

# PROCESS OF ISLAMIC REVOLUTION

By

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*In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful!*

## **Process of Islamic Revolution**

[An Address delivered by Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi  
at the Aligarh Muslim University]

Gentlemen!

In this discourse I shall explain to you the process by which the Islamic state comes into being as a natural consequence of a particular set of circumstances. Now-a-days the phrase, "Islamic State", has become a child's plaything; the idea has caught the imagination of certain people, and some of them even profess to have adopted it as a positive ideal. But strange means are being suggested for its attainment which would make it as impossible to reach the desired goal as reaching America in a motor car. This loose thinking is due to the fact that owing to certain political and historical cause a desire has sprung up for a certain ideal which may be called the "Islamic State"; but no attempt has been made either to define in a scientific manner the nature of this state or to study the process of its evolution. In these circumstances it becomes doubly necessary to investigate this problem in a scientific manner.

### **Natural Evolution of the State System**

In this gathering of educated people I need not spend much time in explaining that a state, what ever its nature, is not formed by artificial means; it is not an article of manufacture to be prepared at a particular place and then transplanted elsewhere entirely at the sweet will of men. It is rather a natural product of the interplay of certain moral, psychological, cultural and historical factorials pre-existing in certain pre-requisites must be fulfilled, certain social forces created and some natural requirements satisfied before it can come into being by the pressure of events. Just as in logic deduction always follows the arrangement of premises; in chemistry a chemical compound is formed by the combination, in a particular way, of certain ingredients possessing chemical affinity, likewise it is an undeniable fact that in sociology a state is merely the natural consequence of those circumstances which pre-exist in a particular society. Again, the nature of a state is wholly determined by the nature of the circumstances which underly its birth and formation. Just as it is not possible that premises may be of one type and their arrangement may bring about a different conclusion; chemical components may be of a particular nature and by mixing them up a compound of a totally different kind may be obtained; a lemon seed may be sown and a tree bearing mangoes may grow out of it, similarly it is not possible that conditions may exist favouring the growth of a particular type of state; the manner of their mutual interaction may also be suited to the development of the same type of state but, after passing through various evolutionary stages, an altogether

different state may emerge out of the process; and the operation of those very forces which favoured one form of the state may result in a state being established which belongs to a different category altogether.

Please do not imagine, that I am bringing in the doctrine of determinism here and denying freedom of human will. There is no doubt that in determining the nature of a state the will and actions of individuals and communities play a very great part. What I am driving at is that whatever the nature of the state-system that is desired to be created, it is indispensable to adopt and choose such means as fit in with the nature and spirit of the desired system and then to hit upon the appropriate course of action leading towards it. It is essential that a particular type of movement should grow up permeated by the same spirit, the same sort of mass character should be moulded, the same type of communal morality should be developed, the same kind of workers should be trained, and the same type of leadership should emerge and such collective action taken as is implied in the nature of the particular state-system desired to be set up. It is only when all such means have been successfully employed and all the necessary forces and appropriate factors have continued to operate for a sufficient period of time and when as a result of their operation over a considerable period, they have created a social pattern strong enough to withstand all influences, foreign to its spirit, then there comes into being, as a natural sequence of this train of events, that particular type of State for which these powerful forces have cleared the field. This is exactly as when a tree springs out of a seed and continues

to grow with its own force, so that on reaching a particular stage of development it begins to bear the selfsame fruit for which its natural structure was particularly suited. If you consider this fact, you will recognise that when a particular type of movement, leadership, mass character and communal morality has emerged into shape which is appropriate to a definite form of the state-system and yet the hope is entertained that, as a consequence thereof, a state system of an altogether different nature will be created this is little more than wishful thinking.

### **The Ideological State**

We have now to consider what is the nature of the state which we call an Islamic State. In this connection I may point out that the distinguishing mark of the Islamic state is its complete freedom from all trace of nationalism and its influences, direct or indirect. It is a state built exclusively on principles. I should call it an ideological state. A state having its foundations in certain recognized moral principles and free from all idea of nationality or race is one of which the world has never tasted but once, and to the advantages of which it is insensible even to this day. In ancient times men knew only of governments by families or classes. Later on, they had experience of racial and national governments. But the idea of a state conducted on a definite set of principles and ruled by a group of persons composed of widely differing nationalities who have accepted those principles as the basis of their entire life, social, economic and political, and whose acceptance of those principles is their sole title to have a voice in the affairs of the state, has never struck root in the narrow mind of man. Christianity did embody a very dim perception of

this truth but it could not develop a full system of ideas on the basis of which such a state could be formed. In the French Revolution we discover a faint glimpse of the idea of a state founded on a set of principles but it soon disappeared in the darkness of nationalism. Communism of course, preached this gospel with deep fervour and did even attempt to form a state on this basis, so that the world began to take interest in the great Russian experiment. But the evil spirit of nationalism soon possessed the communist state and injected its poison down to its roots. From the dawn of history down to modern days, Islam is the only creed in the world which seeks to organise the state on the basis of an ideology free from all traces of nationalism and invites mankind to form a non-national state by accepting its ideological system.

As this is something novel and the world around us is moving in a contrary direction, not only non-Muslims, but Muslims themselves are unable to realise its full implications. The idea completely eludes the grasp of those Muslims who, though born in Muslim families, have had their training and education on Western lines and whose views on life and history are borrowed from European history and western politics. The result has been that in countries outside India where Muslims preponderate and which are more or less independent, when people of this type assumed the reins of Government, they could think of no other form of Government and of no other type of the state-system except that of the national Government and the Nation-State, because they had no knowledge of Islam and its attitude towards the problems of life and they had no conception of a state formed on a definite set of moral and spiritual principles instead of the principles of race or nationality.

