

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Message to all the generations

At a Friday khutbah (sermon) the sheikh explained that "Carrying the quran doesn't make the carrier any smarter." He gave some great examples including "If Mohammed brings his ute to the door and we fill up his ute with Quran and Bukhari and all the books, the ute wont become a scholar. It is just a machine for carrying the books of knowledge". The shelves on the wall have been holding the books for months now, yet we don't give the shelves any importance - they are just shelves.

Millions of Muslims memorise the quran, letter by letter. There are madrasas all over the world dedicated to memorization of the quran. But how many of us actually read, understand and implement the Quran and Sunnah? Allah has perfected the religion and showered us with mercy and blessings but how many of us actually care? Islam is a complete way of life and has its place in all matters of one's life. ALL matters. It is not nearly enough to just say 'I believe' and continue a life void of Islam.

Another example was given of Khalid ibn Walid (RA), the Islamic warrior who never lost a battle and is considered even amongst secular historians to be

one of the greatest army generals to ever walk the earth. He has left his mark, a legend to all Muslims. But Khalid ibn Walid was not a great scholar, in fact he only memorised a few surahs. However he was a living breathing embodiment of what he learnt. He put into practise what his lips could read. That's what made him Khalid ibn Walid.

Another area that was identified is the need for the youth of today to stand up and be counted. It is Generation X and Y who will have to make up for the failing of the generations before us. We will have to stand up and carry the load, be counted and make a difference. It is obvious when we look amongst ourselves, our families and extended families and beyond that the generations before us have not cemented their place as Muslims and as the carriers of the message of our beloved Prophet Mohammed PBUH. It is obvious when you can see the state that the Muslims are in today. It is obvious when you can see the state of our generation who are more interested in the pleasures of this life as they mimic the generations before. It is now not even enough to be a practising Muslim, we have to extend and go beyond the basic requirements and revive the deen of Allah on this earth so future generations can be Muslims with

honour and security.

There was a time when one Muslim was the equivalent to ten non Muslims, I will personally make a claim and say that we are now not much better than one. Roughly half the world is Muslim and yet it is the Muslims who are being humiliated.

So how do we break out of this? Its time to stand up and be someone, do something and contribute. I urge the youth of today to start practising their religion. At least pray your prayers - at a minimum. From this you will find that Allah will restore to you honour and tranquility. From this you will go on to do bigger and better things, I promise you. For the practising brothers and sisters, it's time to be more than just a number. Do something more, help a charitable organisation, fund raise for your local community, build or donate something, help others in need, offer your expertise for a worthy cause. If your talent is making money then make some fisabilillah, Allah won't decrease from your wealth, it can only be blessed more with this intention. And for the older generations, I urge you to encourage the youth, stand aside and give them a go. At the very least, don't stop them from becoming what you should have already raised them to be.

Adam Ali, Melbourne

Tarek Chamkhi East - West



Bad Publicity Is Almost Always The Best Publicity!

"O Allah, forgive for my people because they don't know (ignorant)." Hadith of the beloved Prophet (pbuh).

Over 12 years ago, at the age of 28, I earned a well respected pen name within the opinion section of *Annahar*, the leading Lebanese daily newspaper. I remember around late spring 1999 I wrote a short piece about the first Sharia students conference in Beirut. I was at the time technically still a student amongst them, so my article was an "under cover" promotion for them.

As far as I recall, the article was titled "Taliban Beirut holds their first conference". Surprisingly, the opinion editor and my mentor at that time, Jehad El Zein, chose to run the article on the front page on the first day of the conference.

In those days, the Taliban in Afghanistan controlled over 90% of Afghanistan after a few months of armed uprising that scared the world. The USA spy agencies and their Pakistani counterparts were arming and supporting the Taliban at that time.

Annahar is owned by the family of Gassan Tweyne, a Maronite Christian traditional politician. The paper usually reflected the agenda of the Christian right and to some extent used Islamophobia as part of its daily business.

As a consequence of my "off the cuff" article, the reception desk was bombarded with hundreds of phone calls from Lebanese Christians -

apparently I scared the sh*t out of them! What a naughty young fellow!

I wrote under a pen name for my own safety and few people knew who had written the article. Later that day however, I was standing next to my Islamic media teacher (a leader of Hizb Ut-Tahrir in Lebanon) when he said "the writer of this article is a spy within us". Scary! I am sure he knew that I had written the article and chose this way to tell me off.

