

## IQBAL DAY AT KARACHI

Iqbal Day was celebrated at Karachi by the Karachi Council at Hotel Intercontinental on 21 April, 1968. Mr. Aftab Iqbal, Bar-at-Law (son of Iqbal) inaugurated the meeting. The Academy is grateful to him for his permission to reproduce his inaugural address on the occasion.

Mr. President, your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I consider it a great privilege to have been asked by the Karachi Council to inaugurate this meeting. I must say I feel very grateful for and much appreciate the kind thought which prompted the Council to select me for this honour. We have assembled here this afternoon to pay our respectful homage to the genius of one who may fitly be described as the spiritual father of Pakistan. Thirty years have passed since Iqbal died but he seems to be as close to us spiritually to-day as he was during his life time. With the passage of time we have, in fact, come closer to him because what he thought and felt and visualised in his poetic imagination half a century ago is being realised by us to-day both in our individual and national experiences. Like a mountain, obscured at first by its foothills, he rises as he recedes. The coming generations of Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent in particular and the world generally will see him more clearly than we do to-day. As he himself said, "My own age does not understand my meaning; I am the voice of the poet of tomorrow."

To be able to discover the multiple aspects of his versatile genius we must carry on long and patient research and a study of the moral, political and social conditions in which he lived, moved and had his being. It is obvious that he was born ahead of his times and died rich in honours, though not in years, at a time when a leader of his vast knowledge, intellect, imagination and force of character was most needed to guide the destinies of his people. Of indomitable courage and great audacity of thought he had to face opposition not only from his enemies, which can be easily sustained, in the fields of religion, politics and social reforms, but from those whom he sought to help and on whose moral support he relied. When I returned to Lahore in 1931 after completing my education in Europe I found him at war with three main forces — British Imperialism, Hindu Communalism and the Punjab Unionist party. The Unionist Party consisted of Hindu and Muslim landlords, the foundation of which had been laid by one of his old friends, the late Mian Sir Fazl-i-Husain, under the British patronage. Iqbal fought tooth and nail against this party which aimed at dividing Muslim from Muslim with a view to defeat the Muslim League plan for the division of India. It was ultimately swept away by the Quaid-i-Azam in 1947.

During this period the poet suffered persecution at the hands of his political enemies. They did everythings possible to \_estroy his influence with the masses but did not succeed. When the late Shaikh Din Mohammed was torn away from the Muslim League by the Unionist Party having been rewarded with a High Court judgeship Malik Barkat All and the poet were the only two

persons left in the Punjab to fight for the League. Here are a few specimens of Iqbal's poetry written during these difficult times. He reacted with great dignity and restraint:

یا رب یہ جہان گزراں خوب ہے لیکن  
کیوں خوار ہیں مردانِ صفا کیش و ہنرمند  
تو برگ گیا ہے ندہی اہلِ خرد را  
او کشتِ گل و لالہ بہ بکشد بخرمے چند  
احکام تیرے حق ہیں مگر اپنے مفسر  
تاویل سے قرآن کو بنا دیتے ہیں پازند  
مدت سے ہے آوارہٴ افلاک مرا فکر  
کردے اسے اب چاند کی غاروں میں نظر بند  
فطرت نے مجھے بخشے ہیں جوہر ملکوتی  
خاکی ہوں مگر کاک سے رکھتا نہیں پیوند  
درویش خدا مست نہ سرقی ہے نہ غریبی  
گھر میرا نہ دلی نہ صفا ہاں نہ سرقند  
کہتا ہوں وہی بات سمجھتا ہوں جسے حق  
نے ابلۂ مسجد ہوں نہ تہذیب کا فرزند  
اپنے بھی خف مجھ سے ہیں بیگانے بھی ناخوش  
میں زہر ہلاہل کو کبھی کہہ نہ سکا قند  
مشکل ہے کہ ایک بندۂ حق بین و حق اندیش  
خاشاک کرے ت و دے کو کہے کوہِ دماوند

ہوں آتشِ نمرود کے شعلوں م میں بھی خاموش  
میں بندۂ مومن ہوں نہیں دانۂ اسپند  
پر سوز و نظر باز و نکوبین و کم آزار  
آزاد و گرفتار و تہی کیسہ و خورسند  
ہر حال م میں م میرا دل بے قید ہے خرم  
کیا چھینے گا غنچے سے کوئی ذوقِ شکرخند

