WORKING IN HOTELS SERVING LIQUOR AND PORK

Q: 12- (1) Muslim students who go to non-Muslim countries for higher education generally find out that the money sent to them by their parents is insufficient for their many needs. Thus, they take up jobs to stay even. Some times they find jobs in hotels which sell liquour and pork. Is it permissible for Muslim students to be employed in such hotels?

(2) Running a distillery or merchandising liquour or pork in non-Muslim countries are open businesses. Can Muslims also do so?

A: 1. & 2- A Muslim is permitted to take a job in hotels run by non-Muslims subject to the condition that this
Muslim employee does not take up the duty of supplying pork or serving liquour and other forbidden things to non-Muslims. For, making others drink or serving it to them is forbidden.

According to a narration from Sayyidna `Abdullah ibn `Umar, may Allah bless them both, the Holy Prophet said:

"Allah has cursed liquor and its drinker its server, its selkr, its buyer its squeezer and whoso it has been squeezed for and its carrier and whoso it has been carried to."

In Tirmidhi, a narration from Sayyidna Anas ibn Malik says:

"The Holy Prophet, has cursed ten persons connected with drinking: The squeezer of liquour and the one for whom it has been squeezed, its drinker and its carrier and the one for whom it is carried, its server and its seller and the consumer from its sale proceeds, its buyer and the one for whom it is bought."

The words of the hadith narrated by Sayyidna Anas4 appear almost identically in Ibn Majah as well:

"The squeezer of liquor and the one who orders its squeezing and the one for whom it has been squeezed, and its carrier and the one for whom it is carried, and its seller and the one to whom it is sold, and its server and the one who has been served with it."

Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim*, have narrated the following hadith from Sayyidna `A'ishah Rdi.

She said: "When the concluding verses of Surah al-Baqarah were revealed, the Holy Prophets went out of the house and recited those verses before people present there. Then, he prohibited trading in liquor"

Imam Muslim has reported the following saying of Sayyidna Ibn `Abbas rdi. as attributed to the Holy Prophet:

"The one who has made drinking of liquour unlawful is the one who has also made its buying and selling unlawful."

And Imam Ahmad has reported the following narration in his Musnad:

"This is a report from Abd al-Rahman ibn Wa'lah. He says: 'Once I asked Sayyidna Ibn Abbas: 'We live in an area where we own vineyards and the major source of our income there is nothing but liquor.' To this, Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas replied, 'A certain person came to the Holy Prophet44 and presented a leather bag full of liquor as a gift for him. Then, to him, the Holy Prophet said: The One who has made the drinking of liquor unlawful is the One who has also made its buying and selling unlawful."

In the light of the ahadith quoted above, it becomes clear that the business of liquor is also unlawful, as is its transportation from one place to the other, or its offering for consumption. The ruling given by Sayyidna Ibn Abbas also provides a clear answer to the situation in which the distilling, and buying and selling of liquor may be common local practice, still, there too, it will not be lawful for a Muslim to adopt dealing in wine as a means of his livelihood.

And as far as I know, no Faqih from among the Muslim Jurists has ruled it as permissible.

Contemporary fatawaa