, coherent meaning. Such a work of systematisation as the present one professes to be, could therefore be useful to Hindus and Muslims alike.

There is another, a more compelling, reason for present-day Indians to have a clear understanding of the doctrine of *jihād*. The so-called communal conflict in India which from day to day has been gaining in intensity has clear overtones of an all-out *jihād* that could burst upon us at any moment. This is not to deny that with the average Muslim the desire for peace and communal harmony is as strong as with most Hindus. But the common Muslim is mostly ignorant regarding how to channel his desire for peace without controverting the basic tenets of Islam. In the epilogue to this book, an attempt

has been made in that direction. But it is not possible to take a stand against *jihād* without a clear knowledge of its meaning and its many-sided implications. This book is primarily a search for this meaning, and in this search our only guides are the Koran, the Hadis and the Shariat.

Footnotes:

¹ *Mujāhid* - one who engages in *jihād*. Akbar's repudiation of the story of his becoming a *ghāzī*, without repudiating the title itself, is discussed in Appendix IV.

1

Jihād in the Koran

The Koran does not discuss a single Islamic tenet systematically and in conformity with the arrangement of its chapters. The combined body of Revelations from Allah which constitute the Holy Book of Islam appeared to the Prophet without any logical sequence during the 23 years of his prophetic career (609 to 632 AD), and this fact accounts for its haphazard arrangement. The Koran has 114 chapters and some six thousand verses. The verses of *jihād*, like those explaining any other doctrine, remain spread over a great many chapters. This is the reason why, to an ordinary reader, the knowledge of any and every Islamic doctrine appears difficult, the doctrine of *jihād* being no exception.

A second and more important reason for the difficulty is that the Koranic verses do not deliver their full meaning without a knowledge of their relevance in the Prophet's career. The Koran is not the only source book of Islam, the so-called Hadis¹ collections share that role equally. In Arabic the plural of *hadīs* is *ahādīs*; these describe what the Prophet did or what he said. As a Muslim would put it, these narrate the Prophet's Sunnah (practice of the Prophet). In one sense, the importance of the Hadis literature in the life of a Muslim is even greater than that of the Koran. A Koranic text might admit of different meanings. Certainly different commentators could suggest different meanings of the same Koranic verse. But the relevant *hadīs*, in explaining its meaning as exemplified in the Prophet's practice, renders the meaning unique for all time to come.²

Besides the Hadis, another source book for the Sunnah are the so-called *siyar* (plural of *sīrah*) or the biographies of the Prophet. These do not belong to the body of Islam's canonical literature but in so far as the events described in them are considered genuine by the ulema or the collectors of the Hadis, these bring out the meaning of Koranic verses even more clearly than the Hadis. Thus the genuine biographies of the Prophet are important source books for Sunnah.

After these preliminary remarks the reader must understand that the literal meaning of *jihād* is effort or striving - a meaning, to all intents and purposes, unrelated to the sanguinary activities with which the word has become inextricably woven. The technical expression used in the Koran is *jihād fi Sabilillah*, effort in the way of Allah. But even this expression does not explicitly mention any sanguinary conflict, and if we concentrate on meanings of words alone, we are likely to be led astray. When closely examined, the eighth *sīrah* (chapter) of the Koran, the *Sīrah Anfal*, and the

ninth *s°rah* entitled *Taubah* are the truly jihadic *s°rahs*. But *jihād* is enjoined in many other chapters. Perhaps the most significant verse in this connection is Koran 8/39 which, in meaning, is almost identical with Koran 2/193.

These declare: ♦Fight them until persecution is no more and religion is all for Allah.♦

In other words, Allah in 8/39 and 2/193 enjoins perpetual war for the destruction of the persecuting Koreish of Mecca, and, by the same token, for the abolition of all non-Islamic religions the world over.³ This according to the Koran is the best ♦striving in the way of Allah♦. This is *Jihād fi Sabilillah* in its most *comprehensive meaning*.

(2) Is this war allegorical? Since Mahatma Gandhi♦s allegorical explanation of the Kurukshetra war, it has been the fashion in India to consider all types of religious wars as wars against the baser passions of the human mind. The contagion has not spared even Muslim scholars who are sometimes heard giving a nonviolent interpretation of *jihād*. But such explanation is clearly contrary to Koranic verses. In the 74th verse of *S°rah Nisā*, Allah says very clearly:

♦Let those fight in the way of Allah who sell the life of this world for the other. Who so fighteth in the way of Allah, be he slain or victorious, on him we shall bestow a vast reward.♦

This verse clearly shows that there is nothing allegorical or metaphysical in the nature of war that is *ijihād*; it is armed war and nothing else. The idea has been further explained in another verse which says:

♦Hast thou not seen those unto whom it was said: Withhold your hands and establish worship and pay the poor-due? But when fighting was prescribed for them, behold! a party of them fear mankind even as they fear Allah or with greater fear, and say: Our Lord! why hast Thou ordained fighting for us? If only Thou wouldst give us respite for a while. I Say: The comfort of this world is scant; the Hereafter will be better for him that wardeth off evil♦ (K 4/77).

This verse describes the benefits of *jihād* to be enjoyed in the hereafter. Also it clearly shows that, instead of ♦withholding one♦s hand♦, *jihād* requires the waging of unremitting armed conflict. Obviously, this verse descended for the instruction of those Muslims who had been pleading against bloodshed and wanting ♦respite♦ from the duty of engaging in murderous confrontations. Historically too this verse is rather important. Before the Migration (to Medina) the number of Muslims (in Mecca) was not large, but even among that small number there were war-mongers whom Allah had to restrain as the issue of war in Mecca was dim. This comes out clearly in the first half of the verse. On the other hand, if the traditional date of the *s°rah* to which the whole verse belongs be accepted, the second half of the verse shows that after the reverse at the Battle of Uhud (625 AD), the Muslims of Medina wanted to settle down to a peaceful existence. This second half was intended to rouse them to renewed warlike effort, and to revive their drooping spirits. Not only that. The verse seems to imply that over and above the war-mongers there existed a body of Muslims who were essentially peace-living, and it required all the eloquence of Allah and his Prophet to rouse them and goad them into

unflinching bloodshed. The lure of a felicitous hereafter was held up before them, and it was made clear that the abrogation of Meccan pacifism was final and irrevocable.

(3) The extent of violence and bloodshed permitted in *jihād* is also clearly stated in the Koran. The 5th verse of *S°rah Taubah* makes no bones about the matter. Allah says in so many words:

◆When the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, and take them, besiege them and prepare for them each ambush. But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due, then leave their way free.◆

The meaning of this verse is clear enough. ◆Profess Islam or else die◆ - such is the upshot of this verse expressed in the most transparent language possible.⁴ But clearer even than this is the declaration embodied in the 67th verse of *S°rah Anfāl*, which says: ◆It is not for any Prophet to have captives until he hath made slaughter in the land. Ye desire the lure of this world but Allah desireth (for you) the hereafter.◆

The historical background of this particular verse is important. Every student of Islamic history knows that the first landmark in the world-conquering mission of Islam was the Battle of Badr (624 AD). For the Koreishite idolaters of Mecca who fell into Muslim hands in that war, a proposal was mooted that all those captives be let off in lieu of adequate ransom. The idea was to earn some money by sparing the lives of the captured Koreish. Historians attribute this proposal to have originated from Abu Bakr. Another suggestion came from Umar who would have all the idolaters slaughtered. The Prophet accepted Abu Bakr's suggestion and, after killing a handful, let off the rest of the prisoners in lieu of some ransom money. Evidently this was not to the liking of Allah who would have a ◆slaughter in the land◆ rather than that his devotees should opt for ◆the lure of this world◆ - an expression which evidently stands for the ransom money accepted by the Prophet. As Mohammed Pickthall puts it, ◆The Prophet took the verses as a reproof, and they are generally understood to mean that no quarter ought to have been given in that first battle.◆ The sanguinary nature of *jihād* comes out in this episode with the uttermost clarity.

(4) A variant of this ransom money was the famous *jizyah* or poll-tax or capitation-tax as it has been variously rendered.⁵ The Revelation enjoining the institution of this tax also occurs in the Koran. *S°rah Taubah* declares with thunderous clarity:

◆Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah nor the last day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His Messenger and follow not the religion of truth, until they pay the tribute (*jizya*) readily,⁶ being brought low◆ (K 9/29).

This verse is of the greatest historical significance, and to explain it we must first of all know the meaning of the expression ◆those who have been given the Scripture◆. The Arabic original of the expression, *Ahl-ul-Kitāb*, and the Indian variant *Kitābī* as also the English phrase ◆People of the Book◆, are also important.

In orthodox Islam the term *Kitābī* stands for Jews and Christians. This is because the Koran recognises the Jewish Scripture *Taurāt* (=Old Testament) and the Christian

Gospels *Injil*(=Evangel=New Testament) as Revelations equally authentic with the Koran but superseded, as this very verse indicates, only by the latter. The non-*Kitābīs* or non-Scriptuaries of the world are, in the Koran, designated as *mushrik* (=idolaters). With this explanation, the verse in question simply states that the lives of Scriptuaries may be spared in *jihād*, provided they pay the poll-tax ♦ in humility and with their own hands ♦. The verse is silent regarding idolaters; it does not specify if *their* lives too can be spared in lieu of *jizyah*. But as mentioned earlier, Islamic tenets do not derive from the Koran alone. There occur *ahādīs* - not recognised by all the schools of Islamic jurisprudence - which are supposed to mention the letting off by the Prophet of certain idolatrous (non-Arab) tribes in lieu of the poll-tax. The ulema, even to this day, are not unanimous whether Hindus deserve such immunity, even though the Sultans and Padishahs of Delhi had granted it by recognising their Hindu subjects as *kharājguzār* (=payer of the poll-tax) and *zimmī* (=held in tutelage). Even the fanatical Aurangzeb did not controvert this usage.

(5) Not only the poll-tax or ransom money. Another fruit of *jihād* is ♦plunder♦ or ♦spoils of *ghanimah* ♦ as the Koran puts it. The 69th verse of *S°rah Anfāl* declares:

♦Eat ye the spoils of war. They are lawful and pure. ♦⁷

This injunction regarding ♦spoils of war♦ will be taken up in detail in a subsequent chapter. For the present it will suffice to mention that this injunction is part of the group of injunctions laid down in the Koran on the subject of *jihād*.

To sum up, the following are the rules and instructions regarding *jihād* as laid down in the Koran:

(a) The *ultimate* object of *jihād* is to Islamize the whole of humanity. Since the Prophet♦s sojourn in Medina, this duty has been permanently enjoined on Muslims over the length and breadth of the world.

(b) The *immediate* objects of *jihād* are four in number: (1) spread of Islam by war; (2) the destruction of infidels; (3) *jizyah*; and (4) plunder.⁸

(c) For *Scriptuaries* the imposition of *jizyah* is the rule, just as for *idolaters* the rule is mass-slaughter. But there are many exceptions to this general rule. Mass-slaughter of Jews in *jihād* is eminently permissible, as the subsequent chapters will show. On the other hand, even idolaters can be let off on payment of the poll-tax. The Koran has not published any rigorous rule regarding these matters.

(d) *Jihād* is by no means a war for self-defence. Historically the verse ♦kill the idolaters wherever you find them♦ (K 9/5) forms an item in the ♦immunity♦ granted to the Prophet in 631 AD regarding his obligations to the idolaters of Arabia. But as in every verse of the Koran, the implication of such immunity in respect of a particular set of infidels embraced in due course idolaters of any and every country of the world. Such an injunction is necessarily informed with the spirit of extreme aggressiveness. For those who plead that the call of *jihād* is an injunction for self-defence, the so-called immunity verses of the 9th *s°rah* are the best refutation; but there are many other verses which confute the plea.

In conclusion it is only necessary to add that according to the Koran, the duty of *jihād* for any and every Muslim of the world preponderates over all other Islamic duties. This is brought out most clearly in verses 9/19-22, but these are by no means the only verses with a similar import.

In these verses Allah makes an estimate of the relative excellence of a Muslim who engages in *jihād* as contrasted with another who is engaged in pacific Islamic duties:

Count ye the slaking of a pilgrim's thirst and tendence of the Inviolable Place of Worship (i.e. the Ka'ba) as (equal to the worth of him) who believeth in Allah and the Last Day, and striveth in the way of Allah (i.e. engages in *jihād*)? They are not equal in the sight of Allah. Those who believe and have left their homes and striven with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah are of much greater worth in Allah's sight (K 9/19-22).

The meaning of these verses is clear enough. The greater worth of the *mujāhid* in the sight of Allah necessarily renders him fit to obtain a greater reward here as well as hereafter. The reward here is an exclusive share in the spoils of war which is denied to the sedentary Muslim.⁹ The reward hereafter is everlasting residence in the highest heaven which the Hadis literature designates as *Jannāt-ul firdaus*. It is to that literature that we must turn now to see how Allah's injunctions are confirmed and, in fact, added to in the Prophet's Sunnah.

Footnotes:

¹ Literally *hadīs* means a report. In Islam's technical vocabulary it stands for any report of the Prophet's actions or sayings as embodied in canonical collections also called the Hadis in a collective sense.

² Even *ahādīs* at times are found to be conflicting. We need not go into this.