فطرت نے نہ بخشا مجھے اندیشۂ چالاک  
رکھتی ہے مگر طاقتِ پرواز مری خاک  
وہ خاک کہ ہے جس کا جنوں صیقل ادراک  
وہ خاک کہ جبریل کی ہے جسسے قبا چاک  
وہ خاک کہ پروائے نشیمن نہیں رکھتی  
چنتی نہیں پ ہنائے چمن سے خس و خاشاک  
اس کاک کو اللہ نے بخشے ہیں وہ آنسو  
کرتی ہے چمک جن کی ستاروں کو عرفنانک

---

نگاہِ فقر میں شانِ سکندری کیا ہے  
خراج کی جو گدا ہو وہ قیصری کیا ہے  
فلک سے تجھ کو امیدیں خدا سے نومیدی  
مجھے بتا تو سہی اور کافری کیا ہے  
فقط نگاہ سے ہوتا ہے فیصلہ دل کا

نہ ہو نگاہ میں شوخی تو دلبری کیا ہے  
کسے نہیں ہے تمنائے سروری لیکن  
خودی کی موت ہو جس سے وہ سرور کیا ہے

کہتا ہے زمانے سے یہ دریوش چواں مرد  
جاتا ہے جد پر بندہ حق تو بھی ادھر جا!  
ہنگامے ہیں میرے تری طاقت سے زیادہ  
بچتا ہوا ہنگاہِ قلندر سے گزر جا!  
میں کشتی و ملاح کا محتاج نہ ہوں گا  
چڑھتا ہوا دریا ہے اگر تو تو اتر جا  
توڑا نہیں جادو مری تکبیر نے تیرا!  
ہے تجھ میں مکر جانے کی جرات تو مکر جا!  
مہر و مہ انجم کا محاسب ہے قلندر  
ایام کا مرکب نہیں، راکب ہے قلندر

Powerful tides of opposition rose and struck against him, but he stood like rock. Mean and ignoble attempts were made, by his Hindu and Muslim enemies combined, to starve him and his family but the poet did not budge an inch from his political convictions. His life was one of perpetual struggle and he was prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of his principles including his sons, yet he entertained no feeling of hatred or malice against anyone. I have never known a man whose loves

and hatreds were so deep. The following verses in which he describes a 'great man' (مرد بزرگ) strictly apply to himself:

اس کی نفرت بھی عمیق اس کی محبت بھی عمیق  
قہر بھی اس کا ہے اللہ کے بندوں پہ شفیق  
پرورش پاتا ہے تقید کی تاریکی میں  
ہے مگر اس کی طبیعت کا تقاضا تخلیق!  
انجمن م میں بھی م یسر رہی خلوت اس کو  
شمع محفل کی طرح سبس مے جدا سب کا رفیق  
مثلِ خورشید سحر فکر کی تابانی میں  
بات میں سادہ و آزادہ، معانی میں دقیق  
اس کا اندازِ نظر اپنے زمانے سے جدا  
اس کے احوال سے محرم نہیں پیرانِ طریق

When he died in April 1938, the Unionist Government under the leadership of Sir Sikander Hayat opposed his burial within the precincts of the Royal Mosque of Lahore where he lies in rest today. The British Provincial Governor who realised the poet's worth and admired and respected him as a man of character and the only true and selfless leader of the Muslim community in the Punjab and who knew the public feeling in the matter, permitted his burial within the Mosque enclosure at his own responsibility even though it required the previous sanction of the Central Government. While kings, princes, peasants, politicians, heads of states and diplomats from all over the world go to the poet's'

mausoleum to place wreathes of flowers on his grave, his political opponents whose only aim was to acquire wealth and power are completely forgotten to-day. Iqbal will go down in history as a man who was utterly honest, utterly sincere, utterly selfless and utterly straight forward in serving the cause of his people. His eminence as one of the great poets of the world is, of course, undeniable, but what has immortalized him in the history of mankind, particularly in the history of Islamic thought, is not merely his poetry to which he himself assigned a secondary place in his life's work nor even his vast erudition, his extraordinary intellect, his profundity of thought and his artistic imagination, although they all played their parts in the building up of his world-wide reputation. It was his love of truth, his intense devotion to the Holy Prophet, his absolute sincerity and the burning zeal with which he preached his doctrines; his fearless advocacy of the political and social rights of Indian Muslims and the unique service he rendered to Islam in presenting it to the world in terms of modern thought that have earned for him an abiding place in the history of the Sub-continent in particular and the world of Islam in general. The much needed task of making Islam intelligible to the Western world could only be accomplished by a scholar steeped in Islamic learning with a thorough understanding of European philosophy and modern science. No one who has carefully read the works of Iqbal can fail to notice that he had an up-to-date knowledge of all the important trends of thought in the fields of physics and metaphysics, of biology and social sciences. He had so carefully studied and assimilated the latest

ideas in science, philosophy and literature that he could use them freely while arguing about religious and philosophical problems. He was probably among the few who had carefully studied and grasped Einstein's theory of relativity both on its purely scientific and philosophical sides with special reference to the religious implications of Einstein's views about time and space.

