

A scenic view of a Swiss mountain valley. In the foreground, a dirt road curves through a green field. In the middle ground, a small village with traditional houses and a church with a steeple is visible. A winding asphalt road leads through the valley. The background features lush green forests and majestic mountains with patches of snow under a clear blue sky.

# MY JOURNEY TO SWITZERLAND THE ROAD TO WORLD PEACE

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

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## THE ROAD TO WORLD PEACE

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

*Translated by:*  
Prof. Farida Khanam

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This book is an English translation of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's travelogue published in *Al-Risala August 2003*, entitled, *Switzerland ka Safar*.

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## FOREWORD

I have been associated with the issue of peace directly or indirectly since 1950. I have participated in many peace conferences in India and abroad. In addition, a considerable number of my writings have been published on this subject. Here I would like to refer to three international peace conferences that I participated in, held under the auspices of the Nuclear Disarmament Forum.

The first conference in this connection was held from the 25<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> of July, 2001, at Kandersteg, Switzerland, on “How to make a nuclear-free world”. On this occasion, I first suggested following a unilateral policy for nuclear disarmament. This idea was greatly appreciated by Mr. Andre Bykov, the Chairman of the Nuclear Disarmament Forum. I was asked to prepare a document on this topic which was presented at the end of the conference at a function held in the historical city of Zug (Switzerland).

Given the spirit of the Zug declaration, I prepared two pamphlets titled *A Manifesto of Peace and The Road to Paradise*. This idea of unilateralism is rapidly gaining ground. My booklet was distributed to all the participants at the second conference held by the Forum in Ashdown Forest (England) in September 2001. The third conference was held on October 12, 2002, in Zug, Switzerland. The present book is a travelogue of the author's journey to Switzerland in October 2002.

The central book theme of the book is to present the ideology of peace to the world that is a guide for nuclear disarmament and offers a peaceful solution to Muslim militancy. The solution to nuclear disarmament is that one superpower unilaterally starts destroying its pile of nuclear weapons without insisting that it be done on a bilateral basis. This will create a compulsive atmosphere for the other party to follow the same course, for it would then lose the justification for keeping its nuclear arsenal.

As regards the case of Muslim militancy, in my view, it is not a case of bomb vs bomb, but an ideology vs ideology. To Muslim militancy, we have to change the thinking of those involved in violent activism by presenting the Islamic ideology of peace based on

## FOREWORD

Islam's sources. Once they understand that Islam does not sanction violent activism, the perpetrators of violence will leave it of their own choice.

I have presented a complete ideology of peace for life and given the Islamic perspective on issues like jihad, establishing peace in Kashmir and Palestine, the search for Truth, the existence of God, the purpose of life, mind-based spirituality, and the need for spirit-based religion. This book is a gift to the new generation from a peace-loving person to find inner peace and become contributors to world peace.

Wahiduddin Khan

New Delhi, India

January 1, 2021



## MY JOURNEY TO SWITZERLAND

There is an international organisation based in Europe called 'Peace International'. The 'Nuclear Disarmament Forum' is a subsidiary of this organisation and has its headquarters in Switzerland. In May 2002, our office received a note which mentioned, among other things, that an international conference had taken place in September 2001, where I had put forward a proposal for establishing a worldwide movement for nuclear disarmament, encouraging Russia to make the first step. This was later published as a booklet entitled *Manifesto of Peace*. Furthermore, the note mentioned that the Nuclear Disarmament Forum had accepted this proposal.

Not long after this, we received a letter, dated 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2002, from Peace International, which, among other things, mentioned that Peace International and the Nuclear Disarmament Forum had jointly selected me for an international peace award. The award function was held on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2002 at Zug, a historical place in Switzerland. The letter mentioned that the decision to give me this Award was adopted by the Board of Directors of the Nuclear Disarmament Forum on the recommendation of the Demiurgus

Peace International Council. The letter stated that the Award was presented to individuals and public organisations for outstanding achievements in strengthening peace among nations. It added, 'We are deeply convinced that your unique personal contribution towards the cause of peace for many years fully justifies our choice.' The following five people signed the letter: Anatoly Karpov (President of the Board), Andrey Bykov (Vice-President of the Board), Alban Brodbeck (Member of the Board), Otto C. Meier-Boeschenstein (Member of the Board), and Hans-Rudolf Wild.

Thus, along with my companions, Dr. Saniyasnain Khan, Prof. Farida Khanam, Dr. Rajat Malhotra, Priya Mallik and Khalid Ansari, I set off on a journey to Switzerland. I had many different experiences during the trip, and I witnessed many things. Here, I briefly present an account of some highlights of the trip and some of my insights and impressions.

I had visited Switzerland earlier too. My first trip was in 1986, which was for a conference held in Geneva. An account of that journey appeared in two instalments in the February and March 1987 issues of the Urdu journal, *Al-Risala*. My second trip to Switzerland was in July 2001, which was at the invitation of the

Nuclear Disarmament Forum. A narrative of that journey was published in the March 2002 issue of *Al-Risala*. Moreover, in October 2002, this latest journey was my third to Switzerland. Once again, it was at the invitation of the Nuclear Disarmament Forum, which, as indicated earlier, is a wing of an organisation called 'Peace International'.

## SWITZERLAND: A MODEL OF PEACE

**I**n terms of peace, Switzerland is a model country. Located in Central Europe, Switzerland is a landlocked country. It does not have a coastline. Some people might think that for a country to lack access to the sea is a significant limitation. However, despite this supposed limitation, Switzerland is a highly developed country.

Iraq has only a remote coastline. To make up for this supposed limitation, it mobilised a massive amount of resources, built up a vast army, and attacked neighbouring Kuwait, so that it could capture its coastal area and thereby compensate for its small coastline. Now, what was the outcome of this action? Its outcome was that Iraq was ravaged by a war it had

not yet recovered from. Switzerland, which has no coastline, is continuing to make remarkable progress, while Iraq was so severely devastated by the war that was unleashed that perhaps not even in the successive hundred years can it make up for what it has lost and the damage that it has suffered.



Switzerland is a peaceful country. It maintains peace while being beneficial to its neighbouring countries. Therefore, it was apt that these Peace Conferences were held in Switzerland.

This stark contrast between the conditions of these two countries can be said to be because of the difference between a peaceful policy, on the one hand, and a violent policy, on the other. Switzerland made up for its lack of a coastline by following a peaceful policy of not maintaining any powerful army, so that none of its neighbouring countries would be afraid of

it. Instead, it unilaterally established good relations with its neighbouring countries. It made benefitting others, not harming them, its policy. In contrast, Iraq adopted just the opposite policy. The results clearly show us which of these two policies proved more beneficial.

## BENEFITS OF KEEPING A POSITIVE MENTALITY

**O**n our visit to Switzerland, we met with an Indian Muslim. He was travelling to Europe for some work. One of my companions excitedly told the Muslim gentleman that an international organisation in Switzerland had invited Maulana to give him a peace award. The man remarked, ‘The Indian Muslims are being ruined, so why this joy on this award?’

This negative thinking regarding the conditions of the Indian Muslims is not some isolated or individual case. Instead, this thinking is found among almost all the Muslims of India. All Muslim writers and public speakers write and speak in the same vein. Therefore, it has made the mindset of all Muslims a complaining one.

Later on, this Muslim man mentioned that before 1947 (i.e., in the period before India gained freedom from British rule), the economic conditions of his family were very ordinary. Today, this man runs an export business. Compared to 1947, he has progressed 100 times in economic terms. The very same thing is true for the majority of the Muslims of India. If you ask any Muslim in the country who is engaged in some work or the other how his family's economic conditions were in 1947 and how they are now, you will find that in this period, almost all Muslim individuals and every Muslim institution have experienced significant progress.

