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**MUSLIM ANTI-ZIONISM AND ANTISEMITISM IN SOUTH AFRICA SINCE THE  
SECOND WORLD WAR, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
“MUSLIM NEWS/VIEWS”**

by

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award of the degree of Masters of Arts in Jewish Studies

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This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature

Signed by candidate

8/5/2002  
Date

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## CONTENTS

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	
<b>Chapter One:</b> Muslim and Jew: Before 1948	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter Two:</b> The Politicisation of Islam in the South African Muslim Community: 1948 - 1974	<b>23</b>
<b>Chapter Three:</b> Radicalisation: 1969-1982	<b>37</b>
<b>Chapter Four:</b> Merging Global and Local Currents: 1982-1990	<b>56</b>
<b>Chapter Five:</b> The End of Apartheid: 1990-1994	<b>77</b>
<b>Chapter Six:</b> In Democratic South Africa	<b>108</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>129</b>

## SUMMARY

This study examines South African Muslim attitudes towards Zionism and Jews since the Second World War, focusing in particular on *Muslim News/Views*, a national Muslim owned community newspaper. Prior to the War, Muslim attitudes were informed largely by religious teachings. Limited contact in a racialised society allowed stereotypes to evolve. In the main, Muslims consolidated their own identity and engaged with the challenges of living in a Christian society.

After the Second World War Muslims were increasingly politicised against the backdrop of unfolding apartheid legislation. Islamic study groups were founded in the 1950s but it was a younger generation in the 1960s, which sought to engage with politics through an Islamic framework. In the 1970s younger Muslims were increasingly informed by international Muslim scholarship and its implication for both local and international political issues.

Close ties between South Africa and Israel from 1974 ensured an association of apartheid with Zionism and a hostile critique of the Jewish state. The presence of Jews in the United Democratic Front even posed problems for Muslim activists, in many cases influenced by the Islamic revolution in Iran. Campuses became a focus of hostility towards Israel, beginning in 1982 with the Lebanese War. An anti-Western sentiment incorporated Israel as the proxy of the United States in the Middle East.

Conspiratorial ideas increasingly informed Muslim anger and critiques of Zionism. *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (a notorious antisemitic publication) informed thinking which saw Zionist machinations as dominant in Western affairs. By the 1990s Holocaust denial had entered Muslim discourse. The conspiratorial mindset of most South African Muslims was most evident in the wake of the attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001.

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years Muslim antisemitism and anti-Zionism in South Africa has begun to attract substantial attention. Newspapers and the electronic media have regularly reported on anti-Zionist marches and protests while newspaper correspondence columns and talk shows have devoted space and time to views on Israel, Zionism, and the Middle East conflict in general.<sup>1</sup> In particular, Muslim perspectives, including those hostile to Jews and Zionism, are being heard. Hitherto, very little substantive research has been devoted these developments.<sup>2</sup> This dissertation will deal with the period since the Second World War, tracing anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist hostility, with a particular focus on *Muslim News/Views*, a national newspaper.<sup>3</sup>

Given the specific nature of South Africa's racially divided history, it is not surprising that Muslim attitudes have not been widely heard in 'white' public spheres. Jews have historically been a part of the settler 'white' community<sup>4</sup> and,

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Milton Shain, "South Africa" in *American Jewish Year Book 1996 and 1997*, ed. David Singer and Ruth Seldin, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996 and 1997.

<sup>2</sup> In his chapter dealing with post-war antisemitism in *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*, Milton Shain discusses only "black" and "white" right-wing antisemitism. He does mention the emergence of anti-Zionism among Muslims. It should be noted that the book is concerned with the roots of antisemitism in South Africa. The post-war period is part of an epilogue. See Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> *Muslim Views* is published monthly and in 2002 35000 copies were being distributed free of charge to over 175000 Muslim readers throughout South Africa. The unofficial 1997 estimate of the South African Muslim population by the Islamic Department of the University of Durban (Westville) was approximately 3 million.

<sup>4</sup> They were categorised as "Hebrews" in censuses of the late nineteenth century and in the 1920's. It was not clear whether they were considered to be "whites" or not. See Shain, *The*

as such, have had little formal contact with the Muslim community. This was particularly the case in the apartheid years. And yet opinions and attitudes towards Jews did form despite the absence of contact. These have not been thoroughly examined. At best the issue has been treated only peripherally. For example, in an examination of South African Jewry during what he referred to as the "apartheid crisis", Gideon Shimoni touched on Muslim hostility towards Jews, using as his primary source unpublished interviews with Muslim elites conducted by Alan Hoffman and Tzippi Fischer.<sup>5</sup> Shimoni argued that the most serious manifestations of hostility towards the Jews (equalled only by the right-wing Afrikaners) came from political groups within the Muslim community. In particular, the Call of Islam, a political group founded in 1983, was identified. One of its founders, Farid Esack, was singled out by Shimoni as an exemplar of anti-Jewish sentiment evident in his appropriation of anti-Jewish stereotypes found in the *Qur'an*.<sup>6</sup> For Shimoni, the deteriorating nature of Muslim-Jewish relations was evident on university campuses and in other public places.<sup>7</sup>

Certainly the Hoffman and Fischer interviews provide a useful window into the minds of Muslim elites in the late 1980s. Among those interviewed were members of the United Democratic Front (UDF),<sup>8</sup> religious leaders and

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*Roots*, 109. For Jewish marginality see also Claudia Batsheba Braude, ed., *Contemporary Jewish Writing in South Africa* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> The interviews were subsequently published in Tzippi Hoffman and Alan Fischer, *The Jews of South Africa What Future?* (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers, 1988).

<sup>6</sup> It would seem that Shimoni's comments are contradicted by the published version of the "raw" interviews used by Shimoni. See Hoffman and Fischer, p.122.

<sup>7</sup> Gideon Shimoni, "South African Jews and the Apartheid Crisis," in *American Jewish Year Book 1983*, ed by David Singer (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988).

<sup>8</sup> An anti-apartheid umbrella organisation. See Jeremy Seekings. *The UDF: a history of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991* (Cape Town: David Philips, 2000).

intellectuals.<sup>9</sup> The essential message was that while Muslims accepted religious rights for Jews, Zionism was considered a pernicious and racist ideology and was thus unacceptable. At the time the interviews were conducted, the 'struggle' was uppermost in the minds of interviewees, most of who considered the presence of Jews in the UDF suspect because of their identification with Israel, the oppressors of the Palestinians. Even Jewish loyalty to South Africa was questioned. The Jewish establishment was viewed with suspicion and interviewees found it difficult to separate Judaism from Zionism. Attitudes were further complicated by Jewish involvement in the business community and, in particular, the purported role of Jews as shop and factory owners employing Muslim workers. Inherently, it was indicated, this relationship necessitated confrontation.<sup>10</sup>

While the interviews conducted by Hoffman and Fischer are an invaluable historical source, the publication itself lacks sufficient analyses and contextualization. No attempt was made to situate this information in its historical framework and to ascertain the impact of global developments, including the Arab-Israeli conflict and the revolution in Iran, on Muslim attitudes.

A start to such contextualization was made by Jocelyn Hellig who highlighted the fact that the South African situation presented a unique set of circumstances as a result of apartheid impacting on the Jewish and Muslim communities.<sup>11</sup> Muslim antisemitism in South Africa, she contended, had to be

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<sup>9</sup> The questions are specific to the interviewee, although the answers do provide insights into the Muslim group as a whole, it cannot be assumed that they are common to all members of the group.

<sup>10</sup> See Ebrahim Rasool in interview with Fischer and Hoffman, 117-121. See also Farid Esack in same, 131.

<sup>11</sup> Jocelyn Hellig, *Anti-Semitism in South Africa Today* (Tel Aviv University: The Project for the Study of Anti-Semitism, 1996).

seen in the context of traditional anti-Judaism in the *Qur'an* and a world-wide resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism or Islamism. Prior to the Iranian Revolution in 1979, argued Hellig, Muslim youth lacked a contextual Islamic idiom through which to articulate their political concerns. This was provided by the Iranian revolution, which gave religious content to the local struggle, manifest in the formation of Qibla in 1980. Hellig may well be correct, but her brief study did not provide empirical evidence to support her argument.

A more nuanced approach was taken by Milton Shain when he briefly commented on Muslim attitudes towards Jews in a wide-ranging discussion of antisemitism in South Africa.<sup>12</sup> Shain observed that a significant section of the Muslim community shared the conspiratorial ideas of the far Right, evident in letters to the daily press and on radio talk shows. Moreover, an anti-Zionist rhetoric, displaying classic anti-Jewish motifs had crept into Muslim discourse. According to Shain this hatred went beyond the bounds of normal political conflict and often degenerated into blatant antisemitism with an emphasis placed on Jewish power, cunning and duplicity. Even Holocaust denial had begun to inform Islamic anger.<sup>13</sup>

Despite this apparent hostility, Shain noted that various intellectual discourses operated within the Muslim community and that some of these were progressive, emphasising the universal values of Islam. Others were conservative. However, both strands contained a hostile critique of Zionism. This hostility was often merged with ideas of international Jewish finance and imperialism and linked to an analysis of the South African struggle. Shain

acknowledged that more research was needed on the question of Muslim attitudes towards Jews. Some of this emerged in an unpublished paper in which he made greater use of secondary sources.<sup>14</sup> Of particular interest was his periodisation of anti-Jewish hostility: it clearly pre-dated the Iranian revolution. To be sure, anti-Jewish hostility was incubated in the context of South African conditions, most importantly, as Hellig noted, the unfolding of apartheid legislation.<sup>15</sup> It is hoped that this dissertation, based on greater attention to the Muslim press (in particular *Muslim News/Views*) and at all times cognisant of global and local political contexts will add to our understanding.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Milton Shain, *Antisemitism and South African Society: The Past, the Present and the Future* (Inaugural lecture, University of Cape Town, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.* 12.

<sup>14</sup> See Milton Shain, *Muslim Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism in South Africa, 1945-1998*. Unpublished paper presented at an International Conference, (The Vidal Sassoon International Centre for the Study of Antisemitism. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999).

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* 4-5.

<sup>16</sup> It needs to be noted that not all South African Muslims shared in the hostile critiques of Zionism and Jews expressed in this study. Similarly, the conspiratorial mindset that informed much of the hostile comment cannot be attributed to all Muslims in South Africa. How widespread these ideas were will remain for future scholars to investigate.

## CHAPTER ONE

### MUSLIMS AND JEWS: BEFORE 1948

A huge gulf has always separated the world of Muslims in South Africa from the wider population. In the first instance there have been cultural divides, evident from the seventeenth century when Muslim slaves, convicts and political exiles began to arrive in the Cape from 1658. Other Muslims followed as slaves and political prisoners, mainly from the Far East and Asian areas.<sup>1</sup> Their numbers were enhanced by the arrival of Indians, mainly from Gujarat and Bombay, in the nineteenth century. Between seven and ten percent of the latter were Muslims. Their unique situation as indentured workers set them apart from the Muslims at the Cape. Subsequent to this wave, a second group of Indians came to South Africa in the 1871. Known as "passenger Indians", they paid their own fares to South Africa. Almost eighty percent of these Indians were Muslim.<sup>2</sup>

The Muslim community primarily positioned themselves within colonial power relations as a religious minority.<sup>3</sup> As 'non-Europeans', they had to

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<sup>1</sup> See Ebrahim Moosa, "Islam," in *Living Faiths in South Africa*, ed. by M. Prozesky and J. de Gruchy (Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1995), 55.

<sup>2</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence in South Africa; The Muslim Youth Movement* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> "Passenger" Indians, for example, experienced conflict with white merchants who tried to thwart their trading activities. As a result, notes Tayob, Indian Muslims established religious structures with "enthusiasm and vigour"

struggle with discriminatory legislation and anti-alien restrictions.<sup>4</sup> Within these circumstances Islam provided an important source of strength and survival, enhancing a distinct sense of community.<sup>5</sup> The separation and alienation from the broader community was reinforced by gatherings being limited to small secret meetings in schools formed around individual *sheikhs*.<sup>6</sup>

It would seem that Muslim identity and the strong sense of community was built in opposition to the dominating ideology of the colonial powers. Focusing on the *madrasah* (religious schools), mosque and *imam*, the community was essentially defined in religious terms, determined by Muslim religious authorities.<sup>7</sup> Muslim identity was therefore shaped and reinforced by Muslim religious authorities. "A plethora of Muslim organisations in South Africa," writes Dangor, reflected a keen desire on the part of the Muslims community "to preserve its distinct Muslim identity."<sup>8</sup>

Towards the last quarter of the nineteenth century there were several instances of collective Muslim resistance against white colonial authority. In 1882 Muslims refused to be vaccinated during the smallpox epidemic in Cape Town, in what was a religious protest but was actually a statement concerning social grievances.<sup>9</sup> However, the clearest manifestation of "community" was evident in the Muslim riots in 1886 surrounding the closure of cemeteries in Cape

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<sup>4</sup> Suleiman E. Dangor, "The Muslim Community in South Africa," *Al-Ilm, Journal of the Centre for Research in Islamic Studies*, University of Durban- Westville, (Jan. 1991): 74.

<sup>5</sup> David Chidester, Judith Tobler, Darryl Wratten, eds., *Islam, Hinduism and Judaism in South Africa: An Annotated Bibliography* (USA: Greenwood Press, 1997), 3.

<sup>6</sup> For example, Shaykh Yusuf of Macassar (1629-99).

<sup>7</sup> Tayob, 39.

<sup>8</sup> Suleiman E. Dangor, "The Muslims of South Africa: Problems and Concerns of a Minority Community," *Al-Ilm, Journal of the Centre for Research in Islamic Studies*, University of Durban-Westville, (Jan. 1994).

<sup>9</sup> Vivian Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town* ((Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1995.)

Town.<sup>10</sup> This resulted in the formation of the Malay Cemetery Board in Cape Town.

Muslim identity was further consolidated by State-funded education for 'whites' early in the twentieth century and the introduction of Christian missionaries for the educational needs of the other population groups. While Muslims were wary of this arrangement, they were forced into Christian missionary schools until the formation of Muslim Mission Schools.<sup>11</sup> These schools were created as a means of reconciling religious education and secular education and as a way to counteract Christian missionising in state schools.<sup>12</sup> The first of these schools opened in 1913 and tried to combine the requirements of a sound Islamic education and the demand for a modern education in the South African context.

By the end of the South African War in 1902 there were substantial centres of Muslim religious and political expression in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal. In the Cape, several Muslim organisations arose, each with different political objectives. In addition to Muslim educational institutions, communal organisations were established. In 1902, the South African Moslem Association was formed in response to an attempt by the government to "establish locations for Asiatic and other Coloured persons".<sup>13</sup> This organisation tried to represent the political concerns of both Indian and Cape Muslims. The Cape Malay Association, established in 1923, represented the aspirations of Cape Muslims

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<sup>10</sup>Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 78.

<sup>11</sup> M. Ajam, *The raison d'être of the Muslim Mission Primary School in Cape Town and Environs from 1860-1980 with special reference to the role of Dr. A. Abdurahman in the modernisation of Islam-Orientated Schools*, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cape Town, (1986).

<sup>12</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 80.

<sup>13</sup> Moosa, in *Living Faiths*, 142.

only and was canvassed by national political parties who sought the vote of the Malays.<sup>14</sup>

Thus it is apparent that Muslims had developed a distinctive identity within a multi-cultural and discriminatory context. In 1945 the Moslem Judicial Council (MJC) was established as the organised authority of the *imams* and *sheikhs*. This authority would gradually be challenged by the growing number of graduates from schools, colleges and universities in the Cape. These younger and better educated Muslims often espoused a very different conception of Islam from that of the MJC.<sup>15</sup>

In the wake of the Second World War the primary concern of the Muslim community was to establish a relationship with the Christian apartheid state. The solidification of a racial order formed a lens through which Muslims viewed their particular circumstances. In engaging with the challenge, there was certainly no importance attached by Muslims to dealing with other minorities, including the small South African Jewish community, which at that time numbered approximately 105000.<sup>16</sup> The latter were, of course, a part of the dominant and oppressive white population, although it needs to be noted that their status as 'whites' was not unquestioned in the first half of the twentieth century.

Given the fundamental racial divide in South Africa between Jews and Muslims and given the social structure of the racialised order, contacts between the two groups were built essentially around the workplace, invariably in a relationship of employer/employee. In some cases contact was on a

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* 82.

landlord/tenant basis. Historically there had been some social interaction - particularly in an immigrant inner city region such as District 6 in Cape Town<sup>17</sup> - but with Jewish upward mobility and the solidification of racial stratification, authentic, spontaneous interaction was minimal.

Thus segregation in the interwar years, and apartheid legislation after 1948, exacerbated social and economic divides and put paid to any semblance of normal relations. Without serious social contact between Muslim and Jew we can assume that Muslim attitudes were informed broadly by Islamic teachings and by daily interaction in the workplace. Invariably that meant a potentially conflictual employer/employee relationship.

Of course besides structural divisions between Muslims and Jews, there was also a religious divide. Young members of the Muslim community were introduced to the *Qur'an* which formed the leitmotiv of their religious worldview and was central to the school curriculum. In the *Qur'an* they would have read of Jews as "faithless" and "wrongdoers".<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the *Qur'an* made it clear that Jews were to be tolerated.<sup>19</sup> To what extent such teachings influenced relations is difficult to assess.

The holy text of the Muslim tradition, the *Qur'an*, places the Jew within a specific framework. It records the Prophet's polemics against Jews and depicts

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<sup>16</sup> See Allie A. Dubb, *The Jewish Population of South Africa. The 1991 Sociodemographic Survey*, The Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Cape Town (Cape Town: Jewish Publications, 1994), 5.

<sup>17</sup> Early in the century, in Cape Town, in District 6 Muslims and Jews lived in close proximity.

<sup>18</sup> See Surah 2: 93-95. See also Haggai Ben-Shammai, "Jew-Hatred in the Islamic Tradition and the Koranic Exegesis," in *Antisemitism Through The Ages*, ed. by Shmuel Almog, Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Pergamon Press, 1988), 164-167.

<sup>19</sup> The question of Qur'anic attitudes towards and depictions of Jews has been the subject of substantial research. See for example, Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 3-66.

*inter alia* Islam as being politically and religiously superior to Judaism.<sup>20</sup> The text includes anti-Jewish statements and also recounts the Prophet's own conflict with the Jews, in which he was completely victorious.<sup>21</sup> The conflict between Muhammad and the three Jewish tribes in Medina is reflected in the *Qur'an*, in the Tradition and in the Commentaries (*Hadith*). By and large the Jew is depicted as stubborn and perverse, rebelling against the will of God and rejecting and trying to kill His prophets.<sup>22</sup> Hostile comments are, to some extent, balanced by other passages speaking more respectfully of the Jews as possessors of an earlier revelation and prescribing a degree of tolerance.

In Bernard Lewis' view the essential message of the *Qur'an* is that Jews were defeated and were to be humbled: the terms "humility" and "humiliation" occur frequently in relation to the Jews.<sup>23</sup> It would seem that "humiliation" was just punishment for the Jews' past rebelliousness. Subsequently, they are perpetually condemned to this condition. Sometimes this enduring punishment is as a result of the enmity that Jews displayed towards the Prophet. Muslim views emerging from Medina consequently reflected the worst possible attitudes towards the Jews.

In the Islamic foundation narrative (as in the Christian one) the Jew is hostile and often malevolent. His malevolence ends in defeat. In the *Qur'an*, the

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid.* 45.

<sup>21</sup> See Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Antisemites* (London: Phoenix, 1997).

<sup>22</sup> Ronald Nettler argues that Mohammed's emigration to Medina marked the beginning of Islamic history. It is Islam's encounter with the Jews of Medina which was a central event in the Muslim's rite of political initiation. For Muhammad, some Jewish affirmation of Islam's status would have made that initiation easier. Such was not the case and Muslim doctrine of the Jews has been marked by the problems of that early meeting. See Ronald L. Nettler, *Past Trials and Present Tribulations: A Muslim Fundamentalist's View of the Jews* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1987).

<sup>23</sup> See Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Antisemites*, 128.

Jews disobey Moses and are quelled; they try to crucify Jesus and fail.<sup>24</sup> In the biography of the Prophet, the Jews oppose him but are overcome and punished by expulsion, slavery or death. History, in its unfolding Islamic success, confirmed the Muslim's faith in their own superiority and mission. The stereotype of the "humbled" Jew in Islamic literature is accompanied by a stereotype of cowardice. The standard Quranic text is in Surah 2, verse 61, which says of the children of Israel: "They were afflicted with humiliation and poverty, and they felt the wrath of God. This was because they used to disbelieve the signs of God and kill his messengers unjustly. This was because they disobeyed and transgressed."

All of the various Quranic attitudes toward the Jews and Judaism shared one central theme: the Jew as arrogant renouncers and falsifiers of God's truth. Allah's only response to them could be chastisement: "So when they forgot what they were reminded of, We delivered those who were forbidding wickedness and We afflicted the evildoers with bad chastisement for their ungodliness. And when they turned in disgust from that prohibition of wickedness, We said to them, "Be you apes, miserably slinking."<sup>25</sup>

Notwithstanding the potential for negative stereotyping, for the mainstream of post-Quranic Muslim thinkers, the constant reiteration of Jewish odiousness was casual and descriptive rather than emotionally hateful. This was probably because Islam was securely fixed in its role of superiority and leadership.<sup>26</sup> The humiliation of the Jew is also a prototype and figures often in metaphors and stories in Arabic poetry and folklore. In modern times Mohammed's conflict with

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<sup>24</sup> See *Qur'an*: Surah 2.

<sup>25</sup> See *Qur'an*: Surah 7, v.166.

the Jews has been represented as a central theme in his career, and their enmity to him given cosmic significance. Of particular importance in Muslim-Jewish relations is the concept of *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb*. *Dar al-Islam* translates to "The Realm of Islam": the traditional Islamic term for those areas where Islam held sway and *Dar al-Harb* ("House of the Sword") refers to those areas still to be conquered in the name of Islam.<sup>27</sup> Muslim ideology states that the ideal world is one in which all countries are *Dar al-Islam*. It follows then that there is little room for accommodating other groups with different beliefs and practices.

Although it is a commonly held view that the "Golden Age" of Jewry occurred whilst under Muslim rule, it must be remembered that Jews were always considered to be inferior. Islam recognised Judaism as an earlier and incomplete form of Islam and, as a monotheistic religion, afforded them the tolerance of the Islamic state.<sup>28</sup> In Muslim law and practice, the relationship between the Muslim state and the non-Muslim monotheistic subject community was governed by a pact called *dhimma*. Those benefiting from this pact were known as *ahl al-Dhimma* (people of the pact) or *dhimmis*. The Pact of Umar set the conditions to which *ahl al-Dhimma* were subject. According to the rules pertaining to the *dhimma*, these communities enjoyed a certain status as long as they recognised the supremacy of Islam and the Muslims. The payment of a poll tax and observance of a set of carefully defined restrictions served to remind the Jew (and Christian) of their inferior status.

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<sup>26</sup> See Nettler, *Past Trials*, 11.

<sup>27</sup> See Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*, 21-23.

<sup>28</sup> Those communities under Muslim rule who were classified as polytheists and idolaters were not eligible to receive the toleration of the Islamic state and had to choose between the *Qur'an*, the sword or slavery. See Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*, 20.

Notwithstanding the Pact of Umar, we know that Jewish-Muslim relations were relatively cordial during the early centuries of Islamic expansion.<sup>29</sup> However, in modern times, beginning with the colonisation of North Africa and the Middle East by European powers in the nineteenth century, relations deteriorated. At one level hostility was informed by religious teachings; at another, it was a product of colonisation and oppression, in which Muslims found themselves subjugated and exploited.

Within this context the rise of Zionism in the late nineteenth century and the emergence of a Jewish State in 1948 provided a specific challenge.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the emergence of a Jewish military power, including major victories against the Arab forces in five wars after independence was a psychological shock necessitating explanation. One such partial answer is provided by Bernard Lewis who suggests that Muslims rationalised their vanquished status at the hands of the Jews by appropriating an earlier stereotype, that of Jewish deceit and trickery, and weighing that against Muslim humility and trust.<sup>31</sup> In earlier times, it was a minor theme in the discussion of Jewish matters but in modern times it has provided a useful explanation of military defeat.

