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The Islamic Propagation Centre International is renowned for its ceaseless and well-funded attacks on Christianity. IPCI founder, Ahmed Deedat, has produced such scandalous booklets as “50 000 Errors in the Bible”, “Resurrection or Resuscitation”, “Crucifixion or ‘Cruci-Fic tion”, and “The God That Never Was”.

However, while the IPCI is no stranger to blasphemy, slander, half-truths and outright lies, even they must have been embarrassed by their much-acclaimed international guest speaker — Dr. Khalid Al-Mansour.

A MUSLIM SUPREMIST

As I attended their Wednesday, 24 October, rally in the Good Hope Centre, Cape Town, I was surprised by the extremism of Dr Al-Mansour. Seldom has it been my misfortune to endure such a loud illogical stream of venom from a public speaker. Al-Mansour must have been an embarrassment to all sane Muslims. Not that Christians don't have some similar fanatics disgracing our podiums with hysteria and unsubstantiated drivel. But this American Muslim (described as a Californian lawyer, banker, businessman and activist) went beyond all extremes in his outrageous statements.

Al-Mansour claimed that Muslims were heirs to the greatest civilizations and achievements in history. Muslims had reached America before Columbus was born! The Zimbabwe Ruins had been built by Muslims, as had the Pyramids in Egypt. That the greatest strength of Black culture in Africa was literature. “Reading is our tradition. The slaves from Africa read, read, read.” That before the Whites came to Africa “To steal the land”, Blacks had built “great civilizations that had blast furnaces able to heat up to 1 000 °C — making copper and knives and spears. We must rebuild our civilizations!” The first human beings in the world were Africans, he claimed.

MANUFACTURING HISTORY

Even more astounding was Al-Mansour's assertion that the Zulu king, Shaka, was a Muslim! He claimed that the name “Shaka” is “not in the Zulu language or vocabulary at all. Shaka is the Arabic word for circumcision. Shaka united 2-million Zulus under Islam!”

His ahistoric imagination as to the achievements of Islam were matched only by his manufacturing of the supposed history of Christianity. Al-Mansour claimed that Christianity brought slavery to Africa, destroyed the great Black civilizations, and branded Malay slaves (in

Cape Town!) on the face! The Dutch ministers taught their congregations that “Thou shalt not steal” did not apply to Whites stealing from Blacks. Calvinism was defined by Al-Mansour as: “shooting Blacks in the name of Jesus — for fun.”

When the British came to the Cape they brought in missionaries who taught the Blacks “not to worry about anything in this life. Just turn the other cheek. Rejoice when the White Christians whip you because it’ll help you get to the next life quicker. Whites get it all in this life. But Blacks get blessed only in the next life.” Al-Mansour claimed that the missionaries “taught Blacks to suffer — and to enjoy it. To be exploited and enslaved for Jesus.”

As if that wasn’t enough, Al-Mansour then claimed that Whites had only paid their servants with wine and never gave Blacks any education! “Apartheid is the cruellest, most vile, most evil system on the face of the earth. Christians have done so much sin and evil. They should all repent. The Church must repent,” declared Dr. Khalid, to much applause and laughter.

Then Al-Mansour declared that the Christians will never achieve anything until they accept that Mary and Jesus were not White. “Moses and all the Jews came from Ethiopia. Solomon was Black. All the Jews were Black!” More applause.

After spewing out his racist denunciations of Christianity, Dr. Khalid Al-Mansour then waxed eloquent on the virtues of Islam. “Islam alone holds the solutions,” he declared. “We came from Africa. Muhammed came from Africa. The first humans on earth, over two million years ago ... came from Africa,” and “Three hundred years ago my ancestors walked together with yours in harmony here in Africa.” He concluded, “We are one people. Inseparable. Indivisible. United in Islam.” He even claimed that there was no racial prejudice amongst Muslims.

COMMUNISM IS BANKRUPT

Now, to be fair, Dr. Al-Mansour did make some valid observations as well. He referred to the problems of alcoholism, child abuse, the abuse of women, pornography, unemployment and television. But aside from mentioning education and job creation, he never dealt with any solutions to these problems.

He also mentioned in passing that communism offered no solutions to the problems of tribalism, economics or preserving the integrity of the family. He referred to the fact that Karl Marx was a racist, who called Blacks “niggers” and Breznev wanted Whites to rule the world. He also noted that the communist recipe of nationalisations had dragged Russia and Eastern Europe down to slavery. Communism was bankrupt.

As the advertised topic of his speech was: “Communism, Christianity or Islam — which holds the solution for South Africa”, it is just surprising that he spent such little time (approximately two minutes) on communism and so much time on ridiculous fabrications against Christianity. Even more seriously, he failed to suggest what real practical solutions Islam offered to the problems he himself had raised.

IN RESPONSE TO ISLAMIC SLANDER

Shouting is no substitute for facts and logic. Al-Mansour’s evident bitterness against Christians and hatred for Christianity prevented him from dealing with his topic in a balanced and unbiased

manner. His obsession with race was also not helpful. His lecture more resembled a Black consciousness political tirade than an Islamic lecture. He failed to deal with his subject from a religious perspective and chose instead to let his racist prejudices sour his every word. His grasp of history was abysmal. The novel concept that Shaka was a Muslim is so unheard of and unsubstantiated that one can only stand and shake one's head in amazement. His view that Islam created the greatest civilizations in history is fairly unique. One is given to wondering why the Islamic countries need so many thousands of Western technicians, specialists and engineers to run their countries and their oil refineries.