It is a very astonishing phenomenon. Before 1947, pro-Pakistan leaders said they would sacrifice the Indian Muslims and establish a separate Pakistan. Fanatic elements thought that after India attained independence, the Muslims who remained behind in India would meet the same fate as the Muslims of medieval Spain. Following India's independence, Indian Muslim leaders and intellectuals constantly claimed that a conspiracy was being carried out against the Indian Muslims in line with their earlier mentality. They were victims of severe prejudice and had been made a target of oppression. It was

as if, according to the Muslim media, a process of converting India into a second Spain was underway. However, despite all this, the Muslims of India continued their journey of remarkable progress.

Compare the conditions of the Muslims of Delhi today with how they were in 1947. Compare the economic conditions of the Muslims of Hyderabad today with how they were under the Nizam. Similarly, compare the conditions of Muslims in other cities and towns in India, and you will find that Muslims everywhere have, in this period, made remarkable progress. (For details, see my book, *Indian Muslims*)

This remarkable progress that occurred in the decades after India's independence needed to be researched, and lessons needed to be drawn from it. However, this did not happen. This is because the Muslims of present-day India live in a complaint psyche. People who live in a psyche of the complaint are as incapable of learning about positive realities as a mother-in-law, on account of her complaining mentality, remains unaware of the virtues of her daughter-in-law and, in the same way, a traditional daughter-in-law because of her complaining mentality, is unable to discover her mother-in-law's goodness.

With God's grace, I do not possess a complaining mentality. On account of my non-complaining and positive mentality, I have done unbiased research on the conditions of Indian Muslims. The greatest benefit of keeping a positive attitude is that our mind keeps calm, so it helps us to find ways to manage the situation. Following this, I discovered a great truth: that the remarkable progress experienced by the Indian Muslims in the years after 1947 is related to the changes that a new era has brought about.

Prior to 1947, India was in the agricultural age. At that time, economic means were minimal. Therefore, people could exert their efforts only in a limited sphere. However, after 1947, industrialisation rapidly spread. As a result, a process of what can be called an 'economic explosion' began. On account of these new conditions, it no longer remained possible for anyone to stop someone else's progress.

In the words of the Quran, this revolution was an issue of 'God will provide for him from an unexpected source' (65:3). It was something for which Muslims should have been filled with immense gratitude. However, their complaining mentality deprived them of understanding of this great discovery and, likewise, of great gratitude too.



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE IN THE MODERN AGE

I witnessed something of the same sort during this trip to Switzerland when I met an Arab Muslim there. He was an educated person, but he seemed to be a victim of a sense of despair. He presented a dark picture of the present-day Muslim world. For example, he said that he had come across a book in English that said that the Muslims of India were a deprived lot and that they had been rendered ineffective in the country's democracy. The name of the book, he said, was *Passive Voices*.

I replied to this man, saying that I had seen the book but that it did not present an accurate picture of the Indian Muslims. If he had an interest in the subject, I suggested, he could go to India and survey the Muslims there. For example, he could ask the Muslims he met how their economic conditions were in 1947 and how they are now. He would be surprised to find that almost every person would reply that compared to 1947, their economic conditions were much better now. Similarly, if he were to survey mosques, madrasas, and Muslim institutions in India

and compare their present economic conditions with what they were like in 1947, he would be surprised to see that they had witnessed remarkable progress.

I explained that the ancient age was, in economic terms, an age of agriculture and, in political terms, an age of monarchy. As a result, in the old age, power was the monopoly of only a handful of people—in the economic sphere, those who exercised control over agricultural land, and those who controlled the monarch's throne in the political sphere. However, these monopolies had been shattered in the new age. The modern industrial revolution had removed economic means from the control of landlords and made them available to the general public. The modern age was an age of de-monopolisation. In the same way, the modern ideological revolution based on democracy and freedom had removed political power from the narrow circle of erstwhile royal families and transferred it into the hands of the public at large. In the age of democracy, political power had been reduced to an administration, giving all opportunities and freedom to individuals and non-governmental organisations.



During the conference, Maulana explained that the modern age is an age of global opportunities. Everyone can avail of these opportunities without resorting to violence.

The modern age is an age of opportunities explosion in which opportunities are for everyone. In the wake of the modern economic revolution, it is not possible that any community can be a victim of deprivation. Cases of deprivation were a result of the age of agriculture. However, this deprivation is simply impossible in the modern economic era. For this reason, after 1947, the Muslims of India made significant economic progress. However, our Muslim leaders think in the framework of the structure of the pre-1947 age of agriculture. They have been unable to think in line with modern economic realities.

## GREAT BLESSINGS OF GOD

Our Swiss Air flight to Zurich was scheduled to depart from New Delhi on 11<sup>th</sup> October. We left in the form of a caravan, as it were—five companions, Dr. Saniyasnain Khan, Prof. Farida Khanam, Dr. Rajat Malhotra, Priya Mallik and Khalid Ansari, and myself. We arrived at the airport at 11 pm and boarded the flight, which was scheduled to take 8½ hours to reach its destination, which was at a distance of more than 6000 kilometres.

During the flight, I did a bit of reading. First, I glanced at the latest issue of the Swiss Air in-flight magazine. It had articles in English and German. Then, I came across an article that provided some information about Switzerland. It talked, for instance, about the extensive public transport system in the country and the fact that Switzerland has the most comprehensive cable railway system in the world.

I spotted a copy of the 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2002 issue of *The Times*, a daily newspaper from London. There was a picture of a massive statue of Iraq's President, Saddam Hussein on its front page. A man was standing in front of the statue, doing some work. Compared to the gigantic statue, he seemed like a dwarf! One of nine new statues was made at the Baghdad Fine Arts Academy.

I managed to get deep sleep on the flight. Sleep is a great blessing of God. It has innumerable benefits. About sleep, the French military and political leader Napoleon Bonaparte (d. 1821) said:

‘What a delightful thing rest is—The bed has become a luxury place to me. I would not exchange it for all the thrones in the world.’

(Napoleon Bonaparte)

The entire flight was very smooth, and so was the landing. How strange it is! A plane flies into the air, climbs to a height of eight or ten kilometres, and then later begins to descend slowly, finally landing at its destination. People consider such things as the handiwork of technology, but in fact, it is a great blessing of God that, in the words of the Quran, ‘He has given you all that you asked of Him.’ (14:34)

## CHALLENGE AND COMPETITION IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

**A**t Zurich airport, we met some delegates at the conference. We then set off by car for Zug. It was a journey of around an hour. The very smooth road passed through beautiful surroundings, with

abundant greenery and well-planned rows of buildings. Not once did a car overtake the vehicle we were travelling in. On the contrary, it seemed as if every car was moving ahead in its lane, in the same way as stars travel in their orbits. Furthermore, the person driving the car continuously provided us with information about the country, like a good guide.



While travelling to Zug, Maulana appreciated how the driver of every car was moving in its lane, in the same way as stars travel in their orbits.

We finally arrived at Zug, where arrangements had been made for accommodation in a hotel. Zug is a historical town consisting of two portions—

an old section and a new section. The town is located on the banks of a lake called Lake Zug. The first reference to Zug is from 1242 C.E. In 1273, Rudolf IV of Habsburg bought this area. In 1352, it was incorporated into the Swiss Confederation. In the period of what is called 'The Reformation', it remained Roman Catholic. There are still many historical buildings in the town.

There was a small library in the hotel suite where arrangements had been made for me to stay. It contained books on general topics. We placed some of our books in the library. I came across an English magazine, *Pearls of Switzerland*, in the library, where I spotted an article about education. A passage from the article, produced below, highlights some significant facts:

'The world economy is becoming increasingly global, and markets are virtually integrated. For a small and open economy like Switzerland's, globalisation and the integration of markets means that companies are in permanent competition with others. In such a marketplace, companies can only survive and gain market shares if they constantly develop new and original market products and services that respond to

customers' needs. Research and development, the generation of knowledge and know-how, innovation, and technological progress are crucial to this process.'

Some people want to respond to competition by demanding protective measures for themselves in our world. However, the wise policy is to face the challenge with proper preparation. One cannot face the challenge of competition by running away from it.

