

● THE INFLUENCE OF LIBERAL THINKING ON OUR PEOPLE

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We feel we SURTI SUNNI VOHRAS and all Muslims should think seriously about the influence liberal thinking is having on all aspects of our lives. All of us may not be able to separate the influence of liberal thinking on the activities we engage in every day of our lives. If we were to spend just a few minutes to think of the activities we engage in on a daily basis, be this with our family members, with friends, with acquaintances, with strangers, with our fellow Muslims and with those who are not Muslims and with our learned persons we will realise that the way we talk and the way we behave will not be like what our religion expects of us.

Liberal thinking should not be ignored or dismissed as being irrelevant. We feel we need to find ways and means to understand it and we should try our best to steer our Muslim brothers and sisters away from it. We should not think of the spread of liberal thinking as unavoidable or inevitable. If we think of it as something that is taking us away from our religious beliefs, we must act. If we cannot stop others or steer away others from liberal thinking, we can steer away ourselves from it.

Whilst our lives go on with liberalism dictating how we liaise with others, the clothes we wear and the entertainment we seek the sad side of our opting for liberal thinking has undoubtedly deprived us of the respect we as Muslims need to have for our elders, our learned

persons and for everyone we come into contact with.

We know, even if we do not admit that in our own families the older members are no longer shown the respect which they enjoyed some years ago. Older siblings too are no longer respected, and uncles and aunts too have been side-lined. Try to observe those who attend the Friday prayers at their local masjid. A great percentage of these will hang around the Wuzu area and will only join the others in the masjid when the Bayaan has ended. When attending someone's Janaza, we will notice that many will stay busy with their mobile phones, and only join the others after the prayer has commenced. Saying ASSALAMOALAIKUM is rare and those who greet others are quite selective. In brief we greet those who we know or greet those with whom we have something in common. Look at the ways our weddings are celebrated. Many of us have revived some of our old customs and many have incorporated the customs of others into their wedding celebrations.

Liberalism for many means they have no need to listen to anyone as they know everything they need to know. What such persons say could be true for many as we live in an age where everyone has access to acquiring all sorts of education and information. How much knowledge they have and what sort of knowledge they have they may know but many a times when they say, "WE KNOW" could also be a way of saying "MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS, I DO NOT NEED YOUR ADVICE." ■