³ Cf. N. J. Dawood's rendering of the same verse, "Make war on them until idolatry is no more and Allah's religion reigns supreme", brings out the meaning more explicitly.

⁴ For the historical context of this verse see Chapter 10.

⁵ Literally it means retribution tax - the retribution for obstinacy in refusing to renounce *kufr* (infidelity).

⁶ For readily most versions have with their own hands. Actually in the law books the prescription is that *jizyah* has to be paid in person.

⁷ This rendering is by Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, the translator of *Sahih Muslim*. Pickthall renders "the spoils of war" as "what you have won". This seems to be wrong.

⁸ Plunder in *jihād* is actually twofold in nature. Plunder of property as well as enslavement of the female and child population of the vanquished infidels are

both recognized as *ghanîmah*.

² Vide also Koran 4/95 where sedentary Muslims are specifically mentioned and shrugged off.

2

Jihād in the Hadis

Before I discuss the contents of the Hadis literature, in so far as those pertain to *jihād*, I must tell the reader that only Sunni works of Hadis have been published in translation and even those translations are partial. The Koran is canonical scripture par excellence, and is common to all sections of Muslims. But the Hadis of the Sunnis is not the same as the Hadis of the Shias. Western scholars have studied most of the religions of the world, but even they have not cared to render the Hadis literature in English. The translations I have met are mostly due to the ulema of Pakistan and Bangladesh. It seems there is hesitancy even amongst the ulema in making the Hadis literature easily available to infidels. At any rate, their enthusiasm for making the Koran accessible to one and all is not matched by a similar effort towards popularising the Hadis literature. This is perfectly understandable if we consider the fact that the language used in the Hadis literature at times borders on extreme coarseness and obscenity. It stands to reason that the ulema would not want to display this portion of their religious merchandise before the eyes of unsympathetic infidels.¹ But this very fact has rendered the work of scholarship difficult. One has to be not only a competent Arabist but has also to run the gauntlet of ulemaic apposition to secure authentic works of Hadis. The scholarly searcher has to beware of the bowdlerised and severely edited works of Hadis which would meet him at every step in his research. With this warning, I would lead the reader to a brief discussion of the Hadis literature of the Sunnis.

The *ahādīs* accepted by the Sunnis as canonical have been collected in as many as six works. These in Arabic are called *Sihah Sittah* which in plain English means the six authentic. All these are considered canonical, but the collections by (1) Imam Bukhārī and (2) Imam Muslim are supposed to be the most authentic of all. Those by (3) Tirmizī, (4) Abu Dāūd, (5) Abu Nasā'ī and (6) Ibn Mājah are the other four to make up the six. Another popular collection is *Mishkāt-ul-Masabīh* (=niche of lamp), which, besides containing *ahādīs* from the authentic collections, contains a few more which are held in high esteem among Muslims without actually counting as canonical. Each of these collections has a separate section devoted to the subject of *jihād*. It would require the labour of a German scholar to analyse all these collections critically. Not for the present writer such Herculean labour; the reader of this chapter must be content with citations from Imam Muslim and Mishkāt alone.²

For a full understanding of a *hadīs*, it is important to have some knowledge of its narrator. The Hadis of course records the Prophet's sayings and doings, but it does so through his Companions who, in Arabic, are designated as *Sahābah*. The Hadis in fact is a collection of first-hand reports - those proceeding from certain Companions regarding what they heard from the Prophet's own lips or what they found the Prophet doing at a certain juncture. Among these Companions, the most famous was Ayesha, the Prophet's child-

wife and his favourite. The other narrators include such names as Abu Hurairah, Jabir, Anas bin Malik, Abu Sayeed, Abu Musa, the second Caliph Umar and a host of others.

What does the Hadis say on the subject of *jihad*? The most important piece of information it contains is that the Prophet, in course of his ten years stay at Medina till his death, had engaged in as many as 82 *jihāds* of which 26 he commanded in person.³ These 26 *jihāds* are called *ghazwāhs* indicating that he became a *ghāzī* by slaying kafirs and coming out victorious. The Hadis also tells us that most of these *ghazwāhs* were in the nature of raids or swooping down upon the enemy without previous notice. The Hadis also gives details regarding the vast wealth and the great number of men, women and children he captured in these *ghazwāhs*. Before we give some idea of this *ghanīmah* (plunder), it is important to learn how the Koranic Revelations regarding *jihād* are confirmed by the Hadis.

(1) That *jihād* is the greatest duty of a Muslim is described in the Hadis without any scope for doubt or ambiguity. According to Imam Muslim, It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah said: One who died but did not fight in the way of Allah nor did express any desire (or determination) for *Jihād* died the death of a hypocrite (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 4696).

To get a clear understanding of this *hadīs* it is necessary, first of all, to understand the meaning of the term hypocrite. The Arabic *munāfiq* which is usually used for this term has a very specialised meaning in the Koran. It refers to those people of Medina who, having given shelter to the Prophet and his followers, had gradually grown disenchanted with them because of their violence and the ruffianly character, but did not dare rise in open rebellion against them. The leader of this disaffected Medinese faction was Abdullah bin Ubayy, a name cursed and reprobated in Islam for all time to come. The Koran itself has cursed these so-called hypocrites with words of the harshest denunciation and scorn. The Hadis has announced that their reward is the lowest layer of hell - a whole layer below the one allotted to idolaters.

With this background it is clear that the foregoing *hadīs* pronounces the waging of *jihād* as a Mussalman's supreme duty, failing which he is asked to cherish a fervent desire for it so that the terrible fate of a *munāfiq* does not overtake him in the hereafter. In a word, the Hadis declares even more uncompromisingly than the Koran itself that a pacifist Mussalman is not a Mussalman at all.

(2) It is clear then that the *mujāhid*'s reward in the hereafter should be superior to that of a non-combatant Muslim. We have seen that the Koran pronounces as much when it allots for *amujāhid* a greater reward than that for a peace-loving believer. The extent of its greatness is described in a *hadīs* as follows:

It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Said Khudri that the Messenger of Allah said to him (Abu Said): Whoever cheerfully accepts Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion and Muhammad as his Apostle, is necessarily entitled to enter Paradise (But) there is another act which elevates the position of a man in Paradise to a grade one hundred (higher), and the elevation between one grade and the other is equal to the height of the heaven from the earth. Abu Said said: What is that act? He replied: *Jihād* in the

way of Allah! *Jihād* in the way of Allah (Sahih Muslim, No. 4645).

This *hadīs* clearly indicates that the difference between a pacifist Mussalman and a *mujāhid* Mussalman is as great as the difference between heaven and earth - the pacifist's reward rising to no higher than earthly eminences.

(3) *Ahādīs* that refer to the blood-soaked nature of *jihād* are not rare. No. 4549 of *Mishkāt* has the following:

According to the venerable Abu Musa, Allah's Messenger has said: The portals of heaven lie under the shadow of the sword. On hearing this a lean and emaciated man stood up and said: O Abu Musa, did you hear this *hadīs* with your own ears? Yes, said Abu Musa, and then and there the man went up to his companions and said: I bid you *salaam*. So saying he broke the sheath of his sword and proceeded towards the enemies. He killed many with that sword and ultimately attained martyrdom himself.⁴

Clearly the sword is the Mussalman's best passport to heaven. The Prophet's own conviction comes out with singular intensity in the following *hadīs*. For those who want to set up Islam and its Prophet as devoted to the cause of peace this *hadīs* bears reading and re-reading:

It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: I would not stay behind (when) an expedition (for *Jihād* was being mobilised) if it were (not) going to be too hard upon the believers. By the Being in whose Hand is my life, I love that I should be killed in the way of Allah; then I should be brought back to life and be killed again in His way (Sahih Muslim, No. 4631).

(4) Peace and Islam are in fact wholly at variance. The Prophet's withering contempt for religions of peace comes out in the following *hadīs* with breath-taking intensity:

Said the Venerable Abu Umama: On a certain occasion we went out with the Prophet on a campaign. One man among us was passing by a well standing by the side of a field studded with green vegetation. The spot roused in his mind a strange longing (for a life of seclusion, and he thought): How glorious would it be if I could renounce the vanities of the world and reside in this spot (for the rest of my days). He sought the permission of Allah's Messenger. Said His Highness: (Listen to me, O man of little understanding): I was not sent down (by Allah) to preach the religion of Jews and Christians. To keep oneself busy in the way of Allah for a single morning or afternoon is better than the whole earth and whatever (wealth) it possesses. And to get imprisoned in the field of battle is better than being engaged in surplus prayers for as many as 60 whole years (Mishkāt, No. 4489).⁵

This *hadīs* indicates that even the partial pacifism of Judaism and Christianity was not acceptable to the Prophet of Islam. In an epoch when the Christians propagated their religion with the sword, the Prophet was not agreeable to even their theoretical pacifism.

(5) Quite a few *ahādīs* bring out the fact that the pre-eminent aim of *jihād* is the expansion of Islam by war. We have already seen that this is preached in the Koran itself.

The following *hadī*s not only reiterates the aim but also explains the sequence of objectives which a *mujāhid* is supposed to strive for:

◆ Fight in the name of Allah and the way of Allah. Fight against those who disbelieve in Allah ◆ When you meet your enemies who are polytheists, invite them to three courses of action ◆ Invite them to (accept) Islam ◆ If they refuse to accept Islam, accept from them the *jizya*. If they refuse to pay the tax, seek Allah's help and fight them ◆ (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 4294).

It is only necessary to add that, in this *hadī*s at least, the sequence does not seem to include *ghanīmah* (plunder). The triad of aims discussed here seems to exclude plunder of infidel property and enslavement of infidel population as aims of independent importance. This gap, however, is adequately filled in other *ahādī*s which will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

(6) At this point it is important to understand the meaning of two technical expressions related to *jihād*. The expression *ghāzī* I have already explained as standing for a victorious ◆ slayer of infidels ◆. But there is another expression, *shahīd* (witness), which means ◆ the person who attains martyrdom by offering evidence (*shahādah*) to the truth of Islam by fighting infidels ◆.

There are *ahādī*s describing the best manner of *shahādah* (evidence) offered by a *mujāhid* who has become a martyr.

(A question arose as to) ◆ what kind of martyrdom in *jihād* is the best. Said Allah's Messenger: When a martyr sends (an infidel's) blood streaming, he should (before falling dead) cut off the feet of the horse carrying (the said infidel) ◆ (*Mishkāt*, No. 4530).⁶

This *hadī*s brings out the blood-lust of the *mujāhid* with perfect candour. The translator commenting on this *hadī*s says: ◆ ◆ Sending an infidel's blood streaming and wounding his mount ◆ - these two items indicate the martyr's seeking of death after delivering the finishing stroke to his enemy. The emphasis here is on the *mujāhid*'s realisation of his full remuneration in *jihād* in life and property. ◆ This analysis needs no further comment.

The Hadis literature has many other things to say on *jihād*. Summing up the ones I have mentioned, one can say that it retains all the injunctions of the Koran and in fact adds quite a few things more. (1) That *jihād* is the supreme duty of a Muslim is preached with greater intensity in the Hadis in the light of the Prophet's impassioned utterances regarding what may be called his ◆ aim of life ◆. (2) The objectives of Islamic expansion, *jizyah* and infidel-slaughter are enumerated in the Hadis *seriatim*, - the Koran does not mention such sequence. (3) ◆ The full realisation of a martyr's remuneration in life and property ◆ is explained in the Hadis with supreme emphasis - the Koran lacks such candour, although the admonition for killing the infidel and destroying him to the uttermost limit are implicit, and sometimes explicit, in the Koran. (4) The relative pacifism of the Jews and the Christians is emphatically rejected in the Hadis - the Koran is silent on the subject.

Footnotes:

¹ Cf Muir, ❖ As to the Hadith, I altogether fail to understand how any translator can justify himself in rendering into English much that is contained in the sections on marriage, purification, divorce, and female slavery ❖ (*The Life of Mahomet*, p. 334).

² The material of the Hadis literature is almost identical whatever the collection. So the reader will not miss much by my failing from German thoroughness.

³ The number varies from narrator to narrator.

⁴ Translated from a Bengali version of *Mishkāt*.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., *Mishkāt* has quoted this *hadīs* from the *Sahih Dāu* ❖ d.

3

***Ghanîmah* or Plunder in the Koran**

To round off the theoretical discussion of *jihād* I must pass on to the doctrine of *ghanîmah* as explained in the Koran and the Hadis. We have seen that the reward of a *mujāhid* in the hereafter is the highest heaven. What is his reward on earth? It is ❖ plunder ❖, or ❖ spoils of war ❖, or ❖ war booty ❖, as the Arabic expression *ghanîmah* is variously translated. Not many are prepared to believe that plunder can be considered a meritorious or even desirable outcome of the highest duty enjoined upon the followers of a religion. To remove their incredulity a somewhat detailed discussion of the matter is necessary. It has to be admitted that both the Koran and the Hadis declare this outcome of *jihād* as much inferior to the propagation of Islam as also to the pleasures of Paradise to be earned by fighting with the infidels. But at the same time these works have given detailed instructions on the mode of distribution of plunder as also the laws regulating the distribution. The legislation relating to this is first mentioned in the Koran itself. The Hadis elaborates it and narrates the Prophet ❖'s own plundering activities. Last but not the least, the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence codify the regulations in a systematic manner. I shall come to the schools of jurisprudence in their proper place. Here I refer to the relevant Koranic verses which will be supported by the relevant *ahādīs* in the next chapter. But first of all I must explain the word *ghanîmah*.