In India too people who have received the same kind of mental training are involved in the same fallacy. They talk of an Islamic state but, because of their peculiar mental training and their background of western political history, they have before their mind no plan of life except that derived from the life and history of Nation-States in Europe. Consciously or unconsciously, they fall a victim to nationalistic ideology; and whatever programme they think of is fundamentally nationalistic. According to them the nature of the problem that confronts us is no more than this that Muslims are a separate national group like Hindus, Englishmen and Frenchmen and as such they have every right to a separate national existence under a state and Government of their own. However much they may rack their brains they can not conceive of any other means of attaining this objective except that, as a nation, Muslims should follow the same methods and adopt the same strategy that have been followed and adopted by all other national groups in History. In other words, the elements of which this nationality is composed should first be welded together in a strong unified whole; a powerful national spirit should then be infused among them; a central authority should emerge and direct them; they should organise their own national guards; they should have a national militia; wherever they are in a majority, they should form a national state based on the well-known democratic principle of majority rule; and wherever they may be in a minority their "right" should be safeguarded and their individuality protected, just as in other countries of the world national minorities seek and claim their protection: in the services, educational institutions and elected bodies, they should have proportionate representation; their representatives should be elected by their own voters; they should be given their due share in

ministries as a distinct national entity. Such are the methods and ideas of these people. They are evidently borrowed from the conception of European State-system and yet, those who advocate the above means and strategy talk, in the same breath, of their resolve to form an Islamic State. These people also use Islamic terms 'Ummat', 'Millat', 'Ameer' and the duty of 'obedience to the Ameer' whose connotation in Islamic terminology is something quite different from what these persons have in mind when they use the above words. To them, however, these Islamic terms are synonymous with the terminology of nationalism, and as good luck would have it, these terms were found ready-made in the Islamic literature and they are now being freely used to serve as a cloak for un-Islamic ideas and methods of action derived from the West.

If you understand the nature of a state based on spiritual and moral principles, you will find little difficulty in realising that this attitude of thought and action and this programme of work cannot serve even as a starting point for arriving at the desired goal of an ideological state, let alone the question of its utility in the concluding stages of the movement; rather such ideas and actions are in their very nature fatal to the growth and evolution of a state founded on non-national principles. The very basis of an ideological state is that we dismiss all questions of tribes, classes, and notabilities and look upon men as moral and spiritual beings. It is not with their nationality but with their humanity that we concern ourselves. We place before them certain principles of action and a set of beliefs wherefrom they have been derived and put forward the claim that these principles provide the basis of a universal culture and a non-national State system which will lead mankind to real peace in this world and in the hereafter. Anyone who accepts those principles is entitled to an equal share in the



conduct of the State system built on them. How can a man whose thousand activities bear the stamp of nationalism come forward with such an ideal. How can he appeal to the wider humanity and the common moral sentiments of mankind when he has already falsified his position by associating himself with the good of a particular community or of a particular nation? Would it not be ridiculous to appeal in the name of humanity and of the common welfare of mankind to peoples blinded by national prejudices and fighting with each other in the name of nationalism and national states and in the same breath demand national rights and national self-determination for our own people? Does it stand to reason that a movement for dissuading people from litigation should be launched by instituting a suit in a court of law?

### **The Divine Caliphate**

Another distinguishing feature of the Islamic State is that the basic conception underlying all its outward manifestations is the idea of Divine Sovereignty. Its fundamental theory is that the earth and all that it contains belongs to God, who alone is its Sovereign. No individual, family, class or nation and not even the whole of humanity can lay claim to sovereignty, either partially or wholly, God alone has the right to legislate and give commands. The state according to Islam, is nothing more than a combination of men working together as servants of God to carry out His will and purpose. This can happen in two ways: either some person should receive the law of the state and its basic constitution directly from God or he should follow the lead of another person who is the recipient of such law and constitution. In the working of this state all those will participate who believe in this law and are prepared to follow it. They will all work with a sense of

individual and collective responsibility to God, not to the electorate, neither to the King or the dictator. They will proceed on the belief that God knows everything overt and covert; from His knowledge nothing is hidden; and from His grip man can never hope to escape, not even after death. The responsibility for running the state has been vested in men not for the purpose of enforcing their own orders or imposing their own will on others, for enslaving people of other nationalities calling upon them to bow down their heads in submission or for enabling them to construct spacious palaces by fleecing the weak and the down-trodden in short, for the pursuit of their pleasure and self glorification. On the other hand, men who are at the helm of the state should have a feeling that this is a burden laid on them that they may enforce the divine law and administer social justice to the creatures of God. They should feel that if they make even a small mistake in following and enforcing the law or become guilty of even a grain of *selfishness, prejudice, partiality and dishonesty* they shall be hauled up before the throne of God on the Day of Judgment, even if they escape all punishment in this world.

The superstructure of social conduct and political action that is raised on the basis of this theory is entirely different from that of the secular state in all its details and ramifications. Between these two forms of social and political life there is nothing common either in the elements which make up their unity or in the spirit and attitude underlying them. A state system based on belief in the sovereignty of God and in a sense of responsibility to Him requires for its successful working a special type of individual and mass character and a peculiar mental attitude. Its army, its police, its law courts, its revenue systems, its taxation, its administrative and foreign policy,

its conduct of war and peace, everything differs widely from the similar instruments used by secular states. The ordinary judges as well as the Chief Justices of the secular courts are not fit to work as clerks, or even peons in its judicial system. The inspector general of police department in a secular state is not worthy of being an ordinary constable therein; and the generals and field marshals not fit to be recruited as ordinary soldiers. The foreign ministers of the secular states, not to say of their fitness for any office under the Islamic state system, will not escape imprisonment in that system for their lying, fraud and dishonesty. In short, all those persons who have been trained for running the affairs of secular states and whose moral and mental training has been undertaken in the spirit which permeates every activity of the secular state are totally unfit for an Islamic state, which requires human beings of a very different character for its citizens, voters, councillors, office bearers, judges, magistrates, directors of departments, commanders of the army, ambassadors, and ministers, in brief for all the different elements of its collective life and for the administrative machinery. It requires men who have the fear of God in their hearts; who feel a sense of responsibility towards God; who prefer the next world to the present; in whose eyes moral gain or loss is much more important than worldly success or failure; who follow implicitly in every walk of life that code of conduct and that line of action which has been permanently formulated for them; whose struggles and efforts are directed to the attainment of Divine pleasure who are influenced neither by personal nor by national motives, who are not slaves of their avarice or of their sensual passions; who are free from narrow-mindedness and prejudice; whom wealth and authority cannot corrupt; who are neither hungry for riches nor greedy of power; who

