

DO OR DIE

I am not an intellectual; this is a product of common sense, not intuition, not pessimism—nay, in fact, a judgment grounded on facts, empirically verifiable, and contextualized, however demoralizing and frightening, or insensitive. No—I will not sweeten the bitter Truth or self-delude lest I send the very thoughts into captivity and deprive this paper the words, however unspeakable, a chance to embody. It feels like writing an obituary. If words could weep, it would, but this is the Truth—Pakistan is dying. Lo! I can even hear the funeral bell tolling!

—perhaps I am being dramatic, or sensational, or a tinge prejudiced, or maybe controversial, for each has its own charm, but what I see, as a Muslim, as a Pakistani, and as a student, is not promising. Socially, we have become a nation: unfit, culturally adulterated, economically poor, ecologically polluted, politically unstable, and spiritually hypocritical; the latter shrouding the formers. Individually speaking, as human beings, we are a disgraced lot, labeled, laughed at, and ridiculed, all around the world, even in the Heavens.

Who are we? What is ours? Politically, we are run by Uncle Sam; socio-culturally, by Hindi Entertainment; and economically, by Jewish Banks—all tagged 'Made in Pakistan' and 'Halal' by our self-elected officials. As I sit here, contemplate, and seek for my identity, I find, I am neither a Muslim, nor a Pakistani, or a student, in the strictest sense of the word—but only superficially, like the rest of us, lest our conscience gives way to internal turmoil. Needless to say, we are a country without face, head without brains, and heart without love. Welcome to Pakistan. Please park your car where ever you please!

Either this is a comedy of error or a tragedy of terror—I cannot yet fully say for I am not yet fully qualified. Remember, I am just a student. My knowledge is limited. I believe in what I am told. I do as what they say. And they are telling me right now to shut up. If words could indeed weep, it would, but this is the Truth—Pakistan is dying. Lo! I can now hear the mourners mourning and the diggers, digging.

What has become of us? We adulterate the essence and nomenclature of all Truth with Falsehood and all Virtue with Vice; blasphemy is euphemized into freedom of speech, nudity into freedom of expression, adultery into freedom to love, prostitution into freedom of profession, and abortion into freedom of choice. We indoctrinate young defenseless minds and institutionalize corruption through feudalistic politics, capitalistic economics, and hedonistic culture. Under the umbrella of Islam we have done what no pagan could ever do—believe in God and worship ourselves!

This land of opportunity, and the opportunists, and the chosen Muslims of the Lord, have the highest corruption rate; sectarian violence, domestic crimes, target assassinations, honor killings, and suicide bombings mar the otherwise pleasantries of the day—alcoholism, drugs, rape, pornography, suicides, and divorces. While we celebrate our Independence Day, the World, in their 500-pages report, declares us a Failed Nation, a Failed State, and a Failed Religion. Body-frisked at airports, computer-profiled there from, spied-upon later—this is how we are welcomed! How can I expect and hope to see this debt-ridden, poverty-stricken, and down-trodden Nation to save Pakistan from her impending doom? No, I cannot—

We are too socially stratified, economically polarized, and politically divided amongst ourselves. It is a shame that the only nuclear-armed country in the world with a population of 160m, 70% are illiterate, 60% in poverty, and the rest—godless and confused—heedless of the needful, neglectful of the helpless, indifferent to the weak, intolerant of the pious. Are we the same worshippers of God, lovers of Muhammad (pbuh), and followers of Quran for whom lives and honor were exchanged? Are we the same Muslims upon whom the task to build a city of Islam and a Kingdom of God was entrusted? Amputated in '71, seeing we see not, hearing we hear not, neither do we understand that they, who stand divided, fall united. Deaf! Dumb! Blind!—we are.

I, as a Muslim, as a Pakistani, and as a student, in all these twenty-four years of my life, has come to discover this: these self-proclaimed flag-bearers of Islam and those highly-educated ism-loving fanatics have caused the most mischief; the former through ignorance and the latter through knowledge. This tussle between Mullah-style Islam and the Secular-kind establishment is squeezing the life out of Pakistan; her identity is being stripped, substance reduced, purpose redefined, and destiny blurred—is there any refuge except in death? Brain-drained, face-shamed, heart-strained, what is left but to drag along in this self-defeating self-deceit?

No Sir, Nations don't collapse out of physical illness, however grave—but instead out of mental decay manifested in their worldview (Weltanschauung). After all, it is the body that serves the brain i.e. the think-tank, the policy-maker, the decision-taker, the trendsetter, the influential, and not the other way round. Why does our brain-trust rally behind Secular and Materialistic Ideologies, predominantly through Media, and politics, and primarily through Schools? Alas! What do our leaders seek in Alexander and Caesar; the economists in Smith and Marx; the politicians in Thatcher and Mussolini; the educationists in Dewey and Freire; the philanthropists in Teresa and Bono; the scientists in Darwin and Freud; the philosophers in Hegel and Nietzsche?—when there exists Muhammad (pbuh) the Greatest? Alternative Systems—alternate to what: Islam? We fornicate with the West, adulterate with the Rest, and aborts what there is left—such is our indignity.

Do we not bite our own hands, kick our own backs, and poison our own minds—we do; we worship the Devil and Praise the Lord—Halleluia! Forever from the wedding to the funeral and from the marriage-bed to the grave we have loved no one except ourselves. Consumed in this fast-paced world of cut-throat rats-race and arms-race, and beauty-queens, we have been slapping no one except our own faces and breaking our own hearts—we are killing ourselves—dying without ever having lived—cant you see? Don't you care? Pakistan is dying: This Land of Pure is infested, it's City of Lights: benighted, and its Capital of Promise: corrupted—such it is, sheer paradoxes. For how long are we to turn our backs, our cheeks, and our faces and let them do what they want and how they want it? There was a time when we actually cared but now we don't even pretend to!

It hurts to see what I have seen and hear what I have heard, and to say what I have said, but it is true: Pakistan is next. We always were—ever since the day we came into being on 14 August 1947 on the Night of the nights of the Months of the months promising the Promise of the promises with the Lord of the lords while rooting the Flag of Pakistan and singing La ilaha illalah before the people of the world. Then we had nothing and they still feared us. Today we have everything, plus Nuclear, but none notices us. Dictated-around, bullied-by, threatened-with is how we are stamped-down in our own backyard. They don't idolize their freedom—its our Brotherhood they envy, and the religion that makes it to be. Lo! I can hear the war-drums beating and the enemy-troops marching not very afar and it is only God alone who can save us now—all we need to do is: Ask.

Alas! Brother, if words could only weep, it would, but I swear I tell you the truth—Pakistan is indeed dying. Lo! And Behold! I can even see them approaching. As for me, I say, so what if the words cannot weep—I can, but I won't, for you—Pakistan, was created to bring smiles to us, and not tears. Amen.

Pakistan Zindabad! Pakistan Pa`indabad!

Farhan Noor

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FAST FOOD FOR THOUGHT

RECIPE FOR GLOBAL DOMINANCE

By Master Chef: Farhan Noor

Finely chop & divide Muslim Nations:

- Use a sharp knife to cut through the lines of language, culture, race, class, etc.
- Be creative.

Sprinkle lots of spicy-hot conflicts over it:

- Make sure every chunk is properly coated and diffused with enmity, distrust, hatred, intolerance, misgivings, etc.
- Be generous.

Cook the chunks together over a war-like flame:

- Allow time for oil and energy to sap. Be patient.
- Add salt to wound.

Bon Appetite.