

## PILLARS OF PAKISTAN

Perhaps most of you think that by pillars, I mean the leaders of Pakistan, and you are anxious to hear something on the big personalities of Pakistan. Just before I stepped into the hall, a friend happened to meet me at the gate and asked me who my pillars were going to be. I gave him a guess and he said "perhaps Quaid-e-Azam and Mr. Liaquat Ali, and other." I said. "No, you wait and see."

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me tell you that leaders and big men are not pillars that I have in mind. They are the makers and designers, but not the pillars. The real pillars are the "TILLERS" who comprise 90 percent of the population of Pakistan. The tillers and the workers are the pillars on which Pakistan rests and they alone will keep it going. Their blood and sacrifice, have mad Pakistan and they will hold it with their labour and devotion. It is they I have now to deal with.

If you go round and meet a worker, a peasant, a labourer, a coolly or a 'tongawalla' and ask him how he feels about Pakistan, he will invariably say: "of what use is it to us? There is scarcity of 'atta and cloth' scarcity of everything; prices have shot up and our wages have gone down; it has become difficult for us to maintain ourselves. What have we get out of Pakistan? We have shed our blood; our men, women and children have died in thousands; our houses have been looted and burnt; our young women have been snatched by the brutes; we have been rendered homeless, and here we are, wandering in the streets in search of food. "Some of them are so pessimistic and dejected that they begin to question the wisdom of partition. It is here that we have to pause and hear them patiently and tell them how 'freedom' is going to benefit them and how we are going to cure the evils that have befallen them after partition. It is here that the problems of the people can be diagnosed and solutions thought of.

The pillar-1 mean the tillers who had been crushed under the exploitation of the 'banyas' heaved a sigh of relief when they came to know that the 'banyas' had left lock, stock and barrel. They now hoped that the new regime would bring them relief from exploitation, that they would be able to buy things in the market at reasonable prices, that the burden of debt and compound interest would no longer be there, that them all round, but they were soon disillusioned when they saw a set of new exploiters who came in the of Islam. A large number of opportunists, new traders, merchants, middle-men and profit makers had suddenly sprung up to take the place of the 'banyas' and had, in a short time, fixed their clutches on the poor masses who had hardly breathed a sigh of relief from the exploitation of the 'banya'.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you know very well how disgraceful a black-market has sprung up in the country. Our Muslim traders, who were expected to be honest, have shown a record more shameful than that of the 'banya. Fantastic prices are being charged for ordinary consumer goods. The people are being fleeced and there is nobody to put a stop to the endless greed of the new exploiters. Not only this, the new traders have combined to pull down the prices of agricultural commodities so that it has now become very difficult for the tiller to maintain himself. I

may quote to you an instance of my district Nawabshah, of which I was lately a collector himself. A few months ago the tillers was beaten down to Rs. 8/- per maund. The cultivators groaned with discontent and they came to me and said: "Our Muslim traders have no regard for honesty and fair play; they pay us prices which are ridiculously low. We were better off with the Hindu merchants." I called the merchants and appealed to them in the name of Islam. But they had formed a clique and were not prepared to do anything, and there was no provision of law under which they could be compelled.

An economic collapse was bound to threaten law and order and on this ground at last, I promulgated an order under section 144 that no body shall buy or sell cotton in the district without the permission of the District Magistrate. This brought to a standstill the trade of the exploiters, and their ginning factories in which they had invested big amounts were suspended. They were now threatened with serious losses within a few days the normal prices were restored. Many of the farmers came to me and said. "We thank you for imposing 'curfew' on cotton, for it has done us much good."

Now let us look at another class of exploiters "Zamindars". They have for centuries thrived on the labour of tillers who work and they (zamindars) enjoy themselves. When the Hindu zamindars migrated, leaving behind vast areas of agricultural land owned by them, their tenants hoped that perhaps they might become the owners of the soil they had cultivated for generations under the Hindu zamindars who had now disappeared. But the Muslim zamindars of the vicinity soon defeated their hope. They seized the Hindu holdings by intimidating and threatening the tenants. Thus, the only chance of the poor cultivators achieving freedom from exploitation was lost.