## INTERACTION WITH DELEGATES

The day of 11<sup>th</sup> October was primarily spent in meetings. Hundreds of people from different countries came to the conference. I met and exchanged views with some people. A European Christian professor asked a question about *jihad*. He said that the issue of *jihad* (in the sense of violent action) was related to the ancient age and that it had lost its relevance in the present age. He suggested the need for launching a movement in Islam like the Reformation and reviewing ancient Islamic teachings of Islam to make Islam compatible with the present times.





The interactions with the delegates from around the world allowed Maulana to share the Islamic perspective and realistic approaches.

I replied by expressing the view that Islam had a need, not for reform (*islah*) but, instead, for revival (*ihya*) and clarified that the actual meaning of *jihad* is a struggle for a noble cause. Some politically-oriented Muslims of later times had wrongly made the concept of *jihad* appear synonymous with armed action, but now there was a need to restore the accurate picture of the concept. I also pointed out the need to distinguish between Islam, on the one hand, and Muslims, on the other. Finally, I suggested to the professor that he should not form an opinion about Islam based on the words or actions of Muslims. Instead, he should gauge the Muslims' actions in the light of Islamic teachings.

In the evening, dinner had been arranged at Hotel Schweizerhof in Luzern. We were taken to Luzern by car. Before dinner, the conference's chief organiser, Mr. Andrey Beykov, delivered a speech. He thanked the participants who had come from different countries.

The chief guest of the dinner function was the former President of the former Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev. In the vast hall, people were sitting around different tables. Mr. Gorbachev was sitting at the same table as me. My chair was to the left of Mr. Gorbachev, and his translator's chair was to his right. Thus, Mr. Gorbachev's conversation mainly happened with me on this occasion.



Maulana spoke with former Russian President, Gorbachev, on Muslim militancy, explaining that it has no relation to Islam. Islam is entirely a peaceful religion.

Talking about the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet Russia, I said that this step had been a mistake. Mr. Gorbachev replied that they had only wanted co-operation from their neighbouring countries. I responded by saying that co-operation is good, but it is possible only using peaceful means, not military means. I further stated that Soviet Russia's invasion of Afghanistan had been a severe challenge to the Afghans. The culture of the Afghans is a war culture. To solve problems, they always think in terms of violence. Thus, they had replied to the Soviet military action through counter-military action. In addition, some other factors worked in favour of the Afghans. Thus, after suffering heavy losses, the Soviets had to pull out of Afghanistan.

Another issue that we talked about was how in contemporary terrorism, a large share is that of Muslims. I said that this point is valid but that these were the actions of some Muslims. They had no relation with Islam and that Islam is an entirely peaceful religion. In this regard, I referred to some Quranic verses.

A lady seated at the dinner table mentioned Mr. Gorbachev's late wife, Raisa. I told Mr. Gorbachev that 'Raisa' appeared to be a Muslim name and asked

him if his late wife had been a Muslim. He replied negatively, explaining that she had been associated with the Orthodox Church. However, he mentioned an interesting point about her. Even in the bitter cold of Moscow, she would step out in the mornings for a walk and would return after a long time. There was never any change in this practice of hers.

Liquor glasses were being placed on the table. I requested a hotel worker for some water. It led to us talking about the issue of liquor. Acknowledging the harms of alcohol, Mr. Gorbachev said that when he was the President of the Soviet Union, he had tried to place restrictions on vodka, a Russian alcoholic drink, but the Russian public had become so habituated to alcohol that they could not accept this reform.

Mr. Gorbachev appeared to be a heavily-built person. I said to him that he seemed to be healthy. He said that this was deceptive. It seemed that he knew little English, so the entire conversation took place through a translator. I felt that Mr. Gorbachev would reply at once to any question put to him. Perhaps he did not have the habit of first thinking and only then speaking. In contrast to this, my experience is that Chinese leaders do not reply to a question at once. They first

think and only then reply. Perhaps, this difference between the Russian and Chinese mentalities has some bearing on the fact that in Russia, Communist control collapsed, whereas it is still intact in China. Mr. Gorbachev was the last President of the Soviet Union. He introduced *perestroika*—political freedom—in the USSR, because of which it broke up.

In contrast to this, the Chinese authorities, taking well-planned steps, responded to the demands of the times by separating political administration from economic affairs. They granted people economic freedom while still maintaining political autocracy. In this way, they were able to keep Communist political control intact, unlike in the case of the former USSR.

## THE SOLUTION TO NUCLEAR AND NON-NUCLEAR TERRORISM

The next day (12<sup>th</sup> October), I woke up early. After a while, I heard the bells of a church ringing from a distance. In Delhi, one knows that morning has arrived from the call to prayer (*adhan*) from a mosque for the *fajr* or early morning prayer, and here it is from the bells of a church.

After the morning prayer, I wrote down some points related to the previous day's experiences. Later, I got busy with breakfast, meeting people, and so on.

Many programs had been arranged for the day. The first was a roundtable meeting, which began shortly before noon. Around 150 people were present at this meeting. They had come from different parts of the world. It was as if the global mind had come together there. The topic for discussion was 'Nuclear Terrorism and Prospects of Nuclear Disarmament in the Modern World'.



Maulana Wahiduddin Khan said in his speech that unilateral disarmament is the only way to deal with the nuclear threat. While dealing with other kinds of terrorism, we have to re-engineer the minds of militants towards peace and constructive activities.

Mr. Andrey Beykov, who presided over the meeting, delivered his introductory speech. After this, I was

invited as the first speaker. The crux of my talk was that nuclear terrorism and non-nuclear terrorism are the same in Nature. Thus, we have to deal with both with the same method, that is, through sustainable disarmament. In the case of nuclear bombs, a successful technology has been discovered to extract the plutonium content from nuclear weapons. Similar is the case with the terrorist. Here also, I said, we have to extract and remove the poisonous militant thinking from the minds of terrorists and divert their energies to constructive activities.

## MY VIEWS ON SOME ISSUES

Later in the day, a welcome function was held at the Casino Theatre in Zug. Some speakers were invited to speak. In his talk, Andrey Beykov gave an introduction to his mission. He spoke about the threats posed by nuclear weapons, mentioning that four world powers (U.S.A., UK, France, and Russia) possessed around 90% of all such weapons. He noted the widespread demand across the world that these weapons be eliminated. He spoke about

Peace International and the Nuclear Disarmament Forum and expressed the hope that in the next 25 years, Peace would be established in the world.



The delegates found Maulana’s views on different issues discussed in the programme eye-opening. They greatly appreciated his views.

It has been my experience that people who attend grand conferences have grand-sounding titles attached to their names and speak on grand-sounding topics, often speaking primarily about irrelevant things. In this regard, this roundtable discussion did not prove very different. I shared these feelings with a fellow participant, who agreed with me. Be that as it may, I am presenting below some points that some participants made in their speeches:

*Referring to the present dark state of affairs, South Africa’s Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, ‘God is a dreamer. We also*



*ought to be dreamers. I hope you can dream too of a world without war. We need to be idealists.'*

If I had to make this point, I would have said that the cause of the culture of violence that prevails today is a lack of maturity among people. People do not know the power of Peace. That is why they so quickly take to violence. The need now is to end people's immaturity and make them aware of the benefits of Peace. Only after this can the present culture of violence be put an end to. We need to make people aware of the benefits of peace.

*Another participant remarked that poverty breeds despair, and despair breeds violence. That is why, first of all, poverty should be ended. Only after that can peace be established.*

On its face, this argument sounds beautiful, but in terms of reality, it holds no weight. If some people earn less and others earn more, it results from natural law and not any oppression. That is why what is needed is for opportunities for work to be expanded as much as possible. Following this, people will start making efforts on their own. In the present age, opportunities are available for everyone. We just need to find and avail them.

