



FIANZ RESPONSE TO THE REPUBLICATION OF DEROGATORY CARTOONS IN NEW ZEALAND

The derogatory cartoons depicting our beloved Prophet Muhammad (*Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him*) in a negative way first appeared in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. Other newspapers in Europe followed suit creating a backlash in the countries concerned.

In New Zealand The Dominion Post and The Christchurch Press republished one of the series of offending cartoons on Saturday, 5 Feb 2006. FIANZ became aware of the impending publication on Friday, 4 Feb 2006 and immediately took action in an attempt to stop publication. We wrote a letter to Mr. Tim Pankhurst, Editor of The Dominion Post, strongly urging him to refrain from republishing the cartoons which had already created considerable disquiet and distress throughout the Muslim world. We appealed for good and common sense to prevail.

Br. Javed Khan, President of FIANZ, appeared on TV One's Close Up programme and gave radio interviews vehemently objecting to such unnecessary republication of the cartoons which the media concerned knew would offend the Muslim community both here and abroad. He suggested that republication could have serious repercussions and jeopardise New Zealand's economic relations with Muslim countries, especially in the meat and dairy exports.

In spite of FIANZ's strong protestations, and the protests lodged by other New Zealanders, the cartoons were printed. FIANZ immediately issued a press release expressing our sadness and disappointment at such an irresponsible act from mainstream New Zealand media. We reiterated that freedom of expression does not mean "absolute" freedom or the right to mock other religions and their beliefs. In the statement we highlighted the role played by Muslim New Zealanders in building a cohesive, vibrant and progressive, New Zealand. FIANZ called for all New Zealanders to rally together in these difficult times to keep New Zealand a safe and secure nation so that everyone, regardless of religion, race or culture, can enjoy happiness, prosperity and progress for many generations to come.

FIANZ called for the newspapers to take responsibility for their actions and to appreciate how insensitive and hurtful the republication was to Muslims pointing out that the mature and honourable thing to do now was for the papers to



apologise and retract such printing. FIANZ also appealed to the Muslim community to show restraint in the face of such flagrant insensitivity and to seek God's Grace for patience and forbearance.

FIANZ also wrote to the Presidents of IMAN and MAC to mount quiet protests, thus avoiding verbal provocation, in front of the offices of The Dominion Post and the Christchurch Press. We wrote to all Local Associations and Trusts calling for them to exercise their freedom of expression by registering the unhappiness of the Muslim community, suggesting they write to the editors of both papers, their local MPs and the Human Rights Commissioner. Through the Local Associations and Trusts we advised the community to avoid becoming involved in talk-back shows on the topic.

The measured response of the Federation has won the hearts of many New Zealanders, Muslims and Non-Muslims alike. We received, from the wider community, both messages of support condemning the two newspapers for their irresponsible behaviour and accolades for the pragmatic approach taken by FIANZ in conveying our displeasure and disapproval. We are grateful for the on-going support received from both Muslim and Non-Muslim New Zealanders.

A meeting was initiated by Mr. Joris de Bres, Race Relations Commissioner of New Zealand to discuss the issue.

A delegation from FIANZ (comprising the President, Chairman of Ulama Board, Secretary and the Executive Manager) participated at this meeting. The Editors of The



Dominion Post and the Press along with representatives from Television New Zealand channels TV1 and TV3, the Roman Catholic Church, Temple Sinai, the Broadcasting School and Race and Ethnic Relations Commission were also present at the meeting.

FIANZ took the opportunity to convey, in no uncertain terms, the Muslim communities' disappointment and unhappiness over the republication of the cartoons and the negative portrayal of our Prophet Muhammad (*Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him*). The media concerned accepted responsibility for their actions and apologised. They also affirmed that they would not re-print such material in the future and that they would be mindful of religious and cultural sensitivities.