We have been able to rehabilitate in the name of Islam those people whom we had uprooted in the name of Islam. This is because the exploiters who shout from the house-tops that they stand for Islam and Islamic equality and fraternity, are just deceiving the poor people in the name of Islam. For there is no reason why they should not have parted with the properties abandoned by the Hindus, for the sake of rehabilitating the refugees, if they had believed in Islamic brotherhood. All appeals made to the exploiters in the name of Islam have failed to make any impression on them, and though they have very often shed tears at the blood-curdling stories of massacre of their Muslim brethren, they have not made any substantial contribution to their rehabilitation. It is obvious, therefore, that whatever show they make of Islam is only for the sake of keeping themselves in enjoyment of the large properties in their possession to the exclusion of the vast numbers of needy human beings.

When they feel that they may have to part with power, property or profits they at once raise the slogan of the Sindhis or the Punjabis being in danger. This cunning method has been followed by them somewhat successfully in Sind where all the refugees are regarded as Punjabis and poor Sindhi cultivators are told that the Punjabis would soon turn them out of Sind, snatch their cattle and take possession of the lands cultivated by the Sindhis. The Hindu 'banya' who was leaving Sind had also spread similar rumours all round. It is indeed surprising to see how the 'banya' propaganda against the refugees is identically the same as

that of the Muslim zamindars who do not want the refugees to settle down on lands abandoned by the Hindus.

You will note that the vested interests have common methods of misleading the illiterate masses in order to get them in their clutches. Provincialism, communalism and sectarianism are the weapons, which the vested interests have always used to stupefy the common man. When these weapons fail they divide people on slogans, such as of race, colour and creed. In actual fact humanity is the same everywhere and Islam is common tool of use in Pakistan, but the vested interests have an easy weapon of dividing us on false slogans of "Sind for Sindhis and Punjab for Punjabis". The problems of the common man are the same whether they be Sindhi or Punjabi or Bengali. The vested interests make people fight on false slogans in order to maintain their hold on them, for if they were united, they would soon ever throw the exploiters.

We had a unique opportunity after the partition, of rearranging the affairs of mankind on rational and equitable principles in accord with Islamic principles by which each one would enjoy the benefit of his labour and no one would be allowed to live on the labour of others. This was a unique opportunity of ending exploitation and introducing a total Islamic equality. Barriers of customs and traditions, of sacred antiquity had broken down. The social economic inequalities were leveled up by the blood-bath, and now all of them-high and low-were clustered in camps like one mass of mankind, and if we had cast off our selfishness on this side, and had offered to share our hoards of money and property with our refugee brothers and had endeavoured to evolve a new order, I am sure we would have made a paradise of Pakistan in which nobody would have grumbled nor complained of any shortage.

We were looking forward to the dawn of a new era after the partition. We thought that a new Muslim State would draw up a programme calculated to relieve us from the age-long economic strangle-hold of the exploiters, that the un-Islamic system of a few leading a life of ease and luxury on the labour of others would end; that exploitation in all spheres of life would go; that our standards of living would improve; that an era of freedom from want would set in; that a new order based on equality, fraternity, liberty, justice and fair-play would come into being. These were our hopes. But when the time came for laying the foundation for their fulfillment, when Pakistan was born, when the Islamic State of our dreams became a reality, some useless and stupid issues were pushed forward by the agents of the vested interests.