In addition to rationalising the changed power relationship, Zionism stimulated a vital intellectual and spiritual movement within Islam in which apologetics, self-justification and self-glorification dominated. Ronald Nettler is correct to note that Zionism provided a crisis for Muslims who evinced "an emotional hatred of Jews, while devising theories portraying them as the ultimate

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<sup>29</sup> See Norman A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands; a History and Source Book* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979).

<sup>30</sup> See Milton Shain, *Antisemitism* (London: Bowerdean, 1998), 93-99.

<sup>31</sup> See Lewis, *Semites and Antisemites*, 130.

evil and blaming them for all kinds and manner of disaster." "A new literary genre arose," explains Nettler, "to express a virulent Islamic Judaeophobia, derived from ancient Islamic sources and ground to a fine edge of unprecedented hatred."<sup>32</sup>

It is important to note that hostility towards Zionism cannot be divorced from hostility toward Western involvement and influence in the Muslim world. This is of significance because, as will be argued in this study, South African Muslims have gradually evolved a deep-seated aversion to that which was seen to be of Western origin. On many occasions Zionism was equated with the United States which was seen by Muslims as a symbol of everything destructive and evil. Whereas Muslims had initially defeated the Jews, the establishment of the Jewish state meant the tables had been turned. The Jews had won the struggle for independence, defeated the Muslims and brought a sizeable Muslim population under Jewish control. This was particularly galling in light of the Jewish State being in territory once under Islamic rule or *Dar al-Islam*. The embodiment of Zionism in the Jewish State provided in essence a replay of early Muslim-Jewish strife. However, in it's new variant, the ancient fabric of Islam's worldly glory was totally unravelled once again. The Jews were Islam's main enemy. A voluminous literature on the Jews emerged, informing in time the growth of militant Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>33</sup>

Although Muslims in South Africa were exposed to Islamic literature and ideas, in the early apartheid years South African Muslims were far from the

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<sup>32</sup> See Nettler, *Past Trials and Present Tribulations*, 13 .

<sup>33</sup> See Nettler, 20-23. See also Rivka Yadlin, "Anti-Jewish Imagery in the Contemporary Arab-Muslim World," in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism and Xenophobia*, ed. by Robert S.

mainstream of Islamic intellectual life. The Middle East conflict was also far removed from the local struggle in which the question of apartheid loomed largest. In essence, South African Muslims were concerned essentially with domestic politics relating to specific South African challenges.<sup>34</sup> However, this is not to say that they were entirely divorced from affairs beyond South Africa.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, from its inception, the Muslim press carried articles hostile to Zionism and critical of Jewish actions in Palestine.<sup>36</sup> For example, in *Moslem Outlook* in 1925, "Jerusalem and the Jews" reported that Muslims and Christians had closed their shops in Jerusalem in protest against "Lord Balfour's Zionist Declaration."<sup>37</sup> Additional articles referred to Jewish capitalists forcing Arab peasants off the land: "It is wholly impossible for the Jews to establish their National Homeland in Palestine. After all, three quarters of the population belong to the Islamic religion."<sup>38</sup> *Muslim Outlook* also took exception when a Canadian Rabbi Zlotnik visited South Africa in 1925 to raise funds for the Jewish National Fund to buy land from Arab villagers of Palestine. Zionism, the newspaper declared, was an economic movement controlled by financiers.<sup>39</sup> One year later the same newspaper indicated disgust when Nahum Sokolow, a Zionist emissary, visited South Africa to collect funds for the Palestine National Fund. The editor explained that the "Zionism of the Prophets was vastly and ideally different from the conception of Zionist ideals held by those Jews who have waxed fat on the

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Wistrich, The Vidal Sassoon International Centre for the Study of Antisemitism, (Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999).

<sup>34</sup> See Tayob, 54.

<sup>35</sup> See for example *Moslem Outlook*, 3 October 1925.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> See *Moslem Outlook*, 27 March 1925.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.* 4 April 1925 and 18 April 1925.

<sup>39</sup> *Moslem Outlook*, 22 August 1925.

labour of others. We are not anti-Semitic in our charge. Arabs in Palestine must be treated equal as Jews and then we shall have no quarrel."<sup>40</sup>

It is evident that even though issues in British-controlled Palestine did not necessarily influence the attitudes of South African Muslims toward local Jews, hostile ideas were imbibed. Invariably the comments were negative and resonated with classic anti-Jewish imagery, notwithstanding a distancing from classic antisemitism. It is also important to note that the Muslim community was quite correct to recognise South African Jewry's strong support for the Zionist enterprise. Indeed, Zionism as an ideology was hegemonically entrenched in the Jewish community by the end of the Second World War.<sup>41</sup> Moreover the wider non-Jewish (white) population was also supportive of Jewish nationalism.<sup>42</sup> Such support was not lost on local Muslim readers who were reminded that General J.B.M. Hertzog had praised the opening of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem which he defined as an institution of great importance. For Hertzog it was "the Beacon Light on the Hill of Mount Zion". "What of the Moslem People in Palestine?" asked the editor of *Moslem Outlook*. In a carefully placed jibe at frustrated Afrikaners, the newspaper contended it was hypocritical for Afrikaners, battling for hegemony themselves, to claim that they were opposed to oppression, while "congratulating and supporting a minority who have been forced on the people of Palestine."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *ibid.* 1 May 1926.

<sup>41</sup> See Gideon Shimoni, *Jews and Zionism. The South African Experience 1910-1967* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1980).

<sup>42</sup> Prominent public figures like Jan Smuts and Tielman Roos were indeed publicly supportive of the Zionist movement. See Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994) ch. 6.

<sup>43</sup> See *Moslem Outlook*, 11 April 1925.

Ironically the birth of Israel in 1948 coincided with the victory of the National Party and its introduction of apartheid as a panacea for South Africa's 'race problems'. The gulf that already existed between Muslims and non-Muslim South Africans was now widened. By virtue of their ethnic origins, Muslims were a 'second-class' disenfranchised community; Jews, by virtue of their European origins, belonged to the minority white ruling-class. Within that world Muslims were further removed from the small Jewish community, numbering about 104242.<sup>44</sup> Not only were Jews religiously different but they were also 'white'. This reality added yet another layer to theological divides, exacerbated further by the question of Palestine.

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<sup>44</sup> Census for the Union of South Africa, 1946. In the same census the Muslim population was 110392.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE POLITICISATION OF ISLAM IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MUSLIM

#### COMMUNITY: 1948-1974

With the identity of the local Muslim community fairly well established by 1948 and with communal institutions in place, Muslims gradually began to engage with issues and ideas previously unexplored. International trends made an impact, as did foreign Muslim scholars. Increasingly the politics of the day began to receive attention and involvement. Embroiled within that engagement was a politicisation of Muslim youth and an attendant appreciation of Islam and its potential application to the local situation.

The 1950s witnessed the rise of national independence movements in Africa, the Middle East and South East Asia. At the same time, influential Third World personalities, such as the Egyptian premier Gamal Abdul Nasser and Ahmad Sukarno of Indonesia were, in the words of Ebrahim Moosa, "role models" for a small minority of politically aware South African Muslim youth.<sup>45</sup> These young Muslims came of age precisely as apartheid unfolded with its harsh race-based legislation. Through the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) marriages between 'whites' and 'non-whites' were prohibited and the Immorality

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<sup>45</sup> Moosa, in *Living Faiths*, 147.

Act of 1927 was amended in 1957 to proscribe sexual relations between 'whites' and 'blacks'. In 1950 the Population Registration Act classified individuals according to race and the Race Classification Board was also established to make the final decision in dubious cases. The Group Areas Act (1950) added to the web of race legislation entrenching the physical separation of South Africa's racially defined groups. By this means, residential separation, particularly in urban areas, was implemented. One of the most contentious laws was the Separate Amenities Act of 1953 which regulated public amenities on the basis of racial groups, with the intention of eliminating contact and preserving a colour consciousness. The Bantu Education Act (1953) introduced a state-controlled education department for Africans (blacks), to ensure that the curricula complied with the "nature and requirements of the black people."<sup>46</sup>

Despite the developing legislation, the MJC remained politically quiescent. Individual members, however, did challenge the apartheid system that was taking root. Amongst these were a few activist *sheikhs* and *imams*, most notably Imam Abdullah Haron, a young *imam* who encouraged the participation of the youth in the activities of the mosques. He was particularly concerned with social issues and emphasised the violation of Islamic teachings of equality and social justice in the emerging apartheid ideology.<sup>47</sup> But these activists were unable to exert enough pressure on the MJC to engage politically.<sup>48</sup> Nonetheless the MJC did voice its objections to the removal of 'coloured' voters from the Common Voters

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<sup>46</sup> T. Cameron and S.B. Spies, eds., *An Illustrated History of South Africa* (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers, 1988).

<sup>47</sup> See M. Haron, "Imam Abdullah Haron: Life, Ideas and Impact," unpubl. M.A. thesis, Dept. of Religious Studies, University of Cape Town, 1986 and N. Munroe, "Imam Haron; a biographical sketch," *Janus*, Department of History, University of Cape Town, (1978).

<sup>48</sup> The MJC did become more politically active as time passed. The organisation supported community protest when District Six was proclaimed a white group area. It also responded positively to the 1976 and 1980 student uprisings.

Roll in 1956. In doing so they potentially jeopardised the guarantees offered by the government for the safety of mosques and kramats under the Group Areas Act in exchange for surrendering their vote on the Common Role.<sup>49</sup>

By the late 1950s a new generation of Muslims, better educated than their forebears, came to challenge the religious establishment. They espoused a different conception of Islam from that expressed by the *'ulama* or traditional leaders.<sup>50</sup> Some were university and college graduates and strongly identified with anti-apartheid politics, including links with activist organisations such as The Teachers' League of South Africa and the Non-European Unity Movement.<sup>51</sup>

Their ideas fed into Muslim youth groups, generating a disenchantment with the *'ulama* and the establishment. Small study groups and associations in the Vaal Triangle, Natal and the Cape proliferated. These organisations, consisting of a younger generation of Muslims, encouraged lay persons to study the *Qur'an* on their own by reading English translations. This must be seen as an attempt to reduce dependence on the clergy which, from time to time, led to strained relations between the generations. Moosa notes that these youth groups became "the purveyors of a modernising tendency, rather than being modernist. In other words, they adopted technology and contemporary know-how in the service of faith, rather than embracing the knowledge and intellectual legacy of modernity."<sup>52</sup> Drawing inspiration from pan-Africanism and pan-

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<sup>49</sup> Achmat Davids, *From Complacency to Activism: The Changing Political Mood of the Cape Muslims; 1940 - 1985*, Department of History, University of Cape Town, (1985).

<sup>50</sup> See Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 82-90.

<sup>51</sup> Prior to National Party rule (beginning in 1948) dissatisfaction existed among "black" professionals regarding the subordinate position granted to them by the white government. At the end of 1943 the *National Anti-Coloured Advisory Committee* joined with the *All Africa Convention* to form the *Non-European Unity Movement*. This provided a unified representation of "coloureds", "blacks" and "Asians" against the discriminatory measures of a white government.

<sup>52</sup> Moosa, in *Living Faiths*, 148.

Arabism, and the association of the pan-Arabism with pan-Islamism, these groups advanced an Islamic anti-state rhetoric.

*The group that most provoked the hostility of the 'ulama was the Arabic Study Circle, established in 1950 in Durban. Consisting mainly of young professionals and businessmen, thoroughly disenchanted with the conservative leadership, the group set out to gain access to the Qur'an for themselves. In their view this required proficiency in Arabic. The clergy condemned their activities and declared them to be "misguided". Despite the opposition from the 'ulama, it was the efforts of the Arabic Study Circle to promote the study of Islam at a tertiary level that led to the establishment of Arabic and Islamic studies at schools and at the University of Durban-Westville.*<sup>53</sup>

In Cape Town there was also evidence of renewed activism. With the appointment in 1955 of Abdullah Haron as the Imam of Stegman Road Mosque, Claremont, the Muslim anti-apartheid movement became more intense. A youth formation known as the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM) was founded in 1957 in District Six, Cape Town, with its major focus on reading modern Islamic literature and discussing competing ideologies in South Africa. The MYM's meetings soon turned into protests against apartheid. Once again they drew the ire of the conservative establishment who saw them as an overtly political body. For this reason they were barred from using the mosque.<sup>54</sup>

One can thus see a progressive radicalisation among a post-war generation of young Muslims, angered at the unfolding of apartheid and the inequities inherent in the system. In time this would influence attitudes towards

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*

the United States, Israel and the West. Whereas the older generation had accommodated themselves to a racially segregated order, the new generation sought to challenge the system. Most significantly, however, it sought to do so from within an Islamic framework, informed by Muslim scholars from abroad. The groundwork had been prepared in their own *madrasahs*, but the application of their learning moved beyond esoteric understanding and a personal, spiritual interpretation of their holy text and directly into the political and public realm.

The new direction was particularly evident when Imam Haron, together with some Muslim Mission School teachers, formed the *Claremont Muslim Association* and started a newsletter called *Islamic Mirror* in 1958.<sup>54</sup> Serialised extracts were circulated from the writings of Abu-I-A'la Mawdudi (1903-1979), founder of the Jamat Islami of Pakistan, and Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), a journalist and militant ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt who was subsequently executed by Nasser's government. Both were leaders in international Islamic resurgence.

Mawdudi elaborated the main body of his thinking while India was under British rule and Qutb began to write as the era of direct colonial rule was drawing to a close. Both identified modern Western ideas and modes of behaviour as a threat to Islam. In this understanding Zionism would assume a particularly nefarious role. Mawdudi was the first Muslim thinker to arrive at a sweeping condemnation of modernity and its incompatibility with Islam. His theory of "*Modern Jahiliyya*" declares that modernity is the "New Barbarity". These theories inspired Qutb who carefully concluded that a compromise between

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<sup>54</sup> See Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 83.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.* 84.

modernity and Islam was impossible.<sup>56</sup> "Man is at the cross-roads and that is the choice: Islam or *jahiliyya*. Modern-style *jahiliyya* in the industrialised societies of Europe and America is essentially similar to the old-time *jahiliyya* in pagan and nomadic Arabia. In both systems man is under the domination of man rather than of Allah."<sup>57</sup> Qutb was highly critical of the West, arguing that for Muslim societies to avoid a similar fate they would have to undergo a radical change in which domination (*hakimiyya*) would revert to Allah alone, to Islam, and the holistic system, which He had conferred upon all people. Qutb went further and identified internal challenges to Islam as coming from secular Pan-Arab nationalism, which loosened religious solidarity and replaced it with subservience to man-made governments. Nationalism, he contended, served only as a means to justify man - made actions, leading to materialism and individualism - both an anathema to fundamentalist Islam and both running rampant in *Dar al-Islam*.<sup>58</sup>

Qutb perceived the secularisation of Arabism as inevitable because nationalism was a European invention imported to the Middle East. It was essentially irreligious and unsuited to a culture where religion and state were undifferentiated. During the anti-colonialist struggle this contradiction was blurred, but in a post-colonial age, with the rise of nationalist-dominated regimes, a clash was inevitable. In Qutb's opinion, the "pan-Arab parties" were waging open warfare against the Islamic movement.<sup>59</sup> Such ideas would subsequently lead to radicals gloating at the misfortune of Arab regimes at the hands of Israeli

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<sup>56</sup> See Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam; Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

<sup>57</sup> Sayyid Qutb, "In The Shadow of the Koran, (ca. 1953)" as cited in Sivan, *Radical Islam*, 23.

<sup>58</sup> Similar views were espoused by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini whose ascendance acted as a turning point for the South African Muslim community.

<sup>59</sup> See Sivan, *Radical Islam*, 47.

forces in 1967. While they acknowledged that the Israeli challenge or "Zionist entity" was real, a primary concern was the internal challenge.

Fortified with the teachings of Mawdudi and Qutb, *The Islamic Mirror*, followers of Imam Haron, and the Claremont Muslim Youth Movement challenged the apartheid order. Haron, and the youth organisations within the Muslim community, had a measure of success in promoting their cause when on 7 May, 1961 they convened an historic meeting at the Cape Town Drill Hall, attended by 4000 Muslims representing the 'ulama, mosque and mission schools, and other Muslim welfare bodies. The meeting was concluded by passing a set of resolutions entitled the "Call of Islam",<sup>60</sup> which rejected apartheid as fundamentally contradicting Islamic teachings of justice and equality.<sup>61</sup> This pamphlet was subsequently circulated in mosques in the Cape Peninsula and called for a rejection of the "narrow concept of colour and creed."<sup>62</sup>

It needs to be noted that much attention was given in *Muslim News* to the danger of Christian missionizing. Local Muslim newspapers warned regularly of the danger of Christian teachings and comparisons between Islam and Christianity were offered to the readers.<sup>63</sup> It is interesting to note that even into the 1960s, one of the leading local Muslim newspapers, *Muslim News*,<sup>64</sup> remained concerned with the Christian church and its attitude toward Islam.<sup>65</sup> The concern that Christianity and its prevailing values were a possible threat to Islam seems to have continued throughout the 1960s. *Moslem Africa*, a monthly

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<sup>60</sup> Farid Esack used *Call of Islam* as the name for a group of students which formed in opposition to the MYM in 1983.

<sup>61</sup> See Sivan, *Radical Islam*, 86.

<sup>62</sup> See *Muslim News*, 7 March 1961.

<sup>63</sup> For example see *Moslem Outlook*, 3 October 1925.

publication aimed at spreading the message of Islam, offered its readers articles, which emphasised the differences between Islam and Christianity. These articles were not merely informative but served to disparage Christianity.<sup>66</sup> The Rev. E.L. King was accused of attacking Islam and was quoted as saying that “the infiltration of Islam among Christians is an ominous factor.” The newspaper further accused the Reverend of not replying to questions put to him concerning this verbal attack.

In addition to concerns with Christianity, readers were also reminded that Judaism was an inferior religion. In almost every publication of *Muslim News* the conversion of a Jew to Islam was reported, including the reasons for the conversion. Quite clearly Islam was considered a superior religion.<sup>67</sup> One should not underestimate the impact of these reports on a relatively unsophisticated readership. Together with the burgeoning anti-Zionist editorial line, a new global Islamic identity was being forged among South African Muslims.<sup>68</sup>

The input of ideas from abroad introduced greater attention to issues beyond South Africa and, in particular, the Middle East and the plight of Palestinian Arabs. Israeli policies were criticised, although most emotional and

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<sup>64</sup> The *Muslim News* began publication in 1960 and ran until 1986 from when it became known as *Muslim Views*. It was printed in Athlone, Cape.

<sup>65</sup> See *Muslim News*, 10 March 1961.

<sup>66</sup> See “Faith vs. Faith” in *Moslem Africa*, January 1969.

<sup>67</sup> In *Muslim News*, 29 June 1962, appeared the fable of a Jew who stole the shield of Caliph Ali. The Jew subsequently converted to Islam because of the kind treatment he received from the Caliph. See also *Moslem Africa*, June 1968, “Duty to Neighbours” outlines the criteria for good neighbourliness in the Qur’an. Readers are told that even if your neighbour happens to be a Jew and he allows dirty water to spill onto your property, the good Moslem must not complain.

<sup>68</sup> See Muhammed Haron, “The Muslim News (1960-1986); Expressions of an Islamic identity in South Africa” in *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa*, ed. by Louis Brenner (London: Hurst and Company, 1993). He suggested that, throughout its history, the editorial content of the *Muslim News* was dominated in part by the Palestinian question.

intellectual energies were used in opposing the local situation.<sup>69</sup> This however would change from the late 1960s, when Muslim youth politics became more radical. With that came a greater concern about Israel and the plight of Palestinians.

Notwithstanding the emphasis on Islam as a superior way of life, it was Zionism as an ideology and the formal occupation of Palestine by Britain in 1920 that formed the major focus. According to *Muslim News*, when the Jewish Agency "took over" Palestine in 1929, Muslims and Christians comprised 93 percent of the population and only 7 percent were Jews. Readers were thus reared on a strong anti-Zionist message, rooted in powerful anti-western sentiments.<sup>70</sup>

Hostility reached a high point during the Six Day War in 1967, focusing in the "aftermath of the Israeli aggression" on oppressed Palestinians. A front-page picture of a group of "children refugees who had fled their village when attacked by Israeli forces" captured the sort of views generated by the Arab defeat.<sup>71</sup>

In an attempt to explain the stunning humiliation suffered at the hands of Israeli forces, attempts were made to contextualise the Six Day War in such a way that it seemed as if the defeat of the Arabs was inevitable given the historical forces of western opposition to the Palestinians. "The essence of the problem is the change of status of Palestine since World War One," noted

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<sup>69</sup> According to Abdulkader Tayob, during the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict, Imam Haron was requested by his employers Rowntree-Wilson, for whom he was a travelling salesman, not to criticise unduly the Israeli state. Imam Haron "vowed to his employers not to voice his opposition to Israel, since the unhindered access to Black townships in Cape Town which his job allowed him, was too important". In contrast there were those, for example, such as Shaykh Nazeem Mohammed, who was employed by the same company; he resigned and refused to curtail his criticism of the state of Israel. See Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 85.

<sup>70</sup> For example see, *Muslim News*, 23 August 1963; September 1963; 19 June 1964.

*Muslim News*, Israel had “forcibly squeezed out Palestine and expelled one million Arabs from their home. Furthermore, Jews from seventy different countries were induced to come into Israel where they confiscated property from Arabs who were, in turn, turned into a “voiceless and persecuted minority.”<sup>72</sup>

Readers were reminded that this was not the first act of aggression on the part of those intent on securing Palestine for the Jews. “Through the conspiracy of the British and the Zionists since 1918, plans were afoot for a so-called homeland for the Jews... Israel was imposed on the Muslim soil of Palestine. The first aggression was in 1948, the second in 1956 and now the third brazen aggression....”<sup>73</sup> The Palestinians, it was contended, were not given independence “because of the Zionists, whose colonialist conspiracy had successfully made stooges of the Big Powers”. Local Muslims were urged to note this fact.<sup>74</sup> The idea of Palestine as an unwitting victim in the power play of the West was reiterated as articles such as “Zionist Dajjal”<sup>75</sup> and “Tragedy of Palestine: 1948 War Recalled.”<sup>76</sup> Presumably to deepen their understanding of Jewish machinations, readers were referred to the notorious forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*,<sup>77</sup> as proof of the crafty and shrewd nature of the Jews who dreamed of controlling the world.

In further attempts to bolster confidence in the wake of military defeat, Muslim readers were told of brave acts carried out by Palestinians against the

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<sup>71</sup> See *Muslim News*, 16 June 1967.

<sup>72</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Muslim News*, 30 June 1967.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* 6 October 1967.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.* 14 July 1967

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.* 28 July 1967.

<sup>77</sup> *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* is an infamous forgery based on a French political satirical pamphlet compiled in the 1860's. The *Protocols* claimed that Jews had been plotting the destruction of Christendom and its replacement with a totalitarian utopia.