possess a strength of character that can resist all temptations even if the entire resources of the earth and all the treasures of the world are placed at their free disposal with nobody to check and supervise over them; who pass sleepless nights when the Government of cities is entrusted to them, so that, under their protection, people may be freed from all fear in respect of their lives, property and honour; who, when they enter a country as conquerors, set at rest by their conduct any fear that may be entertained about them that they will indulge in loot and plunder, in tyranny, adultery or sexual incontinence. On the other hand, the conquered population find, in every soldier of their army, a guardian of their life and property and the honour of their womenfolk; whose reputation in international politics is such that the whole world can depend upon them for their truthfulness, love of justice, adherence to moral principles, and fulfilment of promises and understandings. The Islamic state can only be formed with this type of people and it is only men of such sterling character that can run the Islamic state. People with a materialistic and utilitarian mentality who always come forward with a new principle under the stress of personal or national expediency; who do not believe in God or in the life hereafter, whose policy revolves on the axis of worldly gain or loss, far from being fit to establish or govern such a state are a menace to its stability and their very existence in such a state is a challenge to the principles on which it claims to rest.

### **The Method of Islamic Revolution**

Keep in mind the nature of the Islamic state as explained above and then consider the means to be employed for bringing it into being. As I have pointed out in the beginning, the ideological, moral and cultural conditions existing in all society, bring forth by their

interplay the type of state suited to them. It is not possible that a tree may shape as a lemon from its rudimentary stages right up to the state of its completion but when it reaches the stage of fruition it should all of a sudden begin producing mangoes. The Islamic state does not start into being all of a sudden like a miracle; it is inevitable for its creation that in the beginning there should grow up a movement having for its basis that view of life, that ideal of existence, that standard of morality, and that character and spirit which is in keeping with the fundamentals of Islam. Its leaders and workers should be men who are psychologically and spiritually fit to accept that particular mould of character. They should then, by their ceaseless efforts, create the same mental attitude and moral spirit in their society, and on the basis of the moral and intellectual tendencies, so created, there should rise up a system of education to train and mould the masses in the Islamic pattern of life; the system should produce Muslim scientists, Muslim philosophers, Muslim historians, Muslim economists and financial experts, Muslim jurists and politicians; in short in every branch of knowledge there should be men who have imbibed the Islamic ideology and are imbued deeply with its spirit, men who have the ability to build a complete system of thought and of practical life based on Islamic principles and who have strength enough to challenge effectively intellectual leadership of the present Godless thinkers and scientists. With such an intellectual background the movement should take the field against the wrong system of life which is found all around us over the wide world. In this struggle its torch-bearers should furnish proof of their moral strength and of their sincerity by facing adversities, braving dangers and by offering sacrifices in money and lives. They must go through all forms of trials and emerge like pure gold which

every one may declare unalloyed after having it tested. During their struggle they should, by word and deed, exemplify in their conduct and bearing that particular ideology which they claim to represent and, in everything they say or do, it should be apparent to everyone who comes into contact with them that the ideological state to which these selfless, truthful and God-fearing men of pure character and sacrificing spirit are inviting the world must certainly be a guarantee of social justice and world peace. By means of such a struggle all those elements in society, whose nature is not entirely devoid of truth and justice, will become attracted to the movement. The influence of people with a low mentality and of those who resort to mean tricks, will dislike to a palpable degree in the face of a lofty movement like this. A revolution will take place in the mentality of the masses and the collective life of humanity will cry out for a state-system like this, so that after a time it will become impossible in the changed society of the day for any other system of life to maintain its existence. Ultimately as an inevitable and natural consequence, that particular state-system will be set up for which the ground has been prepared in this manner and as soon as this system is set up, office-bearers from the lowest officials right up to ministers and administrators of every rank and status will be available for running it owing to the out-turn of that particular system of education and training which I have mentaioned above.

Gentlemen! This is the natural method for bringing about that revolution and setting up that state system which is called the Islamic revolution and the Islamic state. You are all men of learning; the history of revolutions in the world is before you. You cannot be unaware of the fact that a particular type of revolution demands the same type of movement, the same type of leaders and workers and the

same type of social consciousness and cultural and moral atmosphere. The French Revolution needed that particular kind of moral and mental basis which leaders like Rousseau, Voltaire and Montesque had prepared. The Russian Revolution could only be brought about by the ideas of Marx, the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, and thousands of other Communist workers whose lives were cast in the communist mould. The National-Socialism of Germany could only take root in those particular moral, psychological and cultural conditions which had been created by the theories of leaders of thought like Hegel, Fichte, Goethe, Nietzsche and many others including Hitler. Exactly the same way the Islamic Revolution can be brought about only when a mass movement is initiated on the theories and conceptions of the Qur'an and the example and practice of Muhammad, which should by a powerful struggle effect a wholesale change in the intellectual, moral, psychological, and cultural foundations of social life. It passes my understanding how any movement of a nationalistic character with its background of an imperfect educational system like the one prevalent amongst us, which is based on utilitarian morals and pure opportunism can ever bring about the Islamic Revolution. I do not believe in that kind of miracle in which M. Reynaud, the former Premier of France believed.<sup>1</sup> I believe that the means employed in securing an end inevitably leave their effects on the result produced.

### Loose Thinking

There is a misunderstanding amongst us that if the Muslims are rully organised and develop a solidarity of

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Reynaud, when he was Prime Minister of France during World War Second said in a broadcast on the radio, a few days before the defeat of France, "Only a miracle can now save France and I believe in miracles."

their own, that is the panacea for all our ills. It is thought that, in order to reach the desired goal of the Islamic state or of "free Islam in a free India" the only means that need be adopted is that individuals comprising the Muslim nation should be knit together into a strong unity and develop a central organisation of their own working in obedience to a central leadership. As a matter of fact, this is a nationalist programme. Any nation desiring to become powerful, great and strong, will adopt the same means to secure those ends, be it the Hindu nation or the Sikhs, the Germans or the Italians. A leader who is devoted to his nation. Who is an adept in varying his plans and strategy, to suit the needs of the moment and who is so gifted by nature that he can get his commands obeyed, is always fit to lead a nation on the path of ambition; whether he is Moonje or Savarker, Hitler or Mussolini. And hundreds and thousands of youngmen who can move in an organised manner and do the bidding of their leader for their national ideals, can always raise the standard of any nation, irrespective of the fact whether they believe in the Japanese or the Chinese ideals. Now, if Muslims are a nation by racial or historical ties and the end in view is merely to make this nation powerful and great, then means being employed are no doubt necessary. Muslims will have to tread the path of national ambition, so familiar to those who the history of Western nationalism and, as a result thereof, we can secure a national government of our own or at least secure a reasonable share in the government of our country. But let us be clear in our minds that this is not even the first step on the road to Islamic revolution or the creation of an Islamic state; it is in fact a reverse step which will lead us backward.