*One speaker spoke about the need for cultivating self-criticism and said that one should not just criticise the wrong actions of others but also look at the causes of their actions.*

This point is valid, but the actual problem is the correct identification of the causes of a problem. If the causes of a problem are not correctly identified, all efforts to solve the problem will be a complete waste of time. For example, consider the case of Marxism. Karl Marx identified what he thought were the actual causes of a particular state of affairs, and, in line with this, an enormous struggle was spearheaded by his followers for almost a century. However, the outcome of their struggle was only further devastation on a vaster scale. This was because identifying the causes of a particular situation was not correct. I always try to identify the root cause of the problem and only then initiate efforts to find its solution.

*In her speech, Elizabeth, the former princess of Yugoslavia, suggested that we cannot solve the world's problems only through external actions from outside. For this, we also need to engage in inner efforts.*

Many people speak in this vein, but when they are requested to explain their point more specifically, it has been my experience that they cannot do so. Perhaps, this is because some people speak in this way in a sort of fashion but are not so serious about issues they would like to try and understand in depth.

In my view, what is required is that people change themselves on positive lines.

*A participant remarked, “We are just guests on this planet—a very lousy guest.”*

The correct thing to say is that man has been placed on this Earth that belongs to God for the purpose of the test. The notion of ‘guest’ does not engender a sense of responsibility in a person. However, someone in whose mind the concept of ‘test’ gets fixed will be vigilant. He will adopt a responsible way of living. Then one will feel duty-bound to live a responsible life.

*A lady from America, who happened to be the director of an institute, said that the greatest need is for self-supporting regional economies today.*

To my mind, this suggestion is not in accordance with practical realities. This age is an age of globalisation. Today, a global economy is rapidly being established across the world. In such a situation, only that sort of vision is appropriate, which is according to the conditions of the age. No theory or scheme, no matter how beautiful it might appear, can work if it ignores the demands of the times. We have to plan based on practical realities.



Maulana shared the Islamic and realistic perspective on many issues with the delegates. Many people interacted with him to understand his views better.

*Another participant offered the following definition of Peace: “Peace is to try to defend the status quo.”*

As I see it, there is a crucial point that is absent in this definition of Peace, and that is that Peace is a means for promoting a conducive atmosphere wherein actors can avail of available opportunities to pursue positive purposes. If we maintain peace for the sake of peace, not linking it with justice and other conditions, what this does is that it creates a situation of normalcy that opens the doors to opportunities. Availing of those opportunities, people can pursue their positive goals and purposes.

*Another participant said that now-a-days, political leaders are working for Peace in different countries. He opined that religious leaders should come forward and play a role in bringing a 'new world of peace'.*

Now, it is true that these days, numerous political leaders or intellectual figures appear to be quite active in the name of Peace. However, according to my experience, this is simply part of an effort to establish and maintain their leadership. I have attended many conferences like this one and have found that in such forums, people who are considered leaders speak wonderful words when it is their turn to give a speech, but for the rest of the duration of the conference, they spend their time entertaining themselves in such a way as if Peace is not their concern at all. I do not believe that the participation of religious leaders with such people will produce any positive results. To establish Peace, the initial condition is the seriousness of purpose.

*Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, a former President of the USSR, delivered his speech in Russian, which was translated into English. He opined that the United Nations is a 'relic of the past' and said that 'developed nations used everything to their advantage.' 'We need governance of the world, not govern the world. He commented that we need a new world order—juster, more humane.'*

The matter is that whatever Mr. Gorbachev said here actually applied to himself, too. He was the leader of his country's Communist Party and became the President of the USSR. All he said in his speech applied to himself and his political belief system. Strangely, man does not acknowledge his failures but expects others to bestow on him the status of an expert critic!

## RECEIVING THE DEMIURGUS PEACE INTERNATIONAL AWARD

**A**fter the roundtable meeting, we were taken to a guesthouse nearby, where arrangements had been made for lunch. During lunch, I exchanged views with some people. Later in the evening, we gathered at the Theatre Hall of Hotel Casino. Here, a concert by the Russian National Orchestra had been arranged. It was a large troupe consisting of over 100 artists. Professor Vladimir Spivakov conducted the concert. He did his work with great sincerity. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the program and repeatedly burst out into claps. Professor Spivakov would stand up on the stage, bow low, and express his thanks to the audience at the end of every item.

The award-giving ceremony followed the musical program. Seven people had been selected from different parts of the world to be honoured with a peace award on behalf of Peace International. Besides myself, among the awardees were the President of Russia, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and Nobel Laureate Desmond Tutu from South Africa.



While receiving the Demiurgus Peace International Award, Maulana said that peace could be achieved by meeting the challenge of enmity with the power of love and peace.

After each person received the Award, they gave a short speech. In my speech, I said that the work for establishing peace in the world has to happen through peaceful, not violent, means. In this regard, I cited

the famous words attributed to Jesus Christ about loving one's enemies. Furthermore, I said that loving one's enemies means solving the problem of enmity with the power of love. Therefore, meet the challenge of your enemy with the power of love and Peace. Finally, I prepared a paper to present on this occasion, expressing my views on universal peace. This paper is reproduced hereunder:

*The Beginning of a New Era*

Nuclear Disarmament Forum, Zug, Switzerland  
October 12, 2002

A historian has rightly said that the history of mankind is little less than a register of wars and violence. After the Second World War, this situation reached its climax. Now the world has witnessed the emergence of two superpowers, both armed with thousands and thousands of nuclear bombs. However, it was soon discovered that nuclear arms were practically useless due to their boomerang effect. It is generally accepted that nuclear bombs are neither useful for offence nor defence. Moreover, while using them brings about the annihilation of enemies, it is equally a suicidal course for the attacker. After this reality dawned



upon the superpowers, nuclear bombs became for their owners a liability rather than an asset.

This realisation led to serious negotiations between the two superpowers in order to put an end to this deadly menace. All minds sought a formula for the bilateral destruction of nuclear weapons. However, this kind of bilateralism proved to be impractical.

By the grace of God, after long contemplation, I found the answer to this question in the universal teaching of religion. This teaching was based on the principle of unilateral ethics, the application of which requires one superpower to start destroying its pile of nuclear weapons without insisting that it be done on a bilateral basis. Such unilateral action would create a compulsive atmosphere for the other party, which would feel that it had no option but to follow the same course, for it would then lose the justification for keeping its nuclear arsenal.

I first suggested following a unilateral policy at the international meeting organised by the Nuclear Disarmament Forum held on July 26-30, 2001, in Kandersteg (Switzerland).

This idea was greatly appreciated by Mr. Andre Bykov, the Chairman of the Nuclear Disarmament Forum. I later compiled it in the form of a booklet titled, *A Manifesto of Peace*, and published it. In the next meeting of the Forum held in Ashdown Forest (England) in September 2001, this booklet was distributed to all the participants. With the active support of Mr. Andre Bykov, this idea of unilateralism has been rapidly gaining ground.

It is a matter of great pleasure and satisfaction that Russia has already started to destroy its nuclear armament. Thus, Russia has become the first nuclear nation to begin the disarmament process by disposing about 100 kg of plutonium from surplus nuclear weapons, the equivalent of 10 atomic bombs, i.e., weapons having 100 times the detonating power devastated Hiroshima. It is undoubtedly a decisive step toward destroying and disposing of weapons-grade plutonium worldwide. Although, the U.S.A. is liberally funding this process, the credit for taking the first step must go to Russia.

Mr. Andre Bykov, an eminent Russian scientist, has successfully discovered a formula to extract plutonium from nuclear bombs to be re-used for

constructive purposes. By this formula, he has successfully converted destructive weapons into constructive machines. It is a great and historic achievement. He deserves to be given credit for saving humanity from nuclear conflict. Moreover, at the same time, he has established that the human mind has a unique capacity to turn a minus into a plus. May God shower his choicest blessings upon him.

Now it seems that the dream of humanity is going to be fulfilled. Moreover, the dream of a nuclear-free world will be realised within a short period.

If the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a century of war and violence, the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it seems certain, is going to be a century of peace and happiness. Humanity is once again on the threshold of a new era.