I chose not to respond with fear - I was certain that I had organised the best free publicity the conference could ever hope to get.

The conference discussed a wide range of contemporary topics in an atmosphere of modernity and tolerance. Most of the students who attended were not extremists, but there are always some who will drag us back to an awful literalist interpretation of Islam - it seemed my esteemed teacher was one of these people.

Alhamdulillah, in 2008 Allah rewarded me by giving me the opportunity to establish my own newspaper - where I can publish without fear of execution, dictatorship or censorship. In the course of my 16 years as a professional journalist, I have had a gut full of censorship and fear of being ostracised.

I strongly believe in freedom of expression and belief. I am almost certain that the best publicity and dawn for Islam is to tell the truth as it is. To lay bare the facts, happenings and incidents as they are without

attempting to disguise them.

Is a plain fact that Islam has become the fastest growing religion in the USA and most places in the westernised world post 9/11 - perhaps because of, rather than in spite of, the terrorist attacks that took place on that day.

Just recently, the halfwit Pastor Terry Jones, who never in his life bothered to read any page of the Quran, gave Islam a further gift of publicity. As a result of his threats to burn the Quran, sales of the Quran by Amazon and online Islamic stores soared; libraries across the USA, Canada and Europe were busy lending out copies of the Quran to their patrons. The word "Quran" was also among the most googled words following Jones' publicity for Islam.

The Muslim community in the USA could have spent millions of dollars for an advertising campaign, without reaching even 5 or 10% of the response that Jones gave them.

As publishers of *Crescent Times*, we made an oath that we will never surrender to any pressure to abandon the principle of freedom of expression for all schools of thought - regardless of how weak or poor we may believe their arguments to be.

Crescent Times should reflect the range of opinions and beliefs of our community, it should not become a publication of the intelligencia dictating what ordinary Muslims should think and believe.

Alhamdulillah,
Editor in Chief.

HYDER'S CASE OF INTEREST

1. UN report on Gaza flotilla
2. Lautsi v. Italy (ECHR)

Hyder Gulam* Legal Editor

This month's edition of *Crescent Times'* legal review will highlight 2 interesting matters.

1. UN report on the Gaza flotilla

The independent international fact-finding mission appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council to inquire into the Gaza flotilla incident on 31 May 2010 issued its 56-page report late last month. The mission was chaired by Judge K. Hudson-Phillips, former judge of the International Criminal Court in the Hague, and had two other eminent members: Sir Desmond de Silva, Queen's Counsel, who was Chief Prosecutor of the Sierra Leone War

Crimes Tribunal and Ms. Shanthi Daariam, Malaysian human rights expert and former member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

I urge you to read the UN Report in full - if you have limited time, read the Executive Summary. If you have no time, here the gist of it:

"The fact-finding mission concluded that a series of violations of international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, were committed by the Israeli forces during the interception of the flotilla and during the detention of passengers in Israel prior to deportation."

Here are the references:

- <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=10369&LangID=E>
- http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/15session/A.HRC.15.21_en.pdf

2. Lautsi v. Italy (ECHR)

This is a recent matter that is being decided by the Grand Chamber of the European court of

Human Rights. The case reference is Lautsi v. Italy (no. 30814/06).

The applicant, Ms Soile Lautsi, is an Italian national who lives in Italy. Sometime during 2001 and 2002, her teenage children attended the State school in Abano Terme, Italy.

All of the classrooms had a crucifix on the wall, including those in which Ms Lautsi's children had lessons. Ms Lautsi considered that this was contrary to the principle of secularism by which she wished to bring up her children. At a meeting of the school's governing body her husband raised the question of the display of religious symbols in classrooms and asked if they could be removed. In May 2002 the governors decided to leave the crucifixes in the classrooms. A directive recommending such an approach was subsequently sent to all head teachers by the Italian Ministry of State Education.

On 23 July 2002 Ms Lautsi complained to the Regional Administrative Court about the decision by the school's governing body, on the grounds that it infringed the constitutional principles of secularism and of impartiality on the part of the public authorities. In 2005

the administrative court dismissed Ms Lautsi's complaint. It held that the crucifix was both the symbol of Italian history and culture, (and consequently of Italian identity) and the symbol of the principles of equality, liberty and tolerance, as well as of the State's secularism.

