**[EZ Speech Writers No. 15041]**

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Remarks by Dr. Shahid Rashid on the occasion of the observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, 2016.

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ON THE OCCASION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY THIS YEAR, I THINK IT WOULD BE FITTING FOR ALL OF US TO RECALL ONE OF DR. KING’S SIMPLEST YET MOST POWERFUL TEACHINGS, WHEN HE SAID:

*“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”*

DR. KING’S WHOLE LIFE WAS DEVOTED TO DRIVING OUT DARKNESS AND HELPING ALL MANKIND LEARN THE HEALING POWER OF LOVE. AND IN THIS, HIS MISSION AND HIS TEACHINGS WERE NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD. WHILE DR. KING WAS A CHRISTIAN AND WE ARE MUSLIM, WE, LIKE HIM, ARE DOCTORS, DEVOTED TO HEALING THE SICK AND COMFORTING THE AFFLICTED. and like the african-american community of which dr. king was such a shining light, the muslim-american community — and indeed, muslim communities throughout the non-muslim world — are today facing the same kind of dark hatred and mindless prejudice that dr. king fought so fiercely to overcome.

we know what our role is as doctors and healers. but we must in today’s world — both as individual practitioners and as an organization — now take on an another role, an additional obligation. we must become — both as individuals and as an organization — bringers of light and purveyors of love.

it might not be the mission we signed up for when first we decided to become doctors. but like it or not, it’s a mission and a responsibility, that we should not — and indeed, cannot — avoid. it is a vital mission and one that we must embrace.

From the traditions of Prophet Muhammad comes the story of the man whom the Prophet sent on a mission. He camped close by to some people who did not show him any hospitality. When the leader of the nearby camp was bitten by a snake, they went to Prophet Muhammad’s companion for help. He recited the opening chapter of the Qu’ran over the afflicted man and he arose “as if released from a chain.” but today, simply reading from scripture is not enough.

here, too, we can learn from dr. king’s example. for he did not merely preach from his pulpit and read from the bible on sunday mornings. he was a man of action. he took his message to the streets and to the neighborhoods and to the halls of government, both national and local. he ministered one-on-one, and he preached to the multitudes, at rallies, on television, on the radio. in every waking hour, he lived a life of light and love, and he tought by the example of his own life the power of tolerance, understanding, and acceptance.

***can we do less?***

as individual doctors, as members of our own communities, and as a national organization, can we not find more effective, more proactive ways of shining light onto the darkness of racism and pouring out love to neutralize the awful venom of hate? i think we can. i think we must. not just one of us. not just some of us. but ***all*** of us.

let us look forward to the day when this ministry is no longer needed. let us pray for the day when, god be willing, we can return to our life’s work of healing and curing disease. but until that day arrives, we’ve got another job to do. let us join together in this new mission with the faith that allah will show us the way and will, allahu akbar, ensure that we succeed.

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