As stated above, the technical meaning of *ghanîmah* is plunder or war booty, and it includes all types of booty wrested from the unbeliever - his goods, his land, his gold and silver, as also his wife and children. But the literal meaning of the word seems to be ❖ anything that enriches ❖ (the victor). Etymologically the word is derived from ❖ *ghanîm* ❖, enemy, and means that which has been got from him. But in the technical terminology of Islam, it has come to connote ❖ loot ❖. The Hadis mentions 99 alternative names of Allah, *Al-Mughnî* being one of them. That name in English means ❖ Enricher ❖. *Mughnî* is a word obviously related to *ghanîmah*. But it is doubtful if

Allah is supposed to enrich his devotees by loot alone. In other words, it is quite possible that *ghanimah* might well be an euphemism in its literal sense just as *jihād* (=effort, striving) is one. Islam has a large stock of such euphemisms, including the world *Islam* itself which is supposed to mean *peace*.¹ But whatever euphemism lies hidden in the word *ghanimah*, technically it means *plunder in jihād*, and nothing else.²

It should not surprise the reader to learn that quite a few Muslim translators feel a sort of delicacy or diffidence in rendering the word *ghanimah* as *plunder*. Some of them use the expression *wealth gained in war*, or some such circumlocution. But the more faithful English versions everywhere render it as *plunder*, or use an equivalent expression *spoils* being the most usual rendering. All such expressions, however, mean *loot*, pure and simple. *Wealth gained in war* is a euphemism which conceals the real import of *ghanimah*.

What are the injunctions regarding *ghanimah* in the *Koran*? The eighth chapter of the *Koran* is entitled *Anfāl*, meaning *surplus earning* or *bonus*. The whole of this chapter relates to war booty which is the *bonus* in question. The idea seems to be that the chief objective of *jihād* is Islamic expansion and the pleasures of the Paradise. Earning of spoils is merely a surplus earning - an incidental incentive to the *mujāhid*'s religious zeal, so to say.

(a) The first verse of *S°rah Anfāl* says:

They ask thee of the spoils of war. Say: The spoils of war belong to Allah and the Messenger. So keep your duty to Allah.

The obvious meaning of this verse is that plunder is an act of charity issuing from Allah and his Prophet - no *mujāhid* should look upon it as his own earning.

But verse forty-one of the same chapter says:

And know that whatever ye take as spoils of war, lo! a fifth thereof is for Allah and His Messenger and for the kinsmen and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer.

This verse raises a question as to the allotting of shares from the plunder; as such, it indirectly recognises some share (i.e. four-fifths) for the *mujāhids* as well.

The important thing about this one-fifth of the plunder is that Islamic scholars call it the *holy one-fifth*. The technical expression for it is *Khums*, otherwise spelt as *Khams*. According to the schools of jurisprudence, this one-fifth is to proceed to the Muslim king's treasury when the Prophet is no more. A similar word is *Fai* which stands for the whole plunder going to the Prophet (or the Sultan) if it is obtained without regular warfare. *Jizyah* itself is a sort of *Fai* - the Prophet or the Sultan being the sole owner of that gain.

(b) Who then is to own the remaining four-fifths of the plunder obtained by a regular campaign? Should that be given away to the whole body of Muslims? The *Koran* says: No Mussalman except the *mujāhid* is entitled to any share of the four-fifths. Allah says

clearly:

❖ Those who were left behind will say: When ye set forth to capture booty, let us go with you. Say: Ye shall not go with us ❖ (K 48/15).

Historically this verse refers to certain Arab tribes around Medina, who had been called by the Prophet to join his expedition to Hudaibiyah (628 AD) but who chose to stay behind. They were to get no share of the booty, enjoined Allah.

(c) Whether it be a bonus or Allah's bounty to the believers who engaged in *jihād*, Allah's pledge to lead the believers to adequate plunder is also available in the Koran:

❖ Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee (i.e. the Prophet) beneath the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts and He sent down peace of reassurance on them, and hath rewarded them with a near victory; and much booty they will capture ❖ (K 48/18-19).

Historically this verse refers to the famous Pledge of the Tree which the followers of the Prophet took at Hudaibiyah, when a rumour was circulated that the Prophet's emissary to the Meccans, his son-in-law Othman (the future Caliph), had been killed by the latter. Allah's peace of reassurance was accompanied with intimation regarding adequate plunder awaiting the faithful in near future.

(d) Such reward was not promised to Mussalmans of the Prophet's time alone. His followers for all time to come would continue to receive booty:

❖ And other (gain) which ye have not been able to achieve, Allah will compass it ❖ (K 48/21).

In other words, plunder is every *mujāhid's* birthright - it is a never ceasing dispensation.

(e) Supposing that a *mujāhid* of tender conscience refuses to acquire booty? Says Allah:

❖ Eat ye the spoils of war. They are lawful and pure ❖ (K 8/69).³

This verse shows that Allah exonerates the plundering Mussalmans from all misgivings arising from the prickings of conscience.

(f) The Koran is not given to circumstantial references to historical events. But the plundering of the Jewish clan of Kuraizah supposed to have been in league with the Meccans in the Battle of Ahzāb (627 AD) is mentioned there in some detail:

❖ And (Allah) brought those of the people of Scripture who supported (the Meccans) from their strongholds, and cast panic into their hearts. Some ye slew and ye made captive some. And he caused you to inherit their land and their houses and their wealth ❖ (K 33/26-27).

Land, houses, wealth, captives! The nature of *ghanimah* is made explicit in this verse.

Of such plunder, the male population (chiefly children) are enslaved, and the females inducted into the *mujāhids'* harems when not sold out in the slave market. The Koran

elaborates the right of the *mujāhid* over captured kafir women.

❖And all married women are (forbidden unto you) save those (captives) whom your right hands possess❖ (K 4/24).

In this verse, the character of *ghanîmah* is explained with brutal frankness. The captured kafir women, snatched from their husbands, can be enjoyed with absolute impunity by the *mujāhids*. True, the Koran does not spell out the nature of the indulgence. But its decree regarding kafir women possessed by the *mujāhid*'s right hand is obviously not one of honourable remarriage. It is nothing but forcible concubinage. Lest there should be any doubt regarding the nature of the indulgence, the Hadis adds its own tell-tale gloss upon this very verse. I shall take up this gloss in the next chapter. Here a summary of the contents of this chapter is in order.

In brief, the property of the infidel - his wealth, his women and children -, all without exception, is lawful plunder for the *mujāhid*. The merit of such plunder is indeed less than that of spreading Islam and looking up to the pleasures of the other world, but the Koran has given it due recognition. Not only that. It has explained the mode of its disposal as between *mujāhid* and *mujāhid*, and also as between the *mujāhid* and his commander. Not only that. It has, in unmistakable language, pronounced the plunder ❖lawful❖ and ❖pure❖.

Footnotes:

- ¹ This meaning is wrong. ❖Islam❖ means ❖surrender❖ to Allah by his followers so that Allah could settle his score with non-Muslims, vide Koran 3/19.
- ² In everyday Muslim parlance, the word ❖ghanîmah❖ stands for ❖good fortune❖, and sounds farthest from ❖plunder obtained in a blood-thirsty war❖. Even so, it retains the sense of ❖bounty❖ or gain in the normal course.
- ³ This rendering is by Abdul Hamid Siddiqi.

4

Plunder (*Ghanîmah*) in the Hadis

(1) Is plunder compatible with religion and piety? We have seen that the Koran itself says ❖yes❖. But it appears that some objection was raised against this view as early as the Prophet's own life-time. The Prophet himself met this objection in a somewhat longish *hadîs*. We find him declaring in favour of the Koranic view by contrasting Allah's dispensation regarding plunder in the epoch of former prophets with that in his own. The same issue had been raised when the followers of a former prophet had amassed a goodly amount of loot which Allah apparently disapproved. So ❖a fire approached the spoils to devour them❖, but stopped just short of touching it. The prophet of aforesaid time was clever enough to guess the reason for such strange behaviour on the part of the divine fire. And he told his followers, ❖One of you must be guilty of concealing a part of the spoil. So come forward and touch my hand by way swearing fealty to me.❖ One or two hands stuck the prophet's hand and, true enough, on questioning they disgorged ❖gold equal in volume to the head of a cow❖. So the whole

plunder was put together and Allah's fire promptly lapped it up. To the prophet of Islam, the meaning of this parable was unmistakable. As he reasoned:

◆The spoils of war were not made lawful for any people before us. This is because Allah saw our weakness and humility and made them lawful for us◆ (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 4327).

(2) It should be clear from the foregoing episode that the Hadis makes its own addition to the Koranic doctrine of *ghanimah*. The *mujāhid* must despoil the infidel as a matter of course, but he should not ◆misappropriate◆ any portion of the loot. The plunder is property of the Islamic state so long as it is not doled out to each according to his performance, the Prophet's (or the Sultan's) ◆holy one-fifth◆ being the pick of the basket. Keeping the plunder for oneself without reference to the commander is a grievous sin. As the Prophet puts it in another hadīs:

◆Fight against those who disbelieve in Allah. Make a holy war; do not embezzle the spoils◆ (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 4294).

In fact, ◆embezzlement of spoils◆ is one of the deadliest sins in Islam. This comes out in a number of *ahādīs*. A slave of the Prophet was killed in *jihād* against the Jews of Khaibar (AD 628). When people started greeting him as a martyr, the Prophet cried out:

◆Nay, not so. By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, the small garment he stole on the day of Khaibar but which did not fall to his lot is burning like the Fire (of Hell) on him◆ (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 210).

(3) I have said that this doctrine of embezzlement or misappropriation of the spoils is an addition to the Koranic doctrine of plunder made by the Prophet on his own. But it must be understood that what the Hadis has added to the Koran is but a logical corollary. Plunder, this side of religion, is a vocation natural to robbers. If robbers go on a plundering spree, it is only the iron discipline of the leader that prevents them from falling out among themselves for a larger share of the gain. Now if one were to invoke divine sanction for the plunder, one must similarly make provision for divine disapproval against its misappropriation. The two things hang together, and what the Hadis has added is only a legitimate extension of the Koran.

(4) The Hadis has made many other additions to the doctrine of *ghanimah*. It would be tedious to enumerate all of them, but one important addition, equally logical, merits mentioning. ◆The Messenger of Allah allotted two shares from the spoils to the horseman and one share to the footman◆ (*Sahih Muslim*, Nos. 4358-59). The learned Pakistani translator of Imam Muslim refers to the vast Islamic literature which expounds this tenet and he himself breaks into lyricism in extolling such beauties of the Hadis.

(5) A far more important extension made by the Hadis to the doctrine of *ghanimah* is the inclusion of the whole world as the Mussalman's rightful ◆field of spoliation◆ so to say. The Koran speaks of the ◆other gain which the Muslims have not yet been able to achieve◆ (K 48/21). The Hadis tells us that the ◆whole of earth belongs to Allah and His Apostle◆. Because such *ahādīs* touch the issue of Islamising the whole of humanity this *hadīs* merits quoting *in extenso*. But first of all a preliminary word.

The reader should know that early Islam became prosperous by destroying one by one the Jewish settlements around Medina and wresting their lands and goods and women and children as plunder. A *hadīs* refers to this practice of spoliation with absolute candour and incidentally brings out the theory of wholesale Islamisation of humanity. The *Sahih Muslim* narrates on the authority of Abu Hurairah:

❖ We were sitting in the mosque when the Messenger of Allah came and said: Let us go to the Jews. We went out with him until we came to them. The Messenger of Allah stood up and called out to them: O ye assembly of Jews, accept Islam and you will be safe❖ (No. 4363).

This last sentence has been called the ❖communication of the message❖ (of Islam) and, as has been explained previously, this is the best mode of inaugurating a *jihād*, The *hadīs* then indicates that the Jews were not agreeable to the call. The Prophet repeated the call three times consecutively and failing a satisfactory response said:

❖ You should know that the earth belongs to Allah and His Prophet, and I wish that I should expel you from this land❖ (*Ibid*).

In other words, the whole earth is the *mujāhid*'s field of spoliation. The Hadis has not minced matters, but divulged the supreme mission of Islam with absolute frankness.

(6) As the last item of Hadis❖ addition to the Koranic doctrine of *ghanimah*, we may mention the treatment meted out to the female captives whom the *mujāhid*'s ❖right hand possesses❖. As mentioned in the previous chapter, they are subjected to unrestricted concubinage. The following hadīs brings this out without a vestige of vagueness or obscurity:

❖ At the battle of Hunain, Allah's Messenger sent an army to Autas❖ Having overcome (the infidels) and taken them captive the Companions of Allah's Messenger seemed to refrain from having intercourse with the captive women because of their husbands being polytheists. Then Allah, Most High, sent down regarding that: Forbidden unto you are the women already married except those whom your right hand possesses❖ (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 3432).¹

In fine, the infidel's wealth, women and children - all are lawful plunder for the *mujāhid*. (1) To enjoy such plunder is glorious, if only less glorious than propagating Islam or contemplating the pleasures of the hereafter. The Koran proclaims its lawfulness and sanctity. The Hadis extends the Koranic message. The Hadis particularly dwells on it as a sort of special dispensation denied to former prophets. (2) The spoliation of Jews is elaborated in the Hadis as an earnest of Islam's mission over the whole earth. (3) The matter of ❖those whom one's right hand possesses❖ is explained in the Hadis with breath-taking candour.