I would not want to disparage any of the achievements of Muslims — Only to note that the architecture, music, art, literature, judicial and scientific achievements of Christian civilizations rank with the very best in history.

Al-Mansour's claim to have built the pyramids of Egypt seems rather presumptuous when Islam was only founded at 622 AD, and the pyramids were constructed thousands of years before that. As for Muslims discovering America before Columbus, one wonders why their "superior civilization" did not develop it before the "backward Christians" arrived. Perhaps Al-Mansour has access to some original sources of history not yet considered by historians?

SLAVERY AND ISLAM

That Muslims were responsible for constructing the Zimbabwe Ruins structure is accepted by many authorities. However, they clearly used slave labour to construct the fortifications and slave market for their trade route. The Zimbabwe Ruins is very similar to comparable structures and designs in South Yemen. Arabic coins and jewelery found on site confirm that Arab slave traders used the Zimbabwe Ruins.

This brings us to Al-Mansour's hypocritical accusation that Christianity brought slavery to Africa. Slavery pre-dates Christianity. Over a third of the Roman Empire were slaves. Muhammed owned slaves. Islam was built on the slave trade. And far from the Christian missionaries extending slavery, it was missionaries like David Livingstone who exposed the Muslim slave trade in Central Africa and tirelessly worked to end it with "commerce and Christianity." It was reported that of every ten Africans led away in chains, only two would reach Dar Es Salaam alive. The rest were shot trying to escape or for slowing down the column or died of hunger, disease and wild animals. Livingstone saw that the only way to end this barbaric practise of chiefs selling their subjects or neighbouring tribes into slavery was the Christian Gospel and alternative trade in commerce.

As to Al-Mansour's astounding claim that the Christians destroyed the "advanced civilizations of Black Africa," one only need ask how advanced he considers a civilization without a written language to be. Far from literature being the strength of African culture —the Bushman cave paintings aside — it was the Christian missionaries who taught Africans to read and write. The first book in an African language was the Bible, translated by Missionary, Robert Moffat, into the Tswana language.

Christian civilization brought medicines, education, literacy and the Gospel to Africa. It ended the cannibalism, human sacrifices and intertribal warfare that had been part of the "harmony" before. The "Scars of Christianity" are seen in the schools, hospitals, roads, railways, churches, colleges, libraries, airport terminals and the wheel.

Al-Mansour's ignorant generalisations and distortions of the Christians witness in Africa were

outrageous. No true Christians have ever taught the nonsense he attribute to us. A Christian is someone who loves God and his neighbour. A Christian is someone who has been changed by the power of the Holy Spirit, who worships God as his Father. A Christian is someone who has a personal relationship of obedience to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

THE MYTH OF UNITY

It is also not honest to describe Muslims as “one people. Inseparable. Indivisible. United in Islam.” One has only to look at the 8-year war between Iran and Iraq, the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the long-standing conflict between Algeria and Morocco, the division between Sunni’s, Shite’s and Sufi’s and other splits in the Muslim world.

Dr. Khalid was also confused in his use of terminology. He interchangeably used the terms, ‘we’, “Blacks”, “Muslims” and “Africans.” Now, our speaker was clearly not Black by any African definition. His “ancestors” seemed more European than African to me. And almost none of his audience were Black. The Cape Muslims are Malays, Indians and Coloureds. So their common ancestry with Dr. Khalid seemed a bit contrived.

MUSLIMS AGAINST BLACKS

More to the point, more Africans are Christians than Muslim. And most Black governments in Africa discriminate against Asians. The Tanzanians slaughtered many thousands of Arabs after independence. Zanzibar became a mass grave of Arab Muslims. Uganda expelled all Asians. Malawi restricts all Asians to only two towns. The Muslims of Eritrea have been fighting to free themselves from Black rule in Ethiopia for decades.

And Muslim governments have consistently persecuted Black Christians. The vicious Nigerian civil war (the Biafran War) was between the Muslim government and the Christian Blacks (the Ibo’s). Chad has had decades of civil war between the Muslim North and the Christian South. In Sudan, a 30-year civil war still rages between the oppressed Black minority in the South and the Muslim government of the North. Even in South Africa there is a history of animosity and strife between the Indians and the Zulu, the Malays and the Xhosa, etc.

THE INTIFADAH AND INTOLERANCE

And far from the speaker exhibiting a freedom from racist prejudice, his every phrase and expression exuded bigotry and bitterness. Especially when he condemned “the Zionists” for murdering “innocent Palestinians”. As the official publication of IPCI, Al-Burhaan, openly supports the “INTIFADAH” against Israel and castigates the PLO for not being militant enough, his position was hardly surprising. Host, Ahmed Deedat, and speaker, Khalid Al-Mansour, seemed to be uncritically supportive of the war against Israel. I would be interested in knowing if they also supported Islamic terrorists shooting hostages and blowing up passenger aircraft. If Dr. Al-Mansour represents the Muslim solution for South Africa, then we have a convincing argument that Islam has no practical answer to the complex challenges before us.

At least he was accorded the freedom to propagate his views in Cape Town. Earlier this year the Arab Christian professor, Dr. Shorosh, was not so fortunate. Screaming Muslim mobs attacked him leaving him covered in blood and prevented him from speaking at several venues until his speaking tour was cancelled. The intolerance of Muslims for other faiths does little to recommend their own views.

Peter Hammond