At once a vigorous propaganda campaign started-that the Pakistan Government should first deal with the banning of prostitution, the taboo of liquor and gambling, the prohibition of music and dancing, the punishing of fornication and immorality, the closing down of cinema houses enforcing of a total purdah among women. The press and the platform controlled by the vested interests gave a great prominence to such issues. The ignorant masses, numbed by centuries of such opiate and labouring under wrong notions of Islamic values, fell a ready prey to such propaganda and began seriously to believe that the introduction of 'purdah' and the banning of prostitution would solve their fundamental problems. The greatest misfortune that can befall a people is the loss of proper sense of social balance and real values of life. Our Muslims nation has had this misfortune. We have begun to attach undue

importance to comparatively less important issues and to ignore the fundamental ones. Social problems do deserve due consideration, but only after the fundamental problems which concern our very existence, have been properly solved. How can we preach 'purdah' to the starving semi-nude people who hardly have any clothes to wear and next to nothing to eat?

If we at all wish to survive and progress in the right direction, we must learn to think and find out what we should do first and what next, but unfortunately our thinking faculties have been benumbed by a flood of emotional propaganda dished out by the political parties. They built their popularity and power by the exploitation of sentiments of pseudo-religiosity, which our masses seem to possess so abundantly. Now if the leaders complain that our masses are idiotic and stupid it is very largely they themselves who are to blame and not the masses alone. Our literature, press and platform are all in the grip of this emotional and sentimental verbiage. Our political speeches are usually full of high sounding but empty words often punctuated by verses from Iqbal. A speaker who can sing well and play upon the emotions of the silly goats he happens to address, can hold the audience. I have seen how our political speakers combine verbal jugglery with dramatization and I remember one eminent speaker say at the top of his voice, "Islam is in danger", and as he said this there were loud outbursts of 'Nara-i-Takbir', but in actual fact he was making a fool of his audience. The result of such political jugglery is that our masses continue to go on losing their power of rational thinking.

Ladies and Gentlemen, social evils are the result of certain definite causes. If there is prostitution and immorality and we wish to eradicate it, we have to look for its root cause. We cannot set right the evil unless we eliminate that which causes it. It is no use trying to treat the syphilitic boils on the skin.

The real cure lies in the treatment of the system inside, to cut at the root of the evil. Those who think that a proper remedy against the evil of prostitution lies in the improvement of the individual's character alone are merely groping in the dark, as this is nothing short of putting the cart before the horse.

Good or bad character is the result of a good or bad system of life prevailing in a society. We have to improve the system if we wish to improve the individual character.

If you have in a society a large number of starving people side by side with a class of people rolling in wealth and ready even to buy the chastity of women and eager to spend lavishly on sensual pleasures, how is it possible to check immorality?

The simple rule of an evil 'demand' and a helpless 'supply' operates.

If you have a society built on values completely artificial and unnatural, in which the criterion of respectability is measurable in terms of the money that a man possesses, how is it possible to control our lust for money, the foster-mother of corruption?

People want status and 'izzat' which in our present day society happens to be a commodity purchasable with money; they must get money by hook or by crook, by fair means or foul, and spend some of it to obtain 'izzat'. How often have you not seen a notorious rogue give parties to the highest personalities of the city, invite the biggest people there, spend lavishly on decorations and serve excellent food and drinks attended by musical bands, and after a few such parties, the rogue is duly initiated into the inner-circles as a prominent citizen bearing the hall-mark of respectability?

It is not possible for me to give you a complete account of how corruption and other social evils are caused. I can only give you a few hints, which will make you, think. I am sure that if you seriously think over the 'causes' you will come to the conclusion that economic causes are at the root of most of our social evils. No nation can ever cure the evils that afflict its body politic unless it goes to the root causes, which result in the ills that it suffers from.