On this occasion, I would like to make a passing reference to the poet's views about communism. Some of his admirers and critics who claim to speak authoritatively on his views concerning this important subject have tried to present him as a sort of Muslim communist and an exponent of Western democracy. Nothing can be further from truth than such bold and irresponsible assertions. Iqbal certainly believed in an equitable distribution of wealth but purely within the social and economic system of Islam. While he believed in imposing restrictions on private property and was prepared to go even to the extent of abolishing it, if necessary, he was opposed to the nationalisation of all means of production. In his view, according to Islam, there was nothing to prevent any Muslim Government from abolishing private property if the economic conditions, at any time, so demanded. A mere abolition of private ownership does not constitute nationalisation of property in the communistic sense as it was practised originally in Soviet Russia but which is now being considerably liberalised in recent times. Communism nationalises all means of production, completely abolishes private property, bans religion and brainwashes the individual, making him entirely dependent on the State. Both Communism and Capitalism,



according to Iqbal, feed the body of man but impoverish his spirit. Islam naturally opposes the communist philosophy of life which denies the existence of God though it sympathises with the aim of its economic system.

- According to Iqbal the Islamic economic system transcends the communistic system. It may one day swallow up the latter for a system of society, such as the Islamic, which is founded on a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, provides the best possible conditions for the highest development of man's ego and his physical well being. The following lines from *Javid Nama* on communism and capitalism make the poet's position perfectly clear:

The author of *This Capital* came of the stock of Abraham,  
that is to say, that prophet who knew not Gabriel;  
since truth was implicit even within his error  
his heart believed, though his brain was an infidel.

The Westerners have lost the vision of heaven,  
they go hunting for the pure spirit in the belly.

The pure soul takes not colour and scent from the body,  
and Communism has nothing to do save with the body.

The religion of that prophet who knew not truth  
is founded upon equality of the belly;

the abode of fraternity being in the heart,  
its roots are in the heart, not in water and clay.  
Capitalism too is a fattening of the body,  
its unenlightened bosom houses no heart;  
like the bee that pastures upon the flower  
it overpasses the petal, and carries off the honey.

The soul of both is impatient and intolerant,  
both of them know not God, and deceive mankind.  
One lives by revolution, the other by exploitation  
and man is a glass caught between these two stones.

The poet had been a revolutionary long before the Russian and Chinese revolutions. Had he been the ruler of a Muslim State with dictatorial powers and strong military backing he would have fought against both Capitalism and Communism as they exist today and established the economic system of Islam, This system eliminates the faults of both and effect a healthy compromise between the two. The Islamic law of inheritance, he once said to me, strikes at the very root of capitalism yet, as against communism, it allows an individual to have private property, subject, of course, to restrictions and even abolition, if necessary.

The Soviets have already begun to revise Marxism-Leninism and by gradually permitting God to return to Russia are coming closer to us because the Islamic social and economic system gives them all they require plus a belief in the existence of God which is so essential to the preservation of human society. It may seem highly improbable or even impossible today, but Soviet Russia and China may, one day, be driven into the lap of Islam just like the Turks:

ہے عیاں یورش تاتار کے افسانے سے  
پاسباں مل گئے کعبے کو صنم خانے سے

Iqbal admired the spirit which prompted the Russian and the Chinese Revolutions and he was probably the great modern poet of this Sub-continent who has made repeated references to communism in his works. His famous poem on Lenin may be of interest to you. By putting his own thought into the mouth of Lenin which are in accordance with the communist ideology he has left us a poem which is perhaps the most vigorous attack ever made on Western Capitalism by a Muslim. Lenin, who was an atheist, comes into the presence of God and addresses Him as follows:

اے نفس و آفاق میں پیدا تیرے آیات  
حق یہ ہے کہ ہے زندہ و پائندہ تری ذات  
میں کیسے سمجھتا کہ تو ہے یا کہ نہیں ہے  
ہر دم متغیر تھے خرد کے نظریات  
محرم نہیں فطرت کے سرودِ ازلی سے

