ABSTRACT

The present study deals with the attitude and stance of the Muslim Community in Britain with the perspective of its Universal missionary role vis-a-vis non-Muslim humanity around which it is overwhelmingly surrounded.

In view of the sensitiveness and subtlety of the topic an empirical study based on questionnaire, interviews and self-observation while staying in Britain was undertaken in addition to the survey of the relevant material. The questionnaire was served to 300 respondents and formal and informal interviews were taken from 318 respondents on various issues and aspects of the subject. The places visited for the purpose of field investigation were London, Leicester and Birmingham.

In order to determine the stance of the community it was indispensable to discern and trace out its perception of the Islamic Ideology. It is a fact that if the convictions are sound and the faith unshakable and the concepts are crystal clear, the community steers its ship towards its destined harbour of goals and objects. On the contrary, if the attachment of the community to the ideology is emotional rather than intellectual, superficial rather
than philosophical, ritualistic rather than realistic, the community may glide in any direction on its journey of assimilation, accommodation acculturation and may eventually lose all consciousness about its purpose of creation and role.

So the general perception of the community of the Islamic ideology; the perception of the community of its Identity; its perception of the practicability of the Islamic Injunctions in all circumstances and times; its perception of its responsibility of communicating Islamic teachings to children and youth; its perception of education and of its missionary role towards non-Muslims have been discussed. Apart, the role of the leadership is also analysed.

It is found that the perception of the major section of the Community of the Islamic Ideology and its various aspects is limited, superficial and also confused. Consequently, such people who have restricted knowledge of the Ideology have camouflaged the Islamic culture while adopting the Western concepts and ideals in their mode of life. They are the people who overestimate the technological progress of the industrialised society of the West and are
blurred by its apparent grandeur and opulence. However, it is also found that they do have due regard for some of the Islamic injunctions and principles and they associate themselves with the Ummah, the Universal Islamic Community. But, it was also discovered that their regard for some of the Islamic principles was not intellectual but merely emotional. Similarly their attachment to the Ummah is not deep and real but ritualistic and nominal.

There are some and not less in number who have weaved all the secular and Western ideas and thoughts in the web of their life and look upon the Islamic Ideology as a relic obscurantism hence inimical to progress. They are found completely under the sway of Westernisation.

Nonetheless, there is a small group in the Community, whose perception of the ideology is complete, deep and perfect. They aspire and strive for the superiority of the Islamic ideals in the society and do their level best for realising this ideal.

Thus, it can be concluded that leaving aside an insignificant number of people, the stance of the community is not rooted in the adequate and proper understanding and perception of the Islamic ideology but it is based on
ritualistic and superficial knowledge of the ideology. Their loyalty and commitment to the ideology is emotional rather than intellectual. It is the reason that the impact of the Western trends and Western culture is quite marked on their thoughts and attitudes. Had the perception of the Community been better and its faith in the ideology firm, the community would have influenced the alien culture, and carved for itself a distinct and unique identity. It may be concluded, that the future of the Muslim community in Britain depends upon the dynamic role of the leadership wedded unflinchingly to the Islamic Movement world over and on the proper education of the community about the Islamic and the Western ideologies.