Many of you believe that by individual reformation and by setting up small societies to carry on moral rearmament among the people, we may be able to build a healthy nation. This is a wrong belief. Centuries of propaganda contained in the sermons of moulvis has failed to eradicate fornication and immorality. The more emphasis we have laid on the eradication of these evils the greater their ravages have appeared in society. The reason is obvious. We have tried to cure the boils on the skin without curing the system inside. When the whole atmosphere is surcharged with dangerously infectious germs emanating from a large section of exploiters who mainly thrive by foul and corrupt means, and who must corrupt mankind to increase their gains, to maintain their power, there is only one remedy which can save the helpless humanity: we must so arrange our social order that such corrupt exploiters and plague rats, are denied the sustenance on which they thrive.

We should read just our affairs so that equal opportunity of growth and expansion is made available to the entire human race in Pakistan which has assembled under the banner of Islam. The problems of 'pillars' cannot be solved by unscientific and misleading methods. The 'pillars' have already suffered untold miseries which well-nigh broke their back. Thanks to God Almighty, they again stood up and faced the trails and tribulations with courage and a faith in their future. The vested interests had badly faced the trails and troubled areas where at the outbreak of riots and massacres the vested interests had fled in motor cars, lorries and aero planes, instead by them and sharing the dangers with them.

The tillers who were left behind to face their battle of life and death were demoralized by the cowardice of the vested interests suffered a carnage unparalleled in history. Similar things can happen again if our 'pillars' are not emancipated from the yoke of the slavery of the vested interests.

The wealth of a nation is the manpower that it commands. The old theory that gold and silver is the wealth no longer holds good. We should consider ourselves fortunate to have received a large number of refugees who have increased our manpower. If we had rebuilt our economy on scientific lines we should not have found it difficult to buildup a strong country with the help of the new-comers.

But the machinations of the vested interests made it impossible for us to make any improvement. On the contrary, the newcomers were subjected to severe sufferings and trails all over Pakistan, and large numbers of them were allowed to die a slow and painful death. I have seen them die and I cannot but shed tears when I recollect their immense sufferings. This National wealth, the enormous manpower, has been lost to us because of the selfishness of the exploiters who have no regard for national welfare, and whose only interest lies in their personal profits and incomes.

When we advocate change in our economy on scientific lines, so that all of us should get enough to eat, all of us should get reasonable clothing and shelter, all of us should be able to develop the natural gifts, all of us should be able to enjoy peace and happiness which Islam promises us all, the vested interests oppose the change on false grounds fabricated in the name of Islam.

They at once set their 'moulvis' to announce that these changes are against the teachings of Islam, though in fact the object of the changes is to fulfill the purpose of Islam. Any change which cuts at the roots of the vested interests is declared as un-Islamic, any change which offers a solution of the common man's difficulties and promises him a better living is branded as Communistic. They would allow only eagerly insist on changes such as enforcement of 'purdah' and prohibition of 'prostitution' and 'liquor' for these do not hamper their exploitation nor affect their incomes, and even if they were carried out, only the common man would be brought under restrictions while the vested interests, the higher-ups would still remain above them.

For centuries they have told the poor man that he is miserable, poor and degraded because God has made him so; that it is his 'Kismet' and "Taqdir" ordained for him by God; that the wealth, luxury and ease in which the exploiters roll are also ordained by God; that there is no remedy for all these inequalities as they have been so ordained since eternity. Such a cunning propaganda has undermined the common man's intelligence and has made him completely stupid. He has lost his incentive in life and he has begun to believe that whatever drudgery he has to go through is ordained by God and, therefore, there is no way out. I give you an example of how the common man has been duped and misled into wrong channels of thought.

I Happened once, to walk with a labourer on a field and asked him as to why he was so poor and had to work as hard whereas his zamindar was fabulously rich and had no work to do. His reply was: "It is my *Naseeb*". God has made us high and low. If he had made us equally rich nobody would have worked and drudged? All would have sat at home and refused to work." I was simply amazed and also amused to hear this reashning, and I wondered how the ignorant and illiterate masses had been converted into real fools and how even the power of reasoning had forsaken them. The poor labourer who answered my question never realized that he was as good a human being as his landlord and he had as good a right to decent living as the man who fed fat on his labour, and there was no reason why God made him low and the landlord high and that why was he not high and the landlord low. He failed to realize that God could not be so unjust and unfair. He failed to appreciate that in the scheme of God all human beings were supposed to be equal.