Israeli invaders. "How Dayan was injured" explained that the Israeli account of the general being injured by a stone falling on his head during an archaeology expedition was false. What had really happened, according to *Al-Fatah*, was that Dayan was part of a convoy to supervise organisations for an attack on Jordan when his convoy was attacked by Palestinian commandos.<sup>78</sup> The news of a downed Israeli helicopter and the blowing up of Israeli military headquarters was relayed to local readers in a similar mode.<sup>79</sup>

Besides regularly noting the general injustices meted out to the Palestinians, the city of Jerusalem increasingly became a focal point in discussions. It was argued that Muslims were owners the Holy city. Historical precedence was invoked as proof that Jews had illegitimately occupied Jerusalem. Articles appeared stating that Jews interpreted scripture according to their own desires; there was, it was averred, no building on the Holy Rock, which Jews could claim as being their temple. In reality, the Dome of the Rock was erected on what was open space. Furthermore, they argued the exact legal status of Jerusalem before the recent war was a difficult question to resolve.<sup>80</sup>

The question of Jerusalem seemed to be firmly resolved in the minds of *Muslim News* which indicated that even *Time* magazine supported their cause when it reported that "Israelis shrewdly tried to take the edge off the issue of retaining Jerusalem by seeking Vatican approval for the plan to put holy places under independent religious control."<sup>81</sup> Readers were also told that the Jewish sector in Jerusalem was kept clean whilst the same group was intent on

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<sup>78</sup> *Muslim News*, 19 April 1968.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.* 26 July 1968.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.* 14 July 1967 and 3 November 1967.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.* 11 August 1967.

converting Arab Jerusalem into a “den of vice.”<sup>82</sup> The editor went so far as to assert that “Israelis are planning to go ahead with the construction of Herod’s temple” and that even though the United Nations was still deliberating on a resolution declaring any change in the status of Jerusalem invalid, the “Zionist state is surreptitiously moving ahead with its plans to demolish the first Qibla of Islam.” The editorial concluded, “...it is improbable that the Zionist mind would be deterred from playing its historical sadistic role.”<sup>83</sup>

Further attempts to demonise Israeli “atrocities” took the form of comparisons between their activities and that of the Nazis. Indeed, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank was described as being “worse than Nazis”<sup>84</sup> and the “wanton attack” on Beirut airport in 1969 demonstrated once again the “neo-Nazi face” of the Israelis.<sup>85</sup> No doubt the association of Israeli behaviour with Nazism resonated in South Africa where apartheid and Nazism were often compared.<sup>86</sup> Criticism by Jews of Israeli behaviour was particularly useful. Thus when one Moshe Menuhin apparently criticised Israel, *Muslim News* reported on “Israeli Nazism as seen by an honest Jew.”<sup>87</sup>

Whilst at one level the Arab defeat in 1967 was seen as the result of a conspiracy of western powers and the overwhelming sadistic and aggressive tendencies of the Israeli forces, at another level it was portrayed to local Muslims as a metaphysical battle between Good and Evil. In these comparisons *Muslim News* appropriated international comment and perspectives from the Muslim

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<sup>82</sup> *Muslim News*, 18 October 1968.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.* 3 November 1967.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.* 23 February 1968.

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.* 24 January 1969.

<sup>86</sup> See for example, Brian Bunting, *The Rise of the South African Reich* (London: International Defence and Aid Fund, 1986).

world. The Pakistani minister of Health, for example, was quoted as saying, "...the hour of trial for the Muslim world has come - a trial between truth and falsehood and truth shall come out victorious. Israel is a sore in the body of the Muslim world but she is doomed and will be exterminated."<sup>88</sup> Israelis were even accused of having published a deluxe edition of the *Qur'an* which was sold "dirt cheap". More importantly, it was stated that the text had been deliberately changed to omit verses that criticised Jews. Readers were also warned that interpolated editions of the *Qur'an* were being circulated locally by Israeli agents, and Muslims were requested to destroy any copies that were found.<sup>89</sup> The time had come for Muslims to devote their resources to welfare and defence. Allah would then help them to "wipe Israel from the surface of the earth."<sup>90</sup>

As members of the global brotherhood of Muslims, all Muslims had to appreciate that the suffering of one led to the suffering of all. Evidence of international unity and solidarity was evident in the founding of the "Muslim News Relief Fund." Money was to go to the relief of "victims of Israeli aggression". "Their suffering is our suffering," noted the editor of the *Muslim News*.<sup>91</sup>

Quite clearly the Six Day War and its aftermath had harmed the image of the South African Jew, especially since Jews had vociferously supported Israel and helped materially.<sup>92</sup> The Jew was both a Zionist and a Westerner. Readers were warned of the "Zionist tentacles over international finance" and the

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<sup>87</sup> *Muslim News*, 29 August 1969.

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.* 30 June 1967.

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.* 23 August 1968 and 6 September 1968. See also *Muslim Africa*, April 1969.

<sup>90</sup> *Muslim News*, 22 September 1967.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.* 30 June 1967.

<sup>92</sup> See Milton Shain, "Consolidating the Consolidated: The Impact of the Six- Day War on South African Jewry" in *The Six-Day War and World Jewry*, ed. by Eli Lederhendler, The Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: University Press of Maryland, 2000).

manipulative behaviour of Jews who "... spend money, and work systematically to spread their lies, to confuse issues and make the Western public sympathise...."<sup>93</sup>

Local Jews, as part of a ruling minority, were seen, at least in some quarters to be manipulating financial institutions and businesses in South Africa and occupying land and houses taken by force from an impotent majority. In short, the image of the South African Jew reinforced in a subtle way descriptions of Jews in 'Palestine' who were oppressing fellow Muslims. There can be little doubt that by the late 1960s South African Muslims shared in the humiliation of their Muslim 'brothers and sisters' and 'Zionism' was a term of opprobrium and Israel was an aggressor state.<sup>94</sup> This of course was unknown to those unacquainted with *Muslim News*. At a formal level Muslim anger was kept 'in house' and the Jewish community were largely oblivious to currents of anger. This would change in the 1970s in the wake of the death of Imam Haron in 1969.

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<sup>93</sup> *Muslim News*, 6 September 1967 and 10 October 1969. Of course, a wider stereotype existed in South Africa of the cosmopolitan Jewish financier, exemplified in the cartoon caricature, Hoggenheimer. See Shain, *The Roots*. Chapter two.

<sup>94</sup> See Milton Shain, "Muslim Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism in South Africa, 1945-1998", Paper presented at an International Conference: *The Dynamics of Antisemitism in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century*, The Vidal Sassoon International Centre for the Study of Antisemitism, (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; 13-16 June, 1999).

## CHAPTER THREE

### RADICALISATION: 1969-1982

On 27 September 1969 the South African Muslim community was stunned by the death in detention of Imam Haron. Haron's meeting with exiles in Mecca and Cairo convinced the South African government that he was a threat to state security. He was kept under surveillance and subsequently detained for questioning. In May 1969 he was detained for the last time and found dead in his cell.<sup>1</sup> His death was symbolic of the repressive policies of unfolding apartheid and indeed demonstrated the importance of his activist role.<sup>2</sup>

However, with Haron's death a leadership vacuum among Muslim youth was apparent. Certainly the Islamic Association founded at the University of Cape Town in 1962 had looked to Haron for inspiration, as they had in 1967 when they planned a major "Action Programme" with the aim of addressing the need to interpret Islam on an academic level. Indicative of a new awareness among Muslim youth were attitudes towards Jews evident in a symposium held in conjunction with the Students Jewish Association of the University of Cape Town. Nonetheless, there was dissatisfaction on the part of Muslim youth with the rather effete senior leadership.

It was quite apparent that young Muslim students, involved in the anti-apartheid struggle and critical of their elder's quiescence had imbibed radical

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<sup>1</sup>See Muhammed Haron, *Imam Abdullah Haron: Life, Ideas, and Impact*. M.A. thesis, University of Cape Town. (1986).

Muslim writings. They were undoubtedly evolving a worldview in which the Jewish state was illegitimate and in which Palestinians were seen to be victimised by the 'colonial Zionist aggressors' who in turn were supported by the western powers. An anti-Western discourse would develop throughout the 1970s and 1980s and would ultimately inform many protests. The burning of the Israeli and American flag would be common, as would calls to local Muslims not to wear any labels of western brand names such as Levis. By the 1990s, a proposed boycott of all 'American based' businesses, such as Kentucky Fried Chicken would be heard.

In the early 1970s, however, the major focus was on "Israeli sacrilege" and on criticism of "Zionist Brutal Atrocities." Most significantly, the language of anti-Zionist hostility was increasingly infused with classic antisemitic motifs. One clear example was the notion of an international Jewish conspiracy. Indeed, all scholars, leaders and students were urged to procure copies of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in order to be "informed of Zionist designs."<sup>3</sup>

Given the mindset that had developed amongst South African Muslims, it is not surprising that calls for global Muslim unity in the fight to liberate Palestine in the historic struggle were heeded.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently calls were made for the "expulsion of the Zionist settler-state of Israel from the United Nations". Jerusalem, of course, remained of primary concern.<sup>5</sup>

The ideological formulations espoused by the Muslim press vis-à-vis the Palestine question subscribed to a view of the world and international politics

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<sup>2</sup> Moosa, in *Living Faiths*, 148.

<sup>3</sup> *Muslim News* April 10 1971 and 8<sup>1</sup> May 1971.

<sup>4</sup> For example, see *Muslim News*, 17 September 1971.

overwhelmingly predicated upon conspiracy theories and assumptions. Some of these notions were taken to absurd proportions in which a putative grand conspiratorial alliance of all Western powers together with Israel ganged up against the Palestinians. As indicated earlier, the pain of loss of dignity and a sense of impotence generated an attempt to seek refuge in conspiratorial constructs and an accompanying victim psyche.<sup>6</sup>

In its attempts to explain the apparent evils of the Palestinian situation and the role played by Jews, the Muslim press was rooted in essentialist notions which detected "grand schemes" being manifested in different times and in different places. The unholy Jew, for example, historically despised by God, had always been intent on controlling the world. The dynamics of history were interpreted in accordance with paradigms drawn from sacred texts and stamped with a timeless relevance. As a result *Muslim News* propagated the idea that medieval and modern history was a reaction to, or a continuation of, seventh century episodes and paradigms, which in themselves were paradigms of more ancient episodes.

Taji-Farouki's general abstractions with regard to the Palestinian question have some resonance with the South African scene. "This reductionist interpretation," he writes, "sees perception, purpose, and policy as constructs

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<sup>5</sup> *Muslim News*, 1 and 15 October 1971; 19 November 1971.

<sup>6</sup> Suha Taji-Farouki explains that conspiracy theories provide the party with the analytical and mechanistic devices by means of which it is able to elaborate consistently a particular interpretation of history. See Suha Taji-Farouki, "Contemporary Political Islam and the Palestinian Question" in *Medieval and Modern Perspectives on Muslim-Jewish Relations*, ed. by Ronald L. Nettler, Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies (Oxford: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995).

that float unanchored across the centuries, rather than being part of immediate realities, or intimate details of present circumstances.”<sup>7</sup>

In removing sacred text from its historical, political, social and economic context, *Muslim News* was able to employ these texts as meaningful explanations for a present reality and as a strategy for dealing with that reality. Furthermore, through its prophetic dimension one could anticipate the eventual outcome of history when Islam would triumph and the Jews would be defeated.

Unmistakably influenced by such idealism and inspired by the Islamist ideologues of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and the Jamat Islami of Pakistan, the Muslim Youth Movement of South Africa (MYMSA), emerged as a national movement. Initially founded in 1970 in Natal as a religio-cultural body with a muted political agenda, the MYMSA became increasingly politically aggressive. Although concerned primarily with local issues, Islamist ideas informed broader perceptions and understandings. The intellectual diet for its adherents consisted of writings by such people such as Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949), founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Qutb and Abu al-A'la Mawdudi. Idealism clearly marked this phase of the MYMSA and with it a burgeoning anger towards the West and Zionism.<sup>8</sup>

The most enduring feature of the MYMSA was the emphasis on self-education in matters of religion. Members were encouraged to read and reflect on the *Qur'an* in translated form and to familiarise themselves with the works of Islamist ideologues and the history of Islam. Such training was a means of

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<sup>7</sup> ibid. 40.

<sup>8</sup> Moosa, in *Living Faiths*, 149.

resistance against the Westernising influences of society on the one hand, and the anachronistic interpretations of the *'ulama* on the other.

Part of the focus of this new breed of activist Muslim organisations was a vigorous campaign against the heretical ideas espoused by new religious movements such as the *Ahmadiyyat*, *Qadiyyani* and *Baha'i*.<sup>9</sup> In fact, politically motivated articles such as "Ahmadism and Imperialism"<sup>10</sup> went so far as to assert that these new religious movements were a by-product of imperialism. The ultimate goal of the likes of the MYMSA was to prepare for the inauguration of an Islamic state.<sup>11</sup> Within this paradigm the Jews and Israel were never far from the surface.

Together with the Muslim Students' Association (MSA), which later worked closely with the MYMSA, the MYM had a significant effect on the Muslim youth of South Africa for at least a decade. Notwithstanding internal conflicts within the Muslim community such as opposition to the *Ahmadiyyat*, there was unanimity around the Palestinian question. This was patently evident at the time of the Yom Kippur War in 1973, a period during which *Muslim News* evinced a strident radicalism.<sup>12</sup>

The radicalisation of the editorial comment and the nature of the articles built upon earlier conspiratorial notions. In addition, there was a newfound call for aggression. On 4 January 1974 the editor pleaded with readers to remember that "*Jihad* is a war of defence of Islam and Humanity... Whoever turns away

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<sup>9</sup> These were 20<sup>th</sup> Century Muslim sects which espoused a less conservative approach to and interpretation of the orthodoxy of Islam.

<sup>10</sup> *Muslim News*, 1 June 1985.

<sup>11</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 121-122. Of course, the notion of an Islamic state where Muslims numbered less than 2% was untenable.

<sup>12</sup> See Haron, *The Muslim News (1960-1986)*.

from it will be punished. Muslims must unite to defend the cause of *justice* and *truth*. ...Please make dua [supplication] in all your prayers for the victory of the Muslim forces fighting the Kuffar [heathen] and also for the liberation of all the Muslim lands from the grip of Zionist aggressors and their mercenaries.”<sup>13</sup>

Within the attempt to explain the causes and outcome of the Yom Kippur war, the Muslim press once again related to a history of Jewish deception and western manipulation. Readers were reminded of historical “facts” which had relevance to the current battle between “Palestine and Jews”.

The Children of Israel were invaders who conquered the land in ancient times as they have done in our time....Through the ages and by virtue of secular education, men have learnt to live as human beings but Jews [sic] with their black arts of deception, exploitation and international demoralisation. The Jews of our time are more Jewish than their ancestors. They acquired the power and means to exploit and corrupt the entire mankind.... They have founded a labyrinth of international corruption and exploitation.... They have employed a vast army of Gentiles to write books on Jews and reconstruct them as something more than the chosen people. They have no culture, no history, no architecture, no fine arts.... They are working to dominate the whole world and to create a world of the Jews, by the Jews and for the Jews... The young Pharisees ordered the execution of Jesus... And the Zionists, who are power drunk, dominate the world and lead the gifted Jewish race from one depth of self-deception to another.<sup>14</sup>

Explaining the history of the conflict, *Muslim News* made the issues very clear:

Zionist pressures to win a homeland for “jews” bore fruit when this was recognised in principle in 1917. Since then Zionist settlers have continued to pour into the land and colonise by whatever means necessary including mass slaughters. With the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War came the Nazi campaign to eliminate the jews. After the war the Western world felt compensation to the jews in the form of a homeland “morally” desirable. They thus acknowledged the dislodging of Palestinians from their land. The results of 1948, 1956 and 1967 attempts by the Zionists with explicit American and British aid is a vast chunk of Muslim territory and imposition of ruthless jews on the area... What has not been grasped or has been oppressed, is the fact that Zionists are bent upon aggression and expansionism as

<sup>13</sup> *Muslim News*, 4 January 1974.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* 6 June 1975.

evidenced by the speeches of their own protagonists and the Elders of Zion.<sup>15</sup>

Quite evidently the newspaper's tone became more virulent in the wake of the 1973 War. Significantly, the word "Jew" entered the new discourse, used interchangeably with "Zionist". Whereas, "Jew" had hitherto been used only with reference to the holy texts and to incidences that had occurred between Moslems and Jews following the birth of Islam, it now related to sinister modern secular trends.<sup>16</sup>

The essential understanding conveyed in the *Muslim News* was that all Jews were Zionists and that the imperialistic tendencies were inherent in Judaism. Thus could the paper reproduce a memorandum to Islamic heads of state: "...it is a dark period of history in the Islamic world...we bring to you the cries of orphans, the laments of mothers and the dirge of young widows, all due to usurping Jews whose final target is to obliterate all trace of Islamic culture from the Holy city and turn it wholly Jew as soon as possible."<sup>17</sup>

This interchangeability of "Jew" and "Zionist" by Arab writers has been commented upon by the Israeli scholar, Yehoshua Harkabi. In his view, it was a deliberate gesture intended to serve certain political goals. Judaism, for example, was usually perceived as a religious collectivity and historically valid. While this history was not without its dark side, it still enjoyed a certain legitimacy. This was essentially because Jews were principally members of a

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<sup>15</sup> *Muslim News*, 18 January 1974.

<sup>16</sup> What needs to be stressed is the fundamental paradigm. In the above article "jew" was spelt without an upper-case "J". It would seem that this was a conscious form of disrespect and contempt for the whole range of concepts that are represented by the word "jew".

<sup>17</sup> *Muslim News*, 15 February 1974.

religious and not a national community with desires for a state. Zionism on the other hand was a movement with national aspirations and with definite political goals was considered objectionable. The alternating usage of the two terms, argues Harkabi, may sometimes have provided a political opportunity for some writers to cast aspersions about the nature of Judaism through a political critique of Zionism.<sup>18</sup> Whilst Judaism, and by implication Jews, still had some laudable qualities, Zionism was purely evil and destructive. By using the terms interchangeably Jews and Judaism were subsumed by Zionism, in the process rendering Jews and their religion contemptible.

Generally the Jewish community did not take the Muslim press to task over its inflammatory anti-Zionist statements, nor did it engage in polemics with the Muslim press. However, the Jewish press did on occasion accuse *Muslim News* of being antisemitic. The Yom Kippur War in 1973 was one such occasion. Both the *Zionist Record* and the *South African Jewish Chronicle* of 22 August 1975 charged *Muslim News* with antisemitism because of the tone of its coverage of the October War. The accusation triggered protests and indignation from Muslim organisations and individuals.

A statement from the MJC countered the allegations with the argument that the Palestinian struggle for a homeland was justified and that "We are not interested in Zionism." The editor added his voice to the protests and affirmed that *Muslim News* was in sympathy with Egypt's actions in the Egyptian - Israeli conflict. Readers were told that the Jews who suffered under the Nazis should have learned not to inflict suffering on others. *Muslim News* denied the charge of

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<sup>18</sup> See Y. Harkabi, "Arab Attitudes to Israel," (Jerusalem, 1972) as cited by Joseph Nevo,

antisemitism noting that it "is most certainly anti-Zionist because it is Zionist activities that are causing strife in the Middle East."<sup>19</sup>

Whilst the Palestinian issue enjoyed major coverage from the early 1970s, *Muslim News* cast it's net wider. For instance, the killing of the Israeli athletes in Munich by the "Arab and Palestinian Resistance" in 1974 was discussed as a consequence of Zionist terrorism, including acts of terrorism perpetrated by Israeli groups such as the Haganah and the Stern Gang. The event, according to *Muslim News*, was being exploited by the Zionists. "The rare voices which tried to say something were suffocated by the voices of the Zionist propaganda organs aching under the full consent of imperialism, colonialism, racism as well as the neo-Nazism dream of exploiting peoples under the claim of racial or technical superiority."<sup>20</sup>

"Israeli Treachery" was once again discussed when an Israeli force rescued hijack hostages at Entebbe in Uganda in July 1976.

Last Sunday 150 Israeli terrorists invaded Uganda to "rescue" 102 hostages held by hijackers. There can be no denying the audacity of the operation but it is nevertheless a most treacherous and dastardly act. The West has hailed these terrorists as heroes, but these very "heroes" are guilty of perpetrating the most inhumane acts on Palestinians in Israeli concentration camps. The actions of the terrorists was nothing less than treachery for the Ugandan leader, Idi Amin was still in the process of negotiating a peaceful end to the hijacking. The Israelis invaded foreign land, shed blood and were hailed as heroes. The Zionists have shown by this action and actions in the past that they will not hesitate to perpetrate the most inhuman acts to fulfil their aims.

Here one sees a conflation of anti-West and anti-Zionist sentiment. But the anger went even deeper, with no opportunity lost for attacking Israel. For

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*"Zionism" versus "Judaism" in Palestinian Historiography in Medieval and Modern Perspectives on Muslim Jewish Relations*, ed. by Ronald L. Nettler (1995).

example, when the "Genocide" episode in the BBC World at War television series was controversially scheduled to be screened in 1976.<sup>21</sup> *Muslim News* used the occasion to discuss "Israeli Acts of Genocide". The "atrocities committed by Israelis against the Palestinian people is equally damning," it contended. A list of reports and interviews spelt out "repressive" Israeli acts. In addition, a photo of Jews being rounded up in the Warsaw Ghetto above a photo of Israeli "concentration camps" in the Sinai Desert was included.<sup>22</sup>

It is no wonder that with such reporting and with the consistent negative stereotyping of Jews, Zionists and Israelis, the soil was ripe for an aggressive outburst of virulent anti-Zionism on the part of Muslim students in the wake of the Soweto riots of 1976. Adding fuel to this growing fire were reports of the alleged violation of human rights by Israel which became a permanent feature of the Muslim press from this time.<sup>23</sup> A vivid illustration of the Muslim mood was evident at the time of the United Nations resolution of 17 October 1975 equating Zionism with racism. Its passage attracted much coverage in the Muslim press. A wonderful opportunity was provided to summarise the whole corpus of anti-Zionism which had unfolded. *Muslim News* predictably felt vindicated when reporting that the United Nations (UN) General Assembly had stamped its approval on the resolution equating Zionism with racism after a bitter debate.<sup>24</sup> The resolution was hailed as a victory for the Palestinian Liberation Organisation

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<sup>19</sup> *Muslim Views*, 12 September 1975.

<sup>20</sup> *Muslim News*, 15 March 1974.

<sup>21</sup> The screening was subsequently banned for fear of upsetting certain communities. The South African Jewish community objected to this banning on the grounds that it would serve to minimise the enormity of the tragedy that befell the Jews. Ultimately the episode was screened.

<sup>22</sup> *Muslim News*, 28 August 1976.

<sup>23</sup> For example, see *Muslim News*, 28 March 19, 1975; 3 October 1975; 6 August 1976.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.* 28 November 1975.

(PLO) and a defeat for the United States and Israel.<sup>25</sup> It certainly provided a platform upon which Muslims could build and a slogan which could be used extensively in their condemnation of both apartheid and Zionism.

In subsequent issues of *Muslim News*, increasing focus was directed at the UN verdict. Zionism was affirmed as the scourge of the Muslim world and Zionists as the perpetrators of all evil. The resolution vindicated a long struggle. Much of the reportage was imported from abroad, where articles focused on the colonialist nature of Zionism, with all the ingredients of a white vs. non-white phenomena of conquest, occupation and repressive domination. The sorts of accusations resonated in an apartheid society where anti-Zionists increasingly emphasised the similarities between the apartheid government of South Africa and the "illegal" state of Israel.<sup>26</sup>

In this nexus of oppression, local Muslims solidified their bonds with their 'Palestinian brothers'. Both parties suffered oppression at the hands of what they deemed an illegal government. As victims of oppression, South African Muslims believed they had an added responsibility to identify with the circumstances and sufferings of their co-religionists in Palestine. Significantly their rhetoric consciously distanced itself from antisemitism whilst condemning Zionism. It needs to be noted that whilst this distinction was an intellectual one, it was not necessarily a distinction that held at an emotional level. "The support of the resolution does not make one 'antisemitic' or 'anti-Jewish'. All Arabs are Semites but all Jews are not. Neither are all Jews Zionists. Arabs are struggling

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<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> See *Muslim News*, 19 October 1979; 9 March 1984.

against Zionist occupation, not because they are Jews, but because they are occupiers."<sup>27</sup>

This separation, however, became increasingly blurred as South African Muslims recognised the largely unquestioning support of most South African Jews for Israel. This reality which was not without justification helped the South African Muslim community to draw direct and strong parallels between the "racist" Zionist state of Israel and the racist apartheid regime in South Africa.