Footnotes:

¹ Koran 4/24. The Arabic phrase for ❖those whom your right hand possesses❖ is ❖*ma malakat ayman u kum*❖.

Islamic Expansion through *Jihād*: The Evidence of the Sunnah

In the foregoing chapters I have attempted to give a brief but complete outline of the Islamic theory of *jihād*, that is, the injunctions of Allah and his Prophet regarding the subject. However, no part of Islamic theory is supposed to be complete without a description of the Prophet's own actions in terms to those injunctions. In fact, these actions in their totality are the Sunnah properly so called, the mere injunctions even from the Prophet's mouth being only a part of it. To a devout Muslim, the Prophet's actions and sayings rather than revelations from Allah supply the model of excellence which he is expected to emulate throughout his life-span. The Prophet is the best ruler, the best parent, the best husband, and, by the same token, the best *mujāhid*. To round off the theory of *jihād*, a discussion of his own jihāds is, therefore, essential.

Adding up the evidence of the Koran and the Hadis, a complete *jihād* is seen to have no less than five distinct objectives: (1) Forcible spreading of Islam. (2) Destruction of the kafir population against which the *jihād* is mounted. (3) Imposition of *jizyah* on the defeated infidels. (4) The wresting of war booty in the form of material property. (5) The enslavement of the female and child population of the vanquished kafir enemy. The last two items, indeed, do not count as two, but are aspects of the self-same *ghanimah*. It is for clarity that they are mentioned separately. In this chapter I will concentrate on the first objective of *jihād*, namely, the spread of Islam through *jihād* as illustrated in the Prophet's own career.

This spreading of Islam through *jihād* again has two sides: to force the vanquished infidels into professing Islam, and to destroy their places as well as symbols of worship. The Koranic injunctions, in so far as they refer to forcible spread of Islam, have already been quoted. The reader should particularly refer to verses 9/5, 8/39, 2/193. The relevant Sunnah is best described in *The Life of Mahomet* by Sir William Muir by comparing and collating the early biographical data from Ibn Ishāq, Ibn Hishām, Al-Wāqidī, Ibn Sa'd and At-Tabarī.¹ The Prophet's Sunnah regarding the spread of Islam by means of *jihād* is described in these works in great detail.

According to Muir, the Prophet never made a concerted effort for the spread of Islam in Arabia before the conquest of Mecca (January, 630 AD). He was content to keep together the band of his followers in Medina and with their help wage incessant war against the Koreish of Mecca and other Arab tribes, so as to add to his resources and build a well-equipped military machine. The moment he felt strong enough, he swooped down on Mecca and gained what was for all practical purposes a bloodless victory. The Meccans professed Islam, intimidated as they were by the display of his strength and also because of the unwritten agreement he had reached earlier with the Meccan leader, Abu Sufyan. Muir has given a graphic description of this agreement.

According to him, the Prophet, with an army of 10,000, was proceeding towards Mecca in extreme secrecy when a small reconnoitring party of the Koreish, headed by Abu Sufyan, fell in with Al-Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, issuing forth from the latter's encampment. Al-Abbas wanted to save Mecca from destruction. He persuaded Abu

Sufyan to accompany him to the Prophet and seek quarter from him. This was in the evening prior to the surrender of Mecca. Next morning, Al-Abbas took Abu Sufyan to the Prophet. What took place is best described in Muir's language:

Out upon thee Abu Sufyan! exclaimed Mohammad as the Koreishite chief drew near; *hast thou not discovered that there is no God save the Lord alone?* Noble and generous Sire! Had there been any God beside, verily he had been of some avail to me. *And dost thou not acknowledge that I am the Prophet of the Lord?* questioned Mohammad. Noble Sire! As to this thing there is yet in my heart some hesitancy. Woe is thee! exclaimed Al-Abbas; it is no time for hesitancy, this. Believe and testify forthwith the creed of Islam, or else thy neck shall be in danger!

This description by Muir makes it clear that Abu Sufyan professed Islam under duress - to save his neck from danger. Most of the Meccans followed him in the same course and obviously under the same predicament. Muir has praised the Prophet's extreme generosity in letting off the Koreish so easily, and abstaining from bloodshed and plunder. But he has not concealed the fact that the conversion of the Koreish was effected by terror, by an apprehension relating to the safety of their necks.

It must be admitted that the generosity of the Prophet extended even beyond sparing the life and property of the Koreish. He did not compel each and every Meccan to profess Islam at once, nor threw out anyone who would persist in infidelity for some time yet. They were even allowed to worship at the Ka'bah, the so-called Inviolable Place of Worship. He got the idols in the Ka'bah destroyed on the very first day of his entry into Mecca, but retained much of the pre-Islamic ritual. This facilitated for some more time the continuance of pre-Islamic worship by the as yet unconverted Koreishites, without encountering opposition from the Prophet's followers.

That opposition came about a year later (631 AD) on the occasion of the first independent pilgrimage to the Ka'bah by the Prophet's followers from Medina. At first the Prophet had sent Abu Bakr as the leader of this pilgrimage. But after the latter had already proceeded some distance, the Prophet despatched Ali (his cousin as well as son-in-law) with a set of newly received Revelations from Allah. They were the so-called Immunity Verses. By means of these, Allah gave to himself and his Prophet immunity from the responsibility for tolerating those Meccans and other Arabs who had been persisting in infidelity even after the conquest of Mecca. The *S'rah Taubah* of the Koran contains these Immunity Verses, the *s'rah* itself bearing the alternative title, *Bar'ah* (immunity). Allah declared:

Freedom from obligation from Allah and His Messenger towards those of the idolaters with whom ye made treaty.

Travel [O idolaters] freely in the land for four months, and know that ye cannot escape Allah and Allah will confound the disbelievers.

And a proclamation from Allah and His Messenger to all men on the day of the Greater Pilgrimage that Allah is free from obligation to idolaters and (so is) His Messenger (K 9/1-3).

It is on this occasion that the liberty to kill the idolaters (kill them whenever you find them, K 9/5) was proclaimed and the doors of the Ka'bah were closed for all time to come to non-Muslims. As the proclamation from Allah clearly states, the unbelievers (of Arabia and not of Mecca alone) were given only four months time to forswear their ancestral religion and profess Islam. Clearly this was a direct outcome of the conquest of Mecca although delayed after the day of victory for about a year. This, therefore, must be reckoned the supreme example of how *jihād*is utilised for the forcible spread of Islam. Every practice of the Prophet is canonical Sunnah to the believer, and as binding as the verses of the Koran. It is for this reason that with Muslims, *jihād*became the supreme instrument for propagating Islam and its spread by peaceful means always remained secondary. The ordinance which was originally intended for Arab idolaters, came to be recognised in due course as including idolaters anywhere and everywhere.

Footnotes:

¹ Ibn Ishāq (85 A.H - 151 A.H); Ibn Hishām (d. 218 A.H); Al-Wāqidī (130 A.H-207 A.H); Ibn Sa'd (d. 230 A.H); At-Tabarī (d. 310 A.H).

6

Destruction of Idols and Idol-Temples in *Jihād*: The Evidence of the Sunnah

A natural and in fact inevitable consequence of spreading Islam by *jihād* is the destruction of non-believers' places of worship and their idols. It is somewhat remarkable that this duty has not been enjoined in any Koranic verse as a part of *jihād*. The destruction of idols is often mentioned in the Koran, but nowhere in connection with *jihād*. Such an ordinance derives from the Sunnah and the Sunnah alone. In the Koran there are descriptions of such destruction in heaven at the hands of angels (*firishtas*) and on earth at the hands of Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham), who is proclaimed the first Mussalman in the world. But these descriptions are not connected with any *jihād*.

(1) The *s'rah* for the destruction of idols and images is *S'rah Sāffāt*, the 37th chapter of the Koran. This *s'rah* tells us that on the Day of Judgement Allah would assemble idols and idol-worshippers through his *firishtas* and throw them into the everlasting fire of hell. As the Koran puts it:

(And it is said unto the angels) assemble those who did wrong, together with their wives and what (idols) they used to worship instead of Allah, and lead them to the path of hell. Then lo! this day they (both) are sharers in the doom. Thus deal We with the guilty (K 37/22, 23, 33, 39).

(2) So much for the destruction of idols by Allah himself through his heavenly hosts. As regards Prophet Ibrāhīm's hand in the matter, the Koran describes his iconoclasm in several passages, notably in the same *s'rah* 37 as also in *s'rah* 21 (*Ambiyā*). In the former this is how Ibrāhīm proceeded in regard to the deities of his kinsmen:

Ibrahim said unto his father and his folk: What is it that ye worship? Is it a falsehood - gods beside Allah - that ye desire? And he glanced a glance at the stars; then said: Lo! I

feel sick. And they turned their backs and went away from him. Then turned he to their gods and said: Will ye not eat? What aileth ye that ye speak not? Then he attacked them striking with his right hand. And his people came towards him hastening. He said: Worship ye that ye yourselves carve? (K 37/85ff).

Such are the Koranic accounts of the destruction of idols. It appears that what Ibrāhīm objected to was his folk's addiction to false gods who could not eat or speak. To us this does not constitute so serious an offence as to rouse one to iconoclastic fury. However, the Koran does not mention if, beyond striking his folk's idols behind their back, Ibrāhīm waged any full-fledged *jihād* against his idolatrous kinsmen. That was left to the Prophet of Islam who in his *jihād* against his kinsmen destroyed all the idols in and around the Ka'bah and signalled the event as a permanent legacy to future *mujāhids*.

According to the account given by all biographers of the Prophet, on reaching Mecca, he mounted his camel Al-Kaswa and proceeded towards the Ka'bah. On reaching there he saluted the famous Black Stone with his staff and made seven circuits round the sacred building. Then pointing with his staff to the idols one by one, he commanded them to be hewn down. The huge idol of Hubal stood in front of the temple. As the Prophet's followers attacked it with pickaxes the image fell down with a crash. The Prophet celebrated its fall by shouting a verse from the Koran: Truth hath come and falsehood gone, for falsehood verily vanisheth away, (K 17/81).

This was not all. The destruction of Hubal was followed by the destruction of all the pictures decorating the walls of the temple. An announcer was asked to go down the streets of Mecca shouting a proclamation: Whoever believeth in Allah, let him not leave in his house any image whatever that he doth not break in pieces. The fury of idol-breaking was unleashed in the city.

In the next two weeks the Prophet despatched his armed squads to all places in the neighbourhood with the express command to destroy the images as also their shrines. Khālid destroyed the fane of Al-Uzzā at Nakhla. Amr smashed the image of Suwā worshipped by the tribe of Hudhail. Al-Manāt was destroyed at Kodeid. This particular work of destruction was entrusted to a tribe of Medina who had been specially attached to this deity. This was the Prophet's way of testing their zeal for Islam.

Muir's description of the destruction of the image of Al-Lāt, worshipped by the Thakif tribe of Taif, is particularly touching. Following close upon the conquest of Mecca the Prophet had besieged the city of Taif, but the siege had to be raised because of the heroic resistance of the Thakafites. But when every surrounding tribe started professing Islam and organising raid upon raid against them, the Thakafites decided to offer submission. Their attachment to their Goddess Al-Lāt, however, was too strong to be renounced so easily. Already they had killed one of their own chiefs, Urwa, who, having professed Islam on his own, would have all his fellow-citizens follow in his footsteps. But harassed and exhausted by Islamic attacks from all sides they at last sent out a deputation of six chiefs who pleaded with the Prophet for retaining the temple of Al-Lāt for another three years even after professing Islam. As was to be expected, the Prophet rejected the plea. Thereafter they prayed for a respite of two years, one year, six months, successively with tearful supplication. The Prophet was stubborn in his refusal, declaring that Al-Lāt could

not coexist with Allah for a single day. The only concession the Thakafites could get was that they were not required to destroy the image of Al-Lāt with their own hands. Al-Mughira, a kinsman to Urwa, and Abu Sufyan, the Koreishite leader, volunteered to perform that task. ❖ Al-Mughira, wielding a pickaxe and surrounded by a guard of his relatives, and amid the cries and wailing of the women, with his own hand, hewed [the image] to the ground. ❖

A Christian with iconoclastic tendencies himself, Muir has wasted few words of sympathy for the people whose Gods and shrines were so ruthlessly destroyed. But even he seems to have been somewhat affected by the devotion of the Thakafites to their deity. As he puts it, ❖ Al-Taif was the last stronghold that held out against the authority of Mohammad. It is remarkable as the only place where the fate of an idol excited the sympathy of the people. Everywhere else the images seem to have been destroyed by the people themselves without a pang. ❖ We can ignore the last sentence as proceeding from the pen of a would-be iconoclast, but the heartless manner of trampling upon the devotion of the Thakafites as illustrated in the above incident is an eloquent commentary on the virtue of breaking other people's idols.