The meeting concluded amicably agreeing upon the following:

- (1) That there are new challenges for the media and the New Zealand community with increased diversity of cultures and faiths.
- (2) That the freedom of the media is important in New Zealand but such freedom is not absolute and, comes with responsibilities which include:
 - Sensitivity to diverse cultures and beliefs, and recognition of the diversity within cultures and beliefs.
 - Responsibility to inform the community about diverse cultures and beliefs.
 - Provide dialogue and channels of communication between the media and faith communities.
- (3) That there is a need for continuing public discussion on the issues raised - especially beyond the organisations and groups represented at the meeting.
- (4) That the Human Rights Commission will facilitate further discussion, in consultation with the media, faith communities and educators.
- (5) That the NZ Journalists Training Organisation should address training issues that arise from this debate.
- (6) A directory of Muslim spokespeople to be compiled and made available to the media to facilitate a better flow of information.

The Federation considers the meeting to have been very fruitful and the agreement reached with the News Media to be positive for the Muslim community in New Zealand. Hoping to avoid further fallout, FIANZ advised the community against engaging themselves in any further protest. We also advised the community that FIANZ would observe the situation very closely and respond with tact and hikmah as necessary.



The Federation is very grateful to Mr Joris de Bres for organising this meeting. This sets a template for resolving other tricky issues which may challenge us in the future. We understand that the Prime Minister, as well as other religious groups were very pleased with our measured and responsible approach to the situation and the outcome of the meeting.

The Muslim community in New Zealand is committed to living a life of peace and harmony with full adherence to the laws of the land. While committed to the welfare of our nation, we feel it is important that our feelings and sentiments are appreciated so that we can live with dignity and as honourable citizens of New Zealand. As a community, we need to have a clear sense of focus and direction. We have to be religiously profound yet socially progressive in the secular and multi-religious environment of our country. We should not diffuse our attention nor overstretch ourselves. We need to build a confident Muslim community that is integrated well into New Zealand society as a whole.

Islam was revealed through our beloved Prophet Muhammad (*Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him*) as a mercy to mankind. For Islam to be a mercy, its adherents (the Muslims) must be merciful to mankind. We must also strive for our community to be merciful and beneficial to our friends and neighbours.

True to the teachings of Islam, we should be steadfast in our iman, be endowed with sabr and hikmah. To progress well, time, human endeavour, dedication, wisdom and faith are essential prerequisites.

It is our sincere hope that the Regional Muslim Associations will continue to serve our community and serve them well in the spirit of Islam for peace, happiness, and progress for New Zealand and the whole human society. Only then, we would realize the true vision of Islam as "*rahmatan lil alamin*" (*blessing for the whole universe*).

Sultan Eusoff
Executive Manager

STRANGE EXPERIENCE by Hanif Ali

I had the pleasure of observing the fast (during the month of Ramadhan) as well as being on a plane flying from Auckland to Wellington. The route was over Mt. Egmont (Taranaki). As the plane took off at 7.30pm it was over Mt Taranaki at Iftar time. Here was the strangeness: The sun was glaring on my face (I was sitting on the right side of the plane) but all I could see down on the ground was the snow on Mt Taranaki, while the countryside was not clear at all. I had the presence of mind to take the food offered by the stewardess, and I kept it together with the food

that my sister had thoughtfully given to me from Auckland. At the right time, by my watch - not by the setting of the sun - I broke my fast. This will probably be the last time, and I suspect there are not too many people who have had this kind of experience, that I will break my fast with the sun beating down on me. This was a unique event for me. If I could I would have carved a notch on the plane's window to mark this occasion. The lesson from this experience is that sighting of the new moon to determine the course of the lunar months, is from the ground, and not from some elevated place in the sky.

MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS FROM THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE VISIT FIANZ OFFICE

FIANZ was honoured to receive a group of Malaysian officials (comprising Appeal Court Judges, Senior Judges and State Court officials) of the Ministry of Justice of Malaysia and a member of the Malaysian High Commission in Wellington, on 24 November 2005.