Now I would like to congratulate Mr. Andre Bykov for having successfully initiated the process of nuclear disarmament. It is a great international achievement to his credit.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that we have found a highly empirical formula for avoiding the nuclear war, which has cast its shadow upon humanity for a long time. However, I would like

to take this opportunity to point out that we also have to consider another field connected to this peace mission—terrorism. That is armed action by private groups and individuals. Moreover, let us not forget that where a superpower cannot afford an endless war, terrorists can. These terrorists are people of a different breed: their ultimate goal does not necessarily consist of gaining victory.

On the contrary, death is also a desired goal for them. According to their self-styled ideology, they believe that they will instantly enter Paradise if they die in their militant struggle. Therefore, according to their beliefs, both victory and defeat have an equal value. In either case, they believe that they are the winners. Because of this unique ideology, these terrorists can continue their militancy for an indefinite period, generation after generation. However, they are not a people apart.

On the contrary, they are an integral part of their whole generation. One of their great strengths is that the militants have an ideological factory for brainwashing their youths. This brainwashing process goes on unceasingly, and there is always a long queue of those who want to be recruited and be martyred.

Modern terrorism is thus a great and ongoing menace to our civilised world. Some world powers are engaged in crushing it militarily, but military action alone will not suffice to eliminate this phenomenon.

This is because present-day terrorism is militancy supported by an ideology. So it is not simply an issue of gun vs gun. It is, in fact, an issue of gun vs ideology. A bomb can be countered with a bomb. However, an ideology cannot be countered with a bomb. For this, we require an ideology of peace. So, we have to formulate such an ideology as will banish the notion that there can be anything acceptable about terrorism. This would call for total mental re-conditioning of the terrorists. We have to rid the militants' minds of the ideology activating them. This, in effect, would be like defusing a bomb. With this very purpose in mind. I have published three books, called *The True Jihad*, *Islam and Peace* and *The Ideology of Peace*, which aim at persuading Muslim extremists to accept more peaceful solutions. After our successful experience of nuclear disarmament, we must now proceed to open a front for the ideological

neutralisation of the threat of terrorism. I hope we shall be successful in undertaking this most urgent task.

Wahiduddin Khan

CPS International, New Delhi

October 12, 2002

## LESSONS FROM SWITZERLAND

On this trip, I had the opportunity of visiting different parts of Switzerland. One of the sights I got to see here were trees that, along with green leaves, had leaves of a golden hue. How is it that these leaves were of this colour? I learned the secret of this when I had another experience. Switzerland is a cold country. Here, often it is cloudly, because of which during the day the sun is hidden from view. Several times, I experienced that the sun could not be seen, yet the light was visible in the atmosphere. After pondering on this, I realised that this light was because of these golden-hued leaves. The leaves keep producing a soft light in the atmosphere. What a great sign of God's power this is! There are, of course, numerous other such signs in Nature.



Maulana explained that Switzerland offers us many lessons from nature. For example, one lesson is on difference management rather than striving to eliminate differences.

In terms of Peace, Switzerland is a model country. This Peace was obtained not by eliminating differences among its inhabitants but by accepting them. Switzerland is a nation the people of which have no unity of ethnicity, language, or religion, but it is a united and prosperous nation. In contrast to Switzerland, there is neither social unity nor prosperity in many other countries characterised by social diversity. Some people believe that this is because of the different religions and cultures in such countries. Thus, they tried to eliminate these

differences to promote unity, thinking this would engender unity. However, this is an unworkable and impractical idea. Moreover, that is why this approach has not succeeded to date. The fact is that unity is the name for being united despite differences and not being united by eliminating differences.

A thousand or so years ago, Muslims entered present-day Switzerland. However, their presence lasted only a short while and ended without any significant outcome. Professor George Richard Potter (d.1981), who was a medieval history professor at the University of Sheffield, and who co-authored a book titled, *A Short History of Switzerland*, notes, ‘In the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Muslims reached Swiss territory, but they were too far from their base to have anything more than nuisance value.’

In the past, for several centuries, Switzerland witnessed many wars and conflicts, including the conflict between Roman Catholics and Protestants and the war with Russia, Germany, and France. However, the national policy of Switzerland was always based on two principles—Peace and neutrality. On account of this policy, Switzerland is today regarded as among the most peaceful and



prosperous countries globally, even though in terms of natural resources it does not have anything other than that of reservoirs water.



Maulana explained that opportunities exist along with problems. Therefore, we have to 'ignore the problems, and avail the opportunities'.

In 1914, the First World War broke out. Switzerland had the status of a neutral country then. As a result, many political refugees from other parts of Europe fled their countries and came to Switzerland. Among these was Vladimir Lenin, who later spearheaded the Marxist revolution in Russia. He arrived in Switzerland in September 1914. Some of his companions, who were called Bolsheviks, also gathered there. They organised two anti-war conferences—in 1915 and

1916. At these conferences, Lenin's slogan was, 'Transform the imperialist war into civil war.'

It is a harmful method of seeking to obtain one's objectives. However, most leaders do precisely this. They emerge for a positive purpose, and to obtain this purpose, they adopt harmful methods. However, history shows that a positive purpose always is obtained only through a positive method. A harmful method can never lead to a positive outcome.



Maulana with a co-awardee who also received the Demiurgus Peace International Award during the ceremony.

In Switzerland, the first international body in history was established. The League of Nations was formed after the First World War in 1920. Its

headquarters were in Geneva. Its objective was said to be international co-operation. However, as a result of the Second World War, the League of Nations collapsed. Following the war, another international body, the United Nations, came into being, with its headquarters in New York.

Muslim leaders negatively commented when the League of Nations was established in Switzerland. An instance of this sort of negative comment was a Persian couplet which can be translated as follows:

*What is the League of Nations?*

*Some shroud-robbers have set up an association to divide graves.*

In this world, characterised by multiple and diverse interests, it always happens that collective institutions cannot be to the liking of everyone. It being the case, the right approach is not to express one's displeasure but, instead, to compensate for an aspect that one might dislike by availing of favourable aspects that can be used for one's benefit. It is a fact that both problems and opportunities exist side by side. Through such wise reflection, prudence, and careful thinking, one can find and avail of opportunities despite problems. However, unfortunately, Muslim leaders could not

do this sort of thing. It remains one of the biggest problems of present-day Muslims.

One of Switzerland's greatest blessings is its numerous lakes that are to be found across the country. Switzerland is a mountainous country, and there is often continuous light rain. The rain freezes into snow on mountaintops, which then melts and feeds the lakes with water. The Swiss people have made good use of these lakes. They are used for boating for entertainment, irrigation, and manufacturing cheap electricity.

There are not many such lakes in India, but many rivers exist. These rivers can be used in such a way as to turn them into significant assets. If, instead of spending vast amounts of money on massive dams, financial resources had been allotted for the proper use of rivers, there might have been no water problem in India.

As far as I know, the first noteworthy name in this regard is that of a British gentleman, Lt. Gen. Sir Arthur Cotton. In 1839, he began an important scheme in southern India during British rule, but it could not be completed. He gave this scheme the name of 'Inter-Basin Transfer of Water'. Its objective

was to link different rivers in India through canals so that water from one river could reach other rivers.

In India, almost every year, some parts witness heavy rains that lead to floods in rivers that cause massive damage, while at the same time, in some other parts of the country, rivers run dry owing to scanty rain. If the different rivers in the country are linked together through canals, this problem could perhaps be solved. Water from places that have received heavy rain could flow through canals and reach places experiencing a water shortage. There could be several benefits of such a scheme, including ending water scarcity, boosting irrigation and production of electricity, and enabling easy travel on waterways. It would have been a valuable asset for India if it had been completed.

## MAN'S SEARCH FOR TRUTH

**T**he famous French thinker, Jean Jacques Rousseau (d. 1778), was born in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1712. He is considered a great advocate of freedom. In his autobiography, he acknowledges that he was a great sinner. He left the Catholic faith for some

worldly interest, adopted the Protestant religion, and then returned to the former. In his autobiography, he writes that a house where he lived had been miraculously saved from a fire by a bishop's prayers.