The Muslim case was strengthened as the Pretoria-Jerusalem axis evolved from the early 1970s.<sup>28</sup> No better confirmation of the nefarious connections between apartheid and Zionism could have been invented. One Abdullah Kerim reviewed the growing political, military and economic relations between the "Zionist and Apartheid states," noting that South African Defence Minister P.W. Botha and Admiral Bierman of the South African Navy had met with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin in 1973 while the latter was on a Zionist fund-raising visit to South Africa. The visit of Connie Mulder, the South African Minister of Transport, to Israel in September 1973 was also used to illustrate the contention that these "internationally isolated" countries "now form a dangerous alliance aimed equally against the Arab states and independent Africa and the Third World."<sup>29</sup> Under the heading "Zionists invest in Apartheid" the writer concluded that "the Zionist state of Israel and the Apartheid state of South Africa are consolidating their links and this is emphasised by the exchange of visits."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid.* 23 January 1976.

<sup>28</sup> See James Adams, *The Unnatural Alliance* (London: Quartet, 1984).

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.* 28 February 1975. See also 14 May 1976.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.* 1 April 1977.

Further proof of the relationship was evident in a report of a United Nations Special Committee against apartheid that stated that political, military, economic and cultural collaboration between Israel and South Africa had intensified after the Middle East Wars in 1967 and 1973.<sup>31</sup> This argument was afforded increased coverage in *Muslim News* from 1977 onwards with scarcely an issue appearing that did not include allegations of support between the two "regimes". The caption underneath a photograph of two Israeli soldiers "harassing" a Palestinian framed this viewpoint. "To be threatened by armed men in the land of ones birth is a fate Palestinians share with Blacks in South Africa."<sup>32</sup>

It is important to note that the names "Israel" and "South Africa" were never used in isolation but always prefixed with "Zionist Israel" or variations thereof. Similarly, the "*Apartheid state of South Africa*" was the preferred way of referring to the South African regime. "Israel" as a country was ignored; instead it was referred to as the "Zionist state". Possible reasons for the intensive usage of the words "Zionism" and "Zionist state" could have been the negative connotations associated with the terms and the fact that their use deligitimised the State of Israel.

It was not long before more direct and dangerous conclusions were drawn concerning the Jews of "Apartheid South Africa" and their links with "Zionist Israel". South African Muslims were reminded that although Jews and Afrikaners had not had good relations in the past, apartheid South Africa was serving to close the gap between Afrikaners and Jews. "There are 117,000 Jews in South

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<sup>31</sup> *ibid.* 8 October 1976.

Africa,” noted *Muslim News*, “some were prominent amongst the big businessmen making large profits from cheap African labour ... Israel’s alliance and military assistance has provided a more secure future and lessened anti-Jewish sentiment among Afrikaners.”<sup>33</sup>

Muslims would be left in no doubt that Jews were not only the enemy and oppressor of Muslim co-religionists in far-away Palestine. They were firmly entrenched within the white minority, which illegally oppressed and exploited the black majority of South Africans, of which group the Muslims were a part. Put simply, South African Jews had doubly earned the hatred and opposition of the local Muslim community. This attitude was regularly emphasised in *Muslim News*. Most significantly it demonstrated the blurring of divisions between anti-Zionism and antisemitism.

Whilst interest and comment on the conflict in the Middle East continued unabated,<sup>34</sup> political radicalisation at home intensified. The heartbeat of black politics in the early 1970s came from the black consciousness movement that arose out of the desperate need for the oppressed to make a stand concerning the apartheid laws that governed their everyday lives. South African Muslims, by virtue of being classified “non-white”, were subject to these same laws and therefore by and large identified with the black consciousness movement. Certainly the younger generation were less patient than their parents and were galvanised by a new generation of black activists, including Steve Biko.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> *Muslim News* 4 March 1977. See also 18 February 1977 and 21 October 1977.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.* 15 April 1977.

<sup>34</sup> See for example *Muslim News*, 15 March 1974; 30 August 1974; 31 January 1975; 12 September 1975; 23 January 1976.

<sup>35</sup> Steve Biko was a black leader from the Eastern Cape and a key figure in the black consciousness movement. The movement drew some of its inspiration from the United States

In June 1976 trouble arose in Soweto and spread to nearly every township in South Africa. The *Sunday Times*, a national newspaper, described the situation as 'riots looking for a place to happen'.<sup>36</sup> The events were sparked off by a protest against the obligatory use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in certain subjects in "black" schools. This was more than likely to have been a symbolic reason rather than *the* cause. Essentially it was another example of being dictated to by the white oppressors. Although Afrikaans was described as the language of the oppressors, many 'coloured' people and certainly many Muslims in the Western Cape spoke Afrikaans as their home language. And yet they identified with the protest and fully supported it. In fact, there was no shortage of reasons for the revolt of the youth.

The *Soweto Students' Representative Council* seemed to have organised the main demonstrations in the form of marches, work stoppages, attacks on shebeens, and a rent strike. The black youth seemed to have mobilised the older generation and involved them in the protests. The events were violent and bloody. Police opened fire on the protesting youths and 700 children were killed in the ensuing violence. There was also violence on the part of contract workers against the students, who suffered from job insecurity and could not afford to stay away from work.

In September 1977, Biko died while in security police custody. Many questions were asked about the events surrounding his death but no satisfactory

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and found expression through the *Black People's Convention* (BPC) which was, *inter alia*, involved in a number of different forms of community service. The BPC leadership was tried and jailed in 1974 under the Terrorism Act for inciting student unrest on black campuses at the time of the Frelimo victory in Mozambique. See T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History*, third ed. (Johannesburg: Macmillan, 1987) ch.14 *passim*.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*

answers were ever given. The protests lasted, with varying intensity, until the banning of the black consciousness movement by Jimmy Kruger, the Minister of Justice, in October 1977.<sup>37</sup>

The black consciousness movement had certainly helped to stimulate a new level of awareness among "black" South Africans and made a huge impact on their feelings and opinions. Students became highly politicised with many fleeing abroad for military training.

The upheavals did not leave the South African Muslim community untouched, particularly in the Western Cape where 'coloureds' had joined vigorously in the protest. School boycotts and a complete breakdown at the political level between the government and the Coloured Persons' Representative Council provided a vacuum for new leadership.<sup>38</sup> Young Muslims now identified with the politics of 'black' liberation and in addition juxtaposed the struggle of their co-religionists in Palestine against Zionism. This idea was vividly captured in the notion that in both the Palestinian and South African case, 'blacks' and Palestinians were "threatened by armed men in the land of ones birth".<sup>39</sup>

In the wake of the Soweto uprising, Muslim youth intensified their training programmes under the auspices of the MYM.<sup>40</sup> They wished to clarify their place within the South African polity and to develop a theoretical response. According to Tayob, the ensuing programmes resulted in a clearer view as to how Muslims

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<sup>37</sup> See *Muslim News*, 23 Sept. 1977.

<sup>38</sup> For further information see Davenport, T.H.R. *South Africa: A Modern History*, third edition, (Johannesburg: Macmillian, 1987).

<sup>39</sup> *Muslim News*, 18 February 1977.

<sup>40</sup> Shain, *Muslim Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism*, 5.

were to deal with ideologies prevalent in South Africa. Moreover, participants were encouraged to establish an "Islamic value system."<sup>41</sup>

Among the first recruits to this programme were individuals such as Abdurrashied Omar and Achmat Cassiem who had suffered loss of schooling and incarceration as a result of their actions against the apartheid government.<sup>42</sup> In fact, when asked subsequently for his views on the Muslim political agenda for the Republic (of South Africa), Omar stated that Islam had a political dimension of relevance to the South African situation.<sup>43</sup>

In order to achieve their goals the MYM concentrated on the youth in schools, universities and colleges, training them to spread an Islamic ethos. Their efforts were aided by the use of special manuals, tapes, pamphlets and other literature. Modern ideologies including Zionism, secularism, capitalism and communism were identified as threatening anti-Islamic forces.<sup>44</sup>

The intensification of the MYM's training programme coincided with the success of the Iranian Revolution of 1979 which was hailed as a sign of victory for Islamic resurgence in the world. In South Africa it was accompanied by an increase in antisemitic graffiti and slogans. Muslim-Jewish clashes between students on various campuses became common from the 1980s. In these turbulent times, Ahmat Cassiem, together with a group of students in Cape Town, launched Qibla.

In essence this was a product of disillusionment with the MYM's response to apartheid. Qibla advocated an Islamic holy war as the means to induce

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<sup>41</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 135

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> See Fischer and Hoffman, 143.

political and social change in South Africa. It combined the revolutionary message of the Iranian Revolution with local anti-apartheid slogans.<sup>45</sup> As one of its formal statements declared: "A progressive step has been taken by Muslims in this country...The idea behind (Qibla) is to propagate, implement and defend the rights of the people according to Islamic injunctions, without fear or favour."<sup>46</sup> Here was a direct connection between global developments and local issues.

There is little doubt that, as Abdurrashid Omar commented, the Muslim community in the early 1980s was "in the process of moving towards activism." Reflecting on these heady days, Omar recalled that many of the MYM members defected to Qibla, "demanding physical Jihad action." Qibla was providing that. Omar also noted the clandestine nature of the movement, necessary under the apartheid repressive apparatus. Indeed, he claimed the state saw links between Qibla and Libya.<sup>47</sup>

Whatever Qibla was or was not, it was extremely anti-Zionist. But it was also antisemitic. As Dr. Taj Hargey, a Muslim academic, put it, "Many of the youth cannot rationalise anti-Zionism, because they are political hot-heads. Some of them have not connected why Israel is a threat to the Middle East and human rights so they fall back on the convenient pretext of anti-Semitism. Obviously with Qibla being militantly anti-Israel and anti-Zionist and heavily inspired by Iran which is on record as wanting to wipe out the Zionist entity, you find the young people are becoming increasingly anti-Jewish."<sup>48</sup> Muslim prejudice against the Jews in South Africa at that time was affirmed in a

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<sup>44</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, 140.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.* 151.

<sup>46</sup> *Muslim News*, 5 June 1981.

statement by Ebrahim Rasool (Western Cape Secretary of the UDF). Rasool noted that Qibla had "developed a paradigm, a framework in which they (Qibla) analyse the struggle in South Africa. They say that the Citadel of International Finance is the Jews, is Zionism, they conflate the two. That Citadel is the lifeblood of Imperialism and Imperialism is the dominant force in South Africa and therefore, what happens in South Africa, to us, is a direct result of Jewish and Zionist manipulation. That is a paradigm that they expound freely."<sup>49</sup> However, Rasool pointed out that Qibla did not enjoy widespread support. Nonetheless, the conflation of anti-Zionism and antisemitism was an important development. Qibla would later become one of the most virulent mouthpieces for anti-Zionist and antisemitic protests and declarations in the streets of greater Cape Town. Significantly, the Muslim press accorded the new movement a warm welcome, with substantial attention devoted to their message.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Hoffman and Fischer, 149.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.* 166.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.* 118.

<sup>50</sup> Even though Qibla did start off as a mass movement, it lost support due to a serious misreading of the situation in South Africa at the time, e.g. their critical policy towards the Muslim clergy. Nevertheless they survived as a fundamentalist group, ardently supporting Iran and gaining impetus from the Iranians. See Ebrahim Rasool interviewed in Hoffman and Fischer, 112.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MERGING GLOBAL AND LOCAL CURRENTS: 1982-1990

Two developments in early 1980s provide a window into the radicalisation of South African Muslims. Firstly, Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 demonstrated a "new determination for action among the younger generation,"<sup>1</sup> and secondly, the emergence of the UDF, and the ambiguous position, insofar as Muslims were concerned, of progressive Jewish organisations such as Jews for Justice being linked with this umbrella body. These also illustrated how wide the rift had become between Muslims and Jews.

Tensions between Israel and the PLO had escalated in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1978 Israel invaded southern Lebanon in an attempt to drive out Palestinian 'terrorists'. In June 1982, a large Israeli force attacked southern and central Lebanon in retaliation for PLO attacks on northern Israel. Under enormous military pressure the PLO withdrew most of its forces from Lebanon in August 1982. The invasion attracted substantial attention in the local press, generating numerous editorials and much correspondence. Many of the responses were from angry Muslim readers. Whereas the Six Day War had hardly been commented upon by Muslims in the general press, the Lebanese incursion was different. This was indicative of a new awareness among South African Muslims.

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<sup>1</sup> Shain, *Muslim Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism*, 6.

This awareness was particularly evident on the campuses where a new generation of Muslim students were galvanised into action. Their increased political awareness and sense of duty to become actively involved in issues of the day gave rise to a rigorous debate. The attacks on the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in which Palestinians were murdered by the Christian Falangist Allies of Israel's army inevitably led to clashes between Muslim and Jewish students. In the words of Ebrahim Rasool, "With the massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, Muslims went wild on campus. The Jews responded...There was a lot of conflict. At Wits, UDF students, black students, Muslim students, everyone went for the Jewish students."<sup>2</sup>

*Muslim News* reported on a 'solidarity with the Palestinian people' meeting organised by the Black Students Society (BSS) with the support of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) of the University of Witwatersrand. Among other "blatantly anti-Muslim acts carried out by hostile students", it was reported that a Jewish student swore while the *Qur'an* was being read and "a gang of Jewish students ripped a scarf off the head of a Muslim girl." The male Muslim student who defended the girl was allegedly beaten by the Jewish student and subsequently arrested. "The Jewish students," continued *Muslim News*, "engaged in what can best be described as an extension of the criminal acts which are being perpetrated by the Jewish forces in Lebanon...the actions of the Jews are nothing more than gangsterism that is being imported from Israel." "It seems as though these Jews are now set out to set up a permanent vigilante group to protect Jewish interests on this campus," noted one Muslim student.

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<sup>2</sup>Hoffman and Fischer, 121.

"One can only expect this kind of behaviour from hoodlums."<sup>3</sup> In *Muslim News*' understanding of the events, the violence displayed by the Jewish students was a culmination of a week of anti-Palestine activities conducted under their auspices. Posters had been displayed throughout campus, maligning Khomeini, Idi Amin, Muammar Ghadaffi and Yasser Arafat. "You can tell a man by his friends," read a slogan provided by the Jewish students.

In the wake of the clashes a statement issued by the MSA claimed that "whatever happened was due to the highly provocative stance adopted by the Jews." A meeting organised on campus to show solidarity with the Palestinian people was "completely hijacked by the Jewish students on campus."<sup>4</sup> All those who are "concerned that falsehood be replaced with truth; that justice be restored in the face of injustice," were asked to think about the events on Wits campus. An editorial in *Muslim News* put the matter unequivocally: "This peaceful expression of solidarity was met with by an angry backlash from the guilt-ridden aggressors responsible for the uprootment of a people who cry out for justice." Once again the Israeli and South African regimes were associated.

What we are concerned with at this point is the sinister involvement of the South African regime with the affairs of Israel...South Africa is known for it's unjust laws and so is Israel. South Africa is known for it's callous uprootment of people from the land of their birth and expelling them to the wastelands of the country; so is Israel. South Africa is known for the silencing of the protagonists of truth; so is Israel. By it's actions the South African government has time and again proven that it will go to great lengths to keep the fire of zionism aflame...Jewish liberals have been way up front in the condemnation of the policies of this government - hark the PFP. Yet they amazingly remain mute when thousands of men, women and children are massacred so that the illegal Israeli government be upheld. Something reeks of hypocrisy here.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Muslim News*, 6 August 1982.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

Sentiments aired on campuses spread beyond the university into the wider Muslim community. At a meeting held at the Habibia Masjid in Rylands Estate in Cape Town, banners were displayed equating Zionism with Racism and describing Zionism as "international thuggery".<sup>6</sup> It would appear that support for Palestine was the one feature that unified the Muslim community. Hostility transcended all divisions, including issues concerning the "Islamic identity" of the Ahmadis.<sup>7</sup> Focusing on the Palestinian question also gave substance to a global Islamic identity.<sup>8</sup> This issue was one for which Muslims displayed continuous and unstinting support in the form of pamphleteering and demonstrations of varying intensity. In the early 1980s an anonymous Muslim group had car stickers printed which read *Let my people return - Palestine is crying*. These stickers became very popular and are still evident two decades later.

The connections and comparisons with South Africa added an additional dimension to the anger. Characteristically, the editor reinforced the "lesson" of the Israeli strikes into Lebanon for readers:

Israel's merciless incursion into Lebanon, resulting in the murder of innocent men, women and children, and its criminal destruction of cities and villages leaving in its wake thousands of homeless, is a clear and outright manifestation of the bloodthirsty character of the Zionists, who are illegitimately in control of the land of Palestine. The Palestinians in Lebanon are the refugees who were forced out of their homeland, Palestine, by Zionist imperialism... these same refugee camps that the Israelis are bombarding under the pretext of these camps being PLO military bases.

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> The Ahmadis are a modern Islamic sect which began in India at the end of the nineteenth century. They declare a strong hostility towards belief in magic and rituals in Islam and maintain that Islam is in principle a rational and modern religion. It is these ideas that have attracted some Muslims in Cape Town to the Ahmadis.

<sup>8</sup> *Muslim News*, 11 June 1982.

The fact that the zionists, in attacking these camps, are conducting a well-planned genocide of the Palestinian people was starkly evident in a clip shown on South African television this week (and bear in mind that the local media is decidedly biased in favour of Israel). We saw innocent women, with babes in arms, fleeing in terror from zionist bomb attacks and gun fire of the trigger-happy Israeli soldiers...Zionists are racists and racists remain in power through means of oppression and repression. Oppressive people run their regimes from the basis of untruth and injustice. The Palestinian struggle is based on truth and up till now they have triumphantly resisted the plottings of the zionists...The zionist dream must not be permitted, under any circumstances, to be realised.<sup>9</sup>

The editorial identified the "oppressive" Israeli state with the apartheid government under which local Muslims were classified as second-class citizens and who, at this stage, actively supported the struggle for equality. "This invasion by the Israelis is merely an open assault, like the psychological and physical assaults of the past - an assault on basic human rights that the oppressed people of South Africa know only too well."<sup>10</sup>

It was then argued that the only way to solve the social and political problems of South Africa (and indeed the world) was through the implementation of the teachings expounded in the Islamic resurgent movement, as done by the MYM.

In the light of the Israeli aggression, there has been a lot of talk by Middle Eastern countries about uniting against the zionists under the banner of Arabism...Talk of Arab nationalism distils the true spirit of Jihad which is only possible through firm adherence to Islam and not to any form of nationalism. Imam Khomeini has made a call to all Muslim peoples...to unite and fight against those forces that threaten the foundation of the Islamic countries...Muslim people should wage their struggle against the forces of evil, in this case the zionists, from a total Islamic perspective. Victory will most certainly be guaranteed.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Muslim News*, 11 June 1982.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

Quite clearly anger in the wake of the Lebanon War had intensified. *Muslim News* now regularly included articles by international contributors which lambasted Israel. "Tyranny of Zionists Exposed" declared one headline that included a review of the International Commission of Jurists exposing "the Zionists total disregard for the human rights of Palestinians living under military occupation." 'Zionist' actions were compared with those of the Pinochet regime in Chile.<sup>12</sup> The United Nations confirmed Zionist brutality when it declared that Israeli forces had blown apart the bodies of five Palestinian guerrillas shortly after they had been killed in Lebanon.<sup>13</sup>

Burgeoning Muslim rage was not surprising. As we have seen, the community had been increasingly conscientised in the 1970s. One year before the Lebanon War Muslims had been clearly enunciating a strong anti-Zionist message; in the wake of that war, Muslim identification with the Palestinian cause became even stronger. *Muslim News* was geared to appeal to the sensibilities of Muslims and other oppressed members of society. Thus headlines used such as "Zionists trample Quran in raid"<sup>14</sup> and "Zionist designs on al-Quds"<sup>15</sup> were sure to have an impact on Muslim readers.

Heightened sensitivity to the Middle East was evident in a letter to *Muslim News* where the writer complained about a Muslim wedding reception being held in the Weizmann Hall (part of a synagogue) in Sea Point: "While the zionists are

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<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Muslim News*, 16 January 1981.

<sup>13</sup> *Muslim News*, 30 January 1981. On page ten of the same issue a *Hadith* was quoted which said "The action dearest to God Most High is love for Gods sake and hatred for Gods sake." Indeed, local Muslims would surely understand that hatred for those, ie. Jews, who 'unrighteously' oppress and kill Muslim co-religionists was demanded by Allah.

<sup>14</sup> *Muslim News*, 27 March 1981.

<sup>15</sup> *Muslim News*, 11 Dec. 1981.

murdering our Muslim brethren in Palestine, how can Muslims in Cape Town celebrate a wedding in a hall that is a memorial to a Zionist?"<sup>16</sup> Another letter vividly captured the bubbling anger when it castigated the local press for waging a campaign against Islam. The writer took exception to an article in the *Cape Times* that had claimed family members killed Muslim girls who had fallen pregnant out of wedlock in Jerusalem. The writer claimed that the girls must have been raped, probably by a Jew or a Catholic. Local Muslims, the writer maintained ought to be warned about the methods used by the press to "distort and degrade the religion of Islam."<sup>17</sup>

In this period of heightened sensitivity the liberal and right-wing media were accused of disseminating distorted notions on the Palestinian Question and Islam. "The South African news media, as a tool of Zionism, has covered the Lebanese conflagration in great detail - leaving out anything that does not support their view, of course," wrote one commentator.<sup>18</sup> Another was even more conspiratorial:

Examine the pro-government media, and the liberal press, and their attitude to the zionist question. The entire question of objective reporting is swept aside so that the sympathetic picture of the Jews may be kept alive.... The bullets and bombs of the Jewish forces always only kill the 'evil PLO terrorists' and the 'good Jewish guys' walk off with all the medals. This type of news reporting in favour of the zionists assumes tragically ludicrous proportions at times! Yes, the rot in Israel and the rot in South Africa mix well in the same garbage can.<sup>19</sup>

The motif of a shared suffering at the hands of minority oppressors in South Africa and in the Middle East resonated powerfully for Muslim readers.

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<sup>16</sup> *Muslim News*, 22 May 1981.

<sup>17</sup> *Muslim News*, 16 June 1981.

<sup>18</sup> *Muslim News*, 19 June 1981.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

Discriminated against by non-Muslims, their experience of having been forced out of their homes and neighbourhoods seemed to replicate the actions perpetrated by the Israelis on the Palestinians. In short, identification was based on real life experience. To what extent religious teachings reinforced understandings is difficult to assess. What we do know is that certain passages in the *Quran* described Jews in negative terms.

Rallies condemning 'Israeli brutality in Lebanon' were held countrywide, giving Muslims the opportunity to vent their anger against Israel. At the University of Cape Town, an attempt was made by Jewish students to disrupt a meeting chaired by Farid Esack. Esack called for the "destruction of Israel" in an angry speech that accused the Jewish state of genocide.<sup>20</sup> The occasion generated public clashes between groups of Jews and Muslims, exacerbating an already tense relationship.