Visit to Levin Meat Plant

At their request, we also arranged for the Malaysian party to visit the Levin Meat Plant. FIANZ Lower North Island Supervisor, Ahmed El-Gharably, was at hand during the tour of the plant.

According to our Supervisor, the visitors had a successful visit of the Plant. They were impressed with all sectors of the plant (sticking, boning and storage areas). Their questions were well answered by our Supervisor and the Halal Slaughterman at work.

FIANZ is grateful to Don Dawson, Compliance Manager of the Levin Meat Plant who coordinated the visit at short notice.

Reception at FIANZ Office

The highlight of the programme in the office was the power-point presentation of FIANZ Halal process. We gave an overview of the standards and procedures for Halal certification process adopted by FIANZ. We also reiterated to the visitors the important role played by the members of the Ulama Board in our Halal certification process and the community-orientation and focus of FIANZ.

FIANZ Secretary also took the opportunity to express the gratitude of the Wellington community which received a grant of \$600,000 from the Government and people of Malaysia towards the construction of the Wellington Islamic Centre.

The leader of the group, Dato Mohammad Asri Abdullah, Appeals Court Judge, delivered his speech thanking FIANZ for its kind hospitality and presented a memento to Secretary Hanif Ali.

The visit rounded off with a sumptuous lunch which was heartily enjoyed by the visitors.



*Hanif Ali, Secretary, welcoming the
Delegates from the Malaysian Judiciary*



*Sultan Eusoff, Executive Manager, briefing the Malaysian
Delegates on the FIANZ Halal Systems and Standards*



*Dato Haji Muhamad Asri bin Haji Abdullah, Syariah Appeal Court Judge
of Malaysia and Leader of the Malaysian Delegation, expressing "Thank
You" on behalf of his delegation*



Hanif Ali receiving a "Memento" from Dato Haji Asri



VISIT FROM DR. HANIF QAZI

15 December 2005

We had the great pleasure and honour to invite Dr. Hanif Qazi to our offices for lunch. Dr. Qazi is a past office bearer (President and Secretary), of FIANZ.



Dr Hanif Qazi (Past Secretary/President of FIANZ) signing the visitors book.

In the early days, when he was studying here, Dr. Qazi spent all his time at Lincoln, Christchurch. He was in the forefront of getting the Halal System initiated, at a time when we were in our infancy and no one in the industry was willing to talk to us. Those were difficult times for our



Brs Mohammed Akramy, Ashraf Farouk, Dr Hanif Qazi, Brs Hanif Ali, Abdul Razak Khan, Yakub Khan and Sultan Eusoff.

fledgling organisation, when the Council members had to share their time with studying for their careers, looking after their families and, in their spare time, put all their effort into setting up our organisation. We were helped by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Hanif was very impressed with our progress, in our Halal System and especially in the acquisition of our new and charming office in the basement of the Wellington Islamic centre. He was quite taken with the Meeting Room, and reminisced about the meetings of the early days. He remembered the old Christchurch property in Tuam Street, Christchurch which was the base of Muslim Association of Canterbury (MAC). Dr. Hanif also remembered Dr. Saleh Al-Samahy and Brs. Othman Gaffaar, Abdul Razzak Khan and Mansoor Khwaja as outstanding personalities of that time. It was Mansoor Khawaja who selected the site that the Masjid Al-Nur stands on today.



FIANZ EXECUTIVE MEMBER HONOURED



Br Daud Azimullah with Hon Dr Michael Cullen, Deputy PM and Hon Chris Carter, Minister for Ethnic Affairs.

Br Daud Azimullah, Treasurer of FIANZ, has been awarded the Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM) in the New Year's Honours List for his services to the Muslim community.

This award is a tribute to Br Daud for his untiring service to the Muslim community. Br Daud has done FIANZ and the Muslim community proud. In accepting this award, he said that he had been "humbled" and that "it means a lot".