The community which is at present known by the name of Muslims is a hybrid mixture of all sorts of people with



hardly a common standard of behaviour. From the point of view of moral conduct, you will find among Muslims as many varieties of character as are to be found among the non-believers. The proportion of those who are prepared to give false evidence in law courts is probably as large among Muslims as among non-Muslim communities. Muslims are not a whit behind any other people in bribery, burglary, adultery, lying, and all the other moral evils. All the methods which are used by non-Muslims for earning their bread and acquiring wealth are resorted to also by the members of the Muslim community. A Muslim pleader, when he advocates the cause of his clients, knowing full well that the latter's case is unjust, is as much devoid of the fear of God as a non-Muslim pleader. A Muslim aristocrat, when he comes across wealth, and a Muslim official, when he holds office, behaves exactly as a non-believer would do. To weld such elements into an organised unity and teach them by political training the duplicity and cleverness of a fox or by military training impart in them the bestial vigour of a wolf, may succeed in securing for them the kingdom of the jungle; but I cannot imagine how the kingdom of God can come through such people and by such methods. Who will acknowledge their moral superiority? Who will regard them with feelings of respect and reverence? Whose heart will be attracted to Islam on coming into contact with them? With such uninspiring leadership can they hope to repeat the historical performance alluded to in the Quranic words – "they join the divine faith in large groups:!" Where on this broad surface of the earth will their spiritual leadership be recognised? In which part of the globe will the oppressed people welcome them as liberators? The task of "exalting the Word of God" requires a group of workers who are fearful of God and implicitly follow the law of God without

consideration of gain and loss, no matter where they come from, whether from his community which is now called Muslim or from outside. A handful of such men are more valuable for this purpose than the huge crowd of which I have just spoken. Islam does not stand in need of a treasure of copper coins which pass for gold coins. Before examining the stamp on the coins, Islam seeks to find out whether or not pure gold lies underneath. One such coin is more valuable to Islam than a whole heap of spurious gold coins. Then again, the leadership which God requires for the glory of His name is the type of leadership which should not budge an inch from the principles which Islam seeks to uphold, no matter what the outcome may be, whether all the Muslims perish by hunger or go down before the sword. Leadership which seeks only the advantage of its own community and without adherence to principles is prepared to adopt any plan with which it can secure the worldly salvation of its flock: leadership which is devoid of the fear of God is utterly unfit for the ideal which Islam has fixed for its followers. Then again, the system of education and training which is based on the well-known maxim that one should move with the times, can never serve a religion whose final and irrevocable command is that whichever way the wind may blow and whatever path the world may follow you must, at all costs, traverse the path which has been marked out for you by God. I assure you that, even if you are presented, as a free gift, a particular piece of territory to rule over, you will not be able, as things go now, to administer it according to Islamic principles even for a single day. You have made no preparations to train or educate people imbued with the moral spirit and possessed of the intellectual attitude which is necessary for running an Islamic state, its police, law courts, army, revenue, and its financial, educational and foreign policy. The education

which is imparted in your colleges and universities can doubtless produce, for an un-Islamic Government, the type of men who can serve as secretaries and ministers; but I hope you will not be offended, if I say, that it can not produce even peons for the Islamic courts and constables for the Islamic police. And this defect is confined not merely to your present educational system. Our own old system of education which does not believe in the earth's motion, is equally useless from this point of view and cannot give to the Islamic state a single qazi, finance minister, or director of education. And with such utter lack of preparation, to think of the formation of an Islamic state, is pure moonshine. Those who talk in this strain are completely ignorant of the true conception of the Islamic state.

Some people, however, argue saying that once a national state of Muslims is set up, may be of a non-Islamic character, it could be changed gradually into an Islamic state by education, training, and moral reformation. But whatever little I have studied of history, politics and sociology compels me to repudiate this theory as untenable. If such a plan succeeds I shall regard it as a miracle. As I have explained already, the form of organisation of a state has deep roots in social life. Until there is a change in the social fabric, no permanent change can be produced by artificial means in any system of government. A powerful ruler like the Omayyad Umar, the son of Abdul Aziz, who had at his back a party of men trained by the companions of the Prophet of Islam, completely failed in his efforts to transform the Ommayyad State, because society as a whole was not prepared for reformation. Powerful potentates like Mohammad Tughlak and Aurangzeb Alamgir in spite of their individual piety could not effect any change in the system of Government. Even a strong monarch like

Mamoon-al-Rasheed who wanted to make only a superficial change in the outer form of government, was wholly unsuccessful. And this happened in a period when the power and strength of an individual could accomplish a good deal. I am, therefore, unable to understand how a national state formed on a democratic basis, can easily go through the process of such a basic reformation. In a democratic state power is wielded by persons who have the approval of the voters. If the voters do not possess the true Islamic mentality and the moral attitude which Islam inculcates, if they are not able to tolerate the Islamic standards of integrity and moral purity and if they are not prepared to accept that impartial justice and those firm principles on the basis of which an Islamic state is run, then their votes can never return the true type of Muslims to a parliament or assembly. Under these circumstances power will come into the hands of those individuals only, who though they may be registered as Muslims in the census, are far removed from Islam in their ideas and modes of behaviour. The possession of power by such people means no more than this: that we shall stand where we were under a non-Muslim government; we may even occupy a position worse than that, because a national state bearing the lable of Islam will be bolder and more fearless than a non-Muslim state in suppressing an Islamic revolution. Such a Muslim national state will pass a sentence of death and outlawry for acts which a non-Muslim state will punish only with imprisonment; and all the same, the leaders of this state will be called ghazis during their lifetime and saints after their death, because they happen to be Muslims by birth. Hence it is utterly wrong to think that this type of national state can in any sense be helpful in bringing about the Islamic revolution. The question which confronts us is that if we have to revolutionise the social life of humanity,

even in a Muslim national state, and if we have to do this without the aid of the state, more probably in the face of active opposition by the Muslim state why should we wait for that opposition to take shape instead of starting forthwith on the road of revolution? Why should we foolishly waste our time in expediting the so called Muslim national state and fritter away our energies in setting it up, when we know that it will not only be useless for our purpose but will rather prove an obstacle in our path.

