

White Eed For Pakistanis

By MRS. HABEEB

THE Pakistani community in New York is made up of those who are United Nations officers, others connected with the Pakistan Mission to the UN or the Pakistan Consulate here, and scores of students, visitors and Pakistanis who have not given up their nationality but have made America their home.

Though most enjoy this experience of living away from home in this fabulous city, and many are enticed to continue to stay here and not go back—at least not for another couple of years—they all at some time or the other miss the element of human contact most. It seems many like nothing better than to speak their own language whenever they can, and though none of them would like to get involved with their countrymen all the time they definitely feel secure and at home whenever they have a chance to meet other Muslims and Pakistanis.

At the World's Fair Pakistan Pavilion many students and adults felt as if they were among family members and liked nothing more than to stay long, often meeting and chatting with other Pakistanis at the Pavilion. Especially at the time the War with India was going on, they liked to sit there and exchange news, views, worries, fears, loneliness and letters.

For those in New York, the

In New York

young people in New York, and other Pakistanis who were visiting New York at the time the World's Fair was still on it was like a soothing balm to visit the Pakistani Pavilion. Many were ready to drop their study, their business or work in New York and return to their country if required during the Indian attack on Pakistan.

Serious Study

MOST of the boy students I met were working hard at their studies and not just bent on having a good time while it lasted. Of course, there is always the exception to the rule. One student who came here to study just so that he would have attended a college abroad before starting any career at home, found on coming here that the wide course in Liberal Arts was so interesting and his own education at home was such a narrow dead end and that he felt when he discussed things with his fellow students, it didn't matter which subject they were majoring in—they knew about Art, Music, Literature, Chemistry, Biology, languages and the whole lot. This gave him such an incentive to work that he is relishing hard at it.

The students who are here on scholarship are the ones who are most dedicated to their studies, their research, their doctorate work—and with the facilities available for research and study they are most happy here.

Students' Attitude

A COUPLE of students who have years more to finish said they would like to go home, get married and return here with their brides, thus getting the best out of their stay here. It gets lonely and having a home to come to would make all the difference. The boys and girls who fall in love with non-Pakistanis and get married here mostly cause disappointment to their parents but otherwise have as much chance of a happy married life as at home. After all, marriage is a gamble at any time, any place and with anyone.

The exception to the above are those who had some unfulfilled need in their lives and nobody in the family noticed it or did anything about it, those who had had a raw deal in their homes and who on coming abroad think they will feel complete when they are in love with someone here and get married.

Girls' Fear

THE average Pakistani girl, I feel, the more she stays here the more she is afraid to go back home, even if she is living a completely calm and good life here—no dating or getting involved with boys, etc.

Even then life is so different and fast here—there is so much independence of thought, action and speech—that it would be dif-

icult to get adjusted to things at home.

As for the kind of stuff you see in movies and comic books and the low moral standards here, they only affect those who have not received the right kind of training or values or principles at home or have them lost along the way.

When President Ayub Khan visited America and addressed the UN it was a treat to see and meet the many Pakistanis who came to the airport to receive him and others who made it a point to come to New York from Washington D.C., Quebec, and Montreal. The young people from Pakistan here were a little tense for weeks following the ceasefire and on seeing their President make an impressive entrance and deliver a most dignified, calm and peaceful address, they all seemed to feel relaxed, happy and at peace, as if their own parent had visited them and told them all would be well.

Eed Function

RECENTLY the Muslims of Pakistan got together again for Eed on January 23. The New

York Times reported the start of the holy month of Ramazan of the followers of Islam the world over; the Islamic Centre here issued the dates and timings of Sehri and Iftar, the time for the Eed-ul-Fitr prayers and the amount of Fitra incumbent on each person.

In New York the Eed prayers were arranged to be held at the Americana Hotel and its large hall rented for the purpose was filled to capacity with Muslims from near and far in New York along with a few ladies, too. The Mission held a reception for the Consulate staff in the evening, the housewives prepared usual Sheerkhurma and other sweets, and Pakistani families visited each other just like at home.

Except for the fact that everyone missed their families, it was as enjoyable and happy an Eed as at home. Many families had lunch or dinner together at one person's place; others had private lunches or dinners; still others had invited as many students as they knew.

On the night before Eed, New York got its first snowfall and so the morning of Eed saw a dirty slushy street with rain and snow and storm on the outskirts of New York, but if one drove through the Central Park in the city it was the picture of the most beautiful White Eed-ul-Fitr of all.