On 3 November 2009 the European Court of Human Rights held that there had been a violation of Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 (right to education) taken together with Article 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion). On 1 and 2 March 2010, the panel of five judges of the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights accepted the referral request submitted on 28 January 2010 by the Italian Government. The Court heard submissions in June 2010 and will give a final decision in late 2010.

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| Date Day | Fajr | Sunrise | Dhohr | Asr | Maghrib | Isha |
|----------|------|---------|-------|------|---------|------|
| 1 Fri | 4:32 | 5:55 | 12:07 | 3:38 | 6:19 | 7:37 |
| 2 Sat | 4:31 | 5:53 | 12:07 | 3:38 | 6:20 | 7:37 |
| 3 Sun | 4:30 | 5:52 | 12:06 | 3:38 | 6:20 | 7:38 |
| 4 Mon | 4:28 | 5:51 | 12:06 | 3:38 | 6:21 | 7:39 |
| 5 Tue | 4:27 | 5:49 | 12:06 | 3:38 | 6:22 | 7:40 |
| 6 Wed | 4:25 | 5:48 | 12:05 | 3:38 | 6:22 | 7:41 |
| 7 Thu | 4:24 | 5:47 | 12:05 | 3:38 | 6:23 | 7:41 |
| 8 Fri | 4:23 | 5:46 | 12:05 | 3:39 | 6:24 | 7:42 |
| 9 Sat | 4:21 | 5:44 | 12:05 | 3:39 | 6:24 | 7:43 |
| 10 Sun | 4:20 | 5:43 | 12:04 | 3:39 | 6:25 | 7:44 |
| 11 Mon | 4:18 | 5:42 | 12:04 | 3:39 | 6:26 | 7:45 |
| 12 Tue | 4:17 | 5:41 | 12:04 | 3:39 | 6:26 | 7:46 |
| 13 Wed | 4:16 | 5:40 | 12:04 | 3:39 | 6:27 | 7:46 |
| 14 Thu | 4:14 | 5:38 | 12:03 | 3:39 | 6:28 | 7:47 |
| 15 Fri | 4:13 | 5:37 | 12:03 | 3:39 | 6:29 | 7:48 |
| 16 Sat | 4:11 | 5:36 | 12:03 | 3:39 | 6:29 | 7:49 |
| 17 Sun | 4:10 | 5:35 | 12:03 | 3:39 | 6:30 | 7:50 |
| 18 Mon | 4:09 | 5:34 | 12:02 | 3:39 | 6:31 | 7:51 |
| 19 Tue | 4:07 | 5:33 | 12:02 | 3:39 | 6:31 | 7:52 |
| 20 Wed | 4:06 | 5:31 | 12:02 | 3:39 | 6:32 | 7:53 |
| 21 Thu | 4:05 | 5:30 | 12:02 | 3:39 | 6:33 | 7:54 |
| 22 Fri | 4:03 | 5:29 | 12:02 | 3:39 | 6:34 | 7:55 |
| 23 Sat | 4:02 | 5:28 | 12:02 | 3:39 | 6:35 | 7:56 |
| 24 Sun | 4:01 | 5:27 | 12:01 | 3:39 | 6:35 | 7:57 |
| 25 Mon | 3:59 | 5:26 | 12:01 | 3:40 | 6:36 | 7:58 |
| 26 Tue | 3:58 | 5:25 | 12:01 | 3:40 | 6:37 | 7:59 |
| 27 Wed | 3:57 | 5:24 | 12:01 | 3:40 | 6:38 | 8:00 |
| 28 Thu | 3:56 | 5:23 | 12:01 | 3:40 | 6:39 | 8:01 |
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| 30 Sat | 3:53 | 5:21 | 12:01 | 3:40 | 6:40 | 8:03 |
| 31 Sun | 3:52 | 5:20 | 12:01 | 3:40 | 6:41 | 8:04 |