### **The Technique of Islamic Movement**

Gentlemen, I shall now explain to you in a brief historical survey the way in which the foundations of social life have to be changed and reconstructed in order to bring about the Islamic revolution, and the special technique by which this goal can be reached.

In reality Islam is a movement which seeks to build up the structure of human society on the conception of divine sovereignty. This movement has followed the same familiar pattern from the dawn of history. Its leaders were persons who are called the prophets of God. If we desire to start this movement, it is inevitable to follow the practice and methods adopted by those leaders for there is no other technique suitable to the nature of this movement, nor can one be devised. But when we attempt to trace the footsteps of these messengers of God we are faced with a great difficulty. We have the most meagre information about the work done and methods followed by the Prophets of God in the early period of history. The Qur'an, no doubt, contains brief hints about their work but they do not give us a full picture. We also come across in the New Testament with some sayings of Jesus Christ which, though lacking authority, do throw some light on how the Islamic movement is conducted in its initial stages and what are the

problems that it has to face. But Jesus Christ did not himself pass through the later stages of the movement so that we cannot find any guidance from his life about the later and final stages of the Islamic movement. In this matter we can get clear and perfect guidance only in one place, that is, in the life of Muhammad. In seeking guidance from this source we are not influenced by mere sentimental attachment; but because there is no other source available to us for knowledge of the different phases through which the Islamic movement has to pass. In the whole history of the leaders of the Islamic movement, it is Muhammad alone whose life furnishes us with all the details of the various phases and aspects of the movement, from its early beginnings as an apostolic message of truth, down to its visible embodiment in an external state-system with a definite constitution, a clear cut internal and external policy, and a specific social organisation. Hence, I shall place before you from this source a brief description of the technique of this movement.

You are well aware that when Muhammad the messenger of God was called upon to deliver the message of Islam, a great many moral, cultural, economic, and political problems were awaiting solution. There were already in existence two rival imperialisms, Roman and Persian. The social life of Arabia and the surrounding countries rested on a basis of class distinctions and class conflicts were by no means infrequent, economic exploitation was widespread, and moral evils were there also in their full measure. In his own country there were intricate problems awaiting solution by a leader. The whole nation was steeped in ignorance, moral degradation, economic chaos, and internecine quarrels. The coastal parts of Arabia, right up to Yemen and including the fertile provinces of Iraq, were in the grip of Persian imperialism.

In the north Roman domination had extended to the frontiers of Hedjaz. In the Hedjaz itself Jewish capitalists had established great centres of trade and they had enmeshed the Arabs in the net of their usurious transactions. Facing the easternmost coast was the Christian Abyssinian government which had invaded Mecca only a few years before. In Nijran lying between Hedjaz and Yemen, there was firmly entrenched a group of Christians who derived support from this Christian government and had some economic and political relations with it. In spite of all these multifarious problems which needed urgent solution, the prophet of God paid no attention to these problems of the world outside or to those which were more intimately related to his own people. On the other hand, he merely called upon his countrymen to give up all gods except God and to render full obedience to Him only.

This was not because the Prophet of Islam held those problems to be unimportant or regarded them as unworthy of serious attention. You are well aware of the fact that at a later stage he did give attention to all these problems and solved them one by one. But the reason why he turned away his attention from these pressing questions of the day and concentrated all his energy on preaching obedience to God was that, from the stand-point of Islamic movement, all the evils which arise in the social life of mankind own their existence to this basic misconception that man regards himself as an independent and irresponsible being; or in other words, he sets himself up as his own god; or again because he falls in the error of taking some one else besides the Creator of his existence, as his guide and law-giver whether that other may be a human being or some inanimate object of nature. So long as this evil persists at the root, no amount of superficial reform from the point of

view of Islamic theory can succeed in eradicating social diseases. Unless this basic misconception is corrected and man returns to the consciousness of his responsibility to the Creator, any evil suppressed at one point will re-appear at another point in some other form. Hence, if man is to be reformed and human society is to be purged of evils, the mind of man should first of all be disabused of the idea of independence and mankind should realize that the universe in which we live is not in reality a kingdom without a sovereign. On the other hand, it is governed by an all-powerful sovereign whose sovereignty neither stands in need of man's acceptance nor can it be extinguished by his efforts, nor again can human being step out of the limits of this kingdom and find refuge elsewhere. In view of this hard fact and stark reality, the notion that man is an independent being free to follow his desires and the dictates of his reason is a foolish presumption which is not supported by facts and of which the evil consequences will but recoil on his own head. Both wisdom and realism demand that man should bow down his head before his Maker straight-forwardly and without any reservation, and admit in all humility that his position is that of an obedient servant in relation to his Maker, who is his master, guide and law-giver. It should also be brought home, to man that in the whole of this universe there is only one Sovereign, Master and Ruler. No one else is entitled here to issue his commands nor does, in point of fact, any one else's writ run here. Therefore, he should not agree to become the instrument of any will other than His Will nor accept the command of any other, nor bow down before anyone else. There is no one worthy to be styled in this world as His Majesty because all majesty resides in Him. There is no one here who can be called His Holiness, because all holiness is vested in Him. There is no being to be styled as His



Highness, because highness is the sole attribute of God. There is no one here fit to be called His Lordship for lordship belongs to God wholly and solely. There is no legislator here and no law-giver, for the only law deserving obedience is the law of God. There is no one here besides Him, who can rightfully claim to control and regulate the affairs of humanity, none who can administer justice in his own right, none who can answer the prayer of man and from man can expect help or succor in his distress; there is none besides Him, who possesses the keys of authority and there is nobody else who can claim absolute and unconditional allegiance for human beings. All men are but servants and there is only one Master. Hence it behoves us to deny obedience to all authority which itself does not own allegiance to Him and to refuse to serve any person or group of persons who act independently of the will and purpose of the Creator. This is the root and foundation of all reformation. On this foundation alone the whole superstructure of individual character and social organization can be planned anew after pulling down the old structure, and all the problems of human life that have arisen in the past or will arise in future can be solved in a new manner.