FIANZ congratulates Br Daud Azimullah for his achievement and wishes him and his family well.

FIANZ PARTICIPATION AT THE MUSLIMS OF NEW ZEALAND SYMPOSIUM 18-19 FEBRUARY 2006, UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Over Saturday and Sunday, 18 and 19 February 2006, 70 people (both Muslim and non-Muslim) met at the School of Social Work in the University of Canterbury, to hear several lectures regarding the New Zealand Muslim community. The Muslims of New Zealand Symposium was organised by Dr Erich Kolig, Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, Otago University and Sister Dr Ghazala Anwar, Lecturer (Religious Studies), Canterbury University.

After lunch, Prof William Shepard (formerly of Religious Studies Department, Canterbury University) provided an overview of the New Zealand Muslim community giving excellent outline of the history and organizational development of New Zealand Muslims. Attention was given to the origins of the New Zealand Muslim Association, and the formation of the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand.

In the evening there was a general discussion between the speakers and other interested parties present towards the creation of a "New Zealand Society for the Study of Muslim Affairs". FIANZ with other Academicians from Auckland, Canterbury, Otago and Victoria Universities, will lead this organisation to present a more scholarly view of Muslims in New Zealand.



Brs Daud Azimullah and Sultan Eusoff with Professor William Shepard

FIANZ was honoured to participate in this first-ever kind of Symposium represented by Brs Daud Azimullah, Senior Council Member and Sultan Eusoff, Executive Manager of FIANZ. Br Abdullah Drury from Christchurch also attended the Symposium.

DAY ONE

Day one of the symposium began with a brief presentation by Dr Mohamed Jabawe, an Iraqi immigrant, on Muslim conceptions of space in relation to urban planning and basic architectural philosophies.

Dr Jacqueline Leckie, Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, Otago University, gave an account of the Indian Muslim "pioneers" of Islam. She talked at length about the Kara family of Christchurch, the Bhikhoo and Musa / Moses families of Auckland. She also discussed various other individual Indian Muslims such as Mohamed Ibrahim Wali Suliman, better known as Abraham Salaman of New Plymouth for example.



Professor William Shepard, Dr Art Buehler, Senior Lecturer (Religious Studies) Victoria University and Dr Najibullah Lafraie, Lecturer (Political Studies) Otago University.

DAY TWO

On the second day, Dr Erich Kolig gave his lecture entitled "New Zealand's Muslims and Multiculturalism". He touched on several issues like immigration policies, Human Rights ideology and cultural liberalism. He also touched upon integration and the inherent social tensions surrounding the acceptance by Muslim immigrants of liberal democracy and secular law.

He was followed by Malcolm Brown, Lecturer in Sociology, Auckland University. He discussed Muslims in New Zealand in relation to the comparison between Muslims in Britain and France. He pointed out that Europe and European-Christian culture has been defined in large part by its proximity and relation to the Islamic world and Islamic culture (and religion) for over one thousand years.



Sisters Aisha Boulanour, Lecturer, Otago University and Dr Ghazala Anwar, Lecturer, Canterbury University.

Dr Ghazala Anwar presented a lecture from her personal perspectives of life as a Muslim woman in a Western cultural confine. This was followed by a lecture from Sister Aisha Boulanour, Lecturer, Otago University, on the subject of Islamic clothing and in particular the clothing of Muslim women. She also talked about Islamic conceptions of modesty and the misunderstandings Muslim women face in a Western cultural environment.

continued overleaf

continued from previous page

The third presenter for the day was Dr Najibullah Lafraie, Lecturer (Political Studies Department), Otago University. He talked about the case surrounding Ahmad Zaoui.

Dr Mohammed Musa, Senior Lecturer (Mass Communications), Canterbury University, gave his lecture on the media misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims in domestic and international media forms (radio, print and television). He refuted the allegation that there was a deliberate bias against Islam and Muslims and suggested instead that there was a genuine ignorance and that Muslims living in Western societies such as New Zealand had an

urgent need to participate more vocally in the media in a positive and constructive manner.

