

Subject: Jews Under Muslim Rule.

Oct. 3, 2010.

The Editor,

The Halifax Herald.

Dear Editor,

Paul Bennett in his article " Tale of Jews under Muslim rule", [Oct.3], reviewing the book: "In Ishmael's House", by Martin Gilbert, relates episodes of Muslims' ill-treatment of Jews. This account contradicts the universal history of Muslims and Jews living together in peace and friendship, until the recent introduction of Zionism. Testimony to this is manifold, and is confirmed by Jewish historians.

Muslim tolerance to Christians and Jews goes back to the inception of Islam. The first Khalifah in Islam, Abu Bakr, in the year 634 A.D, ordered the commander, Usama Ibn Zayd, of the troops sent to Palestine and Syria : " Do not deceive or cheat and do not torture and do not kill a child or an elderly person or a woman and do not cut a tree or slay a cow or a sheep or a camel. **You will find people in their churches or their temples and places of worship; do not molest them or harm them**". These words were **The Fourth Geneva Convention**, written 1400 years ago. Similarly, Saladin, in his liberation of Jerusalem from the European Crusaders, went to great lengths to protect the Jews and allow them to return to live in Jerusalem. The Jews and Muslims worked in peace together promoting momentous civilization in Spain [Andalusia], for over 800 years under Islamic rule. There are numerous accounts of Muslims in North Africa and Albania risking their lives in the protection of Jews from the Nazis, during the Holocaust.

The story of hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from Arab countries, after 1948, omits the fact that a significant number of these refugees left under pressure by Israeli political leaders calling for the gathering in of Jews to Israel. Modechai Ben Porat bragged about his effort to force reluctant Iraqi Jews to come to Israel. In 1950-51, Israeli agents were dispatched to Iraq where they tossed hand grenades into the Shem-Tov synagogue, killing a number of worshippers, in order to blame it on the Iraqis and encourage reluctant Iraqi Jews to emigrate to Israel.

Finally, the claims by Martin Gilbert are devastated by the compelling testimony by **Chaim Weizmann**, Israel's first president, who stated before The Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry, in 1946, in Jerusalem at the King David Hotel: "**I would not like to do any injustice. The Muslim World has treated the Jews with considerable tolerance. The Ottoman Empire [of which the Arabs were**

a major part] received the Jews with open arms when they were driven out of Spain and Europe, and the Jews should never forget that." Sadly, many Jews have forgotten Weizmann's advice.

It is our call today for Muslims, Christians and Jews to live together in peace and security in this tortured and precious Holy Land.

Yours sincerely,

Ismail Zayid, MD.