| Date Day | Fajr | Sunrise | Dhohr | Asr | Maghrib | Isha |
|----------|------|---------|-------|------|---------|------|
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| 4 Mon | 4:04 | 5:28 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:01 | 7:20 |
| 5 Tue | 4:02 | 5:27 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:02 | 7:21 |
| 6 Wed | 4:01 | 5:26 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:02 | 7:22 |
| 7 Thu | 4:00 | 5:24 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:03 | 7:23 |
| 8 Fri | 4:00 | 5:23 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:03 | 7:24 |
| 9 Sat | 4:00 | 5:22 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:04 | 7:25 |
| 10 Sun | 4:00 | 5:21 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:04 | 7:26 |
| 11 Mon | 4:00 | 5:20 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:05 | 7:27 |
| 12 Tue | 4:00 | 5:19 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:05 | 7:28 |
| 13 Wed | 4:00 | 5:18 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:06 | 7:29 |
| 14 Thu | 4:00 | 5:17 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:06 | 7:30 |
| 15 Fri | 4:00 | 5:16 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:07 | 7:31 |
| 16 Sat | 4:00 | 5:15 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:07 | 7:32 |
| 17 Sun | 4:00 | 5:14 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:08 | 7:33 |
| 18 Mon | 4:00 | 5:13 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:08 | 7:34 |
| 19 Tue | 4:00 | 5:12 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:09 | 7:35 |
| 20 Wed | 4:00 | 5:11 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:09 | 7:36 |
| 21 Thu | 4:00 | 5:10 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:10 | 7:37 |
| 22 Fri | 4:00 | 5:09 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:10 | 7:38 |
| 23 Sat | 4:00 | 5:08 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:11 | 7:39 |
| 24 Sun | 4:00 | 5:07 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:11 | 7:40 |
| 25 Mon | 4:00 | 5:06 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:12 | 7:41 |
| 26 Tue | 4:00 | 5:05 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:12 | 7:42 |
| 27 Wed | 4:00 | 5:04 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:13 | 7:43 |
| 28 Thu | 4:00 | 5:03 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:13 | 7:44 |
| 29 Fri | 4:00 | 5:02 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:14 | 7:45 |
| 30 Sat | 4:00 | 5:01 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:14 | 7:46 |
| 31 Sun | 4:00 | 5:00 | 11:44 | 3:17 | 6:15 | 7:47 |

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| 3 Sun | 4:24 | 5:53 | 12:10 | 3:43 | 6:26 | 7:51 |
| 4 Mon | 4:22 | 5:51 | 12:10 | 3:43 | 6:27 | 7:52 |
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| 6 Wed | 4:18 | 5:48 | 12:09 | 3:44 | 6:29 | 7:54 |
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| 9 Sat | 4:15 | 5:45 | 12:08 | 3:45 | 6:32 | 7:57 |
| 10 Sun | 4:14 | 5:44 | 12:08 | 3:45 | 6:33 | 7:58 |
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| 18 Mon | 4:06 | 5:36 | 12:06 | 3:47 | 6:41 | 8:06 |
| 19 Tue | 4:05 | 5:35 | 12:06 | 3:47 | 6:42 | 8:07 |
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| 21 Thu | 4:03 | 5:33 | 12:05 | 3:48 | 6:44 | 8:09 |
| 22 Fri | 4:02 | 5:32 | 12:05 | 3:48 | 6:45 | 8:10 |
| 23 Sat | 4:01 | 5:31 | 12:05 | 3:48 | 6:46 | 8:11 |
| 24 Sun | 4:00 | 5:30 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:47 | 8:12 |
| 25 Mon | 4:00 | 5:29 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:48 | 8:13 |
| 26 Tue | 4:00 | 5:28 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:49 | 8:14 |
| 27 Wed | 4:00 | 5:27 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:50 | 8:15 |
| 28 Thu | 4:00 | 5:26 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:51 | 8:16 |
| 29 Fri | 4:00 | 5:25 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:52 | 8:17 |
| 30 Sat | 4:00 | 5:24 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:53 | 8:18 |
| 31 Sun | 4:00 | 5:23 | 12:05 | 3:49 | 6:54 | 8:19 |

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| 3 Sun | 4:07 | 5:25 | 11:38 | 3:07 | 5:50 | 7:04 |
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| 6 Wed | 4:03 | 5:22 | 11:37 | 3:07 | 5:51 | 7:06 |
| 7 Thu | 4:02 | 5:21 | 11:36 | 3:07 | 5:52 | 7:06 |
| 8 Fri | 4:02 | 5:21 | 11:36 | 3:07 | 5:52 | 7:06 |
| 9 Sat | | | | | | |