Dr Musa's lecture was followed by Dr Art Buehler, Senior Lecturer (Religious Studies), Victoria University. He talked about Sufism in New Zealand.

The Symposium was a great success and much appreciated by those who attended.

FIANZ hopes that through organizing this kind of event, Muslims and their aspirations to live in harmony with mainstream New Zealanders, would be better understood.

VISIT FROM UNIVERSITY PUTRA MALAYSIA AND TENAGA NATIONAL BERHAD DELEGATION

On Monday 20 February 2006, FIANZ had the privilege to co-host with IMAN a delegation from Malaysia.

The 19-strong delegation was made up of representatives from UPM (Universiti Putra Malaysia) and TNB (Tenaga Nasional Berhad). Professor Dr Azimi Hamzah addressed the gathering and he impressed upon the need to be steadfast on deen and to cater for the needs of our youth.

There was an invaluable discussion particularly on matters related to the youth. Emphasis was placed on the need to provide support and an alternative life-style to the 'hip hop' culture in a way that was attractive and meaningful to the youth. It was important to recognize and understand the predominant contemporary culture and be prepared to change our methods of education to achieve the best possible result.

On behalf of FIANZ youth, Tariq Ashraf reported on the youth activities in New Zealand. He spoke of their achievements, their challenges, and their aspirations.

In a strangely ironic way it was somewhat comforting to learn that our problems are not unique or confined to New Zealand, given its culture. Malaysia too, being predominantly a Muslim, is having similar problems where it is getting harder to get the youth to buy in to the Islamic values and life-style. These things are greatly influenced by the constant stream of media advertisements glorifying materialism and linking immorality with fame and fortune.



Br Tariq Ashraf articulating a point to the Malaysian visitors.



Prof Dr Azimi Hamzah with Br Sameer Al-Matari, Shoura Council Member of IMAN.

The challenge before us is how to get the youth to recognize the right from the wrong, and then to make the right choice. Choice, how to get them to voluntarily say "No" to drugs for example.

These realities must serve to strengthen our resolve to put forward the Islamic teachings that is for all peoples and all times.

We take this opportunity to thank the delegation for taking the time to visit us and for sharing some of their experience. We hope to keep in contact for mutual co-operation and benefit.



IN MEMORY OF MARHUM DEMAL HODZIC



Demal Hodzic was a migrant from Bosnia. He was born in 1932 in a small town called Trnopolje, Bosnia. With his younger brother, Rafik, he escaped the difficult life under the Yugoslavian authorities, only to be caught by the Italian authorities at the border. After several months in an Italian refugee camp, the brothers were allowed to cross over to Germany. In seeking better economic prospects and life, the brothers then moved to Australia.

In 1962, leaving behind brother Rafik in Australia, Demal came to New Zealand. Demal married Jenny Ford in 1969 and moved back to Bosnia to live with his parents. Demal's father died in 1972. The couple once again faced difficulties in Bosnia and, in 1978, they moved back to New Zealand with their son, Ibrahim. In 1980, Demal's younger brother, Abas joined him. In the meanwhile, Br Demal's mother died in 1984 in Bosnia.

The 1992 Bosnian war affected the Hodzics family immensely. The daily killings and rapes of innocent Muslim women by Serbs worried and distressed Hodzics brothers very much. Ultimately, in 1993, the brothers pooled their financial resources to settle their remaining siblings (Hassan, Hussain and Safia) and their families in New Zealand as refugees. Demal's two brothers (Shafik and Hassan) died of cancer in 2002 and 2004 respectively. This affected Demal mentally and physically.