There can be no doubt that deepening ties between the South African government and Israel added to Muslim anger and harmed attitudes towards South African Jews. Dr. Nasser Amkidwa, representative of the PLO at the United Nations, confirmed this view in a statement that he made sometime later. In the PLO's view, members of the Jewish community in South Africa were particularly Zionist because of the close co-operation between Israel and South Africa. "We can't differentiate between the apartheid regime in South Africa and Zionism in general. They have the same ideological bases." In response to a call by certain Muslim sectors in South Africa for a boycott of Jewish businesses, Amkidwa claimed that the PLO did not support the confrontation of one religion with another but "if this [the boycott] is done on a political basis, this is

acceptable. However, if it is on a political basis we couldn't accept the expression 'the Jewish community'. maybe it should be the 'Zionist people'." Whilst Amkidwa was careful to distinguish between antisemitism and anti-Zionism, the message essentially conflated the two sentiments. In any event, he made it clear that in South Africa 'Jew' and 'Zionist' were interchangeable. If Jewish capitalists in South Africa were donating money to Israel then they were automatically classified as Zionists. Furthermore, "if these people support the regime, that makes them Zionist. But it is not because they are Jewish. If they are real democratic people, they shouldn't support Israel."<sup>20</sup>

Such sentiments appear to have been widely shared amongst the Muslim community in South Africa. Of course, the Jewish community was indeed intensely Zionist; it was very seldom that a South African Jew did not feel an affiliation with Israel. When asked whether the need for a Jewish homeland was totally unacceptable in the South African community, Ebrahim Rasool replied: "I don't think it is totally unacceptable to Muslims. The majority of Muslims would have been happy if they had moved to the south-western part of Great Britain...The sympathy with the displaced Palestinians at least equals the kind of sympathy that could be evoked around the Holocaust. There is also a feeling that there is lots of emotional blackmail that goes along with the Holocaust. I've recently read an account that sees [the Holocaust] as emotional blackmail, [Jews] say, 'look what has been done to us' but never mind about what happens

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<sup>20</sup> Hoffman and Fischer, 102.

to the Palestinians.”<sup>21</sup> Rasool’s introduction of Holocaust manipulation would be developed by numerous commentators, paving the way for Holocaust denial.<sup>22</sup>

The radicalisation of the Muslim population - especially the younger generation - cannot be divorced from the liberation struggle in South Africa. Every aspect of their lives as ‘non-white’ South Africans was construed within the framework of ‘the struggle.’ This would include the struggle for equal education for all ‘race’ groups in South Africa, where Muslims were urged to support their children in their efforts to bring the injustices of the apartheid system to an end. Actions included school boycotts, protests and protest pamphlets. Even when the school boycott was suspended, Muslims were reminded that the “Struggle” continued.<sup>23</sup> Increasingly Muslims called for unity with “Blacks in their struggle against the oppressive system.”<sup>24</sup> Sentiments surrounding the Republic Day celebrations of 1981 illustrated this vividly.<sup>25</sup> Within this new political framework the names of Muslim political detainees became a feature of *Muslim News*, along with those of other persons detained or missing at the hands of the security police.<sup>26</sup> The message was reinforced that Islam would eradicate oppression,<sup>27</sup> and ‘blacks’ were urged to convert to Islam. Photos of ‘blacks’ suffering under

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid.* 116-118.

<sup>22</sup> See below.

<sup>23</sup> *Muslim News*, 13 February 1981.

<sup>24</sup> *Muslim News*, 27 March 1981.

<sup>25</sup> *Muslim News*, 22 May 1981.

<sup>26</sup> See *Muslim News*, 19 June 1981. Readers are informed of a black Muslim convert detained by security forces.

<sup>27</sup> For further discussion on Qur’anic hermeneutics which took place within a “liberation” context and gave rise to a new awareness among Muslims engaged in the liberation struggle in South Africa, see Farid Esack, *Qur’an, Liberation and Pluralism; an Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity Against Oppression* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1997), 254 - 261.

the apartheid system were juxtaposed against photos of Palestinian suffering at the hands of 'zionists'.<sup>28</sup>

Given the association of Zionism with apartheid, it is hardly surprising that the broadbased anti-government umbrella movement, the UDF founded in 1983 and which included Jews for Justice,<sup>29</sup> provided a major problem for Muslim groups.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the problem of mixing religion and politics in general was a problem for many Muslims. However, Ebrahim Rasool, who served on the Western Cape executive of the movement, was adamant that politics and the *Qur'an* could be combined in the 'struggle'. Furthermore, he believed that by serving on the executive of the UDF he would be able to galvanise Muslims to political activity. But clearly it would be difficult for Muslim radicals to share a political platform with Jews who had been, because of their Zionist proclivities, identified as the enemy.<sup>31</sup> He said, however, it would take more than an appeal from the *Qur'an* to create Muslim revolutionaries. Farid Esack<sup>32</sup> shared these sentiments but was aware of the importance of holding onto an Islamic commitment in the 'struggle'.<sup>33</sup> "The post-'83 generation of Muslims," he explained, "is a generation which finds it far more difficult to abandon Islam. You see, in a sense, the organised leadership of the struggle is one that is far more

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<sup>28</sup> See for example, a spread of photographs in *Muslim News*, 12 February 1982, entitled "Langa: Apartheid's Concentration Camp."

<sup>29</sup> Jews for Justice was a progressive Jewish organisation founded in Cape Town in 1985.

<sup>30</sup> The introduction of the apartheid state's Tricameral Constitution in 1983 brought opposition from the 'white' Progressive Federal Party (PFP) and Coloured and Indian groups. A severe recession, in 1984, which provoked wage struggles by a burgeoning trade union movement and an explosion of local struggles around issues such as housing, transport and education coupled with the blatant determination of the South African government of the day to retain power in "white" hands, enraged middle-class blacks. Besides the opposition from the trade unions, this smouldering anger fed into the renewed political groundswell which gave rise to the formation of the *United Democratic Front* (UDF). For more information see, Dan O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The apartheid state and the politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*, Athens, 1996.

<sup>31</sup> See Shain, *Muslim Antisemitism and antiZionism*, (1999), 6.

<sup>32</sup> Farid Esack was the founder of the Call of Islam in 1983.

intensely aware of religion, and far more sensitive to the religious feelings of people. Basically we are finding that religion has become a factor that is not going to be wiped out very easily."<sup>34</sup>

There certainly was interest and involvement in 'struggle' politics on the part of South African Muslims, within an Islamic framework. Esack thus promised an opportunity for Muslims to hold onto their religious commitments whilst expressing their political commitment to the eradication of apartheid and to the restoration of non-racialism.

This heightened awareness, on the part of Muslims, of the role of religion in understanding and explaining ones political standpoint led to substantial debates.<sup>35</sup> One such debate was the involvement of Jews in the UDF.

In Rasool's view even though Jews had been involved in community organisations it had been in a peripheral and selective way. "I think they choose those kind of issues which are of significance to their community. The Jewish community is a white community in South Africa." When asked about the refusal of the UDF to meet with the organised Jewish leadership, Rasool admitted that it was a "very sensitive issue." The problem was clearly complicated:

Whenever anyone speaks of the organised Jewish community, one is always faced with the question, where does Judaism end and where does Zionism start? Because our struggle is not just a narrow South African struggle, it is also internationalist in its perspective. The *UDF* is conscious of the fact that, just as we are struggling against some form of evil here, there are Palestinians who are engaged in a struggle of their own, to regain the whole of Palestine. And so in terms of that, it would be a very

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<sup>33</sup> Farid Esack, *Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism*, 36.

<sup>34</sup> Hoffman and Fischer, 10.

<sup>35</sup> See Abdulkader Tayob, "Muslims' Discourse on Alliance Against Apartheid," *Journal for the Study of Religion*, Vol. 3 (2), (September 1990) and Esack, "Three Islamic Strands" cited in Milton Shain, *Muslim Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism*, June 1999.

insensitive thing for the UDF...to be having good relations with people that one isn't sure of, because of their commitment to Israel as a state.<sup>36</sup>

Although the UDF accepted that organisationally Jews for Justice was not Zionist, they were very suspicious of the traditional Jewish community. Even the broad-based and inclusive nature of the UDF was not sufficient to overcome the deeply entrenched conflicts that defined Muslim relations with Jews in South Africa.

Rasool reiterated that it was very important for the UDF not to antagonise Muslims. When asked which community's (Muslim or Jewish) support they were willing to sacrifice, he admitted that, "the Jewish community is confined to the white community. It is not that they have become enemies *per se*, because the UDF support amongst the white community is quite extensive. However, the Jewish community is also by and large the business community, the owners of the big shops, the factories...Our workers are striking at their factories and so forth. Therefore, it is still largely a community which is not in the foreseeable future going to be with the struggle or in the peoples camp." Rasool further argued that if the executive leadership of the UDF had to meet with the organised Jewish community, the Muslim community would "slam down the UDF once and for all and make sure the UDF gets no more support." Although Rasool argued that the UDF was not anti-Jewish, he did declare that it "wouldn't like to give a blank cheque to the whole Jewish community."<sup>37</sup>

Even those Muslims who had previously argued for collaboration with apartheid or against *fitnah* (disorder) and had now shifted their position to

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<sup>36</sup> Hoffman and Fischer, 114.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.* 116-117.

solidarity with the oppressed still relied extensively on a number of Quranic texts to support religious exclusivism in general and antipathy to Christians and Jews in particular. Esack captured these complex issues when he explained that "Coupled with the notion of Islam as an ideological option for a future South Africa was a religious exclusivism denying the potential for virtue in non-Islam."<sup>38</sup> It is therefore not surprising that even the common enemy of apartheid and the willingness of Jewish groups to co-operate on a common political platform with Muslims was fraught with difficulties.

Although he was not technically a member of the UDF, Esack confirmed the opinions expressed by Muslim members of that organisation. When asked about the relationship between the Jewish and Muslim communities in South Africa, he replied that there was no meaningful one. "There is one of a seething antagonism..." was his comment.<sup>39</sup> In the minds of many Muslims, he argued, the commitment of the South African Jewish community to Israel undermined their contribution to the struggle against apartheid. "We have problems with those elements in the Front who are prepared to accommodate Zionists as long as these Zionists are anti-racists in the South African context....The Jewish community in South Africa is by and large completely isolated from the black community. To the extent that Muslims are also part of the black community, we have no contact with them."<sup>40</sup>

It was not only the question of the Jewish participation in the UDF which demonstrated the distances between Jews and Muslims and the lack of trust on the part of Muslims. Even the establishment of an inter-faith caucus presented

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<sup>38</sup> Farid Esack, *Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism*, 40.

problems. "How do we sell standing on the platform with a Jew, to the Muslim community?" explained Esack. "The Muslim mind had never become sophisticated enough to distinguish between Zionism and Judaism. Now we wanted to include Jews in the meeting, but they were also Zionists. There are Zionists in Jews for Justice as well. Until the UDF we could not get ourselves to shake hands with Zionists....You don't collaborate with the oppressor, you don't even shake hands with a Zionist. If, in the mind of the ordinary Muslim, a Zionist is a Jew and a Jew is a Zionist then you can't even be seen to be next to a Jew."<sup>41</sup>

In Esack's view an inherent antisemitism was manifest in the South African Muslim community. This influenced any kind of community co-operation. Embedded within the hostility was a conspiratorial cast of mind: "The other thing is that Muslims are victims of a whole conspiracy theory, and that Jews are behind this conspiracy, all over the world and even in this country...The Jews are out to destroy Islam in this country."<sup>42</sup> While noting that this was not his personal view, he stressed that it was a view widely held by South African Muslims. He explained that it was believed by some Muslims that the South African Council of Churches and the UDF were creations of the Zionists.<sup>43</sup> The strong South-African Israel alliance complicated matters and prevented South African Muslims from working under the same political umbrella as South African Jews. "We don't want Zionism and Palestine to be low on the agenda of the liberation struggle,"

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<sup>39</sup> *ibid.* 124.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.* 126.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.* 127.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.* 132.

<sup>43</sup> *Muslim News*, 13 July 1984.

explained Esack "...we bring this up at the UDF forums. We do raise this on the agenda all the time."<sup>44</sup>

It is clear that the Palestinian question would not easily be jettisoned by South African Muslims. In the common struggle for equal rights for all in South Africa, incorporating South African Jews was a complicated matter. Besides seeing Jews as the "Other" in the struggle for political liberation in South Africa, interfaith solidarity carried the potential threat of reducing Islam to the level of a religion in the western sense of the word.<sup>45</sup> That is to say, to most Muslims Islam was a total way of life and interreligious co-operation and allowing space for different communities to dictate the norms of the society was not viable.

The resolve on the part of South African Muslims to eradicate oppression of any kind, whether it be apartheid or Zionism, deeply informed Muslim-Jewish relations on campuses; indeed the campus provided a setting for the acting out of the aggression and tension felt by Muslims towards Jews in the broader society. Certainly no clashes were reported elsewhere.

One of the most publicised conflicts occurred at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1984 during Islamic Week. According to a report issued by the South African Union Of Jewish Students (SAUJS), the Muslim Students Association of the University of the Witwatersrand organised an Islamic Week, aimed primarily at promoting the Islamic religion. But the programme was focused not only on religious issues. It included various lectures that SAUJS claimed were blatantly antisemitic and anti-Zionist. Vulgar antisemitic cartoons, photographs and articles were on display. Jews found offensive the inclusion of

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<sup>44</sup> Hoffman and Fischer, 132.

a Magen David in barbed wire dripping with blood, a cartoon of Menachem Begin drinking the blood of an Arab and various articles concerning the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. In addition to the iconography, two films "Lebanon" (a BBC production) and "Palestine: Women Under Siege" were scheduled to be screened.

The SAUJS report confirmed that negotiations between the leaders of the two groups resulted in two pictures being removed, with promises to remove the other offensive material. The screening of the films was also halted. An agreement was reached between the student representatives not to debate the Middle East issue on campus and to avoid offending the sensitivities of other students. Nevertheless, even the remaining material proved highly offensive to the Jewish students.<sup>46</sup>

During the first day of Islamic Week, two Jewish students approached the exhibition and snatched piles of the tabled literature and threw it to the floor. A meeting was called by the administration and the SRC, together with SAUJS and the MSA. An objective arbitration committee was appointed to judge the offensive nature of the exhibition. "We have removed the cartoons to avoid further conflict," an MSA spokesman reported.<sup>47</sup> SAUJS issued a statement condemning what it considered antisemitism during the Islamic Week. However, the statement was censored because it "offended the sensitivities of the Muslim

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<sup>45</sup> Farid Esack, *Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism*, 41.

<sup>46</sup> Similar cartoons had appeared in *Muslim News* and continued to be part of its contents. Invariably they were unsigned. Thus this new level of polemic was not confined to the campuses, but anti-Jewish sentiments seemed to be seeping through to the wider Muslim community. Whereas the students involvement with politics and the "Struggle" was initially met with opposition in the form of letters and comment from the older and more conservative members of the community, vicious visual and verbal assaults against Jews were increasingly acceptable by the late 1980s.

students by its reference to Islam". SAUJS reacted that the MSA was using a "religious" week to promote those issues deliberately provocative to the Jewish students. As a result of the public censoring of its statement, SAUJS held a meeting where the statement was read. The British historian Martin Gilbert, at that time visiting Johannesburg, addressed the students on "The Holocaust: Another Zionist Plot?".<sup>49</sup>

It was discovered that, despite the two films not being submitted to the Publications Board for censorship, the film on Lebanon was screened. SAUJS issued a second statement criticising the unfair attitude of the University administration and the SRC for allowing the MSA to hold their exhibition in terms of academic freedom whilst censoring the Jewish students' response. SAUJS distributed a pamphlet on Human Rights in the Middle East, designed to present a factual account of the injustices perpetrated in countries governed by so-called Islamic Law.<sup>50</sup> This action resulted in increased security measures around the exhibition.<sup>51</sup>

The SAUJS report confirmed that other than two scuffles and a great deal of tension and pressure, nothing further happened until the end of that week. On 30 April 1984, coinciding with the SAUJS celebration of *Yom Ha'atzmaut* (Israeli Day of Independence), antisemitic graffiti were found spray-painted in more than ten places on the University of Witwatersrand campus. In addition antisemitic graffiti was evident around the perimeter of the campus. The slogans included 'Hitler was right', 'Allah says spit on a Jew', 'Botha's Zionists', 'Murderers in

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<sup>48</sup> *The Star*, 4 May 1984.

<sup>49</sup> South African Union of Jewish Students, *Statement on Islam Week*. The lecture was advertised at the conclusion of the statement. 2 May 1984.

<sup>50</sup> *South African Jewish Times*, 11 May 1984.

Lebanon', 'Zionist Fascists', 'SAUJS Pigs', as well as numerous slogans referring to the PLO.<sup>51</sup> At the *Yom Ha'atzmaut* celebrations (attended by approximately 4000 students) a statement was read by Jewish students claiming they would not be intimidated by antisemitism which they said was rife on the University of Witwatersrand campus. They reaffirmed SAUJS support for and solidarity with the State of Israel.

That night eighteen bullets were shot into the Muslim prayer room on the university campus damaging property but causing no injury. On the following Monday, the offices belonging to the clubs and societies of the University were torched. Nothing concrete was ascertained but investigators suspected that the fire originated in the SAUJS offices and had been caused by a small explosion.<sup>52</sup> The incidents were publicly condemned by SAUJS, the SRC and the MSA both in written statements and at a gathering of the student body. The MSA statement merely condemned the graffiti as the work of cowards who were trying to exploit an emotional situation. It did not condemn the antisemitic statements or distance itself from the views expressed the previous week at its exhibition.

It is quite evident that by the mid-1980s a new generation of Muslim activists saw South African Jews in the context of the Middle East conflict and the close ties between the apartheid government and Jerusalem. Farid Esack captured the dynamics:

Palestine is an unadulterated cause for us...There is that South African link. Supporting Palestine does not make you reactionary politically in South Africa. Supporting Palestine means you're anti-Zionist, you are anti-state. Lots of Jewish people 20, 30 years old, here in South Africa talk

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<sup>50</sup> *The Citizen*, 4 May 1984.

<sup>51</sup> *The Star*, 7 May 1984; *The Citizen*, 8 May 1984; *The Rand Daily Mail*, 8 May 1984.

<sup>52</sup> *Rand Daily Mail*, 15 May 1984; *The Citizen* 15 May 1984; *Muslim News* 18 May 1984.

about how their parents might have been murdered during the Holocaust. They are still filled with stories like that. What you then have is an automatic response; an overwhelming support for Israel when Muslims make any pro-Palestinian noises. This is seen especially on the campuses. The campuses have become the battlegrounds.<sup>53</sup>

Esack's observations were enforced by Abdurrashid Omar, a Muslim cleric: "There has been a big battle between the Muslim students and Jewish students, when Muslims want to say anything about Zionism, the Jews usually don't give them any democratic right to say the state of Israel is an illegitimate state. Muslims don't have that right on the campuses."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> See Farid Esack interviewed in Fischer and Hoffman, *What Future?* 125.

<sup>54</sup> See Abdurrashid Omar interviewed in Fischer and Hoffman, 144.

University of Cape Town

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE END OF APARTHEID: 1990-1994

The major reforms unleashed by President F.W. De Klerk on 2 February 1990, meant the normalisation of society and a new space for public protest. Certainly the long-standing relationship between the ANC and the PLO made anti-Zionist protest very acceptable and, amongst others, Muslims soon found themselves on 'the street', taking up issues pertaining to the Middle East. The climate in the 'new' South Africa was certainly conducive to anti-Zionist protests.

In April of 1990, Muslim students from the University of Cape Town rallied on the campus. Three hundred gathered to "expose the imperialistic role of israel in South Africa."<sup>1</sup> This protest led to a counter-rally by Jewish students from the university who gathered on the steps of Jameson Hall holding balloons with the printed words "How can we believe them?" A photo of this gathering was reproduced in *Muslim Views*.<sup>2</sup> Further clashes were reported from University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) during an Islamic Open Day. The occasion appears to have attracted opposition: a pig's head and anti-Islamic pamphlets were found on the campus.<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims, it was quite apparent that a new generation of Muslim students was in the making. In the

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<sup>1</sup> See *Cape Times*, 26 April 1990.

<sup>2</sup> *Muslim Views*, May 1990.

new South Africa their voices would not be silenced. "The clearest indications of Islamic resurgence," writes Shain, "was the on-going conflict between Jewish and Muslim students at the University of Cape Town and the University of the Witwatersrand and in solidarity meetings for Bosnian Muslims at which American and Israeli flags were burned."<sup>4</sup>

Despite the thrust towards equality and the normalisation of society after decades of divisive race-based legislation, some Muslims focused on a specifically Muslim agenda, renewing their efforts in conscientising co-religionists and consolidating around specifically Muslim interests. In pursuit of this aim, readers of *Muslim Views* were urged to visit the Islamic Propaganda Centre at Rosmead Supermarket in Cape Town (a well known supplier of anti-Israel, anti-West and anti-Jewish literature).<sup>5</sup> An advertisement listed the "important" anti-Israeli books that were available at the supermarket. Much of this literature was provided free of charge.<sup>6</sup>

One of the booklets *Arabs and Israel; Conflict or Conciliation?* by Ahmed Deedat was riddled with vulgar and conspiratorial notions of Jews and Zionism.<sup>7</sup> Because of Deedat's status as a popular scholar, and the wide distribution of his work, it is worthwhile delving in some detail on his essential message. To be sure, the publication illustrated all of the entrenched ideas that had by this time become part of the local Muslim worldview. A taste of its contents was evident in the cover photo and accompanying caption. It depicted a Palestinian woman

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<sup>3</sup> *Daily News*, 22 August 1990.

<sup>4</sup> See Shain, *Muslim Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism*, 1999.

<sup>5</sup> This was an outlet for the Durban based Islamic Propagation Centre run by Ahmed Deedat. The centre was alleged to have received funding from Osama Bin Laden.

<sup>6</sup> *Muslim Views*, February 1990.

hugging her child with a soldier looking on. Deedat described the photo in the following terms: "A Muslim woman has just retrieved her 'little David' from the clutches of the Israeli soldiers... The Jewish lad, perhaps the grandson of one who escaped the Nazi incinerators in Germany during the 'Holocaust'. His mission in life - with the prophetic words written on his helmet- 'Born to Kill!' The only thing missing is the Swastika on his armband. What irony - the persecuted has now become the persecutor!" The book was dedicated to "...the children of the Intifadah!", and prefaced with a copy of a report from the *Natal Mercury* of 28 March 1989 which told of the shooting of a four-year-old Palestinian boy by Israeli troops during clashes with protesters in the occupied West Bank.

The book's hostility to Zionism invariably flowed into classic antisemitism with accusations of Jewish power, perfidy and political influence. Readers were informed that it would be wise to "learn from the Jews" since the *Qur'an* indicated that Jews were initially "preferred...to all others for My message."<sup>8</sup> But because of "their pride, their arrogance, their rebelliousness" they were repeatedly led into bondage. He suggested that a great deal could be learned from the history of the Jews as they are "God's guinea-pigs" for mankind. Immediately after this injunction he referred to an advertisement for the *Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America* that was reproduced in the booklet.

It was a clear indication that South African Muslims identified strongly with their co-religionists in the Middle East and that related issues continued to occupy a central part of their conversation in the 1990s. The advert requested donations and informed readers not to be misled into thinking that Jordan was

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<sup>7</sup> See *Muslim Views* February 1990 with an advertisement for FREE Islamic literature. It includes

Palestine. They were exhorted to remember that, contrary to a statement by King Hussein, if the Arab Palestinians from the West Bank were to seek a union with their brothers in Jordan it would be under PLO leadership and not under King Hussein. Deedat interpreted the advert for local readers in his inimitable way: "The purpose of the advertisement was to brain-wash the intractable Jews and Zionist Christians, and perhaps some Palestinians to believe that Jordan is Palestine. A diversion of the world's attention from the rape of Palestinian land by the Jews."

The language used by Deedat was provocative and emotional, with words and phrases designed to fuel anti-Jewish prejudices which played on well-entrenched tropes. These included Israeli brutality, western complicity in Middle East atrocities,<sup>9</sup> Palestinian oppression, Qur'anic evidence for the 'wickedness' of the Jewish people and apartheid South Africa and its ties to the 'illegal' Jewish state of Israel. The booklet even had a competition to find a caption for the photograph that appeared on the front cover. Prior to the publication of *Arabs and Israel*, Deedat's intention was to print the photo in the general press and offer a cash reward for the best caption submitted. According to Deedat the initial challenge was to get the photo published in the "Zionist influenced Christian media, depicting their illegitimate offspring's committing atrocities and ruthless brutalities against the hapless Palestinians, whose only crime is that they are of a different race and culture and that they would not disappear or disintegrate as the Jews so desperately desire. To publicise and highlight the

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<sup>9</sup> *Arabs and Israel* and states that it is "A book that should remove the blinkers of blind prejudice."

<sup>8</sup> *Qur'an* 2:47.

plight of the oppressed Palestinian communities from the ruthless policies of the survivors, and descendants of Hitler's Holocaust - the Jews of 'Israel', an essay competition was devised, offering cash prizes to the winners."