But whatever be one's opinion about this vandalism, the Islamic significance of these events can hardly be exaggerated. Iconoclasm became part and parcel of *jihād* not by any specific injunction of the Koran but by the very activities following upon the conquest of Mecca. These constituted the Prophet's Sunnah and was an addition to the teachings of the Koran, so much so that in a great many *jihāds* waged by the latter-day zealots of Islam, the very words which the Prophet had uttered at the time of destroying the image of Hubal at Ka'bah became a part of the ritual of iconoclasm unleashed at the end of a successful *jihād*. ❖ Truth hat come and falsehood gone; for verily falsehood vanisheth away. ❖

7

Slaughter of Infidels in *Jihād*: The Evidence of the Sunnah

The generosity shown by the Prophet to his kinsmen at Mecca was not matched by anything in relation to the Jews of Medina, nor, for the matter of that, to any Jewish tribe of Arabia. Actually, the Prophet's uniformly stringent measures adopted against the Jews contrasted most signally with his leniency towards the Arabs. To account for the contrast, D.S. Margoliouth credits the Prophet with being a ❖ champion of the national idea ❖ of the Arabs, and this supposition does give a national explanation of his uniform hostility to the Jews. As Margoliouth puts it, ❖ With this attitude [namely the Prophet's supposed nationalism] agreed his ordinary tenderness for the lives of Arabs when he massacred Jews without mercy. ❖ Whatever the explanation, the Prophet's treatment of the Jews brings out a most important body of Sunnah connected with one aspect of *jihād*, namely, ❖ making slaughter in the land ❖ (K 8/67). To illustrate this aspect, a short account of the massacre of the Jewish clan of Kuraizah is in order.

This event had taken place three whole years before the conquest of Mecca, and it may be said that the Sunnah regarding slaughter of infidels in *jihād* had been well established by it, so that the Prophet's lenient treatment of the Meccans was an exception designed to

prove the rule. To understand the rule clearly we must remember that the destruction of Banu Kuraizah was an episode connected with the Battle of the Ditch. This battle took place in 627 AD following a siege of Medina by a body of the Koreish and sundry other tribes. By that time Banu Kuraizah had been left as the only considerable Jewish tribe in Medina, those of Banu Kainuka and Banu Nazir having been banished a few years previously. It was alleged by most of the early Muslim writers that Banu Kuraizah were in league with the Koreish and this opinion has been broadly accepted by most of the latter-day scholars. The Jews did not in fact participate in the battle, but their hostile movements kept the Muslim army on tenterhooks during the month-long siege. As soon as the siege was raised, the angel Gabriel is said to have visited the Prophet and asked him to punish the traitors immediately without thinking of rest or repose. As a *hadis* puts it:

Gabriel said: you have laid down arms. By God, we haven't laid them down. So march against them. The Messenger of Allah asked: Where? He pointed to the Banu Quraiza (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 4370).

What transpired after this is easily described. The Prophet laid siege to the stronghold of Banu Kuraizah, who were starved into suing for submission. The Jews offered to face banishment leaving their property behind. The Prophet did not agree. They appealed for mediation by the Arab tribe of Aus of which they were clients. The Prophet agreed to this and asked the Ausite chief, Sa'd bin Mu'az, to administer judgement. Sa'd pronounced the verdict in the name of Allah. All male members of the Kuraizah (barring children) were to be put to death, their women and children were to be sold into slavery, and their property was to be distributed among Muslims. The Prophet praised Sa'd as having adjudged the case with the judgment of God, the Exalted and Glorified.¹

The slaughter of Banu Kuraizah sheds a lurid light on the early annals of Islam. A big pit was dug in the market place of Medina, and 800 Jews (according to Muir's calculation) were brought down, chained and manacled, to be beheaded in cold blood. The Prophet himself presided over the massacre. The able-bodied prisoners were brought in companies of five or six, seated in a row on the brink of the pit, and beheaded in a leisurely manner, their bodies being cast into the pit. A woman whose husband had just perished, admitted to having killed a Muslim by throwing a big stone during the siege and, having refused the gift of life granted to the enslaved womenfolk, was promptly despatched at her own request. Her smiling face as she stepped forward for execution is said to have haunted the Prophet's child-wife Ayesha to the end of her days.² The Kuraizah showed signal courage in facing death, but for Islam the punishment meted out to them merely constituted the canonical precedent for making slaughter in the land.

It must be mentioned that barring Muir few European scholars have found fault with the Prophet for the gruesome murder of the men of Banu Kuraizah. According to D.S. Margoliouth Those who had taken part openly with the invaders of Medina could not very well be permitted to remain there. To banish them was unsafe; to permit them to remain was yet more dangerous. Hence they must die. And since it would appear that the Kuraizah had turned against the Prophet merely because he was in extreme danger, their fate, horrible as it was, does not surprise us. If they had not succeeded in harming him, they had manifested the will to do so.

More recently a French scholar, Maxime Rodinson, has defended the Prophet in stronger language. As he puts it, ♦ from a purely political point of view, the massacre was an extremely wise move. The chosen solution was undeniably the best. ♦

The Muslim apologist Syed Amir Ali too has defended the Prophet. He argues that as the Jews themselves had wanted the Ausites to arbitrate, no question of blaming the Prophet can possibly arise.

It is not necessary to comment on these judgments pronounced by latter-day critics. But the reader must be reminded of one thing even at the risk of tiresome repetition. To the devout followers of Islam, the massacre of Banu Kuraizah is part of the Prophet ♦'s Sunnah. It is not as if the matter ended with the slaughter that took place in 627 AD in the market place of Medina. Over the centuries, the *mujāhids* have been inspired by this part of the Sunnah to emulate the Prophet in similar massacres of the infidels. Timur at Delhi, towards the close of the 14th century, followed the Prophet ♦'s seventh century exploit at Medina by murdering in cold blood *one hundred thousand* Hindu prisoners captured by him during his prolonged *jihād*. A devout follower of the Koran and the Sunnah he ♦ made slaughter in the land ♦ rather than seek ransom for his helpless victims. It is not the 800 Jews of Medina, but the millions of infidels slaughtered in subsequent centuries that should make us pause and reflect. Not only that. Those who defend the Prophet should reflect on the fate of the millions of infidels for whose heads the *mujāhid* ♦'s knife is being sharpened in all Islamic countries right at this moment.

Footnotes:

¹ *Sahih Muslim*

² This indicates that the women of Medina had been invited to feast their eyes upon the gruesome spectacle.

8

Plunder (*Ghanîmah*) in *Jihād*: The Evidence of the Sunnah

Did the Prophet appropriate plunder (*ghanîmah*) for his own use? The relevant Revelations and *ahādîs* have already been discussed in detail, and the part of *Khums*, the holy one-fifth of the plunder in the Islamic scheme of things, analysed threadbare. But here again the Prophet ♦'s own practice (*Sunnah*) has to be mentioned if only to round off the discussion. A proper analysis of this single topic would require a whole book; here I shall content myself with a bare outline.

(1) According to the biographers, the Prophet received his one-fifth starting from the raid of Nakhla (late 623 AD) in which one Koreishite was killed and two of them made captives, the booty obtained being meagre. But as the earliest of the Prophet ♦'s biographers, Ibn Ishāq, reflected, ♦ This was the first booty which the Muslims obtained, the first captives they seized, and the first life they took. ♦ The amount of ransom money charged was 40 ounces of silver for each of the two captured Koreishites.

(2) In comparison, the loot from the Battle of Badr (624 AD) was considerable. Besides a vast amount of garments and articles of leather, the number of camels captured was 114 and that of horses 10, the captive Koreishites totalling 70.¹ According to Margoliouth's calculation, the ransom money charged was 100,000 *dirhems*. The Prophet received a clear one-fifth of these. Over and above, he took the camel of Abu Jahl,² his most inveterate Koreishite enemy happily sent to hell on the battlefield, as also the famous sword Zulfiqār. These constituted his special share as the chief of his team.

(3) The largest amount of plunder earned during the Prophet's ten years' residence at Medina was obtained at the cost of the Jews. A short account of these earnings should elucidate the relevant Sunnah for plunder with more vividness than any other event could.

As is well known, the Prophet's conquering career started with his migration to Medina in September 622 AD. In the history of Islam the event is known as the Migration (*hijrah*) with a capital M. The Prophet's previous career of 12 or 13 years' preaching at Mecca had enlisted very few converts. In Medina, indeed he was received with the honour due to a monarch, but this was not accompanied by any accession of wealth or property. The first gainful exploit of Muslims was the victory of Badr. But the plunder obtained therefrom, though opulent, was not considerable enough to feed the growing Muslim population indefinitely. It seems to be this consideration above any other which actuated the Prophet for extirpating the thriving Jewish settlements around Medina and attaching their property to the nascent Islamic state. It has been argued that the Jews themselves had behaved treacherously with him. But if all earth belongs to Allah and His Prophet such a rationalisation is hardly necessary. In any event, after the victory of Badr the Jewish tribes of Medina started being a prey to the Prophet's repeated assaults. Banu Kainuka was the first tribe to be thrown out. This event occurred close on the heels of Badr. After the reverse at Uhud (625 AD), it was the turn of the Banu Nazir to be banished. Banu Kuraizah, as mentioned earlier, were exterminated after the Battle of Ahzāb (627 AD). All these were Jewish tribes of Medina.

The very next year saw the raid upon Khaibar (628 AD), that is, on the Jews who resided far from Medina. They were retained in their settlements on condition of tilling their own lands and paying half their produce to the Islamic state. This seems to be the first imposition of *jizyah* in the history of Islam. The extirpation or subjugation of Jews in all these cases was followed by extortion of a vast amount of *ghanimah* (plunder).

(a) Property worth thousands of *dirhems*, if not more, accrued from the expulsion of Banu Nazir (625 AD). This tribe had rich and extensive agricultural lands, all of which was appropriated by the Prophet. This was because the Nazirites were conquered without engaging in regular warfare, so that their property was counted as *Fai* (gift) in Islam's technical vocabulary.³ As Abdul Hamid Siddiqi's commentary on a *hadīs* elaborates:

The properties abandoned by Banu Nazir were the ones which Allah bestowed upon his Apostle for which no expedition was taken either with cavalry or camel. Those properties were particularly meant for the Holy Prophet. He would meet the annual expenditure of his family from the income thereof and would spend what remained for purchasing horses and weapons for preparation of *Jihād* (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 4347).

(b) The plunder accruing from the extermination of the entire male population of Banu Kuraizah is best described in Muir's language. As he puts it:

The booty was divided into four classes - lands, chattels, cattle and slaves; and Mohammad took a fifth of each. There were (besides the children who counted with their mothers) a thousand captives; from his share of these, Mohammad made certain presents to his friends of slave girls and female servants. The rest of the women and children he sent to be sold among the Bedawi tribes of Nejd, in exchange for horses and arms in the service of the State; for he kept steadily in view the advantage of raising a body of efficient cavalry. The remaining property was divided among the 3,000 soldiers of Medîna, to the highest bidders among whom the women also were sold.

The whole booty at the prize valuation would thus be 40,000 dînârs. Mohammad sold a number of State slaves to Othmân and Abd-ar-Rahmân, who made a good speculation therefrom. They divided them into old and young. Othmân took the old, and found as he expected much money on their persons. Large sums were obtained from the Jews of Kheibar and other places for the ransom of such of the women and children as they were interested in.⁴

This single example brings out the Prophet's practice regarding *ghanîmah* (plunder) with a vividness which a hundred pages of theoretical discussion would hardly equal.

(c) But even this booty, vast as it was, was small compared to what the Prophet wrested from the Jews of Khaibar. After their defeat, When the Moslems came to apportion their spoils they found that the conquest of Khaibar surpassed every other benefit that God had conferred on their Prophet. The leader's one-fifth enabled him to enrich his wives and concubines, his daughters and their off-spring, his friends and acquaintance, down to the servants. Eighteen hundred lots were portioned out for the fourteen hundred fighters; the two hundred horsemen got, according to custom, treble lots. Moreover there was no fear of this wealth melting away as the former booty had melted; for the Jews remained to till the land which became the property of the robbers.⁵

Did the Prophet appropriate female slaves in conformity with the Koranic injunction⁶ on concubinage? Biographers mention Raihâna, the Jewess of Banu Kuraizah, chosen by the Prophet as his concubine after she had refused to espouse Islam, that being the condition for legal marriage. But Raihâna's story does not figure prominently in the canonical *ahâdîs*, which, while mentioning nine wives (apart from the long-deceased Khadija) and two concubines, dilate only on Maria, the handsome Coptic slave girl presented to the Prophet by the Christian governor of Egypt. It is not clear why Maria, who had apparently turned Muslim, was not given the benefit of legal marriage. That she was a slave could be no objection, for the Prophet could well have manumitted her. In fact, canonical *ahâdîs* refer to the similar case of Safiyya with much fanfare. As Muslim writers make much of this case and cite it as an example of the Prophet's noble heart, I will describe it in some detail.

Safiyya's father Huyayya belonged to Banu Nazir. After the expulsion of his tribe from Medina, he had taken refuge at Khaibar, and, because of his warlike activities, had been assassinated by killers sent by the Prophet with an express order. Her husband Kinâna

was cruelly tortured and murdered in cold blood after the conquest of Khaibar, again by the Prophet's express order. In the distribution of spoils, Safiyya actually fell to the lot of Dihya, a handsome Muslim, in whose shape Gabriel is said to have often visited the Prophet. The full story is told by Imam Muslim on the authority of Anas, the Prophet's personal attendant. As Anas relates:

◆ We took the territory of Khaibar by force. There came Dihya and he said: Messenger of Allah, bestow upon me a girl out of the prisoners. He said: Go and get any girl. He made a choice of Safiyya. There came a person to Allah's Apostle and said: Safiyya is worthy of you only. ◆ When Allah's Apostle saw her he said [to Dihya]: Take any other woman from among the prisoners. ◆ He then granted her emancipation and then married her. ◆ On the way Umm Sulaim embellished and then sent her to the Holy Prophet at night. Allah's Apostle appeared as a bridegroom in the morning. ◆ (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 3325).