The reality, however, is that events such as this always happen because of some of the other known or unknown material causes. However, believers attribute them to some 'miracle' of persons they hold in great reverence. This incorrect attribution is the actual source of all miraculous tales.

The well-known German thinker, Friedrich Nietzsche (d. 1900), spent a sizeable portion of his last days in Switzerland. His health was generally bad. Finally, in 1888, he went insane, and later, he died in this state of madness.

I have found in my studies that many 'big' scholars have faced this sort of tragic fate. This happens because such people are sunk deep in an extreme mental contradiction. They fail to discover any certain truth at the level of thought. However, to maintain their so-called intellectual image or stature, they continuously try to present themselves as someone who has discovered the absolute truth intellectually. This inner contradiction probably finally drives them to go mad.

It is doubtlessly the greatest blessing for a person with a great mind to discover a truth on which he can live with certainty and confidence. However, unfortunately, the tragedy mentioned above mostly happens with those ‘intelligent’ persons whose intellectual roots are not founded on divine truths.

Indian leader, Gandhi Ji, came to the Swiss city of Geneva in December 1931. There, he delivered a speech at Victor Hall. Among the things he said in the speech was that ‘Truth is God’.

French writer, Romain Rolland, commenting on this concept of Truth, has written, ‘If it is correct, that “Truth is God”, it appears to me that it lacks one important attribute of God: Joy.’ (*Romain Rolland and Gandhi Correspondence* by Romain Rolland, p. 3)

To say that Truth is God is a negation of God’s Being. God is a conscious Being. If God is not a conscious Being, He is not God. Truth is an abstract quality. It is not some living Being or existence. That is why to say that God is Truth or Truth is God is not a correct interpretation of God’s acknowledgement.

In medieval Europe, the Church exercised widespread domination. Many people were killed on the orders of the Church only because they critiqued some of the dogmas that the Church had established. One of

these people was a person named, Michael Servetus. In 1553, a Spanish religious court decided that he should be hanged. His 'crime' was simply that he used to say that the concept of the Trinity is not present in the Bible. When the religious court passed the death sentence against him, he fled and arrived in Switzerland, which had become a predominantly Protestant country under the influence of Calvin.

The concept of the Trinity is considered to be a fundamental dogma of the Christian religion. However, strangely, there is no definite mention of the Trinity in the Bible. I once asked a European Christian priest where the concept of the Trinity was mentioned in the Bible. He kept flipping through a copy of an English translation of the Bible for around an hour. He presented some verses. However, I said to him that in these verses, Bible makes no explicit mention of the concept of the Trinity and that the primary or foundational concepts or dogmas of any religion ought to emerge clearly from its scriptures and not through some self-made interpretations. Finally, acknowledging his failure, the priest silently went away.

I shared that man is a born seeker. Every human being regards himself as incomplete until he has found that supreme principle by which he can explain his



existence in this world and discover the purpose and meaning of his life. If one is sincere and honest in his search for Truth, he will discover the Creation Plan of human existence. According to this plan, God—the Creator of man—created him as an eternal creature and has divided his life into two stages—the pre-death period or the limited life in this world for a test and the post-death period or the eternal life after death. The period of life before death is meant to be a test for man, while the eternal period after his death will be the period for his reward or punishment, based on his performance in the test in this life.

## AN ANALYSIS OF MUSLIMS

Switzerland is famous for its modern-style watches. Before this, Turkey was a big centre for manufacturing traditional-style clocks in the Middle Ages. They were made by Muslim craftsmen and were exported to other countries. Later, spring-driven watches began being made in Europe, with Switzerland emerging as a major centre of this industry. The artisans of Turkey were unable to face this competition and keep pace. By the early years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, watch-making in Turkey had virtually ended.

In present times, Muslim peoples face the same sort of predicament. In an age characterised by traditional manufacturing, several predominantly Muslim towns such as Damascus, Baghdad, and Istanbul enjoyed the status of great manufacturing centres. However, when the age of scientific industry dawned, Muslims began to fall behind. They failed to keep up with the modern age. This backwardness escalated so much that it reached the intellectual sphere, too, resulting in intellectual backwardness. One example is that many Muslim leaders and thinkers, wrongly terming violence as 'jihad', are busy today trying to glorify it even though sensible people now consider violence completely anachronistic.

There are only a few Muslims in Switzerland. Most of them are from Arab countries and Turkey. I was told that there are several mosques in Swiss towns. I travelled to some places in the hope of seeing these mosques, but most of these structures have been made by setting apart a portion of a house for prayers. There are, however, some regular mosques in the country, but I could not get to see them. I met some Muslims associated with those mosques, but I could not have much of a conversation worth mentioning because they knew neither English nor Arabic. We had some

essential exchange of words, however. They said that in Switzerland, Muslims have no problems from the point of view of religion.

Among the ‘mosques’ that I got to see in Switzerland was one that the Turkish people had established. I met some Turks there. They seemed to be from the working class. They could speak only Turkish, because of which I could not have a conversation with them.

An educated Muslim living in the West once claimed that the Western media is prejudiced against Muslims. He said that when Jews commit violence against Palestinians, it is only said that Israelis have done this or that. It is not said that ‘Jews’ did it. The same is true in the case of the Irish Republican Army in Ireland, whose actions are not referred to as actions committed by ‘Christians.’ However, he argued that when a Muslim is embroiled in a terrorist action, the Western media quickly condemns Islam.

This criticism of the Western media is wrong. The above difference in reporting is natural. For example, when Israelis or Irish nationalists engage in violence, they do so in the name of their ethnic community, which is why it is attributed to their ethnic community. However, in contrast, Muslim’s so-called *mujahideen* engage in violence in the name of Islam and ‘Islamic

Jihad'. That is why it is very natural that the media reports this violence in the name of Islam.

## SPIRIT-BASED RELIGION

**T**his visit of mine to Switzerland was for around a week. During the trip from India to Europe, I saw a great variety of sights. However, in every place, I saw only materialistic activities. I thought that man has two needs—material needs and spiritual needs. In the present world, most human activities are being undertaken on the basis simply of material needs and desires. In the true sense of the term, relatively few spiritual activities can be seen anywhere. For this reason, in material terms, there is a great abundance of material 'goods' worldwide, but in spiritual terms, today's man is afflicted with severe starvation.

In Delhi, I do the work of spiritual counselling in a limited way. People from different backgrounds attend my spiritual sessions. Once, a person participated in my spiritual sessions for two days and was quite impressed. She told me that she had been regularly going to places of worship for many years but had not gained spiritual nourishment. She

had not experienced any intellectual development through this. As a result, only some rituals would be conducted there. She found my spiritual sessions different. My lectures addressed her mind, and she was receiving spiritual nourishment and intellectual progress from them.

This same situation is prevalent these days at many places. Some rituals are conducted there, but those who go there do not experience any sort of intellectual or spiritual progress. The fact is that religion should be a representative of Truth. Only that activity is a genuine religious activity in the real sense through which people obtain spiritual nourishment and intellectual progress. Lifeless rituals and customs have no relation with authentic religiousness. Man is indeed in search of Truth. Therefore, man needs a spirit-based religion. A religion imbued with spirit addresses people's minds and through which one can receive spiritual nourishment and intellectual progress.

## SWISS BEAUTY

### AN INTRODUCTION TO PARADISE

On 13<sup>th</sup> October, a unique ‘boat trip’ program was organised. From the hotel, we were taken to the town of Luzern. There is a vast lake there, where we boarded a yacht that had two floors.

The yacht moved gently on the lake’s waters, the pace suitable for people to view the beautiful scenery. I took the opportunity to prepare some portions of my travelogue.