The South African Jewish Board Of Deputies (SAJBOD) and South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) responded with anger to the public competition, issuing a joint statement declaring that the advertisement was blatant propaganda designed to arouse hostility against the State of Israel.<sup>10</sup> Deedat included an insert of their protest statement in *"Arabs and Israel"* and offered his readers the following analysis of the situation: "The Zionists got wind of our advertising campaign through their agents and sympathisers in the right places and succeeded in gagging a number of newspapers from publishing the fully-paid advertisement. The media which did publish the adverts created an unimaginable uproar from the Jews. A hue and cry was heard from the 'CHOSEN PEOPLE,' labelling us as 'Anti-Zionists!' 'Anti-Semites!'"

The blatant conflation of antisemitism and anti-Zionism continued throughout this booklet. At every opportunity the 'evil' of the western world and Jews were highlighted, as well as the 'antisemitic card':

Our jewish cousins are most generous in conferring the shameful title of 'ANTI-SEMITE' on anyone disagreeing with them. It has become a magic wand in their hands and which can bring the Christian world to their heels with the mere threat of labelling them as such. It conjures up in the Christian mind Hitler, the holocaust, the pogroms, the massacre of thousands of innocent men, women and children simply because they were Jews...A thousand years of murder and rapine have now begun to twinge the Christian conscience. And 'Anti-Semite!' is the magic word

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<sup>9</sup> For example: "Will President Bush be able to extricate his administration from the 'Jewish Lobby' which Reagan his predecessor has bequeathed him? We pray that justice and wisdom will prevail in Bush's dealing with Israeli inhumanities against the helpless Palestinians." 8.

<sup>10</sup> See *The Argus*, 20 January 1989 for a report on this argument. See also *Cape Times*, 20 January 1989, for a report on Deedat's response to the statement from the SAJBOD.

that cloaks every Jewish crime. The Western world will blink at every Jewish atrocity for fear of being labelled by them. The Israelis, like their godfather ex-president 'Rambo' Reagan, can do no wrong! They are forever immaculate!

Deedat argued that the accusations of 'Anti-Semite' and 'Anti-Zionist' were used to deflect attention away from the real perpetrators of aggression.<sup>11</sup> Whenever there was a whimper of protest from the victims of 'Zionist aggression' it was silenced. "Zionists in South Africa," he explained, always accused the victims of being anti-Semites and anti-Zionists.

Besides these accusations, the booklet claimed that the press was influenced by Jews and that leading newspapers of the country were "gagging us".<sup>12</sup> "They [the press] will not permit us to cry. They have succeeded in gagging us. They themselves appear to be afraid of the powerful Zionist establishment. Their claims to upholding freedom of the press and freedom of expression are quickly forgotten."<sup>13</sup> Deedat also pointed to the paradox that newspapers, controlled by Jews, vigorously opposed apartheid as pursued by the South African government and "claim that racial exclusivity is wrong" but that when Zionism "pursues its policies of racial exclusivity"<sup>14</sup> the press remains silent.

*Arabs and Israel* also discussed religious issues. For example, *The Quran and the Jew*<sup>15</sup> based on a lecture which Deedat presented to Jewish students of the University of Cape Town at their request, was included. "I condescended to

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<sup>11</sup> See for example, "*Arabs and Israel*", 44.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.* 45.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.* 46.

“speak to the young Jews...” he writes.<sup>16</sup> The section began with an explanation that all Jewish prophets were accepted by Muslims, that Muslims gave their children ‘Jewish’ names and that the antagonism which was felt between the two groups had not emanated from Muslims but rather from the Jews who “though the Muslim honours, respects and reveres all the Jewish prophets as his own prophets, the Jews will not accept one of ours.” Deedat included quotes from the *Qur’an* which supposedly demonstrated the potential for friendship between Jew and Muslim. However the relationship had collapsed because of the non-participation of Jews in their potential covenantal relationship with Allah. Readers were invited to “Listen to God Almighty: how He pleads with Jews” and reminded of verses from the *Qur’an* that illustrated God’s apparent displeasure with the Jews.<sup>17</sup> He juxtaposed Qur’anic anti-Jewish verses with quotes from the Hebrew Bible in an attempt to convince his readers that the disapproval of Jews was not a Muslim point of view but actually emanated from their own scriptures where they were addressed as ‘You Jews; you vagabonds; you rebellious people!’ (Deut. 9:7).

Deedat cleverly tried to convince the students, and then his readers, that it was the Jews who were at fault for forgetting God’s favours to them as His “chosen people.” He invited them to reverse this position of disfavour by accepting the new revelation and embracing Islam. All that was required of Jews, he claimed, was for them to apologise for the wrong they had done to “my people” and the Palestinian people would forgive them. “They are simple and extremely good-hearted,” claimed Deedat.

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<sup>16</sup> *ibid.* 47.

The implications of his argument were that it was solely the fault of the Jews that animosity existed between them and the Muslims. In short, the message was that Muslims had no cause for introspection *vis a vis* Jews. The latter were entirely to blame. Deedat would be widely read by South African Muslims. The booklet was a masterly piece of tendentious polemic. It even cited Max Dimont, a popularizer of Jewish history, who had claimed that Israeli-Arab tensions were not the product of deep-rooted racial and religious antagonisms but were caused by political events. History had shown that Jew and Arab could live together without strife, noted Dimont. Deedat reinforced the idea of a superior Islam that held the key to a peaceful life for all. He made the statement that "Islam is Judaism made universal".<sup>18</sup>

Deedat pursued an unusual argument in attempting to explain the divide between Jews and Muslims. He claimed that Jews, if they were to realise their potential and convert to Islam, would be of the same family as Muslims. However, they were easily influenced and led astray and this lack of integrity had caused them to lose their 'chosen' status. Predictably he saw Jewish influence over the United States as the reason for Arab military failures:

The United States of America warned the Jews that the Arabs were on the move. The American satellites had seen to that, but the Jews could not believe it...The Egyptian army broke the impregnable 'Bar-Lev-Line,' and moved into the Sinai. The Arabs had the israelis by their throat. The Jews sent an SOS to their American godfather, and the godfather responded with men and war-machines directly into the Middle East battlefield...This glaring, open American intervention against the Arabs proves that every time we go into battle with the Jews, we will not be fighting the Jews alone,

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<sup>17</sup> *Holy Qur'an* 2:40 "O Children of Israel! Call to mind the special favour which I bestowed upon you, and fulfil your covenant with me as I fulfil my covenant with you, and hear none but Me."

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.* 62.

but almighty America....What makes America so infatuated with the Jews?<sup>19</sup>

Deedat provided the answer: "The reason is the JEWISH LOBBY in the USA. There are about six million Jews in America. A very cohesive, well-knit and organised community which knows how to use their money, their numbers and their brain. No American can ever aspire to become president without the tacit support of the Jews."

Deedat offered a solution to the problem of the American 'obsession' with Jews.<sup>20</sup> With its problems of homosexuality, drunkenness, surplus women and the 'Satan Worshipping Cult', Deedat suggested Islam was the only solution to America's problems.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the African-American Muslims were those best suited for this task to Islamise the United States. The task of the local Muslims was to reinforce the idea of an international brotherhood and to "Arm him! Help him to Islamize America before Armageddon overtakes America and Israel."

The notion of a world-wide Islamic community resonated comfortably with ideas disseminated by other local Muslim sources. Deedat combined the injunction to support an international brotherhood with an invective against the Jews and a call to local Muslims to avoid mimicking the negative characteristics that had been the 'spiritual downfall' of Jews, "Don't be jealous, Don't be envious like the Jews who still could not get reconciled to Allah choosing their Arab

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<sup>19</sup> ibid. 73.

<sup>20</sup> ibid. 75.

<sup>21</sup> ibid. 76.

cousins for His message. Allah has now chosen the B-L-A-C-K -M-A-N for this noble task of changing the West.”

The tone and argument of *Arabs and Israel*, whilst couched in conciliatory language at times,<sup>22</sup> left the reader in no doubt that the Jews had abdicated their favourable position in the sight of God. This was due both to their “stiff neckedness” and to the influence of other nations on them. He appealed to the metaphysical argument that, because of their ‘fallen’ state, Jews deserved the persecutions and problems that had beset them as a nation. Jewish ‘historians’ were appropriated to persuade readers that any apparent victories by Jews were only illusory and the result of the misrepresentation of the facts and aid from outside powers.<sup>23</sup> Western imperialism and aid for Jews, manipulation and control of the press, and international Muslim unity were all well-worn arguments in South Africa.

According to Deedat a quarter of a million copies of *Arabs and Israel* had been produced. He appealed for monetary aid from readers to enable the booklet to reach one million readers. Even if he was exaggerating there can be no doubt that the booklet was widely disseminated. It’s emotive and inflammatory message and picture would serve as a powerful reinforcement of already deeply entrenched anti-Jewish ideas.

Muslims were predictably encouraged when Nelson Mandela and Yasser Arafat had demonstrated a close relationship shortly after the ANC leader’s release from prison in 1990. For Muslims this was a green light for anti-Israel

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<sup>22</sup> For example, Deedat states that Muslims and Jews are cousins and have the same basic beliefs. 54.

<sup>23</sup> See *Arabs and Israel*, 57. Deedat quotes *History of the Jews* by Cecil Roth, 406.

expression, particularly in view of Mandela's criticism of Israel. In an editorial entitled "Mandela and Zionists," Zionists were accused of having "perfected the art of nationalistic paranoia - Jews gathering in one state is political, - not religious...Zionists have blurred the edges by equating Judaism with Zionism."<sup>24</sup> After Mandela's very public embrace of Arafat in Lusaka, joined by the Namibian president, Sam Nujoma, the Imam Hussein Foundation of South Africa - in response to a Jewish outcry - blamed Jews for screaming "anti-semitism or pro-Nazism whenever concerned people speak out against Israel's terrorism against Palestinians... Mr. Mandela and Mr. Nujoma [the Namibian President] had not allowed themselves to be hoodwinked by the Zionist-media...The Jewish people should not be upset by justified criticism of Israel's human rights violations but rather be ashamed of protecting the criminal activities of Israel, whose record of violence and aggression against the Palestinian people for the last 40 years knows no parallel."<sup>25</sup>

Public protests increasingly became the order of the day; letters to the press and the rhetoric of student demonstrations indicated a hardening of sentiment. "Occupation of Palestine...Dignity of Palestine is at Stake;"<sup>26</sup> "Local Muslims Asleep: Palestinian crisis causes the United Nations to condemn Israel!"<sup>27</sup> and "Palestinian Plight" (which declared that "Zionism and racism are two sides of the same coin,") illustrated the powerful hold the Middle East question had on local Muslims.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1990.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Muslim Views*, July 1990.

<sup>27</sup> *Muslim Views*, October 1990.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

A common theme in anti-Zionist rhetoric was the accusation that Jews were always looking for sympathy because of the Holocaust and yet they persecuted the Palestinians as Hitler had persecuted them.<sup>29</sup> Thus when Rabbi David Hoffman took Archbishop Desmond Tutu to task for 'bearing false witness' against the Holocaust after he claimed that Tutu had seemingly minimised the Jewish tragedy, one S.A. Kariem responded that "today children and unborn babies, defenceless men and women are all victims of Israeli genocide in occupied Palestine. As if their suffering is not enough Rabbi Hoffman tries to taint the Arabs under whom Jews found protection from European persecution with the guilt of the Holocaust. No historian of any repute would agree with Rabbi Hoffman on this issue. And yet the Rabbi glibly presents such nonsense as fact."<sup>30</sup>

The identification of Jews with the "evil West" was another motif embedded in anti-Zionist rhetoric. Muslims saw a conspiracy by unscrupulous Western powers controlled by Jews, bent on controlling world finances. This perceived conspiracy even extended in the minds of some to the intended destruction of Islam by the Zionist/USA coalition.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, Muslims saw the struggle for liberation in South Africa - referred to as the Azanian revolution - and the Palestinian revolution, as akin, both revolutions against settler-colonial states dominated by the USA.<sup>32</sup> Given this close identification, it is not surprising that

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<sup>29</sup> See *Muslim Views*, October 1990.

<sup>30</sup> *Muslim Views*, February 1990.

<sup>31</sup> See two letters to *Muslim Views*, August 1990.

<sup>32</sup> *Muslim Views*, April 1990.

local Imams were encouraged to publicise the Palestinian Intifadah during Friday prayers at mosques.<sup>33</sup>

Attitudes towards the West were most vividly illustrated in the wake of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and during the ensuing Gulf War. Conspiratorial theories abounded: the USA and the Zionists were collaborators at the expense of the Muslim world. Whereas reports were initially flavoured with a distinctive call for moderation and negotiation over Kuwait - even though it was appreciated that Saddam Hussein had been set up as a buffer against the spread of the Islamic Revolution - once the Western powers, led by President George H. Bush, had ganged up against Saddam, the invasion was transformed into a Jihad.<sup>34</sup>

The American response to the present crisis in the Middle East resulting from the Iraqi annexation of Kuwait demonstrates the hypocrisy and double standards of America and the Western powers. We wish to draw the attention of the Muslim ummah that the real objective of America and its western allies is to secure their military and economic interest regionally and globally. After all, was it not the west who induced and financed Saddam Hussein and his puppet regime in the Middle East in its prolonged losing battle with Iran?

Political rhetoric flashed over the news media by America and the west ridicules and makes a mockery of all past statements and actions concerning the Middle East and the world.

Firstly, Muslims should not be hoodwinked into believing that the west by any stretch of the imagination is a friend of Islam.

On the contrary, the west is primarily concerned with the continued propping up of endangered puppet regimes who are serving the economical and military interest of the west...

Secondly, where was the west when Palestine was being handed over to the zionists to create a Jewish homeland at the expense of the rightful people of Palestine?

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<sup>33</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1990. See also the editorial of the same edition entitled "Muslims at Work" which stated that the Intifadah had not been halted in spite of "Nazi-type repression."

<sup>34</sup> See *Muslim Views*, July/August 1990. A Johannesburg based Muslim leader described Saddam Hussein as a "butcher" and stated that "... The general consensus is that the Arab world is getting what they deserve having propped up Saddam Hussein in the war against Iran."

Thirdly, why do the atrocities committed by the Zionists go unnoticed by the so-called champions of human rights and democracy?

Should not America eject the Zionist out of Palestine while they are in the region and the entire military might of its allies at its disposal? They claim to have come with the 'sincere' intention of protecting the territorial 'rights' of the people of the region?

We condemn Saudi Arabia's move to invite non-Muslims to defend the Holy Land. This goes to show that they are not capable of protecting and governing the Holy Land themselves... We demand that America and its allies cease to hatch plots against Islam and the Muslims and abstain from interfering in our affairs.<sup>35</sup>

An increasing sense of anger towards Western involvement in Saudi Arabia highlighted the character of anti-Western feelings. The world of Islam had been deceived and abused at the hands of the West.<sup>36</sup>

A sense that this confrontation in the Gulf region was not merely a political and strategic exercise but one with greater metaphysical implications was evident in *Muslim Views*. The battle was not merely between earthly foes; it was rather a battle of far greater import - a battle between the forces of good and evil, the evil West against Islam.

It is becoming increasingly clear that western political scientists, operating with essentially secular tools of political analysis, seem to be incapable of reading and understanding the historical forces at work which are rapidly changing today's world. They do not seem to perceive the movement of history. How else can we explain their incapacity, ten years ago, to anticipate or even properly understand the epic Islamic revolution in a pro-western Iran, and ten years later, to anticipate the equally epic collapse of communism. And now the Gulf crisis reveals that they do not yet recognise that there are limits to the extent to which the west can project power in the re-emerging world of Islam... A more informed perspective would lead to the prior realisation that the materialistic western world would find itself being subjected to ever-increasing political, economic and philosophical challenges from a re-born world of Islam... the objective of Islam's challenge would be to ensure the triumph of religious

<sup>35</sup> *Muslim Views*, August 1990.

<sup>36</sup> *Muslim Views*, September 1990... "No longer can Lawrence of Arabia deceive the Arabs and win their support for the pursuit of western strategic objectives in the Arab world."

truth, of a spiritual interpretation of the universe and of spiritual value-systems in human civilisation.<sup>37</sup>

The writer continued to inform the readers of the impossible gap that existed between Muslims and secular western materialistic society. Their true sentiments were displayed in a statement, "And this embraces not only political and economic discord but, also, profound and irreconcilable spiritual, moral and philosophical differences." In short, deeply rooted differences would make it impossible for Muslims to make peace with those spiritually, morally and philosophically inferior to them.

Muslims were called upon to identify with the global Muslim struggle. And of central importance, noted the editor, was the Palestinian problem.

What has made the relationship between Islam and the west even more problematic has been its role in the creation and preservation of the Jewish state of Israel. This factor alone is proving to be sufficient to eliminate the possibility of survival for collaborators (with the west) within a world of Islam which witnesses a return of western troops to its territory...the present age, which has witnessed the Islamic revolution in Iran, for example, is one in which Islam is fast becoming unshackled to become a significant actor in world affairs.<sup>38</sup>

Indicative of Muslim political radicalisation and anger was the regular marches on the US and Israeli embassies. One such demonstration was held outside the Israeli embassy in response to the killing of twenty-two Palestinians by Israeli forces at Masjid-al-Aqsa.<sup>39</sup>

USA and Israeli flags were burned as Muslims protested against the perceived injustices being perpetrated against their fellow Muslims in the Middle

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<sup>37</sup> *Muslim Views*, September 1990.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Muslim Views*, October 1990.

East. Some observers even wanted to participate in the confrontation in the Gulf and a group of Muslims, calling themselves the Islamic Mujahideen Foundation, made themselves available to serve as soldiers in the Gulf "against the USA and its allies". One of their members, Boeta Miley flew three flags outside his home in Cape Town: "The Palestinian flag symbolises the suffering of those under the Zionists, the Iranian signifies his uncompromising stand for Islam and the Iraqi comments on the hypocritical standards of the United Nations." The Islamic Mujahideen Foundation, explained Miley, "feel that South African Muslims must wake up from their slumber and take a stand on a situation that affects all Muslims world-wide. The Foundation wants the onslaught against Islam to be stopped dead in it's tracks."<sup>40</sup>

The beginning of war in the Gulf in January 1991 generated hostile Muslim comment and interpretations. All the pre-existent notions of Western and American "evil" seemed to be validated by the unfolding drama. The comment on the front page of the *Muslim Views* confirmed this when it pointed to:

...a conspicuous silence in the United Nations regarding the barbarous Bush bombardments - which have been in violation of international law - upon the Iraqis. This, however, is not uncharacteristic of them since the experiences of American aggression are very fresh in the memories of the South East Asian and Central American societies whom they have raped and plundered for more than two decades. It is in the light of these unforgettable experiences that many are vehemently protesting in the USA and other parts of the world against the illegal war which the USA saw fit to force upon the world community. The unacceptable invasion of "kleine" Kuwait (where Palestinian-Kuwaitis were treated as second class citizens by Iraq) thus gave the power-hungry hypocritical Americans the excuse to continue their aggression against the Satanic Saddam whom they had created and propped up during the terrible eight year war against Iran.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Muslim Views*, November 1990.

<sup>41</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1991.

The language of condemnation succinctly illustrated the metaphysical nature of the perceived evil inherent in the United States of America. It is no surprise that Israel, Zionism and Palestine were drawn into the equation. One photograph of a young woman with a child holding a poster depicting the Statue of Liberty with a Star of David on the torch characterised the sentiment. "Expose Deceit Racism Imperialism" was on the poster which was underpinned with the following messages: "For Muslims, who do not necessarily condone Saddam Hussein, the wider ranging issue is imperialism and the West's intransigent attitude to Palestine and Israeli aggression in the region."<sup>42</sup>

The *Jamiatul-Ulama* (Natal) also added an anti-United States message. While calling for Saddam to vacate Kuwait, it noted "Saudi Arabia's call to America for protection of its territory cannot be condoned. America has turned a blind eye to the flagrant isolation by its protégé, the Israelis on the Palestinian people."<sup>43</sup> Similar comments emanated from the Islamic Council of South Africa, "This unwanted war is the product of an attitude of man in rejecting the One True God. The crisis illustrates that superpower control of nations must cease, enabling people to solve their problems themselves."<sup>44</sup> The Islamic Co-ordinating Council expressed similar sentiments. Zionism, the South African government and the West were all targeted:

The following cannot be ignored - American imperialist interests, zionism, Saudi Arabia's dependence on the US for its existence as a monarchy and that Iraq was at war with Iran with the support of its present enemies. Saddam Hussein does not enjoy our support for the invasion of Kuwait. We demand the withdrawal of US and allied forces from Muslim and Arab

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1991.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*

land. We reject Mr. FW de Klerk's support for the allied forces. Mr. De Klerk does not speak for the Muslims of South Africa.<sup>45</sup>

From the comments of other local Muslim organisations that the editor of *Muslim Views* chose to reproduce, (the Muslim Youth Movement of both Durban and Cape Town, Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania, New Unity Movement and the Islamic Missionary Society), it is clear that Muslims were to take an anti-War position. Saddam had been propped up by the Americans, and Israel had manipulated the situation. The war was a flagrant act of imperialism and aggression on the part of the West. One of its purposes was to thwart any process towards self-determination for Muslims in Palestine. It was therefore a pro-Israeli act that was to be abhorred by all Muslims.<sup>46</sup>

Interestingly, the UDF also took an anti-War stance underpinned by concern about the Palestinian issue. It was critical of South African support for the United States and noted that the foreign minister, Pik Botha, did not speak on behalf of the people of South Africa. The government's war-like statement in support of American was rejected.<sup>47</sup>

A statement issued by Qibla was particularly aggressive and included all the categories of rhetoric present in the radical Muslim worldview:

The Muslims of Iraq and the neighbouring regions have our full support against the occupying imperialist and zionist forces of the great satan, USA. Muslims and the oppressed people condemn outright the presence of the USA and it's confederates in Hijaz. We must prepare to counter any further acts of aggression that the forces of evil have planned against the Muslims and the oppressed people world-wide. The events unfolding in the Middle East must be seen as the great and inevitable confrontation

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<sup>45</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1991.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*

between Islam and unbelief which will unfortunately but necessarily be a bloody one. Muslims and the oppressed must protect each other and cut off the hands of the oppressors. We note that the apartheid regime has sided with the USA against the Muslims. To this end they have deployed their security forces to counter Muslim offensives in the Cape and elsewhere. 'They plan and Allah plans... and the best planner is Allah'. America is a racist society. It is no champion of democracy and freedom. American democracy and freedom can only apply to white skinned people and not blacks and browns. America has rushed with its army to Vietnam, Korea, Haiti, Panama and other non-white countries. When it comes to white skinned countries like Russia in it's war against Afghanistan, America never sent it's army to enforce UN Resolutions...in this war it is the duty of Muslims to support Iraq against American and zionist aggression.<sup>48</sup>

Protest against the involvement of the USA in the Gulf War did not remain confined to the printed page. Citipark stadium in Athlone, Cape Town, the scene of many historic Muslim gatherings, hosted a rally against the Gulf war. The rally was held by the Interim Committee Against US Imperialism. About two thousand people, mainly Muslims, gathered to protest the US bombings of Iraq. Replicas of the American and Israeli flags were set alight amidst shouts of "*Allahu-Akbar!*"

Speakers, including leaders of South Africa's liberation movements, castigated America's role in the Middle East and other parts of the world. Resolutions were adopted calling on the US-led Allied troops to withdraw from the Middle East and for F.W. De Klerk and Pik Botha to withdraw their "unmandated support for America and its allies." In addition, it was demanded "that zionist-imperialist Israel withdraw from the occupied territories and end the massacre of Palestinians." Sheikh Nazeem Mohamed, president of the MJC, urged participants of the rally not to take their cues from the United States or the United Nations but rather to follow the constitution of the *Holy Qur'an*.

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<sup>48</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1991.

Subsequent speakers echoed his ideas. Anti-west sentiment, linked to imperialism and Zionism were paramount concerns.<sup>49</sup>

The notion that the United States based its policies on Israel's behalf at the expense of the Palestinians was regularly expressed. The South African government, moreover, was considered an accomplice to the United States.