Without any previous preparation or anything by way of preliminary action, the Prophet Muhammad presented this fundamental conception to his people directly. He did not follow any round-about method in preaching his message. For instance he felt no need to prepare the ground by trying to win the popularity and gain the affection of his people through useful social and humanitarian work. Nor did he seek political power in order to push forward his mission through the backdoor of governmental authority. He did nothing of the kind. What we see on the other hand, is that there came forward a man who directly announced

that "There is no god but One God." He did not fix his eyes on anything else. It would be wrong to conclude that mere prophetic boldness or missionary zeal was responsible for this direct and straightforward mode of preaching. In reality this is the necessary technique of the Islamic movement. The influence and prestige gained by any other means is of no use whatever for the moral reform which Islam undertakes. People who co-operate with you on any basis other than that of "no gods except One God" can give you no help in the task of social reconstruction on Islamic lines. In this great work only those persons can be of real use who come towards you on hearing the cry of "no gods except One God" who have been attracted solely by this truth and who desire to make it the foundation-stone of their lives and prepare themselves for work on this basis. Therefore, the particular type of wisdom and practical understanding which is necessary for conducting the Islamic movement requires that, without any introductory work, a start should be made directly with this call to the unity of God.

This conception of the unity of God is not a mere religious creed. As I have explained just now, the whole system of social life which is based on the conception that man is an independent being or that sovereignty belongs to any other being, animate or inanimate, is uprooted from its foundation and a new superstructure rises on a different basis with belief in the oneness and sovereignty of God. Today the whole world hears your *Muezzins* (callers to prayers) proclaiming loudly, "I bear witness that there is no god except one God," and hardly takes any notice of it, because neither the caller knows that he is calling about, nor do the hearers find any real meaning or purpose in it. But were it to become known that the proclamation is intended to mean—and the caller is fully conscious of it—that one should recognize no sovereign, nor accept any

government, nor yet obey any law, or that one should refuse to accept the jurisdiction of any court, to carry out the command of anyone or bind himself to any established usage or rite and that one should repudiate the privileges, sovereignty, sanctity and authority of every one else, besides God, and declare himself to be a rebel against ungodly rulers, you can very well understand that this daily proclamation will not be tolerated even for a moment. Whether you seek to quarrel with any one or not, the whole world will come and quarrel with you. As soon as you raise cry you will feel as if all of a sudden the earth and the heavens had turned your enemies and on all sides you will find yourselves encircled by hostile elements.

This very state of affairs confronted Muhammad when he raised this cry. The Proclaimer had raised the cry in full consciousness of its import and the hearers knew very well what he was really driving at. Hence everyone who was adversely affected in any respect by this cry stood forth to suppress it. The priests scented danger in this cry to their papal domination, the rich saw a menace to their hoarded wealth and luxurious living, the capitalist realized the danger to his economic overlordship, worshippers of race and tribe were not slow to feel the challenge it implied to their superiority; the nationalists at once shrugged their shoulders at this new unifying force which meant the destruction of the artificial unity built on the idea of nationality and ancestor worshippers rose in indignation at this looming cloud whose showers were to wash away their ancestral ways of living. In short, every one who had set up an idol for his worship felt the ground slipping from under his feet and all these people hastily patched up a unity among themselves, in spite of their deep seated differences, to fight this new and formidable menace to their established way of living. Under these circumstances only those

persons came forward to join Muhammad whose minds were clear, who were capable of understanding and accepting truth, and who had at least such love for it left in them that when they realized that his call was a call of truth, they girded up their loins to face death and destruction for its sake. The movement needed people of this very type. They came one by one and in twos and fours. Their numbers increased gradually as the struggle developed. Some of them had to lose their employment; some were driven out of their homes by their own kith and kin; some had to leave their friends, relatives and acquaintances; a large number of them were dragged on hot sand; while others were stoned and abused in the market place. One had his eyes taken out and another his head broken. Attempts were made to buy off people by offering them women, wealth, office, authority and everything else that could be offered. All these things came and it was necessary that they should come, for without them the Islamic movement could neither gain strength nor grow to wider proportions.

The first advantage of all this was that people of a weak character and irresolute determination could not join this select band. Whoever came was the cream of the society then existing and was really needed. There was no method of selection more effective than that whoever came to this movement should pass through these trials. The morally unfit were automatically weeded out.

Then again, those who came were undergoing these hardships not for any selfish motives, not for the interest of their family, tribe or nation but for the sake of what they felt to be a great truth and in order to seek the pleasure of their Lord. For this alone they were beaten, starved to death, and became the victims of an unparalleled oppression. In the net result, they developed the true Islamic attitude which was needed. The struggle moulded

their character and gave added sincerity to their beliefs and actions. It was natural that in this automatic process of training they should become permeated with the true spirit of Islam. When a person comes forward with a high ideal and undergoes sufferings, torture, exile, poverty and other hardships for its sake, the spirit of that ideal infiltrates his heart and mind and his whole individuality is transformed into the likeness of his ideal and purpose. In order to complete and hasten this transformation, prayers were prescribed for the followers of the new movement so that their minds may become concentrated on this one aim, the sole object of their life. By repeatedly proclaiming the sovereignty of Him whom they regarded as Sovereign, their convictions may gain in depth and intensity and they should fully believe in the omniscience of God, in His mastery of the Day of Judgment and His complete supremacy over all His creatures, because henceforth they work under His Commands. This was also necessary so that the idea of obedience to anyone except Him should never again be allowed to influence their minds even in the slightest degree.