This narrative tells its own story in the simplest language possible. But to illustrate how devout Muslims view such examples of Sunnah, one more word is necessary. Imam Muslim himself has entered this *hadīs* in his collection, not as an example of *ghanimah* (plunder) earned by the Prophet from his *ghazwah* (expedition) but as an instance of the high morality involved in emancipating a slave woman before marrying her! Needless to say, Safiyya had not been a slave woman prior to her being treated as lawful plunder. The learned Pakistani translator of *Sahih Muslim* is not satisfied even with this elucidation. Not to be outdone by the venerable Imam of aforesaid, he has added his own encomium on the Prophet's noble character on the strength of this very *hadīs*. He speaks of a Revelation (without actually citing it) that ◆ her marriage with the Holy Prophet was a dire necessity in the larger interest of the Islamic State. ◆!! Nor does he stop even at that. He adds in so many words that ◆ It is easy to talk of noble things and high ideals, but it is difficult to put them into practice. ◆!!! Obviously, he enters the event in the register of the Prophet's noblest deeds. Comment is superfluous.⁷

Footnotes:

¹ These are Sir William Muir's figures. Margoliouth says that the camels numbered 150.

² His real name was Abu Hakm (father of wisdom). But as he was resolutely opposed to Islam, the Prophet named him Abu Jahl (father of folly).

³ *Fai* is Koranic rather than Prophetic. ◆ And that which Allah gave as spoil to his Messenger from them, ye urged not any horse or camel for the sake thereof. But Allah giveth lordship to His Messenger over whom He will. ◆ (K 59/6).

⁴ *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 320 and n.

⁵ D.S. Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, pp. 361-62.

⁶ K 4/24; also see above.

⁷ Margoliouth says that the Arabic word **سافىيا** means **تيتبيت** i.e. an article specially selected by the conqueror out of the booty. He denies that Safiyya had been her real name. Comment again is superfluous.

9

Jihād in the Shariat

In Islam, the term **شريات** is often used to mean the system of ordinances as given in the Koran and the Hadis. But I shall use it in a more restrictive sense - for those ordinances which were formulated in the schools of jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) of the famous Imams Hanîfah, Hanbal, Mâlik and Shâfi. The school of Hanîfah being the most popular in the Islamic world, I shall confine my attention to that school alone and use Shykh Burhanuddin Ali's (d. 1198 AD) *Hidāyah* in order to set forth the opinions of the Shariat on the subject of *jihād*.

From the foregoing chapters it would appear that the Koran and the Hadis, between them, have exhausted the subject of *jihād* and that there is little to add to their ordinances. But in fact it is not so. For example, if *jihād* be a Mussalman's supreme duty as indicated in the Koran and the Hadis, a question is inevitable: Is it not proper for a Muslim to be engaged in *jihād* continuously and permanently? Should he not set out on his own to **make slaughter** amongst the infidels without caring for what his fellow Muslims are doing? Not so, says the Shariat; one can engage in *jihād* only when the Imam gives a call for it. In the Prophet's time, he himself was the Imam par excellence. But after him the duty has vested in lawfully constituted Imams. *Jihād* is indeed compulsory for all able-bodied Muslims; it is a *farz* - the Arabic word for duty that is binding and unavoidable under all circumstances. But it is not a *farz-i-ain* - the canonical duty binding on every Muslim without reference to any other person. It is a *farz-i-kifāyya* - a duty that can be left to others until the Imam gives out his call. When the Imam does so it becomes *farz-i-ain* and no able-bodied Mussalman under his jurisdiction can shirk the duty of waging *jihād*. But till that moment he can rest on his oars. Such is the prescription of the Shariat regarding the nature of the duty of *jihād*.

Can any and every Imam of any and every mosque give out the call for *jihad*? The question does not arise in Islamic states where the Sultans and Padishahs count as lawfully constituted Imams. But in non-Islamic states, the question becomes important. Any Muslim leader, even the leader of the congregation for Friday prayers, in non-Islamic countries can put forth his claim for authorising a *jihād*. The Shariat has indeed prescribed certain qualifications for Imamhood, but has not provided any foolproof method for testing such qualifications.

(2) The Shariat has clarified another point which is not mentioned in the Koran or the Hadis with sufficient clarity. Is it necessary to serve a notice to the infidels who are being attacked? The Koran is silent on the question. The Hadis, in the context of the Jews mentioned in a previous chapter, says that the Prophet did serve such notice on at least one occasion. But most of his *jihāds* being in the nature of raids embarked upon in extreme secrecy, these were not usually preceded by formal declarations of war. The Shariat accepts both the provisions, but sets out to explain the importance of prior

notification with some care. According to the *Hidāyah*, [the infidels have to] perceive that they are attacked for the sake of religion, and not for the sake of taking their property, or making slaves of their children.¹ Thus the *Hidāyah* makes the notification compulsory when attacking those infidels who have never been called to the faith, but makes it optional in other cases.

(3) On the other hand, the Shariat asks the Imam to declare *jihād*, if necessary, by violating or terminating the pacts and treaties previously entered into with the infidels. In other words, the Shariat asks the Muslims to look upon treaties with infidels as no more than temporary expedients to be dispensed with when these no longer serve their purpose. As already mentioned, immunity from such obligation to the unbelievers is enjoined in the Koran itself, but the Shariat spells it out with absolute frankness. Says the *Hidāyah*: If the Imam makes peace with aliens for a single term, and afterwards perceives that it is most advantageous for Muslims to break it, he may in that case lawfully break it after giving due notice; because upon the change of circumstances the breach of peace is war and the observance of it is a desertion of war; and war is an ordinance of God, and the forsaking of it is not becoming.

(4) Is there any room for civilised rules in the war that is *jihād*? None whatsoever, declares the Shariat. The Mussalmans must attack the infidels with all manner of warlike engines (as the Prophet did by the people of Taif) and must also set fire to their habitations (in the same manner the Prophet fired the Baweera) and must inundate them with water, and tear up their plantations and tread down their grain. These means are all sanctioned by law.

(5) Is it permissible to kill women and children in *jihād*? Better not, says the *Hidāyah*, not because they are to be pitied but because they constitute booty. But if the *mujāhid* does kill them, he is not liable to punishment or fine, because that which protects (that is Islam) does not exist in them. Clearly, the Shariat is no believer in understatement or the soft option.

(6) It is evident that the Shariat is bent upon taking the injunctions of the Koran and the Hadis to their logical end. Thus it is not prepared to release captives even after they have decided to profess Islam. They have to be sold as slaves, says the *Hidāyah* because the reason for making them slaves had existence previous to their embracing the faith.

(7) Even a non-Muslim captive is not to be ransomed for his Mussalman opposite number. The argument of Hanifa, says the *Hidāyah*, is that such an exchange is an assistance to the infidels; because these captives will again return to fight the Mussalmans which is an evil.² In fact, the emphasis in the Shariat is towards slaughtering the kafir prisoners, kafir-slaughter being preferable to having Muslim prisoners released.

It is not possible in so short a notice to do justice to the vast literature of the Shariat on the single subject of *jihād*. But the foregoing material is quite adequate to explain the tendency of this literature. That tendency is to close whatever loophole for charity might exist in the exceedingly sanguinary business called *jihād*. It is not as if the injunctions of the Koran and the Hadis are not sanguinary enough. But the Shariat is all the more so and

even a cursory glance at this literature brings out the hollowness of the claim put forth by modern apologists like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who would have us believe that *jihād* is nothing but a species of defensive warfare. Azad has indeed appealed from the Shariat to the Koran. But as has been clearly pointed out in the previous pages, that book itself suggests very little foundation for such a belief. I have also shown that the Hadis does even less. And the Shariat clinches the matter beyond any scope for ambiguity or equivocation. As the *Hidāyah*, at the very start of its pedantic exercise on the subject of *jihād* points out: [*jihād*] is established as a divine ordinance by the word of God, who has said in the Koran slay the infidels and also by a saying of the Prophet: war is permanently established until the day of the Judgment. This shows that the Shariat merely confirms the doctrines of the Koran and the Hadis, and adds to them only incidentally.

Footnotes:

¹ *The Hedaya*, translated by Hamilton, Book IX, Chapter II.

² It is, however, fair to mention that the school of Imam Hanîfah is not unanimous on this point.

10

Jihād and Religious Riot

An important question relating to the subject of *jihād* is this: in mixed populations consisting of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, should this sanguinary creed not inevitably lead to religious riots? Certainly, the Koran furnishes us with verses which have the appearance of extremely provocative utterances aimed at rousing the Mussalmans to a state of murderous mob-fury. Go forth light armed and heavy armed and strive with your wealth and your lives in the way of Allah, says the Koran (9/41). A verse of this kind does look like being more in the nature of a rabble-rousing ejaculation than a proclamation of preplanned and premeditated warfare. Slay the idolaters wherever you find them (9/5) is again, to all appearances, a call to lawless violence rather than a general's directive to draw the battle lines with discipline and forethought. Indeed, the whole group of the so-called Immunity Verses (9/1-12) of the Koran seems for all practical purposes to indicate a sort of abdication of the Islamic state's responsibility for law and order by asking the Muslim masses to destroy the infidel population by whatever means available to them. A close examination of the context and consequences of the verses is, therefore, necessary to investigate the question of the relation of the doctrine of *jihād* to religious riot.

As has been mentioned earlier, the Immunity Verses of *S'rah Taubah* were issued in early 631 AD to inform the idolaters of Arabia that after the expiry of 4 months their religion would no longer be tolerated. As Mohammed Pickthall, the orthodox translator of the Koran, mentions in the introduction to this *s'rah*, these verses formed the proclamation of Immunity from obligation toward the idolaters and signified the end of idolatry in Arabia. But how was that end to be achieved? By slaying the idolaters indiscriminately, says the Koran; by besieging them and by laying for each of them an ambush. In other words, Allah does appear to have sanctioned, by these

verses, religious riots on an unprecedented scale.

But did the Prophet so interpret them? The biographies do not narrate any large-scale riot following upon the issuance of these verses. It has to be remembered that the Prophet survived these injunctions by only about a year, and most of the time he was receiving delegations from the tribes of Arabia offering voluntary submission and voluntary adhesion to his creed. Information regarding forcible conversions during the period is scanty; and apart from the riot-mongering verses of the Koran mentioned above, we are not informed of any specific instance of religious riot actually taking place in pursuance of them. In the technical language of Islam, we should say that the riot-mongering verses did not in fact give rise to a body of Sunnah to illustrate them.

But indeed such Sunnah is not necessary. The Islamic concepts of *Dār-ul-Islam* (territory of Islam) and *Dār-ul-harb* (territory of war), which originated from the jihadic provisions of the Koran and the Hadis, seem to have grown out of this very dilemma. These concepts presuppose the extermination of Arabian idolaters by the power of the state, while in non-Arab Islamic states the practice is to spare the lives of idolaters on payment of the poll-tax. Such an arrangement dispenses with the need for religious riots in Islamic states for the simple reason that the state on its own does the work of conversion or refrains from it according to its own convenience. In these states, the populace is absolved from its duty of ❖slaying the infidels❖ indiscriminately.

By the same token, non-Islamic states with a large body of Muslim population must of necessity give rise to religious riots, if the Ulema declare these states to be *Dār-ul-harb*. The Immunity Verses of the Koran must, in the nature of things, come into full play in such states. In this restricted sense at least, *jihād* and religious riot are one.

Who would give the call for such riots? It has been shown in the previous chapter that *jihād* cannot start without the Imam pronouncing a call for it. It has also been pointed out that in Islamic states, the king is the person best qualified to pronounce such a call. But in *Dār-ul-harb* such an Imam is obviously not available. So any person with the requisite Islamic qualifications can give the call for *jihād*, and even the Imam who leads the congregation in Friday prayers can very well undertake the job. Needless to say, such a *jihād* can hardly turn out to be anything but a species of religious riot.

To illustrate such *jihāds*, which should more properly be called *jihād*-riots as distinct from a full-fledged *jihād*, I should give some examples from India❖s recent history. In such a case, historical examples of lesser Imams must replace the Prophet❖s Sunnah if only because the Prophet❖s career antedated the doctrine of *Dār-ul-harb*.

(1) The first considerable religious riot in India under British rule was the so-called Mopla rebellion of 1921 which occurred in Malabar as an offshoot of the Khilafat Movement. The Moplas burst into unprecedented violence against the British, following upon the Khilafat Committee❖s call for the same addressed to the believing population of Malabar. As it turned out, most of the casualties in this *jihād* were Hindus rather than the British. Hundreds of Hindu women jumped into wells to save their honour, others being ravished and slaughtered with absolute indifference by blood-thirsty *mujāhids*. Hundreds of corpses of Hindu women as well as children were recovered from the wells

after the end of the riots. The call for this *jihād* had been pronounced by the Ali Brothers, Hasrat Mohani, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Mahatma Gandhi himself acknowledged these atrocities as part of Islam's holy war. He referred to the *mujāhids* as God-fearing Moplas and said: They were fighting for what they consider as religion and in a manner which they consider as religious. Needless to say, such manner of fighting for such a cause is the essence of an Islamic *jihād*. It should be mentioned that leaders like Azad gave the call for *jihād* against the British rather than the Hindus, but it is not known how they intended to confine the war against a single class of infidels.