However, the dawn of reason is now setting in, and people have begun to question the doctrine of 'Kismet' and 'Taqdir'? They now ask; "where is the equality, fraternity and justice advocate by Islam."

No longer can they be satisfied with the example of equality set by a Prime Minister of the Punjab who in the Id prayers stood side by side with a beggar clad in tatters. For now, they know that the beggar outside the mosque was kicked by the same premier who did not like to see a dirty man hovering round his car. No longer the story of a master (Aqa) allowing his slave (Ghulam) to dine with him, can inspire people with the concept of equality. For now, they know that the master denied the slave all human rights, and kept him in bondage. The old examples of equality in the mosque or on the dinner table, have lost their appeal to the people's mind who inspired by a consciousness of human right now demand equality in all spheres of life.

Ladies and gentleman, let me now tell you what is meant by Islam equality. It is not confined to the mosque only but it applies to all spheres of life. It means that all of us should have equal opportunities, all of us should have a share in the resources of sustenance created by God, all of us should share equally the labour and drudgery that living makes necessary for us, and all of us should enjoy happiness and leisure equally. If such an equality is introduced, only then can we have fraternity and justice. For, you know that there can be no brotherhood between unequals. The high must detest the low and the strong must oppress the weak. Similarly, justice is not possible between unequals. The strong and the rich would always prejudice the course of justice. Therefore, you see, how innumerable poor miserable get their crucifixion at the altar of the justice and fraternity cannot come into play until and unless the first concept of Islam total equality is fully introduced in our social life. We have for several centuries advocated these concepts but we have made no effort to level up the inequalities in our society. We have shouted from the stage and the pulpit for hundreds of years that Islam stands for equality and fraternity. But in the very society that professes Islam equality and fraternity do not exist.

For this reason, other people do not take our claims and professions seriously. Inside our society these concepts have lost their meaning, resulting in the degeneration of Islamic society and the growing loss of faith in religion. For, whatever, we have preached we have not practiced and people are no longer prepared to labour under illusions.

If we want to redeem our society from a complete collapse and if we want to build a new order in which the 'pillars' of Pakistan can play their role to make the nation and the country strong and respected in the comity of nations, the Islamic principles of total equality must be introduced in its fullest meaning.

We should end exploitation: nobody should be allowed to live on the labour of others, every one should be made to work and to put in the very best that he is capable of for the good of the nation.

Basic needs of life should be provided to all. The class of lazy idlers, parasitical middle-men, profit makers and exploiters should not be

allowed to thrive. The tillers should be given equal rights with the exploiters, the zamindars, who do not work and live on the labour of others. Land should be equally distributed between the tillers. The workers and labourers should share equal rights with their employers. Greed and lust for property should be bridled by a change in the values of life.

As I have already said our values of honour, status and izzat are based on money and property. We have to change these values and recast them on a different basis. Labour; work and good deeds should be the criterion of 'izzat', and not the possession of money. The Quran laid down the golden rule ( Qurani ayat ) that good deeds alone shall determine the status and honour of a person. We on the contrary allowed good deeds to be eclipsed by the extent possessions in terms of property and money, and very soon we saw that people with money became the 'respectables' and those of good deeds became the 'fakeirs' who lived away from the world. The capitalist form of Government which came into being after the demise of the Holy Prophet, associated with itself and bestowed its favours on men of property alone, and similar things happened in all other Governments of this pattern. Therefore, you see how a man of large property and income receives honours from Government, is invited to state functions and is included in the list of eminent and respectable citizens, no matter whether he is a man of good deeds or not.

A simple change in our out-look would produce a radical change in our approach to life. For instance, if the Government did not show any particular favours to property-owing