In the spirit of the new mass politics other rallies were held protesting the war in the Gulf. At the Cine 400 in Rylands Estate, Cape Town, Israeli and American flags were burnt as the crowd called for the United States and other western allies to withdraw from the Middle East. The imam of the Gatesville Masjid (mosque) reminded the crowd of the metaphysical nature of this conflict: "The satanic USA is the master criminal - its stabilising means towing the US line." A spokesperson for the Western Cape ANC branch, Bulelani Ngcuka, told protesters that the war was to protect the interest of Zionism and that the United States was relying on the disunity of the Arab nations. He warned against South Africa replicating the oppression that was happening in the Middle East.<sup>50</sup>

It is clear that for the Muslims of South Africa, the Gulf War was not just a crisis unfolding many miles away from home; it was filled with issues which had very real parallels to those being faced in South Africa. As can be seen from the statements of leaders and commentators, Zionism in one way or another, underpinned the conflict in Iraq. The editor of *Muslim Views* even went so far as to suggest that South Africans were under the threat of an overpowering evil Zionism. Local Muslims, he warned, should be careful of American imperialism making itself felt in South Africa. "The oppressed should be conscious of the

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<sup>49</sup> ibid.

Americanization (zionisation?) of not only the Middle East, but also South Africa.<sup>51</sup>

Notwithstanding the attacks on the United States and Israel, both Saudi Arabia and the United Nations came in for criticism. Saudi Arabia was considered a "disgraceful and pathetic state," and the United Nations condemned as an "absolutely impotent body of nations that had openly been defied by Israel on numerous occasions." They "have been bulldozed by the Americans and have orchestrated an international move to destroy Iraq because it is a Muslim country with some muscle." Most scorn, however, was reserved for the United States: "the USA thinks it is even greater than God...It has shamelessly allowed itself to be dominated by the zionists." And in language which was already familiar to local Muslims they were reminded that Israel is "...that zionist state, the arch enemy of Islam, has been the root cause of the problems in the Middle East. The zionists, through their servants, the Americans, have manipulated the situation in the Middle East to such an extent that they have succeeded in leaving the Middle East totally defenceless." The Allies are "a bunch of spineless nations who have time and again shown the world what double standards are all about and who are totally subservient to their zionist masters."<sup>52</sup>

Events of the Gulf War caused *Muslim Views* to question the South African government's support for the "unholy allied forces" which it was accused of having "strong trading links with the Zionist state." The current crisis "is part of the USA's expansionist policies that seem to fit in so well with the zionist

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<sup>50</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1991.

<sup>51</sup> *Muslim Views*, February 1991.

<sup>52</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1991.

programme,<sup>53</sup> it was noted. Showket Hamdulay, a local reporter, asked whether the United States government had put pressure on the ANC to “cool it’s involvement in anti- Gulf War protests at a meeting with the organisation in Cape Town?” Hamdulay suggested that this censure was because of United States financial aid to the ANC and had taken place against the backdrop of Nelson Mandela’s meeting with PLO leader, Yasser Arafat. “Mr. Mandela’s behaviour apparently incensed the US zionist lobby”, argued Hamdulay.<sup>54</sup>

*Gulf Warfile* was included in *Muslim Views* as an “exclusive perspective of the Gulf situation.” Reports from overseas Muslim press echoed those of local reporters and confirmed the depiction of a world-wide Muslim fraternity doing battle against the common enemy, the USA and Zionists. The *Europe-Muslim News* reported, “Americans are brought up with violence from the day they are able to watch television...The dropping of bombs over Iraq are played out as video games and have no feelings for any humans on the ground...News reports awaken sympathy for zionists and hate against Arabs (Muslims).”<sup>55</sup>

A flood of letters to *Muslim Views* affirmed the shared sentiments of the Muslim readership. In an open letter to the President of the United States of America, the Natal Committee Against Imperialist Wars (which incorporated the Natal Muslim Youth Movement) declared that the United States involvement in the Gulf had nothing to do with liberating Kuwait but was inspired by the capitalist system which relies on a logic of “me-first, dog-eat-dog, people-destroying.” The letter informed the President that even though President De Klerk had given his support to the allies in the Gulf War, he did not “...speak for the majority of South

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*

Africans. The majority of South Africans do not support your drive to bully smaller nations." Furthermore, it declared that American wealth was based on the "blood of people around the world". The letter claimed that Iraq had agreed to withdraw from Kuwait but America had refused to negotiate with Iraq in any way and posed the following question to the United States, "Is this because you have bigger claims in the Middle East?". The question was answered with the statement, "Your Israeli allies have made it clear that if the Iraqi military machine was kept intact, they would not hesitate to attack Iraq. They have always committed aggression in the region - with your express and sometimes tacit support."<sup>56</sup>

Indicative of criticism of the United States and Israel was criticism of CNN reports on the Gulf War. Confirming Muslim anti-West distrust, one letter writer, Shafa'at Khan, claimed that Iraqi casualties were reported on with "cynical pride and bloated satisfaction," whilst Israeli targets being hit were "mourned with cries of concern for the psychological condition of the children." In light of his observation, Khan concluded that the West had no concern for "Palestinian children who live in a constant state of war and oppression." "Do the westerners in their persistent indulgence in racialism believe that Muslim children do not experience human emotions and fears? Are Muslim children worth less in their eyes? What superiority do Zionist children qualify for in order to rally for world sympathy?"<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *Muslim Views*, February 1991.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Muslim Views*, February 1991.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

In addition to CNN being targeted, Muslims argued that the general press was manipulated. In true conspiratorial style it was argued that Hussain's retreat "was just an event staged by zionist-controlled media. Saddam has a secret weapon and will be back to destroy Israel as well as the USA forces." Indeed some Muslims believed that Iraq was winning the war, but the truth was not known "because all the news is controlled by the Pentagon and their allies." This sort of mindset refused to believe even television scenes of the Kuwaiti flag over Kuwait City as a sign of Iraqi defeat. "The Americans," wrote one correspondent, were "masters at creating film sets" and had "created a fictitious Kuwait. These so-called Iraqi prisoners are Kuwaiti's dressed up in Iraqi uniforms." "This CNN stuff is sheer propaganda, sheer propaganda!", said one Muslim worshipper as he walked away from a Mosque after Friday Ju'mah.<sup>58</sup>

There were those who viewed the defeat of Hussain in a more philosophical manner. One was the "Ayatollah of Bonteheuwel" (Hadji Ismail Bakshie) who volunteered to fight on the side of Iraq. "Muslims," he stated, "must not be disappointed to the point that they believe that Saddam lost the war. After all how many boxers get into a ring and how many nations fought against Iraq? The world must realise that there is a difference between peace and retreat. There will always be a next time."<sup>59</sup>

With the defeat of Iraq, reporter Adil Bradlow went "behind the scenes" in an article entitled "The other side of CNN."<sup>60</sup> In arguing for a balanced

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1991.

<sup>60</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1991. See also *Muslim Views*, March 1993, Local television also came in for criticism when South African Television screened "The Taking of Flight 847," the International Islamic Movement from Gatesville expressed regret and disappointment "to see the SATV becoming a mouthpiece of the international zionist propaganda." The Muslim community was told

assessment of the situation in order to be able to understand the course of future developments, he stated, "it was neither a Jihad nor a just war." Bradlow explained that the problem was the historical subordination of the region as a whole to the dictates of world economy. The Gulf crisis lay in the colonial subjugation of various Arab nations.

Dr. Imtiaz Suleiman, chairman of the Islamic Medical Association, was even more conspiratorial, albeit resigned to the defeat. The "new world order" he declared, was part of the test for Muslims: "The fact of the matter is that we lost. But only in the economic and military sense. Did Islam collapse? Did Muslims degenerate? No!" said Suleiman. He went further to suggest that Muslims should call George Bush "Hazrat" (as doing good) for bringing Muslims together because "the hypocrites of the Muslim world, al Sabah, Fahd, Mubarak, Assad, Hussain and Ogal have been exposed as well as imperialism and zionism as the true enemies of Islam. One billion Muslims have risen from slumber in united hate against their enemies."<sup>61</sup>

Any action of the Israeli state continued to be viewed through the prism of Palestinian concerns.<sup>62</sup> Thus when Ethiopian Jews were airlifted to Israel by the

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that the SATV did not respond to an objection from this body and, even worse, ran another "propaganda series - 'Terrorism - an expose'," which was described as "one sided trash". The International Islamic Movement warned that the SATV was heading for a confrontation with the Muslim community. This sentiment was shared by readers who issued statements which displayed the view that they were being unfairly represented by the media and that this misrepresentation was in fact a Jewish plot to make Muslims look "beastly" whilst covering up their own "devilish" image. M. Ali stated, "This media seems to be under the control of elements in this society who are prejudiced against Muslims... It is high time that the anti-semitic myth be exposed and the Zionist beast hiding in this myth be condemned... SATV must refrain from being used... by the devilish Jews who finance them to keep the 'goyims' dancing to their manipulation" (*Muslim Views*, February 1992.)

<sup>61</sup> *Muslim Views*, June 1991.

<sup>62</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1991. See also *Muslim Views*, April 1991. "Everything you wanted know about the Intifadah... But were too afraid to ask the zionists" readers have anti-west and ant-Israel notions confirmed. See also "And now for some history".

Israeli airforce in 1991, the action was explained in 'Zionist Imperialist' terms. The exercise was the "illegal Zionist state's attempt to consolidate itself in the middle-east." "Apart from being an orchestrated plot to get non-Arabs to usurp Arab land," explained Islamic scholar, Ebrahim Moosa, "the Zionists bringing in of settlers from Ethiopia meant that they had no place for their own inhabitants."

Again we see comparison with the South African situation. Moreover, readers were told that racial prejudice by lighter skinned European Jews was being displayed towards darker-skinned Orientals. "As in South Africa where the majority suffered at the hands of a racist minority government, so did Israel's oriental Jews enjoy the same fate,"<sup>63</sup> explained Shafiq Morton. When President De Klerk visited Israel in 1991, the occasion was not lost on *Muslim Views*: "It is well-known that the Apartheid engineers and the Zionist architects share common characteristics," explained the editor.<sup>64</sup>

A further indication of Muslim radicalisation was evident at a National Muslim Conference held at the University of the Western Cape, which planned to "chart the role of Muslims in a post-apartheid South Africa".<sup>65</sup> The debate centred around whether to negotiate with the South African government or not. Opinions were diverse and consensus was not reached. Ahmed Kathrada of the ANC and Barney Desai of the PAC disagreed as to how the change should be negotiated and the leader of Qibla, Achmat Cassiem, called for a united Islamic position. Significantly, the presence of Albie Sachs, a Jewish activist, caused some distress, notwithstanding his praise of MJC imams whom he had known before going into exile. In spite of Sachs' political position, his being a Jew and a

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<sup>63</sup> *Muslim Views*, June 1991.

communist, caused the Murabitun sect to issue a statement challenging his presence. Although this request was subsequently ruled out of order, the fact that the issue was discussed demonstrated an ambiguity towards Jews for at least some Muslim leaders.

Muslims were particularly wary of the ANC's attitude towards Israel: would the new government accept Israel as a legitimate Jewish state? This question was uppermost after Nelson Mandela addressed Muslims in the Bo-Kaap, Cape Town, (to pay tribute to "individuals and organisations that fought in the struggle,) and shocked the audience by stating that he believed in Israel's right to exist: "It seems the issue of Israel will be taken up in future encounters between the Muslims and the ANC", he declared.<sup>66</sup>

Democratisation and the normalisation of South African society thus posed particular problems for the Muslim community. There were even voices who questioned the planned new democratic state. *Muslim Views* warned of the dangers of "nationalism and political parties" which were Western notions. Hence some Muslims rejected other Muslims who were to hold political office under the new South African government. They were exhorted to join the Islamic movement which was defined for them by one Dr. Kalim Siddiqui as the "struggle of the Muslims to establish, maintain, develop, defend, extend or re-establish the Islamic State as an instrument to 'enjoin good and forbid evil' for the welfare and happiness of all mankind in this world and in the Hereafter." The task of the

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<sup>64</sup> *ibid.* November 1991.

<sup>65</sup> *Muslim Views*, May 1990.

<sup>66</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1991.

Islamic movement was to "mobilise Muslim masses to establish the Islamic State through Islamic Revolution in their societies."<sup>67</sup>

The clearest indication of this cast of mind was evident in the formation of the Islamic Party, launched in Cape Town in October 1990. While its formation drew mixed reactions, some Muslims were convinced that past alliances with secular movements such as the UDF were no longer necessary. Even *Muslim Views* was wary of participating in secular public politics.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, links between South Africa and Israel became a major focus in the debate as to whether the Muslim community would support the ANC or not in South Africa's first democratic election. When Mandela indicated that Jews had played a part in 'the struggle', some Muslims were careful to explain that these were individuals. Israel as a state had not contributed.

The ANC, it would appear, was too close to Israel and too friendly with the Jews. As one observer declared, Nelson Mandela had shocked Muslims in the Cape by declaring that he recognised the existence of the "illegal, racist regime of Zionist Israel."<sup>69</sup> These comments echoed previous views and confirmed the fact that Muslims in South Africa saw South Africa and Israel as similar political entities. "He [Mandela] has forgotten so quickly the outstanding contribution made by Israel to the apartheid regime in South Africa...The Zionists have

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<sup>67</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1991. See also an interesting insert in the middle of all the anti-west, anti-Israel and Gulf War reporting in this issue of *Muslim Views*. Entitled "Israelis invite *Muslim Views* for a holiday", a cynical editor related that *Muslim Views* received an invitation to travel to Israel for "Three unforgettable weeks for under R3 000." Tour guides Dov Lavy and Aliyah Shallach promised readers an "opportunity to volunteer on an IDF base somewhere in Israel" and issued an invitation to meet the real Israel and her people. The editor remarked, "Well, flattered as we are by the invitation, *Muslim Views*, respectfully declines taking up this 'fantastic opportunity' to support Zionism!"

<sup>68</sup> *Muslim Views*, April 1991. See also editorial of June 1991; July 1991 and August 1991 wherein similarities between the apartheid government of South Africa and the 'Zionist' state of Israel are highlighted.

always been loyal supporters of Israel as they have been of the regime in South Africa."<sup>70</sup>

For others, Jews were communists and Zionists; their participation in South African politics was good reason for Muslims to not involve themselves. If the ANC did not "get rid of these organised zionist/communist gangsters then surely South Africa will slide into anarchy and become ungovernable and the masses will starve and suffer even more."<sup>71</sup>

Whilst anti-West articles highlighting the negative role played by America in world politics in general, and it's intention to thwart Islam in particular, still occupied much space in *Muslim Views*,<sup>72</sup> local politics became a subject of great debate as the first democratic elections approached. Following the announcement of 27 April 1994 as the date for the elections, Muslims, who had not previously had the right to vote, were confronted with a number of dilemmas rooted in the Muslim identity. The issues were clearly adumbrated by Johannesburg journalist, Ameen Akhalwaya, who indicated the following options:

- voting for the ANC as the leading force in the fight for justice and not for the Nationalist party because of its record of oppression.
- Muslims must not vote at all since they cannot participate in *kuffar* or "non-believer" politics.
- Muslims must form and vote for an Islamic party, which would contest elections on an Islamic state ticket.

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<sup>69</sup> *Muslim Views*, December 1992.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Muslim Views*, October 1992.

<sup>72</sup> For example see *Muslim Views*, March 1993.

- An Islamic party must be formed but not contest elections but rather act as a pressure group for Muslim interests. This would be an option because Muslim organisations were unable to reach consensus.

Although Akhalwaya conceded that Muslims could participate in *kuffar* politics, he noted that it would be heresy to allow non-Islamic political groups to behave as they saw fit. Should they contravene certain norms and standards, he noted, the logical consequence would be to strive for a separate Islamic state. Akhalwaya opposed those Muslims who refused to participate in politics and yet did business with 'non-believers' and had bank overdrafts.<sup>73</sup>

The Call of Islam was less neutral than Akhalwaya and urged followers to vote for the ANC. Qibla in turn declared that the "struggle continues" and the "New South Africa" was "just another figure of the oppressors imagination."<sup>74</sup> Qibla's stand spoke to Muslims who felt that it was wrong to cast a vote in the upcoming election, as only an Islamic state would serve the will of Allah.

The formation of the Islamic Party by concerned members of the Muslim community was noted by *Muslim Views* which identified its purpose being to "infuse the political arena with a strong Islamic code." Readers were urged to distance themselves from the forthcoming elections by boycotting the event.<sup>75</sup>

Election issues concerning Muslims included homosexuality, gender issues and abortion.<sup>76</sup> These were forbidden under Islamic law but would be sanctioned under the law of the liberation party. For many Muslims this

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<sup>73</sup> *Muslim Views*, August 1993.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.* November 1993.

<sup>75</sup> Televiews called for readers to respond to the question "Democracy antithetical to Islam?" See *Muslim Views*, February 1994. See also March and April 1994 where advice was given on how to

generated profound discomfort. The Middle East question also informed debates, as indeed did relations with Jews. The Oslo peace process was not sufficient to dampen concerns. Whilst the Palestinians wanted peace, noted *Muslim Views*, they had not bargained for the outcome which "had been carefully worked out by the Zionists and their American allies; a package which is fraught with problems and filled with hidden plans." The editor drew an analogy between the peace process and the South African transition. In South Africa, he pointed out "we have thus far experienced the cowardly acts of government who have been harping upon peace and doing the very opposite...Arbitrary decisions by people who have been placed in authority by a white minority, and which impact negatively on an already suffering majority can only lead to further tension. Can one really trust these people when they talk about peace?"<sup>77</sup>

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react to parties canvassing the Muslim vote and a warning that lack of political maturity leads to followers of Islam being exploited.

<sup>76</sup> *Muslim Views*, August 1994.

<sup>77</sup> *Muslim Views*, September 1993.

## CHAPTER SIX

### IN DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

In the new democratic South Africa all currents and strands of anti-Zionist hostility continued to flow with even greater ferocity. Notwithstanding the fact that Israelis and Palestinians appeared to be making progress along the Oslo road, the symbols of Zionist oppression remained targets for South African Muslims. That is to say Jerusalem - considered by Jews the undivided capital of the Jewish people - increasingly became a focus for Muslims. In their parlance, of course, it was *Al Quds*. The focus on *Al-Quds* and the *Al-Aqsa* mosque in Jerusalem was not unrelated to a burgeoning Muslim religiosity; throughout the 1990s *Al-Quds* Day marches took place annually. These invariably turned into Zionist bashing occasions - often conflated with vulgar anti-Jewish statements.<sup>1</sup>

Tempers were exacerbated by international politics, especially the war in Bosnia which generated calls for a global Muslim army. Muslims in the Eastern Cape rallied to the call and reported that they had one thousand volunteers undergoing military training.<sup>2</sup> Solidarity with Bosnian Muslims prompted local Muslims to march on the United States Embassy.<sup>3</sup> An Israeli flag was burned during one protest in Cape Town, with the angry crowd shouting "Death to Israel." Achmat Cassiem challenged the police to fire into the crowd. "More than

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<sup>1</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1992. "Zionists are masters at distorting the history of Palestine, particularly of Islam's third holiest site." See also *Muslim Views*, March 1993.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* August 1995.

<sup>3</sup> See also *Al-Qalam*, "Solidarity with Bosnia", July and August 1995.

one thousand Muslims marched onto the Israeli embassy, burning the flag and protesting the atrocities that take place against Muslims in Lebanon”, noted *Muslim Views*. “Bill Clinton,” said Cassiem, “has now given Israel one hundred million dollars towards killing Muslims in Lebanon.”<sup>4</sup>

With their new-found public politics, Muslims decided to deal with the drug problem in Cape Town. In 1996 People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) was founded.<sup>5</sup> Although the target was drugs and dissatisfaction with local police, protests often turned into anti-Israel occasions. It appears that the anti-Zionist agenda was a product of Qibla's high profile in PAGAD. This group would occupy the headlines intermittently for at least the next six years and would eventually be declared a terrorist organisation by the FBI.<sup>6</sup>

It is little wonder that the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, was praised in *Muslim Views*. “Hizbullah praises the death of Rabin as a miracle from God,” noted the newspaper.<sup>7</sup> Even Hamas suicide bombers were defended. “But the world conveniently ‘forgets’ Israeli aggression and brutality against the people of Palestine, Lebanon and surrounds. The illegal Israeli government has murdered almost one million innocent civilians since 1948...There will only be peace in Palestine when Muslims can self-rule the land of their birth.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Muslim Views*, May 1996.

<sup>5</sup> See also *Muslim Views*, July 1996 and August 1996 for an account of events surrounding the activities of PAGAD. See also *Al-Qalam*, June 1996 and October 1996.

<sup>6</sup> See Milton Shain, “South Africa” in *American Jewish Year Book, 2002*, ed. by Lawrence Grossman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, forthcoming).

<sup>7</sup> *Muslim Views*, Dec 1995.

<sup>8</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1996. See also April 1996, “Israeli atrocities in Lebanon continue unabated”.

It is obvious from letters to *Muslim Views* that readers shared the opinions of the editor and leaders of the community. One reader accused the South African government of turning it's back on the "horrific killing of human life in other countries...you are one great disappointment as statesmen, you do not even air your opinion as to what these evil Jews are doing...perhaps you treasure the support you receive from the Jewish community?"<sup>9</sup>

Further evidence of the animosity towards the local Jewish community emerged during the proposed visit of President Rafsanjani of Iran to South Africa. The SAJBOD opposed the visit, citing Iran's "terrible track record on human rights abuse." This was unacceptable to Sa'dullah Khan, editor of *Muslim Views*:

It is strange and unacceptable that the SAJBOD and the US government should want to dictate to President Nelson Mandela as to who they must and must not invite. The Jews in Israel don't have a good record themselves...Let South Africa entertain relations with any country it wishes...The Jewish community in South Africa must begin to owe allegiance to this country and start to think like everyone else in this country. They must not support President Mandela when it suits them and turn their backs when they think of Israel.<sup>10</sup>

Anti-American rhetoric was reinforced when US. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, admitted to having Jewish ancestry. Indicative of the anti-West feelings was *Muslim Views'* discussion of two Israeli helicopters crashing into each other over Lebanon. They quoted Al-Ma'eena, a senior columnist from the *Arab News*, who had discussed the incident: "The Israeli soldiers suffered the death they would have brought so unfeelingly to so many Lebanese villagers in occupied southern Lebanon. Predictably, Israel went into a "deep" state of shock, as did CNN whose broadcasters donned their most sombre faces...to lose 77

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<sup>9</sup> *Muslim Views*, May 1996.

<sup>10</sup> *Muslim Views*, September 1996.

highly trained killers in a single instant threw the whole zionist entity into a frenzy.” He predicted that American hostility towards Arabs would increase during Albright’s tenure because of her Jewish ancestry.<sup>11</sup> With the focus still on the West, Muslims were urged to examine the Middle East peace process and were asked to consider whether the US-Israel ploy was “to give the zionist state time to regroup and implement a more sinister programme of political, social and economic hegemony over the Arab states?”<sup>12</sup>

Conspiracy theories abounded as explanations for Muslim social and political concerns. PAGAD referred to a ‘global conspiracy’ when explaining opposition to its activities. In response to a document released by the ANC government ‘The Threat of Fundamentalist Islam’, Fu’ad Rahman argued that the document was researched by “the Israeli intelligence network known as Mossad.” Furthermore, “the ANC government is heavily influenced and controlled by the zionists.” Mossad, he continued, “working hand-in-glove with the CIA (American intelligence), due to their extensive surveillance on Muslims here, knew about PAGAD before PAGAD knew about PAGAD.”<sup>13</sup>

Even more bizarre was the identification of mining magnate, Harry Oppenheimer, as part of the problem of the crumbling society of the new South Africa:

He is the South African equivalent to the American moneymonger known as Rockefeller who due to his wealth and ‘owning’ America, dictates American policy. He is a zionist. Bill Clinton’s are prepared by this conspiracy. If he does not, he either mysteriously disappears or is dethroned from presidency. And because Clinton was such a good boy by pushing their line, by being the first American presidency to formulate a

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<sup>11</sup> See *Muslim Views*, March 1997.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

foreign policy on anti-Islam propaganda in which is stated 'We will not tolerate another Islamic Government in this world', and therefore explains the fears for an Islamic government - because Islamic governments immediately eradicate the drug routes and drug peddling. An Islamic government does not allow foreign control, etc. This is why America (used and under control by the zionist conspiracy) has ousted the popularly voted in FIS-government in Algeria and replaced it with a puppet yes-boss dictator.