بینائے کو اکب ہو کہ دانائے نباتات  
 آج آنکھ نے دیکھا تو وہ عالم ہوا ثابت  
 م میں جس کو سمجھتا تھا کلیسا کے خرافات  
 ہم بند شب و روز م میں جکڑے ہوئے بند  
 تو خالقِ اصار و نگارندہ آنات  
 اک بات اگر مجھ وک اجازت ہو تو پوجھوں  
 حل کر نہ سکے جس کو حکیموں کے مقالات  
 جب تک میں جیا خیمہ افلاک کے نیچے  
 کانٹے کی طرح دل میں کھکتی رہی یہ بات  
 وہ کون سا آدم ہے کہ تو جس کا ہے معبود  
 وہ آدمِ خاکی کہ جو ہے زیرِ سماوت؟  
 مشرق کے خداوند سفیدانِ فرنگی  
 مغرب کے خداوند درخشندہ قلزات  
 یورپ میں بہت روشنی علم و ہنر ہے  
 حق یہ ہے کہ بے چشمہ حیوان ہے یہ ظلمات  
 رعنائی تعمیر میں رونق میں صفا میں  
 گرجوں سے کہیں بڑھ کے ہیں بینکوں کے عمارات  
 ظاہر میں تجارت ہے حقیقت م میں جو ا ہے  
 سود ایک کا لاکھوں کے لیے مرگِ مفاجات  
 میخانہ کی بن یاد میں آیا ہے تزلزل  
 بیٹھے ہیں اسی فکر میں پیرانِ خرابات

گالوں پہ جو سرخی نظر آتی ہے سر شام  
یا غازہ ہے یا ساغر و مینا کی کرامات  
تو قادر و عادل ہے مگر تیرے جہاں میں  
ہیں تلخ بہت بندہ مزدور کے اوقات

About Western democracy he had some interesting views to express. You are all familiar with his two famous complets:

گریز از طرزِ جمہوری غلامِ پختہ کارے شوے  
کہ از مغز دو صد خر فکر انسانے نمی آید  
جمہوریت اک طرز حکومت ہے کہ جس میں  
بندوں کو گنا کرتے ہیں تولا نہیں کرتے

He used to say, "Democracy is a coat which several European countries have discarded after a trial and which a number of Asiatic countries have eagerly picked up to wear however ill fitting it may be. Every country must have its own constitutional garment made to measure." Democracy as a system of Government of the people, for the people and by the people originated in the city states of Greece. It lasted there a short time and failed because they were perpetually at war with each other which made it impossible for them to defend themselves from foreign aggression. They were consequently overwhelmed both from

within and from without. It reappeared in the Roman Republic but soon degenerated into the Imperial autocracy of Rome. There was no democracy in Europe after that for nearly fifteen hundred years until the people of England wrested political rights from King John in 1250 under the Magna Carta. But democracy has never really taken roots in the British Isles.

After the French Revolution in 1737 which created a semblance of self-rule in France, power was ultimately wrested by Napoleon Bonaparte and to-day General De Gaulle exercises dictatorial powers as President. In Spain the Republican Government was defeated by Franco and in Italy Mussolini took over the reigns of Government.

It was tried in China but failed because of its enormous size and nobody would seriously maintain that there is any democracy worth the name in India and the United States to-day. The reason why democracy failed wherever it was tried was that the people were not educated enough to choose their leaders wisely and they lacked moral character — fidelity not only to intellectual but to moral truth. If it were possible to define the term 'moral character' one could say, if on the one hand it is honesty, integrity, courtesy, patriotism, patience, perseverance, temperance, on the other it is the capacity which these virtues give to resist hatred, jealousy and selfish ambition and folly. Ultimately every country has that Government for which it is fit and which it deserves. In Islam democracy is a spiritual principle which lays down that all men and women are equal in the sight of God; Western democracy is a

political method of election by the counting of heads irrespective of the merit of the voter.

Iqbal's message is a beacon-light for those who would care to study his works. A great poet, especially of his type, is a gift of Divine Providence to a nation and we must consider ourselves lucky that we have one. To him we owe not merely wonderful poetry with a message and a dynamic philosophy of life but a national home in which we can live honourable lives and work out our destiny on the lines of our own culture and traditions. Entirely devoted to the Holy Prophet he received his poetic inspiration from the Holy Book. This lent purity and vitality to his thought and an irresistible force and dignity to his language. In the early hours of the morning it was his habit to study the Qur'an and he was, at times, so deeply touched that he wept profusely until the pages of the Holy Book became wet with tears. He would then ask his old servant, Ali Bakhsh, to put it in the sun to dry.

His body may have become dust and ashes but his spiritual influence as a poet, as a thinker and as a teacher of mankind will ever defy the limitations of space and time inspiring the coming generations of Muslims and non-Muslims alike with hope, courage and faith. His teachings, if properly understood, appreciated, and assimilated, will go down in history as a tremendous character building force.