It is said that on witnessing the beauty of Kashmir, Babur (who was the first Mughal emperor) had exclaimed:

*If there is Paradise on Earth,*

*It is this; it is this, it is this!*

However, when I witnessed lovely natural scenes in Switzerland, my heart said that God had placed these beautiful sights in the world, so that man could obtain an initial introduction to Paradise through them. These world sights engender an intense desire for eternal Paradise in man. Their purpose is not that we should consider them to be Paradise itself and then try to build a dream world of happiness amidst them.



The natural scenes of Switzerland reminded Maulana of how God had placed these beautiful sights in the world, so that man could obtain an initial introduction to Paradise.

A person in our group met with a young Swiss man, a 24-year-old student of engineering. He was a Christian. When he mentioned a concept of another world in the Christian religion after death, and he was asked if he did not think about what might happen to him after he died, he replied, “Jesus Christ has taken all our sins. So, Paradise is assured for all of us. So, why should we worry about it?”

I explained that Paradise is the name of the ideal world, where man will attain complete fulfilment and the company of those people who make his life highly meaningful. Man is a seeker of Paradise. He

seeks Paradise in this world. However, this world is only an introduction to Paradise. Efforts to make a Paradise on Earth are fruitless. Paradise has been kept in the Hereafter after death. According to the Creation Plan, God created an eternal, perfect world called Paradise. Then God created man as an eternal creature and divided his life into two periods. During the temporary phase of man's life, he has been placed in this imperfect world to be tested. Paradise is not assured for any group. It has to be earned individually. To be found eligible for entry into eternal Paradise, a man in his life before death must realise his Creator while He is the unseen, submit to Him and develop a Paradisiacal personality in himself. Then, he will be found eligible for inhabiting the perfect World of Paradise.

## THE HARM OF ENTERTAINMENT CULTURE

**T**he yacht moved slowly while people were busy eating and drinking. Here, I saw something that provided a good learning lesson. I noted that people were repeatedly bursting out into loud laughter.



Meanwhile, I was sitting silently in a chair some distance away. So I asked a person from the group what these people were laughing about. He said that it was the practice of these 'educated' people to add a humorous phrase every time they said something, so that listeners would laugh. For instance, on the yacht, there was a famous chess player. Someone played a game of chess with him and lost. On this, a companion of his lightheartedly addressed him as 'My defeated friend'. Listening to this, people burst out laughing.

It is a way of entertainment among the 'educated' people. Almost every point they make includes a quaint or unique statement that causes people to laugh. This 'entertainment culture' has become widespread in present times. However, my opinion is that this non-serious style has caused great havoc to 'educated' people. These people (based on their material interests and concerns) solemnly conduct themselves in their profession. Because of this, in the limited sphere of their profession, they appear to be knowledgeable. However, their intellectual development is significantly stunted in other aspects beyond their profession.

In my life, I have met a vast number of people. I have listened to them speak and have read their writings.

I have found that most people in the present age possess a dual personality. In one aspect, they excel, but they do not excel in other aspects. The one aspect in which they excel is that with which their material interests are linked. In this domain, they are serious. They try to deeply understand things related to this particular sphere of their life. As a result, they become experts in this particular field.

However, besides this, there are other aspects of life with which these people's material interests and concerns are not directly related. These people almost always take these other aspects very lightly. They rarely try to learn more about them. For this reason, their views on such matters are generally vague and lack clarity. On such matters, their minds are a jungle of confusion. If asked to speak on these issues, they will either say some childish things or something so seemingly complicated that the listener gains nothing from their words.

Another harmful aspect of this predicament is that such people often suffer from a false sense of confidence. As suggested earlier, such 'educated' people know their particular field very well and can speak on it with great expertise. It creates a false sense of confidence because of which when such people

meet a person who can compensate for their lack of understanding of other aspects of life, they ignore what he says. They consider such a person unworthy of their attention and ignore him. A devastating result of this is that their process of learning stops. They remain ignorant of things beyond the narrow limits set by the issues that directly impinge on their material interests. It is as if they are material giants and intellectual or spiritual dwarfs.

## THE SOLUTION TO KASHMIR AND PALESTINE

On the evening of 13<sup>th</sup> October, during a meeting, Dr. Walt Weber asked some questions related to Muslim politics. One question was about solving the Kashmir issue. I said that the solution to the problem lay in a principle of Nature that can be expressed in a saying: 'Politics is the art of the possible.' I stated that I had deeply studied the Kashmir issue and have repeated one point for years—end the problem by accepting the Line of Actual Control as the international border.



Maulana presented solutions to the issues of Kashmir and Palestine during the conference.

Dr. Weber also asked about how to end the violence in Palestine. I said that I had repeatedly been presenting a proposal to the Palestinians and would say the same thing to them. I said that there is a narration about the policy of the Prophet Muhammad that shows that whenever he had to choose between two options, he would always leave the more challenging option and adopt the easier one. (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 6786) Therefore, in line with this narration, the Palestinians should abandon the violent action method and adopt a peaceful method. Following this, violence would automatically come to an end.

Dinner that night was organised at Burgenstoc Hotel, located on top of a mountain. Jakob von Uexkull, a senior journalist in Stockholm, was among the people I met. I had a long and detailed conversation with him. He remarked that the case of modern Western man was a case of search for meaning. He opined that modern Western man had lost faith in materialistic civilisation and was searching for something else, but he had not been able to obtain it so far.

During our conversation, a reference was made to American author Samuel Huntington's book, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*. I stated that the book had wrongly represented Islam. The book's author had made Muslim communal efforts synonymous with Islamic jihad, although such efforts had nothing to do with Islam. After that, I introduced Mr. Uexkull to some of the authentic teachings of Islam.

Another person I met was a German called Alfredo SfeirYounis, who was then living in Geneva. He seemed a very erudite man. I had a detailed conversation with him about Islam. To begin with, I asked him several questions regarding his field. Then, he said that I was only asking him questions but not saying anything about myself. That is how the topic of our topic turned to Islam. Mr. Younis said that he had read an English

translation of the Quran but that his knowledge of Islam was minimal. Following this, I spoke with him about Islamic teachings. He listened to my words with great attention.

## RELIGION, SPIRITUALITY AND WORLD PEACE

On 14<sup>th</sup> October morning, I had a detailed discussion with Mr. Andrey Beykov. He had arranged for this meeting at Park Hotel. We exchanged views on various subjects, such as religion, spirituality, and world peace.

Mr. Beykov is a knowledgeable person. He talks with great depth and listens with great attention to other people. He noted what I was saying on his pocket computer during our conversation. He mentioned one particular issue about a church in Jerusalem where light comes from the sky on a particular day every year and at a special time. Entering through the roof of the Church lights up the whole atmosphere. Mr. Beykov said that he goes to Jerusalem every year to see this supposedly holy light and that he had made a video film of it. He claimed that the light came from Jesus himself. Following my return to Delhi,

he phoned me from Moscow and said that the next appearance of the light would happen on Easter Day in April 2003.



During the conference, Maulana interacted with Mr. Andre Bykov, Chairman Nuclear Disarmament Forum.

Magical beliefs of this sort are to be found in all religions. People do not analyse them, so they continue to believe them. Take, for example, this light that was believed to come from Jesus. Reflect on the fact that after Jesus, the Church changed its actual teachings. That being the case, it would seem quite impossible for Jesus to authenticate these changed teachings by sending this supposedly holy light every year into this Church. Hence, one can say that it is not some light from Jesus, whatever else it might be.

Someone remarked that God is not a concern for

people in Switzerland, generally speaking. They say that they have got everything without God, so they ask, what need do they have for God? What a strange delusion Satan has pushed into people's minds! Everything that the people of Switzerland have got, from beautiful lakes to motor cars, is ultimately a gift from God. Through things that God has created, these people have been able to build a comfortable life. How strange it is that people avail these numerous blessings but do not acknowledge their source, the Giver of all blessings!