Br Demal died of a heart attack on 11 Oct 2004. Inna Lillahe Wa-Inna Elahe Rajeon. He was buried at Manukau Memorial Gardens, where his two other brothers are also resting. Br Demal was a unique individual who was very passionate. Committed, persistent, humble, generous, industrious, helpful, dedicated, charitable and pious. Even though he was 72 years of age and not in the best of health his concern was always for the welfare of the Muslims, particularly those of South Auckland.

Few weeks before his death he spoke to me of his desire to sell his Te Aroha property and to perform Hajj with the proceeds. May ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) accept his intentions, good deeds and reward him and his family and grant him Jannatul-Firdous.

He is survived by a son Ibrahim, two daughters Dula & Demka and brother Abas - all living in New Zealand - brothers Rafik and Hussain living in Melbourne, a widowed sister Safia back in Bosnia, nephews, nieces, sister-in-laws and grandchildren.

Gul Zaman

(Former President of SAMA)

Upcoming Events

Executive Meeting	March/April
AGM	June
Islam Awareness Week	August

Contributions

Readers are invited to submit articles of interest to:
FIANZ NEWS
PO Box 1415 Wellington or fianz@xtra.co.nz

Editorial Committee

Sr Rehanna Ali	Br Abdullah Drury
Br Hanif Ali	Br Gul Zaman
	Br Sultan Eusoff



اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية النيوزيلندية
The Federation of Islamic Associations
of New Zealand (Inc.)

A United and Progressive Community

7 - 11 Queens Drive, Lyall Bay, Wellington, PO Box 1415, Wellington, New Zealand
Telephone +64 4 387 8023 • Facsimile +64 4 387 8024
Email fianz@xtra.co.nz • Web fianz.co.nz



FIANZ CELEBRATION AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

The Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ) held its first ever Eidul Fitr Celebration at the Parliament House on 16 November 2005. We also took the opportunity to celebrate FIANZ's 25th Anniversary Silver Jubilee Celebration.



Silver Jubilee Anniversary Cake (specially prepared by Bellamy's of Parliament)

The double celebration was well attended by NZ Government officials, Parliamentarians, the Diplomatic community, other community leaders, media personnel and members of the Muslim community. We were also honoured by the presence of the First President of FIANZ, Br Mazhar Krasniqi, and former FIANZ Presidents. Dr. Ashraf Choudhary, Member of Parliament, was the Master of Ceremony for the evening.

The function began with a recitation of the Holy Qur'an, beautifully rendered by Sheikh Mohammad Amir, Imam of the Wellington Islamic Centre. Sister Rehanna Ali, Representative from the Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand, read the English translation.

Br Javed Khan, President of FIANZ, gave a welcome address in which he spoke about the significance of the month of Ramadhan for Muslims. He also spoke about FIANZ as the Umbrella organisation in New Zealand serving the Muslim community. Br Javed also spoke of the appreciation by the Muslim community of the New Zealand government and the wider community for their acknowledgement and recognition of the community. He reiterated the Muslim communities' enthusiasm for living in unity and harmony with the other communities in New Zealand. Greater understanding leads to greater respect which is surely a catalyst for peace and harmony for our society. Hon. Dr. Michael Cullen, Deputy Prime Minister; Hon Don Brash, Leader of the Opposition; Hon Chris Carter, Minister for Ethnic Affairs and Hon Tariana Turia, Leader of the Maori Party also spoke at the ceremony.



Speech by Hon Dr Michael Cullen, Deputy Prime Minister



Speech by Hon Don Brash, Leader of the Opposition



"Vote of Thanks" by Br Daud Azimullah, Co-ordinator of Silver Jubilee

The event was a resounding success for FIANZ. It has been given a ringing endorsement by the Government for its continued work towards advancing the interests of the Muslim community in New Zealand.



FIANZ feels very encouraged by the positive recognition and the continued support extended by the Government and the wider community of New Zealand. This augurs well for the community to work towards strengthening our social fabric and cohesion, making New Zealand society as a whole stronger, healthier and more vibrant.



Speech by Br Javed Khan, President of FIANZ