(2) The Great Calcutta Killing of 1946 was again the consequence of a call for *jihād*, which in this case was pronounced by Mohammed Usman, the Mayor of Calcutta at that time. He put the call in black and white and addressed the *mujāhids* as follows:

It was in this month of Ramzan that open war between Mussalmans and Kafirs started in full swing. It was in this month that we entered victorious into Mecca and wiped out the idolaters. By Allah's will, the All India Muslim League has selected the selfsame month of Ramzan to start its *jihād* for realising Pakistan.¹

(3) The holocaust in Noakhali in the same year (1946) was likewise intended as a full-fledged *jihād*. The call in this case was pronounced by Gholam Sarwar, a Muslim M.L.A. from those parts. Gholam Sarwar's call was not documented, but the report submitted by Judge Simpson clearly refers to large-scale conversion of Hindus to Islam by application of force in village after village. In many instances, upon the refusal of the menfolk to embrace Islam, their women were kept confined and converted under duress.² All these of course were characteristic of a true *jihād*.

This was not all. As in Calcutta, the Noakhali riots were characterised by the dishonouring of thousands of Hindu women. There were clear indications that these unfortunate women were looked upon as the *mujāhids*' lawful plunder (*ghanîmah*). Baboo Rajendralal Roy, the President of Noakhali Bar Association, attempted to put up on his own some resistance to this *jihād*. The outcome of this resistance has been described by a contemporary writer: Rajenbaboo's head was presented to Gholam Sarwar on a platter, and two of his lieutenants received as guerdon both of his young daughters (in their harem).³

(4) The large-scale communal riots taking place in places like Aligarh, Bulandshahar and the like in December 1990, were all the handiwork of worshippers proceeding from mosques at the end of the Friday prayers. Most newspapers reported these riots, but none quoted the call given by the Imams.

(5) Almost all Hindus have in recent years been evicted from the Kashmir Valley as a result of *jihād*. This particular *jihād* has been authorised and financed by Pakistan and other Islamic countries. Clinton's America is the latest addition to the names of countries actively promoting this *jihād*. Of course, America has not called it a *jihād* but declared its support of the *mujāhids* in the name of Human Rights, which means the same.

(6) The large-scale arson of December 1992 occurring in Islamic Bangladesh in the wake of the demolition of the Babri structure at Ayodhya was characterised by gangrapes of

thousands of Hindu girls, assaults on Hindu temples, and widespread loot and violence. It had all the marks of a full-fledged *jihād*.

All these examples go to show that riots on many occasions break out in the name of *jihād*. I have mentioned Indian examples alone, but similar examples can no doubt be cited from most countries with a substantial Muslim population. It is a moot point whether such *jihād*-riots satisfy all the scriptural requirements of an unadulterated *Jihād fi Sabilillah* (*jihād* in the way of Allah). But there is little doubt that *jihād*-riots do take place. If a country with a sizeable Muslim population neglects the possibility of their incidence, it does so at its own peril. In India, for example, the ever-increasing uncertainty in Hindu-Muslim relations can be set down to our long-standing failure in taking a clear stand on the subject of riots inspired by the psychology of *jihād* endemic in the Muslim community. Before taking up this topic, I should give a summary of the discussion spread out in the foregoing chapters.

Footnotes:

¹ Translated from the Bengali original cited in R.C. Majumdar, *BāḪgādesher Itihāsa*, Volume IV.

² Ibid.

³ Benoy Bhushan Ghosh, *Dvijātittva O BāḪgāli*, p. 68.

11 Recapitulation

In summing up the contents of this book one must remember that its aim is the exposition of the theoretical aspects of *jihād*, and as such its subject is Islamic tenets rather than Islamic history. This remark applies with equal force to the brief historical accounts of the Prophet's own *jihāds* which this book mentions. These are intended as accounts of the Prophet's Sunnah or practice which is part and parcel of theoretical Islam as distinct from the Islam of history. The distinction is fundamental if only because not everything in the Prophet's own history is considered his Sunnah. His bloodless conquest of Mecca, for example, does not constitute a body of Sunnah, whereas his destruction of the Jewish clan of Kuraizah very much does so. This is because the latter act conforms to the Koranic injunction of making slaughter in the land while the former has no such scriptural backing. To put the whole matter in a nutshell: the Koran as the word of Allah supplies the injunction; the Hadis in the language of the Prophet confirms it; and the Sunnah gives a practical demonstration of the same and thereby acts as an exemplar to future performers of the hallowed exercise called *jihād*.

One thing regarding the present discussion requires particular emphasis. The reader must not suppose that my citations from the Koran are by any means full or exhaustive. I have discussed only those verses which seemed relevant to the subject. And as regards the Hadis, my citations have been fewer still. It is not even true that I have selected the most sanguinary verses in order to bring out the true nature of *jihād*. All through, my aim has been to highlight as many aspects of the subject as possible, and for this reason I have not

confined my attention to any single aspect, nor overburdened my analysis with innumerable citations. This is why I have not dilated on the speculations of the various schools of Shariat but referred to only those conclusions which confirm the scriptural injunctions or fix them with greater clarity. On the other hand, as my subject has been primarily Islamic *jihād* as expounded in the canonical literature, I have not referred to the concept of *jihād* as understood by the Sufis, the proponents of Islamic mysticism. But for the sake of completeness, I should mention that, according to some Sufis, the canonical *jihād* is *Jihād al-Asghar* or the *Lesser Jihād* whereas the war against one's sensual proclivities is *Jihād al-Akbar* or the *Greater Jihād*. In a word, the Sufis emphasize self-control rather than war against infidels in their conception of *jihād*. But whatever merit such a conception may possess, it is not known that Sufis in any country under Islam have made the slightest impact on their co-religionists in unsettling the deep-seated convictions regarding the bloodthirsty business that is *jihād*. For this reason, I take note of the Sufi conception of *jihād* for what it is worth, but do not find it necessary to discuss it at length.

If one were to summarise the contents of this book, the point that would need the uttermost emphasis is that *jihād* is a bloody confrontation with unbelievers; it is a war informed by the greatest possible spirit of aggression; and, more often than not, it is a war of deception and subterfuge. ♦ War is stratagem ♦ says the Prophet (*Sahih Muslim*, No. 4311) - a *hadīs* to which Aurangzeb was particularly addicted. But it would be wrong to suppose that the Koran nowhere mentions *jihād* as a species of war in self-defence. According to verses 2/190-92 of the Koran:

♦ Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth not aggressors.

♦ And slay them wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out ♦ And fight them not at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you, then slay them ♦ But if they desist then lo! Allah is Forgiving Merciful. ♦

These verses clearly preach war in self-defence alone. Although they are sanguinary enough, it is astonishing how they attempt to combine some sort of humanity in a counsel of reckless bloodshed. On the face of it, they do not indeed advocate aggressive warfare, so much so that they forbid excesses committed even in self-defence. But what lurks behind that seemingly benevolent face does not appear all that benevolent. This is a matter on which we need not go by these verses alone. Very many verses of the Koran and the whole of the Hadis literature breathe the spirit of unqualified aggression. We need refer to the Immunity Verses alone (K 9/1-12) to have a feel of that spirit. As regards the Sunnah, not a single *ghazwah* (=war led by the Prophet in person) of the Prophet, barring that of Uhud (AD 625) and Ahzāb (AD 627), can by any stretch of imagination be reckoned defensive war. In other words, 24 out of the 26 *ghazwahs* of the Prophet were aggressive in intent as well as execution. It has been argued that these aggressive confrontations were necessary if only to make Islam survive under uncongenial surroundings. This is at best dubious reasoning if we remember that, at Medina, Islam had found a haven of safety and security. But even if we accept this reasoning as valid, the aggressive nature of the *ghazwahs* of the Prophet can hardly be wished away. What,

however, is more to the purpose is the fact that whatever justification we can plead in favour of these wars of early Islam, their status as a body of canonical Sunnah, to be emulated till the end of the world, can hardly be dismissed as a relic of the past. The Koran itself does not always conceal the world-conquering mission of Islam behind ambiguous verbiage. ♦O ye who believe! What aileth you when it is said unto you: Go forth in the way of Allah, ye are bowed to the ground with heaviness?♦ If ye go not forth He will afflict you with a painful doom, and will choose instead of you a folk other than you♦ (K 9/38, 39). It is this strain which is the informing note of most of the jihād verses of the Koran, the verses of self-defence being only a streak of pacifism that is both specious and unconvincing.

(2) A second point of importance arising out of the present discussion is this: the aim and the fruits of *jihād* have all been spelled out in a manner which is in perfect consonance with its overwhelmingly aggressive design and intent. This is why although the conversion of unbelievers to Islam is recognised as the supreme aim of *jihād*, the call for such conversion has not been made a compulsory pre-requisite for mounting a jihadic offensive. This again is the reason why this supreme aim has, in the Koran as well as the Hadis, generally been made subservient to the comparatively minor aims of plunder, *jizyah*, and slaughter. ♦Eat ye the spoils of war. They are lawful and pure♦ (K 8/69) - such pronouncements have often been made in a louder and loftier voice than the call for spreading Islam. A *hadīs* in the collection by Tirmizī contains the singular exhortation: ♦Spread ye *salām* (the Islamic mode of salutation); feed ye the people that go without food; and strike ye down the heads of unbelievers.♦ Tirmizī himself considers this *hadīs* *gharīb*, that is to say, poor in authenticity. But it can hardly be denied that the keynote of the jihadic injunctions of the Koran and the Hadis is the assumption of the most intimate relationship between such expressions of Islamic deportment as *salām* and such Islamic achievements as striking down the heads of unbelievers. It must also be remembered that even the recommendation for concubinage with captured kafir women does not occur in the Koran in only one verse and in an involuntary fit of divinely inspired lasciviousness, so to say. Its repetition in so many verses cannot but raise in our mind the question: could not the repetition of such pronouncements be avoided in what is supposed to be the Holy Book of Islam? Small wonder that religious riots are invariably marked by violation of infidel women, even when loss of life is minimal.

12 Conclusion

In concluding this small treatise on the important Islamic doctrine of *jihād*, the reader must be reminded that it does not purport to be a critique of Islam as such. Even in the restricted field of its survey, its aim has been descriptive rather than critical. But before one leaves the subject it is only fair to address to the reader certain reflections which the foregoing discussion inevitably raises.

(1) The first reflection is on the failure of the world at large to take note of this creed of hate and violence, and get forewarned as to the peril it entails to the civilisation of all non-Muslim peoples including those who profess Christianity. The decline of the West, of

which Spengler wrote, is nowhere so evident as in its total indifference to the Islamic doctrine of *jihād*, and in the absolute neglect of its duty to confront such a creed intellectually while broadcasting over the whole world its pernicious implications. Thanks to the money-power of the oil-rich Arab countries, Islam has spread its tentacles to the farthest point of the globe, and is making known its intention of world-domination in no uncertain terms. The intellect of the West looks at the spectacle, benumbed and fascinated, sometimes breaking into loud acclamations as to the glory that is Islam, and sometimes mumbling incoherent protests against its ♦fundamentalism♦. As Nirad Chaudhury has pointed out, this division of Islam into two variants - the one Fundamentalist and the other Liberal - is the result of ♦either ignorance or repulsive hypocrisy♦. Whatever else may get liberalised, *jihad* cannot; and the West♦s failure to understand the true nature of the current Islamic Revival must be recognised as the most colossal intellectual failure of the present epoch. It is against the background of this failure that a great many contemporary events have to be judged: the West♦s prevarication with the events in Bosnia or in Kashmir; its impatience with Israel in its life-and-death struggle in surroundings where a single false step could spell its destruction; and, coming to a lower plane, the Prince of Wales♦s breaking out into singing the glory of Islam from a public platform.

(2) As regards Christian missionaries, their record is worse still. Despite the far-flung apparatus of proselytisation they have built up over the centuries, their latter-day flirtation with Islam is probably the stupidest thing these worthies have done at the end of nearly two thousand years of unceasing effort towards leading the ♦benighted heathens♦ of the world to the fold of Christianity. Apparently this flirtation ♦is aimed at peaceful conversion of the pagan peoples of Asia and Africa in some sort of collaboration with the Islamic zealots active in those countries and without causing them any unnecessary heartburn. But it is certainly the strangest marriage of convenience that could ever take place between two parties who have always been at loggerheads with each other. Also it must be remembered that the study of Islam and world♦s acquaintance with its awful doctrines started with these missionaries themselves. True, after the initial centuries of mud-slinging at the prophet of Islam, Christian scholars had been sobered by the reflection that in view of the identity of their own creed of monotheism with Islam, a wholesale condemnation of the latter would involve a condemnation of their own religion. But till the end of the 19th century these scholars had a clear understanding of their task. They did not fail to recognise the doctrine of *jihād* for what it was - a code of murder and rapine disguised under a thin coating of religious verbiage. Also, however enamoured they might have been of the Koran♦s full-throated pagan-bashing, they never forgot the supposed superiority of the Christian revelation. Even so serious a scholar as Sir William Muir did not fail to administer a large dose of Christianity in his monumental biography of the Prophet. Muir knew, as all Christian missionaries knew in those days, that their greatest adversary in the business of proselytisation was Islam. It is therefore incomprehensible that their latter-day descendants should join hands with Islam in every country of Asia and Africa in the game of proselytising the pagans of those lands.