## PRESENTING THE IDEOLOGY OF PEACE

**O**n this journey, I met a person from Kuwait. His name was Ali Hasan. During our conversation, he said that the Islam that Arab people have now-a-days is extraordinary. For instance, if you ask an Arab how the weather is, he will first say *Bismillah hir Rahman nir Rahim* (In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful), *Alhamdulillah* (Praise be to God), and *Subhanallah* (Glory be to God), and only after that, he will reply. However, these are only catchphrases (*takyakalaam*) of theirs. It is not the expression of any Islamic spirit.



I said that the Islam that prevails among Muslims today is not in the form of a Divine way of life but, instead, it is a part of the culture, as with other peoples. Nowadays, religious activities appear to be happening among various religious groups, but these are cultural activities, not religious in the true sense. On 14<sup>th</sup> October evening, a session was held with detailed discussions. An Indian companion of mine later told me that I had spoken for 1½ hour continuously in English and that he listened to me in amazement. He thought it strange and a great blessing of God that I, being a *maulvi* (Muslim scholar), spoke with such clarity in front of an English-knowing audience about Islam and Muslims.



Maulana signing the Document presented to the awardees.

In my talk, I touched on different issues. First, I clarified that the military action that some Western countries were engaged in against terrorism would not cause terrorism to cease. Modern terrorism is not an issue of gun vs gun. Instead, it is an issue of gun vs ideology. Terrorism cannot be ended simply through violence; the fact is that those who have taken to terrorism have developed an ideology that seeks sanction for their terrorism, that is, justified terrorism, and in which they have firm faith, so much so that they even consider suicide-bombing to be martyrdom. They believe that if they are killed fighting, they will go straight to Paradise. Even if all the atomic weapons were eliminated, it would not cause terrorism to end. This is because terrorism is in mind. I explained that along with the present nuclear disarmament program, there was a need to launch an ideological campaign to replace militant thinking with peaceful thinking. We need to re-engineer the minds of militants on peaceful lines by replacing the ideology of violence with the ideology of peace.

This session was probably the most important one during this entire trip. Present on occasion was an eminent person who lives in Los Angeles. I was told that he had a direct connection with the U.S.

Administration in Washington, D.C. Taking advantage of his presence there, I said that, according to my estimate, the U.S. authorities had till now been unable to understand the depth of the problem of Palestine. That is why their efforts had not succeeded in solving the problem. I said that I believed that the American people are realistic. Hence, if the Truth is conveyed to them, they will reflect on it.



Prof. Farida Khanam addressing the committee after the signing of the Document.

I expressed that Peace cannot be established simply through military power in West Asia. To solve the issue, America should change its policy in West Asia. Till now, it had been pursuing a one-sided, pro-Israel policy. However, now it should change this and

adopt a wise policy, what could be called a ‘win-win formula’—a formula through which all parties would win. For instance, in Jerusalem, the principle of one city and two administrations could be agreed to. In line with this principle, the eastern part of the city could be given to the Arabs, and the western part could remain under Israeli control.

Some 400 people had gathered from different parts of the world. Some English books of ours were presented to most of them. In addition, the conference organisers arranged for my pamphlet, *Manifesto of Peace*, in which I had given the proposal in 2001, to be distributed among the participants. They had also issued a beautifully bound book (of more than 250 pages), in which three speeches of mine had been included.

## PRESENTING MIND-BASED SPIRITUALITY

Later that day, I had a conversation with Princess Elizabeth of the former Yugoslavia. She had witnessed numerous tragedies in her life—the monarchy had ended, her marriage had ended in divorce, and a decline in her economic fortunes. After

going through these experiences, she had gone out in search of Peace. She had met with a teacher and sought Peace in meditation. For years now, she had been meditating every day.

I asked her what meditation is. Was it, according to her, some intellectual process?

Her understanding of meditation was that it is the quieting of the mind. I said to her that I was also interested in spirituality and engaged in meditation. However, my meditation happened through an intellectual process, not stopping or suppressing it. Therefore, my meditation or spirituality was intellectual or mind-based in nature.

Mental tension is a significant challenge today all over the world. This has led to an enormous increase in the popularity of meditation or spirituality. However, to me, a process of trying to stop or suppress the intellectual process is simply a sort of intellectual anaesthesia. In line with man's nature, the proper method for man to gain spirituality in this regard is intellectual awakening, not suspending the intellectual process. Such spirituality is gained by awakening one's mind.

## OUR JOURNEY COMES TO A CLOSE

On 15<sup>th</sup> October, we were taken to the office of the Nuclear Disarmament Forum in Zug. There, Mr. Andrey Beykov showed us a video of the light in the Church in Jerusalem that he had mentioned to me and that I had referred to earlier.

After returning from the trip, numerous people wrote to share their impressions. One such person was Ms Andaleeb Hayat, who had received some of our books. Regarding my book, *Ideology of Peace*, she wrote, 'I am sure that this Islamic perspective and prophetic wisdom will help people avoid conflicts and live in harmony. Furthermore, she mentioned that our literature had helped her understand Islam better, which appeared to be 'practically more logical, nature-friendly and convincing'.

On 16<sup>th</sup> October, our stay in Switzerland was to get over, and we had our return flight to Delhi. So, we headed for Zurich by car and boarded Swiss Air flight number 172, scheduled to depart at noon.

Our return flight was not smooth. It was pretty bumpy. The plane began to shake and go up and down on the way. It happens because of the winds.

Be it a journey by ship or by plane, the smoothness or otherwise of a journey depends on the winds, and man has no control over the winds; he cannot even fully predict them. At such times, only those who turn to God can find solace.

The plane landed at New Delhi airport on 17<sup>th</sup> October, after around 7½ hours. Moreover, with that, this momentous journey came to a close.

## EPILOGUE

After returning from the trip, numerous people wrote to me to share my impressions of my trip. I shared my book entitled, *The Ideology of Peace*, with them. In the book, I presented a complete ideology of peace for life. I explained that nuclear arms race was the very antithesis of the establishment of peace. The objective of peace can be achieved only through peaceful means. Achieving peace is just not possible by violent means. The book is not only a guide for nuclear disarmament based on unilateralism, but it also offers a peaceful solution to Muslim militancy by helping people understand the concept of peace in Islam. Muslim militancy is not a case of bomb vs bomb, but an ideology vs ideology. The ideology of peace alone can counter the ideology of violence. We have to change the thinking of those involved in militancy by presenting the Islamic ideology of peace based on Islam's sources. Once they realise that Islam does not sanction violence, they will leave violent activism to their own choice.

The ideology of peace, so to say, is the opening of life's doors to every possible opportunity for positive action. It may be compared to the removal of a dam



from a river. Like a flowing river, life surges onwards, constantly propelled by human nature and comes to a halt only when the artificial barriers of war and violence are placed before it. Peace, unlike war, creates conditions that enable us to work towards constructive ends unhindered. Peace gives the greatest possible stimulus to the flow of beneficent human activity.

The book, *The Ideology of Peace*, is a gift to the new generation from a peace-loving person. It presents peace in the form of a complete ideology—an ideology which awakens human consciousness; provides the answer to all life's problems in terms of peace; which describes the crucial importance of peace, right from the individual to the international level. It shows that peace is not an option: it is our destiny.

Switzerland is a model country for peace. Despite facing wars and conflicts, its policy of peace and neutrality ensured its position as a peaceful and prosperous country in the world. The present book is a travelogue of the author's journey to Switzerland in October 2002. The book's central theme is to give practical guidelines to establish world peace like unilateral nuclear disarmament and solution to Muslim militancy from Islamic sources. The book further offers the Islamic perspective on jihad and establishing peace in Kashmir and Palestine.



Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021) was an Islamic scholar, spiritual guide and an Ambassador of Peace. Having received international recognition for his work, the Maulana authored over 200 books and recorded thousands of lectures giving the rational interpretation of Islamic concepts, prophetic wisdom and the spiritual meaning of Quran and Islam in the contemporary style. His English translation of the Quran is widely appreciated as simple, clear and in contemporary style. He founded *Centre for Peace and Spirituality International* in 2001 to re-engineer the minds of people towards God-oriented living and present Islam in the modern idiom based as it is on peace, non-violence and spirituality.

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