While on the one side those who joined the Islamic movement were going through this process of training, on the other; this struggle itself gave a fillip to the movement. When people witnessed with their eyes that a hell was let loose on the devoted followers of the Prophet, that they were beaten, imprisoned and turned out of their homes they naturally desired to know what all this was about. And when they learnt that these people were being tortured not for "women, wealth, or property," but only because they had come in possession of a new truth, to which they held fast sincerely, and that their lives and habits bore no trace of any selfish motive, they were naturally to seek that for which these people were facing cheerfully all these

difficulties and calamities. And when they came to know that this was nothing else except belief in one God, and that this belief had effected such a revolution in their lives that they were ready to throw away all the advantages which their society secured for them, and willingly give up all prospects of worldly success for the sake of truth and righteousness, and that, in this cause which they had taken up, they were not slow to sacrifice their lives, property and even their children, a new light dawned upon them, sweeping away before it all shadows of doubt and misunderstanding. It was in this background of righteous suffering that they were irresistibly drawn to the bosom of truth. This was the reason why barring those persons who were blinded by religious prejudice or vested interests, all the rest were drawn towards this movement; some were attracted almost instantaneously, while others resisted the attraction for a while, but sooner or later every truth-loving and selfless man joined the movement.

Meanwhile the leader of the movement himself by his personal example, fully demonstrated the principle of his movement and everything that the movement stood for. Every act, speech and movement of the leader breathed the true spirit of the Islamic faith and fully brought out its implications for practical life. This is a question requiring detailed explanation, for which there is no space here, but I shall briefly mention a few important things.

His wife, Khadijah, was the wealthiest woman in Hedjaz, and he was carrying on trade with her capital. When the prophet became active in his new mission, his commercial business came to a standstill, for by devoting himself completely to his mission and incurring the enmity of all the Arabs, his business suffered until it collapsed. Whatever the couple had laid by, was invested and exhausted in a few years' time in propagating the new faith.

Ultimately, matters came to such a pass that when the Messenger of God went to Taif on his mission of preaching the religion, he who had once been the prince of merchants had hardly means enough to purchase a donkey which would carry him to his destination.

The Quraishites offered him the throne of the Hadjaz, and said that they would accept him as their king. They offered to give him in marriage the prettiest woman of Arabia, and to place at his disposal as much wealth as he wished for, on the condition that he gave up his mission. But the man who had stood up for the salvation of mankind, rejected all these offers and remained content with the abuses, vilifications and cruelties of his countrymen. The leaders of the Quraish and other Arabs said, "Muhammad, how can we come and sit with you and hear your talk when in your company there are always found sitting slaves, poverty-stricken persons and mean people? You have collected around you all those who are regarded in our society as low class people. Remove them, and we shall seek your company. But the man who had come to level up—the high and the low, refused to remove the poor for the sake of the rich.

During the whole course of the movement, the prophet of God never cared for the interests of his own country, tribe, natin, or family. It was this disinterestedness which convinced the world that the Prophet was working for the betterment of all human beings, irrespective of race or nationality, and it was this which attracted people of all nations towards this movement. If he had cared for his own family, then non-Hashemites would have had no interest at all in his movement. Had he been anxious to preserve the authority of the Quraishites somehow or other, the non-Quraishites have had no incentive to take part in this work. Had he stood for the superiority of the Arab race, then Bilal

of Abyssinia, Suhaib of Rome and Salman of Persia would have had no reason to support him in his task. What really attracted everyone was his pure and sincere godliness and his absolute selflessness, free from all personal, family, tribal and nationalistic motives.

When he was compelled to leave Mecca, all the money and valuables which his enemies had deposited with him for safe custody, were handed over by him to all with instructions that after he had gone, they should be returned to their rightful owners. A wordly man would have every motive on such an occasion to run away with whatever he could lay his hands on, but the servant of God returned the property belonging to his blood-thirsty enemies, and this at a time when they had already decided to murder him. This unexampled moral behaviour must have caused no little astonishment to the people of Mecca, and I am sure that, when two years later, they came out to fight against the Messenger of God on the battlefield of Badr, they must have felt it in their heart of hearts that they were fighting a man who had not betrayed their trust and who was mindful of their rights even when he knew that they had plotted against his life and were intent on his destruction. While they drew out their swords against him in blind hatred and obstinacy, their hearts must have been feeling the prick of conscience. It is quite possible that this may have been one of the moral causes that led to the defeat of the non-believers in the Battle of Badr.

After a long bitter struggle, extending over 13 years, when the time came for a small Islamic state to be set up in Madina, there were already available 400 workers, every one of whom had received full training in Islam and was thereby enabled to perform any task he was called upon to undertake in the capacity of a Muslim. These people were all now ready to conduct the Islamic state which was,



therefore, set up. For full ten years the Messenger of God Himself guided the affairs of this state, and, in this short space of time, trained thousands of men to perfection in running every department of government in the Islamic manner. This was the period in which Islamic ideology developed from an abstract idea into a perfect socio-political system, and every aspect of the administrative, educational, judicial, economic, cultural, financial, military and international policy of Islam was fully, clarified. For every sphere of life principles were laid down and applied to practical conditions of life. Workers on these lines were prepared by education, training, and practical experience, and these people presented such an example of Islamic government that within a brief span of 8 years the small state of the town of Madina expanded into the Islamic state of whole of Arabia. As people saw Islam in its practical form and witnessed its concrete results they were convinced that this was humanity at its best, and that the true salvation of mankind lay only in this form of society. The worst enemies had ultimately to come over to the cause against which they had fought for years together. Khalid son of Waleed, accepted it; Ikrama son of Abu Jahal bowed to it, and Abu Sufyan as well. The murderer of Hamza, named Vahshee, also embraced the new faith, and even Hinda who had swallowed the liver of the Prophet's uncle walked into the camp of the Prophet whom she had at one time hated with a fierce hatred.

