

## **SPEECH OF MR. GHULAM SABIR ON 15 NOVEMBER AT IQBAL DAY IN COPENHAGEN.**

I am delighted to see here the dignitaries representing their great countries. Their presence among us is a symbol of solidarity in our efforts towards creating a sense of brotherhood among man. Our main aim as I have written and said to some of you is promoting love and harmony and removing the fear and mistrust of one another. In short we work towards world peace.

I would like to first mention about two organisations in Copenhagen namely Iqbal Academy Scandinavia and *Islamisk-Krisent Studiecenter*. You have already heard the learned lady Lissi Rasmussen, who is heading IKS, of which I am also a member. Both of our organisations have almost the same agenda, which is to stimulate the minds of intellectuals from Christian and Muslim communities for positive dialogues in order to promote peace and harmony in the society. I am not stood here to deliver a big speech on today's theme but I would like to share with you my feelings in a few words.

It is not an exaggeration if I say that religion and violence are contradictory to each other. It is an admitted fact that violence is not sustainable in the present world and as such it is quite alien to the scheme of things in any of the religions most certainly in Islam. Peace and love are major ingredients of religion. At the same time peace and love are interdependent to each other. Each one is incomplete without the other. Peace cannot possibly be achieved without awakening in man the subtle feelings of real love for his fellow human beings. And this is not possible unless man becomes aware of his own place in the universe. Human self is a highly important aspect of human nature. Søren Kierkegaard says that 'one must learn to know himself before knowing anything else'. But he regards love as playing major role in this direction. But he says: "love edifies self". Therefore it is only a loving heart that is able to conceive self and edify it. By knowing ones own 'self' man becomes aware of the value of his fellow human beings. Søren Kierkegaard believes that 'man, being an individual, is himself and at the same time he is the whole race'. This is exactly what Qur'an is saying: *If anybody killed an innocent person he killed the whole people; and if anyone saved a person's life he saved the life of the whole people,*

Kierkegaard's approach toward love and human values particularly his themes of love, human self and existentialism are strikingly similar to Iqbal, whose birthday we are observing today. and that inspired me to write my book *Kierkegaard & Iqbal*. To my surprise the book achieved a target which was never my intention when I started writing it. Without any initiative or effort on my part the English written book has been translated in Danish and published by a famous publishing Group Bindslev at Copenhagen. The translation was done by Amina Tønssen, secretary IKS under supervision of Peter Tudvad, the well known Danish philosopher and an authority on

Søren Kierkegaard. Another prominent person Dr. Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, the director of Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre, assisted the translator by providing valuable advice and material to her. These are the examples of efforts by a few individuals in IKS and IAS towards promoting peace and love between Christians and Muslims.

Coming back to my topic of love and humanity, Professor Paul Davies, a unique writer and a prominent scientist of mathematical physics writes at the end of his book *The Mind of God*: “How we have become linked into this cosmic dimension is a mystery. Yet the linkage cannot be denied. What does it mean? What is man that we might be party to such privilege;” Then he says: “I cannot believe that our existence in this universe is a mere quirk of fate, an accident of history, an incidental blip in the great cosmic drama. Our involvement is too intimate. ... We are truly meant to be here.” He further writes: “we are not the purpose for which the universe exists. Far from it I do, however, believe that the human beings are built into the scheme of things in a very basic way.”

Iqbal is the universal poet-philosopher. He is a great proponent of love and human dignity that cover more than seventy percent of his philosophical and lyrical works. He writes: ‘It is only by rising to a fresh vision of his origin and future, his whence and wither that man will eventually triumph over a society motivated by an inhuman competition and a civilization which has lost its spiritual unity by its inner conflict of religious and political values.’ About human dignity and respect he says: *Aadmeyat ehtram-i admi; Baakhabar shau az maqam-i aadmi* (Humanity is to respect human being; One must be aware of the place of man). For himself he says and these words may apply equally for all of us: *Sadma aajae hawa say gul ki patti ko agar, Ashk ban kar meri aankhon say tapak ja-i asar; Dil men ho soz-e muhabbat ka wu chota sa sharar, noor sey jis kay milay raaz-i haqeeqat ki khabar; Shahid-i qudrat ka aaeena ho mera dil na ho, sar men juz hamdardiye insan koe sauda naho.* (If the rose petal is damaged by breeze, may its pain drop from my eye as tear; May my heart contain that little spark of love’s fire, through the light of which the secret of the Truth is unveiled to me. May my heart not mine but the Beloved’s mirror be, May no thought in my mind except human sympathy be).

Lastly a sentence from **IQBAL** He says ‘given character and healthy imagination, it is possible to reconstruct this world of sin and misery into a veritable paradise’.

G. Sabir