

Nation of Islam attacks the death cults

Although by no means a majority of U.S. religious denominations and clergymen support drugs and death cults, there has been no shortage of "official" religious spokesmen to come forward in the weeks following the Jonestown mass murder-suicide to defend the "rights" of the kook cults, while such denominations as the Episcopalians and elements of the Society of Friends have for some time been associated with the rock-drug counterculture and various "right-to-die" doctrines.

With heavy media attention focused on these and similar religious developments, it is easy to overlook the emergence of one of the nation's less well-known major denominations as a significant force in the struggle against the death cults and the drug trade.

The World Community of al-Islam in the West has strongly attacked the death cult of the Rev. Jim Jones as the work of the same "organized conspiracy of evil" responsible for drug-running in the U.S. Attacks on the Jonestown cult have appeared in the Dec. 8 *Bilalian News* and in speeches given by Imam Faiz, head of the Hartford Connecticut Community of Islam and Imam Nas Inram, head of the Seattle, Washington Community of Islam in the past week.

Long vigorous opponents of drug trafficking, the community of Islam has begun to incorporate a campaign against the death cults into its antidrug efforts.

The Dec. 8 issue of the *Bilalian News*, in its brief report of the Jonestown holocaust as it went to press, put the term "mass suicide" in quotes, and promised that its next issue will pursue "Some of the many lingering questions surrounding this bizarre incident."

At a "Save the Children" dinner sponsored by the Community of Islam in Hartford on Nov. 26, Imam Faiz of the Hartford Community of Islam denounced the Jones cult in the course of a powerful attack on the drug culture. The Imam stated: "Drugs are creating a climate of death. . . . They are poisoning our youth. We have a fixation on death in the U.S., as this cult in Jonestown exemplifies. . . ." The same dinner of the Hartford Community of Islam also announced the formation of an antidrug coalition to end the flow of drugs into the schools and the community.

On Dec. 3, Imam Nas Inram, head of the Community of Islam in Seattle, Wash., 65 persons at a U.S. Labor Party-sponsored forum on drugs that the Jones cult was the work of organized conspirators of evil: "Look at the society; the trend is there, the suicidal trend. The Cult, Jim Jones. Don't think that was an accident. The conspirators recognize that there is a movement toward religion. They recognize that. People are beginning again to move

towards religion, and if religion can gain its rightful place it will begin the salvation of society. So we get a cult, a great big cult."

Religion vs. cultism

The World Community of Islam locates the distinction between religion and cultism in religion's commitment to develop the human mind. This is why drugs and the counterculture are closely associated with the cults. Said Imam Inram: "There is very little that happens in our world, in our society, that happens by coincidence. . . . Why do you think that there is dope in this society. . . . To keep us sedated. Dope is not just the physical dope; that is just the physical manifestation of something that is happening on three or four planes, higher planes. . . . They (also) have educational dope for the intellectuals in the college . . . then we have the spiritually inclined, so for him they've got the spiritual dope. They put a whole bunch of spiritual fanaticism in the religion, then they use these people to control the masses. . . ."

"They come up with all kinds of weird lifestyles, like the idea of gays being a natural and normal thing. You think that just came out? It's a plan; it's a scheme in order to keep people in control. . . . Someone is trying to take control, and in their effort to do that they have learned how to control people through manipulation. To gain control of religion, gain control of the material world, gain control of your or my personal life. They come right into your home through the radio, through the music — they have orgasms to the music. It's an abomination.

"If you read the scriptures, you will find that when societies reach that point they are on the verge of destruction. They don't even recognize it. They pass legislation to legalize marijuana; they will legalize anything."

A recent speech by the chief spokesman of the World Community of al-Islam in the West, Wallace Deen Muhammed, to the American Academy of Religion developed the positive teachings of the denomination. The invitation of Wallace Deen Muhammed to be the featured speaker at its session on Nov. 19 in New Orleans represented the first time that this body publicly recognized the coming of the great religion of Islam to the United States. The American Academy of Religion is a society of college and university professors engaged in teaching and research in religion.

"I don't see how any human being can want to be anything but a human being," Wallace Muhammed said. "I don't want to be a prophet, because actually I know nothing to extend the scripture. All that I have gotten has been an understanding of the scripture that has already been revealed." Imam Muhammed's re-

marks were in the context of explaining the "mysterious" teaching of a Professor Fard, who claims to have first brought Islam to the United States in Detroit, Michigan in 1930. "If he (Prof. Fard) had been dealing with a higher level of knowledge (among the population — ed.) he would have come to us with a more sensible, a more rational and a more humane doctrine. But definitely he (Prof. Fard) did not come to us with al-Islam. He came to us with the label of al-Islam," said Imam Muhammed, as he described some of the strange teachings which were formerly associated with the Muslims in the United States, such as the idea of the white population as a "devil" race. Wallace Muhammed stated that this doctrine was the doctrine of Prof. Fard, and not al-Islam: "I believe that if Dr. Fard had been dealing with a higher level of knowledge or education in the community or among the people that he had to preach to, he would have approached it quite differently."

In a statement carried in the Dec. 8 *Bilalian News*, Imam Muhammed developed the Islamic commitment to the process of perfection of human nature to approach the nature of God, which is the principle which defines the common, Neoplatonic humanist content of Christianity, Islam and Judaism: "Aren't we to be like Allah? If Allah is merciful, aren't we to be merciful? If Allah is wise, aren't we to seek wisdom? If Allah is just, aren't we to be a just people? Yes.

"The Muslim strives to be like his God on a human

level. He wants the attributes of his God to shine in his life. . . . He can idolize his God, is that right? Yes. Meaning we can take on some of the attributes of Almighty God. In fact, we are born with them. We are born with kindness in our nature, we are born with truthfulness in our nature. . . . So we should strive always to be the best person and never accept a speck of sin, no matter how small it is — to be something that we can wear honorably. No man can wear any amount of wrongdoing honorably. We can only wear good deeds honorably. And, Allah calls us to good deeds and carries us to good deeds."

In view of its campaign against drugs and the death cults, it is not surprising that the World Community of Islam is being attacked as a cult itself by the very British intelligence outlets which themselves — as last week's *Executive Intelligence Review* reported — are closely linked to the kook cult madness.

Almost as soon as the Jonestown suicides had occurred, a coordinated campaign to tar the Muslims as a "cult" was begun by anglophile Alex Cockburn in a recent issue of the Rupert Murdoch-owned New York *Village Voice*. Another version of the same line appeared in the *Baltimore Sun*, which varied the slander to the effect that the Black Muslims are a cult, but a good one. The same cult charge was made against the U.S. Labor Party in the *Village Voice*.

— Anita Gallagher

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