

# OBITUARY

## MAULANA ABDUL MAJID

### A leading spokesman for Islam

Professor Musa Mazzawi writes:

Maulana Abdul Majid, who died in London on March 1, at the age of 80, will be remembered in the English-speaking world as a leading spokesman for Islam. For 20 years he was Imam of the Mosque in Woking, Surrey. The Mosque, which was built in 1889, became the headquarters of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust founded by Khwaja Kamaluddin. Abdul Majid joined the Mission in 1926 and also became editor of *The Islamic Review*, which for a long time was the only journal in the English language on Islamic topics circulating throughout the world.

Although the Woking Mission was at times said to be associated with sectarian attitudes and leanings, Abdul Majid himself always steered an orthodox and middle-of-the-road course. He was passionately concerned with improving the image in the West of the religion and culture of Islam, and encouraging converts. He preached a

liberal and modern interpretation of Islamic dogma guided by the Saying of the Prophet Mohammad, that "Religion is to make life easy, not to complicate it". He also consistently defended the cause of Arab nationalism, particularly in North Africa and Palestine.

Abdul Majid was interested in the promotion of better relations between Britain and the Muslim world. During World War II he edited for the Ministry of Information in London two weeklies in the vernacular for Indian troops and seamen, and used the proceeds to keep the Woking Mission alive.

Abdul Majid was a person of profound learning and compendious knowledge of literature and languages (with university degrees from Germany and India, where he was born). His many friends will remember him as a man of abundant humanity and charity and as a gentle, self-effacing and tireless worker for his fellows, of all religions.