With true conspiratorial insight, Rahman argued that the situation in the new South Africa was being manipulated by "zionists" who controlled the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and had "infiltrated major ANC-government structures with so-called white liberals sitting in key positions." Furthermore, the Oppenheimer family "dictates global economy trends due to the wealth of all South Africans they have usurped...Oppenheimer is also a zionist...He is also linked to a major zionist structure, conspiring to dictate world policy due to owning the worlds wealth." Rahman blamed the 'zionists' for the demise of the Nationalist Party. However, together with the Zionist Party would make the ANC-government incapable of governing. This move would be to ensure "greater money control on the wealth of the nation."

Muslims were not only informed of the evil machinations of Oppenheimer and his 'zionist' cohorts, but it was argued that all those who were opposed to the actions of PAGAD were considered under the influence of the 'zionists'. As Rahman put it:

The NP was among those openly condemning PAGAD and Islam in Cape Town. And according to reliable sources, the Afrikaner rightwingers were always in cahoots with the zionist conspiracy. Tony Yengeni and Chris Nissan also openly condemned the PAGAD initiative, labelling them as Muslim fundamentalists wanting to overthrow the government. A question

is asked where did Tony Yengeni get almost a quarter - million Rand cash to buy a house in Bloubergrand last year?<sup>14</sup>

The implication was obvious. Rahman's article illustrated familiar conspiracy arguments in which societies ills were blamed on the Jews. There was a consistency to his argument for those fed on a diet of anti-Zionism and antisemitism. In Rahman's mind, Jews controlled the United Nations, influenced the IMF and the World Bank, and supported the butchering of Muslims all over the world. Islam challenged this global conspiracy.<sup>15</sup>

Muslims in Cape Town and other parts of South Africa identified with such views; thus protest marches displayed placards calling for "Death to Zionists." How else would one deal with the evil Jewish conspiracy expressed by Rahman?<sup>16</sup>

They [the Jews] want to make away with the money currency and have it replaced by a computer chip on the hand. This computer chip will also be your personal identification, bank number, code number, drivers license, etc. but most importantly, this conspiracy and it's cronies will be able to monitor anyone by satellite...Also, they have plans to minimise global population figures to a mere 1-billion! So that easier control can be maintained.

Even numerology was invoked to demonstrate the evil power of Jews. Because three times 666 equals 1998, wrote Rahman, there "will be major festivals of satanists and zionists for the coming of the great demon (Dazzal) at the pyramids of Giza during next year, 1998."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1997.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> For further evidence of Muslim global identification see "Solidarity with Bosnia", *Al-Qalam*, July 1995.

<sup>17</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1997. See also *Muslim Views*, April 1997, "How the Media manipulates the Truth about Terrorism" for evidence of conspiracy theories explaining how the west

When Israel celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> year of independence in 1998 the whole corpus of anger which had been built up over decades found expression in protests. *Muslim Views* lamented this milestone and reminded readers of the 'evil nature' of the State of Israel.<sup>18</sup> Whilst Israel counts her 50 years as a victory over antisemitic forces, noted the editor, "Palestinians have had 50 years of 'Nakba' (chaos)". "A long trauma of dispossession, loss and suffering" was the way the period was described.

"It is ironic that Zionism and apartheid were born in the same year," noted *Muslim Views*. "Apartheid is officially dead, but Zionism, despite being declared a racist ideology by the UN is extending its tentacles in world domination."<sup>19</sup> "Israel is the only country in the world known to have legalised torture and has been called on by Amnesty International to reject continued use of certain techniques."<sup>20</sup>

A clear indication of the level of local Muslim antagonism towards the Jewish State was expressed by an association of 'black' medics in South Africa who explained that:

Israel's rejoicing in the midst of statelessness of the displaced Palestinians should be regarded as both vulgar and immoral. Beyond the religious issues remains an entire range of human rights abuses ranging from torture to severe oppression. And herein lies the challenge facing Muslims in South Africa: Can they initiate and sustain a campaign to free Palestine modelled on the hugely successful anti-apartheid campaign, by retaining as its central theme the open secret of Israeli abuse of human rights?<sup>21</sup>

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demonised Islam. See also *Muslim Views*, August 1997, "Israel's attack on Christianity", in which the Western media were accused of helping to establish Zionism.

<sup>18</sup> *Muslim Views*, April 1998, "Israel celebrates 50 years of tyranny." See also *Muslim Views*, July 1998, "Do Palestinians have cause to celebrate Israel's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary?"

<sup>19</sup> *Muslim Views*, July 1998.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*

It was the Secretary General of the MJC, Sheikh Achmat Sedick, however, who best captured the hostile sentiment toward Israel's jubilee:

While Jews and Zionists are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> year of Independence (Yom Ha'atzmaut), it is an appalling state of affairs for any South African to share their sentiments. What independence are they talking about? Independence after years of illegal occupation of land? Independence after butchering, maiming, raping innocent civilian women and children?

In the Sabra and Shateela massacre at the Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon in 1982 nearly 5000 civilians were killed. From December 1987 to December 1995 the Zionists killed more than 1900 Palestinians...

South Africa celebrated Freedom Day on April 27 - a day well deserved to be celebrated as we were freed from the shackles of oppression...

Antithetically, the Palestinians, for the past 70 years under the security state rule of Israeli authorities, suffered the most gruesome form of subjugation, oppression and deprivation of their human rights and usurpation of their lands...they (the Jews) know that the Jews and Zionists are guilty of the damnest form of anarchy and massacres which they levelled at the Palestinians.

A typical example which the whole world witnessed was of a youth throwing a stone at Israeli soldiers and in return live ammunition, missiles and tanks would target him and his comrades.

This situation we describe is more abhorrent than the Holocaust and the apartheid policy of South Africa...If this is what the Jews are celebrating - and pride themselves on as a day of independence - then they have learnt nothing from the Holocaust and what the Nazis did to them as a nation. Indeed, they are in many ways emulating the past in a more barbaric and inhuman fashion.<sup>22</sup>

Anger and frustration reinforced conspiratorial thinking. "The FBI and CIA need new mythical enemies to justify their big budgets," wrote *Muslim Views*. "This gelled in with the propaganda campaign of the Zionist mafia. The disorganised Muslims, nearly 6 million in the US. provided the perfect soft

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<sup>22</sup> Cape Times, 5 May 1998.

target..." noted one commentator. Of course, Zionists dominated the United States! Even the Oklahoma City bombing was seen as the "work of a Zionist."<sup>23</sup>

Further information was given by a Swiss journalist, Ahmad Huber, in *Muslim Views*. In response to being asked about the future role of Muslim media, he reinforced the notion of Zionist domination. "The impact of this media is far-reaching especially in the role they play of disinforming the public. We have to raise our voices against them and keep to our Muslim media and build them up." Huber's words were juxtaposed with a report on mainstream media in South Africa and accusations of anti-Islamic reporting.<sup>24</sup>

Writing on this subject, Shafiq Morton, stated that the election of a government of national unity had given the local *ummah* a very unique chance to establish itself in the government and in the media. Morton felt that African Muslims had to grab their chance and journalists had to be supported by the community as the lack of good Muslim journalists had compromised the situation of Islam in the media. The "missionary churches and Zionist lobbyists have long-time since realised this and have left us choking in their dust."<sup>25</sup>

Given Muslim sensitivities, it is hardly surprising that the screening of "Jihad in America" by the SABC aroused vociferous objection from local Muslims.<sup>26</sup> Even the proportion of time given to various religious groups on SATV was questioned. "On Sundays the Jews get a thirty minute religious programme. Hindu and Muslims are given a combined thirty minute programme.

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<sup>23</sup> *Muslim Views*, June 1997.

<sup>24</sup> *Muslim Views*, April 1995. Radio 786 had to apologise for airing an interview with Dr. Ahmed Huber in which he spoke of the "Holocaust swindle". See Milton Shain, *Antisemitism and South Africa*.

<sup>25</sup> See "Muslims and the Media", *Muslim Views*, June 1995.

<sup>26</sup> *Muslim Views*, November 1995.

What is the hidden agenda for this combination of two totally different religions? The truth is obvious, to keep the truth of Islam from the public," noted a *Muslim Views* reader.<sup>27</sup>

Confrontations between the politically aware and, by now, well-organised South African Muslim community, and broader society, were explained by Muslims in terms of conspiracy theories. The Jews, as the main enemy, were never far from the apparent cause of all global problems. The explosion of a bomb at Planet Hollywood in the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town, illustrated this. *Muslim Views* expressed outrage at the terror attack and called for Muslims to present a united front in ousting the perpetrators. According to Muslims Against Global Oppression (MAGO), readers needed to remember that there were forces operating which grabbed the opportunity to cause terror and then focus the attention on Muslims. As part of this warning it was confirmed that the 'New World Order' was to be held in great suspicion as "...it is not intended to end wars but to establish the hegemony of the powerful over the weak."<sup>28</sup>

It is apparent that by the late 1990s antisemitic motifs deeply informed South African Muslims. Local and international politics were conflated in a cocktail of anti-Jewish and conspiratorial accusations,<sup>29</sup> all vividly evident during the United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances in Durban in August 2001.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid.* March 1996.

<sup>28</sup> *Muslim Views*, August 1998.

<sup>29</sup> Even the Democratic Party's support for the bombing of Iraq was subtly connected to it's Jewish leader, Tony Leon. *Muslim Views*, January 1999.

<sup>30</sup> See Milton Shain "South Africa" in *American Jewish Year Book 2001*, ed by Lawrence Grossman, (forthcoming).

A much more sinister addition to conspiratorial thinking was the infiltration of Holocaust denial into Muslim discourse. The same Ahmed Huber, interviewed on Radio 786, a Muslim owned radio station in Cape Town, spoke of the "Holocaust Swindle".<sup>31</sup> Two years later the same radio station interviewed Yaqub Zaki, a Scottish convert to Islam, on the question of Zionism and Israel. He spoke of world Jewish conspiracies and disputed the idea that Jews were murdered or gassed during the Holocaust.<sup>32</sup>

Given the emergence of Holocaust denial, coupled with the conspiratorial cast of mind, the opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre in 1999 posed a particular challenge to Muslims. Jameel McWilliams, a reporter from *Muslim Views*, visited the Centre and reported on its exhibition. Despite an attempt to be balanced, underlying notions of Jewish culpability and Holocaust denial emerged in his review. For example, in discussing the representation in the exhibition of the pre-Nazi period, McWilliams declared that the Weimar Republic received little more than a passing mention and felt that it should have been developed further as this period helped to provide the reasons for Hitler's actions. "The hyper-inflation is one [reason for the collapse of the Weimar republic and Hitler's subsequent rise to power], because rightly or wrongly, the Jews were blamed for it." While admitting to be moved by visuals of the death camps, McWilliams nonetheless argued that it was precisely the death camps

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<sup>31</sup> See Milton Shain, *Antisemitism and South African Society*.

<sup>32</sup> See Milton Shain, *Antisemitism and South African Society*. At the time, the SAJBOD lodged a complaint with the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) that the interview violated the code of conduct for broadcasting services. This code forbade *inter alia* anything offensive to the feelings of any section of the population. The IUC claimed that the legislation was unlawful as it curtailed freedom of speech. The Johannesburg High Court subsequently ruled in favour of the IUC on technical grounds but the IBA was criticised by Justice D. Marais for the grossly incompetent way in which it dealt with the SAJBOD complaint. See Milton Shain, "South Africa" in *American Jewish Year Book 2001*, ed. by Lawrence Grossman, (forthcoming)

which were so controversial. "A lively 'numbers-game' has long been in play, and the exact purpose of the camps debated," he noted. In spite of the disputations, however, McWilliams acknowledges the camps were "terrible places".<sup>33</sup>

McWilliams' report was a subtle attack on Jewish special pleading; the Holocaust could be manipulated for Jewish gain. More importantly, however, the review set the scene for a series of articles by McWilliams in *Muslim Views* focusing *inter alia*, on "the behaviour of the Zionists which has been less than exemplary since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948."<sup>34</sup>

In these articles global conspiracies, Zionist imperialism, Holocaust denial and Jewish 'dishonesty' were all emphasised. For example, McWilliams declared that Zionists had interacted with other specific interest groups in order to procure the land of Palestine. Amongst others, The Royal Institute of International Affairs had "Zionist members, and between them, control world affairs," explained McWilliams. In language filled with stereotypical cliches, he explained American and British behaviour in the Middle East in terms of oil interests. But, he pointed out, Zionists had "assiduously cultivated since the late nineteenth century, and especially over the last sixty years" the image of the persecuted Jew. "We have seen why the Germans had reason to dislike the Jews early in this century, although antisemitism was, even then, nothing new in Germany. The Nazi Party had only to keep it going." Clearly informed by 'revisionist' historiography, McWilliams criticised the sacred nature of 'Six Million'. This, he said, was a figure only arrived at long after the Holocaust.

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<sup>33</sup> *Muslim Views*, August 1999.

"Today it has taken on the aura of Holy Writ and in Israel, Germany, France and Canada it is a crime to deny it. Moreover, it has to be six million; five million won't do."

McWilliams' revisional stance was betrayed when he recommended *The Myth of the Six Million* by Myendzizshetski; *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* by Arthur Butz; *The Six Million Swindle* by A.J. App and *Did Six Million Really Die?* by Richard Harwood,<sup>35</sup> as required reading for those who were willing to face the 'truth'. In true revisionist style, the purpose of the concentration camps was called into question: "Propaganda thrives on historical amnesia and the concentration camps were not, as is popularly supposed, invented by the Germans; they were first used by the British in the Anglo Boer war..."<sup>36</sup> Proceeding from the discussion on the origin of the concentration camps, McWilliams examined the condition in the camps and probed the "legendary figure of six million Jews dead in the Holocaust." "Auschwitz," he contended, "was crowded by people who had only the most basic idea of hygiene. The result was the spread of disease, especially typhus, which is spread by lice." The lethal effect of typhus infection was explained and readers were reminded that Jews were not the only ones to die as a result of conditions in the camps. "So how many really did die?" asked McWilliams:

Probably this can never be known with certainty, but it is an interesting fact that the Yar Vashim [sic] memorial in Jerusalem lists about one and a quarter million. What happened to the other four and three quarter million? Debunkers of the Six Million Myth, who describe it as the biggest hoax since the Donation of Constantine, generally concur that approximately one million Jews died in the camps from all causes. If six million did

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> These publications are recognised as containing Holocaust denial theories and are not accepted as academic works.

<sup>36</sup> *Muslim Views*, November 1999.

indeed die in the camps, the probability is high that most of them were non-Jews.

The article explained that the furnaces were necessary to burn dead bodies to prevent the spread of disease. "We are constantly reminded of the suffering of the Jews by the media, by Hollywood, particularly Steven Spielberg. But where is the evidence that the Germans gassed six million Jews? Was there even a deliberate policy of extermination by the Nazis of European Jewry?"

The report went on to accuse the Zionists of attempting to create a guilt syndrome and to repeat "the 'Six Million' like a mantra, the chanting of which becomes more intense with the passing of time. It is now more than half a century since the camps were liberated and one would have expected voices to have been louder then rather than now. Could it have something to do with the desire and necessity to present Israel to the world as a legitimate state?"<sup>37</sup> In the final part of the feature McWilliams discussed the silence and scepticism of the Catholic Church with respect to the Holocaust as well as the use of the 'Six Million' as a "red herring" in the Israeli 'aggression' against the Palestinians.

The silence of Pius XII regarding the extermination of the Jews was rationalised and used as a supportive pillar in the denial edifice:

He was certainly in a position to know, since the Vatican maintains the best intelligence service in the world...Certainly something as highly visible as the extermination of European Jewry could not have escaped their attention. But, never, at any time, have the Vatican mentioned the extermination of the Jews anywhere. Only in this decade, and then with extreme inertia, has the Vatican even considered political correctness as far as the Jews were concerned. It took them ten years to sort out an apology of sorts, in very circumspect language, for non-recognition of the State of Israel since 1948. Mention is made of the suffering of the Jews,

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<sup>37</sup> Muslim Views, January 2000.

but not of the extermination. Clearly, the Vatican did not then, and does not now, believe that the Holocaust took place.

The Holocaust, argued McWilliams, was too big an operation to be conducted in secrecy and the Vatican would have known about it and “would have spoken out, but it didn’t.”

It is not surprising that *Muslim Views* subscribed to international revisionist ‘scholarship’ in its analysis of the situation; antisemitism was deeply rooted in the minds of at least some sectors of the South African Muslim community. Given that the Holocaust was in some sense connected to the Zionist question, McWilliams reminded his readers that Zionists invariably justified “driving the Arabs out of Palestine” by reference to “the legend of the Six Million...But what is so special about the suffering of the European Jews?” he asked. “What about the rest of us who lived for five years under Nazi occupation? What about all the other inmates of the concentration camps who died in them, possibly outnumbering Jews by far? What about the three million plus who died in occupied Europe? One could go on and on and yet we are constantly bombarded by media with reminders of Six Million.” In an attempt to consolidate his thesis, McWilliams noted that the “disgusting treatment which has been meted out to the Palestinian Arabs would cause an international outcry if indulged by anyone other than the Zionists. But how often do we hear about Deir Yasin, Sabra and Shatila, in which entire Arab villages were massacred?”<sup>38</sup>

Conspiratorial thought reached its apogee in the immediate wake of the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the

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<sup>38</sup> *Muslim Views*, February 2000.

United States. It was no surprise that *Muslim Views* reacted to the terror attack with the use of familiar rhetoric. After the initial perfunctory condemnation of the attacks, the newspaper, declared that the occasion was a “defining moment for Muslims.” The United States was criticised for its Islamophobic reaction and accusatory claims were made against media coverage in the wake of the attack. The “almost immediate naming of Bin Laden as chief suspect and Islamophobic reactions around the world,” was condemned and the United States was accused of polarising countries. Third World and Islamic countries were once again at risk of being the potential target of the United States retaliation. This could, explained *Muslim Views*, exacerbate conflict in the Middle East. Whilst offering sympathy to the victims and their families, the MYM and MJC warned against “hasty conclusions, especially after the discovery of the true perpetrator of the Oklahoma bombing.” The Media Review Network, an Islamic group, merely expressed concern that “Muslim terrorists” would be unfairly blamed.

As the analysis continued, television coverage was accused of being dominated by CNN and local talk shows were blamed for “displaying a fair level of ignorance and prejudice of Islam and Muslims.” No mention was made of the numbers killed in the attack, although readers were provided with a report from the Council on American/Islamic Relations (CAIR) stating that there had been three hundred attacks on Muslims in America and that the FBI had harassed American Muslims in a mosque. The emphasis - perhaps understandably - was not on the horrific nature of the attack but rather on the repercussions for Muslims. Attacks on Muslims and racial profiling on airlines was the focus of

comment, while the FBI's implication of 19 suspects with Middle Eastern names was questioned.

The fact that these names were falsified on the passenger list in the first place raises questions about possible motives for setting Muslims as responsible for the attacks. The unrestrained hostility in the utterances of George Bush and the unchecked bias with which CNN has pronounced 'war' as an overriding theme with recurring visuals and allegations of Bin Laden's role in the attack, despite the absence of concrete evidence, has fuelled Islamophobia world-wide. CNN and the US government have created a mass hysteria in which the hunt for Bin Laden and other 'terrorists' have completely eclipsed any notion of justice in the pursuit of justice.

According to *Muslim Views*, Western hysteria masked any realisation of the "real reason that America was attacked" and stopped any serious need to reflect on what the "US government is doing to the world." The United States, it was argued, "has repeatedly used the ideals of freedom and democracy as pretexts for military action and sanctions." Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were criticised for offering a base for the United States attack on Afghanistan. "In the eyes of the Muslim world both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are seen as traitors, not only by extremists like Bin Laden, but by the entire Muslim ummah. Beyond this treason their days are numbered."

Local Muslims saw themselves as direct participants in this global battle when the door of the MJC offices in Salt River, Cape Town, was set alight. The act of arson was blamed on the negative publicity afforded to Muslims by CNN, Sky News and Fox News as a result of the events in the United States. This served to alienate the local Muslim community from broader society as all who were not Muslims were suspected of being negatively biased.

Further comment in *Muslim Views* encapsulated Muslim notions of an evil West which was epitomised and controlled by 'Zionists'. Ibn Al Fikr condemned the taking of life for power and glory and noted that "the pilots who hijacked the planes are war criminals no less than Ariel Sharon. The main difference is they are dead and Sharon is still running amok in occupied Palestine. He continues to murder innocent civilians just as they did."<sup>39</sup>

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As we have seen the conspiratorial mindset against the West, Israel and Jews, had deep roots in the South African Muslim experience. Having been far removed from Jews in a racially divided and polarised society, it was easy for Muslims to stereotype Jews and to consolidate hostile attitudes. The character of these stereotypes changed gradually in the context of South Africa's racial struggles, under the impact of Muslim radicalisation and global trends. Negative stereotypes of the Jew as found in the *Qur'an* were clearly expounded in the madrasahs. As a scoundrel forsaken by God because of misdeeds and dishonest actions, in the minds of young Muslims, the Jew was already inferior. Israel's alliance with apartheid South Africa from the 1970s reinforced these negative sentiments and gave ammunition for those identifying closely with their Palestinian co-religionists. A new dimension was added to the idea of the 'nefarious Jew' as South African Muslims found themselves part of an oppressed majority. In the minds of local Muslims, Jews in South Africa were not only the oppressors of their 'brothers' in Palestine but also had great influence in the

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<sup>39</sup> *Muslim Views*, September 2001.

politics of South Africa. Swayed by the rise of Islamism in the wake of the Iranian revolution, a new generation of Muslims imbibed a profound anti-Western stance, which implicated the alliance between South Africa and the United States. Within this worldview was an antagonism towards secular governments in general and a profound distrust of 'Zionist machinations' which, in the Muslim mind, were plotting to control world institutions and to even destroy Islam. Hostility reached such proportions so as to take seriously notorious forgeries such as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and Holocaust revisionism. With conflict raging in the Middle East, and South African Jews supportive of Israel - and with a looming 'clash of civilisations' in the wake of the terror attacks on the United States - it is unlikely that Muslim attitudes will moderate in the near term.

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## GLOSSARY

Ahmadiyyat, Qadiyyani, Baha'i	20 <sup>th</sup> century Muslim sects
Allahu-Akbar	Praise God
Al-Quds	Jerusalem
dar al-Harb	House of War (outside world governed by infidels)
dar al-Islam	House of Islam (countries where Islamic law prevails)
dhimma	pact which regulated non-Muslim monotheistic subjects
dhimmi	people of the pact
dua	supplication
Eid-ul-Fitr	festival at the end of Ramadan
fitnah	disorder
Hadith	sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad
Hadji	one who has completed the pilgrimage to Mecca
hakimiyya	domination

imam	leader, usually of worship in Sunni Islam
jahiliyya	pre-Islamic Arabia's ignorance of divine revelation
jihad	struggle in Islam
jumu'ah	Friday, also the special Friday worship
kramat	burial place of a Muslim 'saint'
kuffar	unbeliever
madrasah	religious Islamic school
Masjid-al-Aqsa	Dome of the Rock
mosque	place of worship
moulana	a religious scholar, graduate of Islamic seminar in India or Pakistan
nakba	chaos
Qibla	physical direction of prayer in Islam
Qur'an	Islam's Holy text
Sheikh	teacher, religious leader
sunnah	way of the Prophet
Surah	chapter or section in Qur'an
ulama	traditional leaders in Islam, learned people
ummah	universal Muslim community

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