The worth of the short-lived gains they have thus achieved in those countries must be viewed against the forces they have unleashed in their continuing flirtation with the

Islamic establishment. They must know that a newly baptized pagan is more vulnerable to the blandishments of Islam than an unregenerate pagan rooted in unalloyed heathenism. The small dose of monotheism administered through Christianity merely removes the pagan's safeguards and renders him inclined to a larger and a more massive dose of the same. And the toothless Christianity of the 20th century, preached by means of fraud and bribery and a prodigious establishment of social service, will certainly prove no match for Islam when the latter sets out to declare full-fledged *jihād* against the converts which Christianity has gained by years of hard labour and a mind-boggling expenditure of money. The Western powers will certainly go through the motions of protesting against the iniquities of such rampant fundamentalism, but will do precious little to save those converts for Christianity. Christian missionaries should take lesson from the fate of the Christians under the Ottoman Empire, and, for the matter of that, under its Kemalist successors. Slowly and surely, Turkey has been denuded of the Christian element in its population, with the Western powers looking on in blissful unconcern. There is no reason to believe that the same fate does not await the new converts to Christianity in Asia and Africa. Certainly the present-day flirtation of Christian missionaries with Islam in these countries bodes little good to Christianity's long-term ends. Before it is too late the Christian churches should take a hard look at this self-defeating policy of their missionary establishments and warn their countries as to its possible outcome.

(3) Coming to India, the future of Hindus who form the bulk of the population of this country seems grim indeed if their obstinate refusal to face the reality of the current Islamic Revival with its pronounced jihadic overtones continues as before. Hindus have been victims of *jihād*-riots in an ever-increasing progression since the infamous Mopla riots of 1921. Political independence, besides giving rise to an Islamic state wedded to the goal of reconquering the whole of India for Islam, witnessed a genocidal slaughter of Hindus the like of which is not known in world history. The Indian State since 1947 has persistently refused to investigate these riots and lay bare the jihadic motivation behind them. This, however, is a large subject with prodigious political dimensions, and no proper discussion of it can be made within the compass of this book. I would confine myself to a few remarks of a general nature regarding how Hindus and peace-loving Muslims should address themselves to the Islamic creed under discussion.

As for Hindus, they should clearly understand that the doctrine of *jihād* is absolutely fatal to their life and property, not to speak of the honour of their womenfolk. If the Hindu does not make a serious and determined effort towards persuading his Muslim brethren to renounce the doctrine of *jihād*, if he does not devote his heart and soul to devise adequate means of achieving that end, in a word, if he does not shed his deep-seated indifference to things Islamic, then he is most certainly proceeding towards self-destruction and that too in a not very distant future. To realise the overwhelming urgency of this matter, it is only necessary to point out that, starting from the Islamic revolution of Khomeini's Iran, Muslims all over the world are hell-bent on reviving the jihadic frenzy of 7th century Islam. That Mussalmans of India should continue to feed on such frenzy and that Hindus should persist in their delusion regarding the feasibility of peaceful coexistence with such a frenzied folk, does no longer make sense.

Muslims on their part must clearly understand that the doctrine of *jihād*, however useful

it may be in promoting their worldly interests and ensuring their eternal felicity in the hereafter, can hardly command the approbation of men possessed of even a modicum of rationality and sense of justice. An argumentative Muslim might plead that *jihād* is his only weapon for self-defence in a hostile world; but no one in his senses would really declare permanent war against unbelievers on such a plea. Self-defence is certainly every man's birthright and one can very well sympathize with a person going to war in order to establish his birthright; but *jihād* is hardly ever such a defensive war. *Jihād* is total war aimed at exterminating all unbelievers from the face of the earth, and whoever justifies such war on the plea of self-defence plays a gigantic game of deception on people's credulity.

If this reasoning be admitted, the question that immediately suggests itself is this: is it possible to have a version of Islam that may be called *Islam without jihād*? Is such an Islam not a truncated Islam? I should attempt an answer to this second question first.

It requires but little reflection to note that Islam in its pure form - the Islam that is firmly and unalterably rooted in the teachings of the Koran and the Hadis - exists nowhere in the modern world. A big example of the altered state of affairs is the obsolescence of slavery and the maintaining of slave concubines which, according to the Koran, is the birthright of every Muslim and the privilege of every *mujāhid*. The practice is sanctioned in the Koran and the Hadis and confirmed by the Prophet's Sunnah. Despite such incontrovertible pleas of legality and respectability, these two customs are no longer defended in Islamic countries, and even the Ulema do not preach these usages with their accustomed fervour. If, however, the Prophet's Sunnah be binding on every Muslim, then it follows that no practice sanctioned by him can count as being of temporary validity. ♦It becometh not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided an affair (for them) that they should claim any say (in it), ♦ says the Koran (33/36). If this be true, then it is obvious that the observance of one part of the Sunnah to the neglect of another would prove destructive to the whole theory of the Sunnah. If the Sunnah for the slave concubine be temporary, on what authority will the Sunnah for *jihād* count as permanent? The Koranic authority for both being similar, how do we distinguish between the relative worth of either?

Indeed, the matter does not seem to admit of any very considerable controversy. Theologians of Islam divide the whole gamut of Islamic duties into five clear divisions: (1) *Itiqādāt*, implying matters of belief; (2) *ʿādāb*, the system of Islamic moralities; (3) *Ibādāt*, involving matters of religious practice like prayers and fasting including the practice of *jihād*; (4) *Muʿmalāt* which includes laws of business transactions; and (5) *Uqʿbāt*, penal provisions of Islam. Out of these five divisions, the last two, namely, *Muʿmalāt* and *Uqʿbāt* are in a state of obsolescence in most countries under Islam. It stands to reason that Islam in its pristine purity is non-existent in most Islamic countries. In view of this it is sheer perverseness to argue that Islamic *Ibādāt* is not susceptible to any such modification as the renunciation of *jihād* would imply.

It may be objected that the Koran pronounces the undertaking of *jihād* to constitute a Mussalman's supreme duty, whereas no such pronouncement is available for divisions like *Muʿmalāt* and *Uqʿbāt*. But contrariwise, one can also argue that the Sunnah of the Prophet has been declared to be perfect in its totality, the greatest good of a

Mussalman's existence being supposed to consist in an unquestioning copying of the Prophet's life-style. Now if the Mussalman, even with such deep-seated conviction regarding the inviolability of Sunnah, can choose to violate the Prophet's Sunnah with respect to slavery and slave concubinage, and indeed to consider such violation as being of perfect validity, then the violation of the injunction of *jihād* can certainly not be faulted on any count. What we should take up instead is an investigation into the obstacles to such a step.

The greatest obstacle is no doubt the education imparted in the *maktabs* and *madrasahs* - the seminaries that teach the tenets of Islam. The Ulema would not allow the infringement of a single tenet, at least on the plane of theory. That they have not renounced even the injunction regarding slave concubines whom one's right hands possesses, comes out most clearly in communal riots in India in which the violation of Hindu women always forms a part of the ritual. It is doubtful if all communal riots are started by the Ulema, but the lesson that infidel women are lawful plunder for Muslim rioters in their role of *mujāhids* is undoubtedly inculcated in Islamic seminaries managed and governed by the Ulema. Without a thorough-going reform of this system of education, the prospect for *Islam without jihād* is bleak indeed.

It is here that India's Secularism is attended with the biggest question mark in its day to day observance. Since 1947, thousands of Islamic seminaries have sprung up throughout the length and breadth of this country in pursuance of clauses in our Constitution, and the Indian State is prevented from interfering in their management by the operation of those very clauses. Leading the Mussalmans to the path of peaceful coexistence with their Hindu neighbours by appealing to such Secularism, is an expectation ludicrous in itself; but the deception played upon peace-loving Muslims by this sop of Secularism is worse still. The intolerably farcical element in this sordid business is the unceasing propaganda, daily mounted in our media with screaming headlines and loud protestations, in favour of this very Secularism and the State's proclamation that without this policy no communal amity is possible in India. This assertion is of course the exact opposite of the truth. A Secularism that allows reckless proliferation of Islamic seminaries without any attempt to reform their system of education is the surest pathway to unhindered communal discord.

Is it possible to remove these forbidding obstacles? Could those Mussalmans to whom the cause of communal concord is dearer than jihadic outbursts of Islam, devise a way to preach the message of *Islam without jihād*? To outward seeming the feasibility of such preaching appears remote indeed. But even in Islam there are some pathways for peace and communal concord. These are of course narrow and beset with insurmountable hurdles, but honest and sincere endeavour on the part of earnest Mussalmans can perhaps make them broader and more accessible to the generality of Muslims.

It must be remembered that the Koran itself has recorded the hesitant murmurings of certain followers of early Islam who had wanted respite from the duty of *jihād* (4/77), and others who had preferred service to pilgrims as a better Islamic duty than going into battle against infidels (9/19-22). It is true that on both occasion Allah dismissed their conscientious objections peremptorily; but even after that the trend persisted. The *hadīs* which declares that the Prophet had not been sent to preach the pacifism of Jews and Christians acquires significance in this context. The peace-loving

Mussalman in our own day can appeal to these incidents and forestall the objection of die-hard *mujāhids* by pleading that Allah himself had enjoined the duty of war as a contingent one necessitated by circumstances.

Indeed a close study of the Koran would convince any one that the duty of *jihād* was all along ◊contingent◊ as distinguished from the ◊permanent◊ duties of prayer, pilgrimage and the like. It was in fact no part of the Meccan dispensation, but was enjoined only in Medina for the expansion of Islam which was made possible only under certain exceptional circumstances. Peace-loving Mussalmans of our time can very well plead that an essentially contingent injunction can claim no permanent validity and that the duty of *jihād* can be set aside following the change of circumstances.

Such a movement for *Islam without jihād* would obviously require a thorough-going reform in the existing scheme of Islamic education obtaining in India. The Indian State◊s supine indifference to such reform is not only reprehensible in itself, but also goes against all the lessons of history. As early as 1871, W.W. Hunter (in his *Indian Mussalmans*) had impressed upon the then British-Indian Government the absurdity of the British-managed Calcutta Madrasa providing an educational fare in which *jihād* formed a large part of the curriculum prepared for Muslim students. The present Indian State has produced few administrators of Hunter◊s calibre, and the frequent outpourings of its spokesmen regarding the noble and peace-loving faith of Islam are not known to have made the slightest dent into the scheme of Islamic education obtaining under the present regime. Such a scheme of education must be overhauled, yielding place to a more suitable one.

Indeed the movement for *Islam without jihād* can never be organised by Muslims alone, however well-intentioned. Such a movement requires the active cooperation of Hindus as well as the Indian State. Had the Indian State sponsored *Islam without jihād* since its inception, there is little doubt that by now the leadership of the Muslim community would have passed on to peace-loving Muslims. But right from the start the Muslim element in India◊s political set up had been under the shadow of the Ulema of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad◊s vintage. Till now the preponderating force in India◊s polity has been the Azad-Nehru axis. This force never emphasized the possible role of pacifism in Islam. Since the days of the Khilafat agitation, Azad had been proclaiming the role of the sword in Islam. In his view of course this sword was the sword of self-defence, but as has been shown in the course of this work, it is pre-eminently the sword for the destruction of infidels. The confusion was worse confounded by the fathers of our Constitution labouring under an invincible ignorance regarding the tenets of Islam.

If the truth were to be told, the greatest enemies of Muslim pacifism have not been the Ulema but the so-called secularists of India, most of them hailing from Hindu society itself. The ignorance of these worthies in regard to everything Islamic has to be seen to be believed. The only consolation they can derive is from the fact that at present such ignorance is a universal phenomenon. The Western world◊s intellectual decline is nowhere so manifest as in this context. India◊s Secularism is on its own admission merely a pale imitation of its Western original which itself has nowhere taken note of the Islamic doctrine of *jihād*. Consequently, the riot-prone behaviour pattern of the immigrant Muslim population in Western countries has left them helpless and guessing.

The Western media call it ❖ethnic unrest❖ - a stupid description betraying abysmal ignorance about the nature of Islam.

The Indian State can seek consolation from the fact that its own Muslim problem has gradually tended to become a problem for the whole world. The problem cannot be solved without attempting far-reaching reform in Islam in general and Islamic education in particular. Islam being a world phenomenon, Indians cannot do much towards achieving such reform. But the ❖Secular State❖ of India has never attempted even the little that it could achieve. The State which offers no helping hand to such unfortunate victims of Islam as the helpless Shah Bano and the scholarly Mushir-ul-Hassan but which confers honours on such exponents of *jihād* as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, has certainly forfeited every right to exist except on the sufferance of the hundreds and thousands of *mujāhids* it sustains and nurtures and daily inspires with the holy resolve to destroy its very foundation.