The historians have given so much prominence to the religious wars of the Prophet that people were misled into believing that this revolution in Arabia was brought about by violence and bloodshed; whereas not more than a thousand or twelve hundred men were killed on both sides in the course of all the wars fought during the five years, in which the warlike nation of the Arabs was subdued. If you

keep in mind the history of revolution in the world, you shall have to admit that this revolution is fit to be called a "bloodless revolution." And this revolution changed not merely the administration of the country, but also the mental and moral outlook of the people. The whole of Arabia was transformed as if by a magic touch, in its mode of living, in its moral habits and spiritual values; in short, in all aspects of its life. It was not a mere political and social reform that had taken place. The whole basis of material and moral life had undergone a revolution. Adulterers whose life had been one of insensate self-indulgence, were now protectors of female chastity, erstwhile drunkards became the leaders of the prohibition movement. Men who had lived as thieves and vagabonds came to have such a keen sense of honesty that they hesitated even to accept food from their friends, because it smacked of taking hold of another's property; so much so that God Himself had to assure them in the Qur'an that there was no harm in taking such food. Those who had been robbers and dacoits became so religious that when an ordinary soldier among them, at the time of the conquest of the Persian capital, came upon the royal crown of Persia, worth crores of rupees, he concealed it in his tattered blanket in the dark hours of the night and handed it over to his general. So that his honesty may not become an object of public admiration and that hypocrisy may not taint his sincerity. Those who had no respect for human life at all, and with whom it was a common habit to bury their daughters alive with their own hands, came to have such regard for the sanctity of life that they could not see even a fowl being slaughtered mercilessly. Those who had no idea whatever of truthfulness and justice became so truthful and just that on the occasion of the peace of Khyber, when their revenue collector went to collect the government tax from the Jews,

and the latter offered him a large sum of money in order to persuade him to reduce the government demand, he refused to accept the bribe and distributed one-half of the produce between the government and the Jews by laying two separate stacks opposite each other and asking the Jews to choose freely one of them. At this strange behaviour of the revenue-collector, the Jews were taken aback completely and involuntarily cried: "This is the justice on which the earth and heavens stand." Among them arose governors who did not live in government houses but among their subjects in houses like theirs, who freely went about in the streets on foot; who had no guards at their doors and were accessible to everyone at any time of day and night. Among them were to be found judges, one of whom dismissed the suit of the Caliph himself against a Jew on the ground that the Caliph could not produce any other witness except his own son and his slave. Among them appeared those generals one of whom, on being forced to evacuate a city during a war, returned the whole of the Jizia (protective tax) to the non-believers on the ground that he was not in a position to afford protection to the conquered and therefore, had no right to retain the tax which had been collected in lieu of such protection. Among them were born ambassadors one of whom, in a court full of the Persian generals, gave such practical demonstration of the principle of human equality in Islam, and directed such relevant criticism against the class distinction in Persia, that God alone knows how many Persian soldiers must have been overpowered with a feeling of respect for this religion of humanity. Citizens arose among them who had such a strong sense of moral responsibility that they usually came forward on their own accord to confess the crimes which were punishable by amputation and death and demanded that they should be purged of the evil effects of their crimes

by punishment in this world, so that they may not have to appear before God in the capacity of a thief or an adulterer. Soldiers were to be found among them who did not fight from mercenary motives but for the sake of the faith in which they believed. They marched to battlefields at their own expense and whatever booty came into their hands they placed the whole of it before their general. Could such a complete transformation in the moral and mental attitude of a whole people be brought about merely by wars or physical force? The broad canvas of history lies before you. Can you bring any instance where the sword has revolutionized human morality so completely?

It seems strange that, while during the space of thirteen years, only three hundred persons embraced Islam, in the latter ten years the whole country of Arabia adopted this religion wholesale. As some people cannot solve this enigma, they give all sorts of strange reasons for it. But the matter is quite plain. So long as life had not been actually planned and organized on the basis of this new ideology, people could not understand what this novel type of leader wanted to do. All sorts of doubts arose in their minds. Some said that he was indulging in poetic fantasies; others, that he had lost his wits. Still others thought that he was a visionary and each one thus gave his own view of the matter. Only men of unusually keen understanding and intelligence could believe in Muhammad at that stage, men whose realistic vision could see clearly that the salvation of mankind lay in this new creed. But when a complete system of life was built up on this ideology and people had actual experience of it, when they saw before them its concrete results, it was then that they understood what it was for which this virtuous servant of God had faced all the perils and toils of life. After this no room was left for doubt, obstinacy or prejudice. For anyone who had eyes in his

head and light in those eyes, it became impossible to deny this open reality.

Gentlemen! This is the method by which Islam seeks to bring about a social revolution. And this is its way of doing the work. It begins with a simple call to the obedience of God and an invitation to people to abandon the life of self-indulgence and accept the restraints of morality. Then it gradually moves forward. People think that this is a kind of miracle and say that this cannot appear again. Only a messenger of God should come and perform it. But the study of history convinces us that it is a perfectly natural occurrence. There is to be found in it the logical and scientific relationship of cause and effect. If we work in this manner today the same result will appear. It is of course, true that for this work, qualities of faith, a true understanding of Islam, single-mindedness of purpose, strong power of judgment and complete sacrifice of personal feelings and selfish desires are necessary. Strong-willed persons are needed for this purpose who, on accepting truth, can concentrate on it and will not look towards anything else. Whatever may happen in the world they would not budge an inch from the path chalked out for them by the Qur'an. They should be prepared to sacrifice all prospects of personal advancement in worldly life. They should not hesitate to disappoint their own and their parents' hopes and expectations. They should not grieve over the separation of friends and relatives. Society, government, law, nation country, whatever obstructs the achievement of their object, they should be prepared to struggle against it. This type of men upheld and exalted the word of God in an age bygone and it is only such persons that can repeat and reaccomplish the task.

I now close this subject with a few concluding remarks. Providence has made Aligarh the nerve-centre of Indian

Muslims. It is on this account that four or five years back I had selected Aligarh for an address and placed before it a new plan of educational system which, in my opinion, was essential for the revival and regeneratin of Islam. With similar feelings I am again addressing the students of Aligarh and placing before them the plan of that movement which is the only possible movement for bringing about a social revolution of an Islamic nature. I have done my duty and communicated to you whatever I had in mind. The responsibility of changing your hearts does not lie on me.

