ABUBAKAR IMAM MEMOIRS



Edited by

ABDURRAHMAN MORA

Errata:

Page 11. Arabic verse translated at the top of the page is rendered thus:

إزرع جميلا ولو في غير موضعه ولا يضيع جميل أينما زرعه

Page 223. Last paragraph on this page, not included, though regarded as *Wasiyya* (bequest), is rendered as follows:

I then decided to arrange all my papers and prepare them for publication. I feel sure that should I not live to see the publication of this book, my children and friends will see to its successful completion.

THE ABUBAKAR IMAM MEMOIRS



Malam Abubakar Imam

THE ABUBAKAR IMAM MEMOIRS

Edited with

An Introduction and

Appendices

By

ABDURRAHMAN MORA



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations and Maps .. .. *vi*

Acknowledgements .. .. *vii*

The Editor General — His Background .. .. *ix*

Forewords by : Alhaji Dr. Yahaya Gusau, O.F.R, Shetiman Sokoto *xii*

„ „ (ii) Alhaji Nuhu Bamalli, C.F.R., Magajin Garin Zazzau .. .. *xiii*

Introduction .. .. *xiv*

CHAPTER: 1. Birth and Childhood 1

Chapter: 2. School Days in Katsina 9

Chapter: 3. Life As A Teacher 21

Chapter: 4. Early Activities in Gaskiya Corporation 31

Chapter: 5. West African Press Delegation to United Kingdom .. 52

Chapter: 6. Discussions and Correspondence with Lord Lugard .. 77

Chapter: 7. Richards Constitutional Revision: The Role I Played 104

Chapter: 8. Policy Revision in Gaskiya Corporation 113

Chapter: 9. First Political Leaders 152

Chapter: 10. Activities In the Political Arena 172

Chapter: 11. Islamic Education and Pilgrimage Problems 189

Chapter: 12. Membership of Boards, Councils and Committees .. 205

Chapter: 13. Thousands at Home and Abroad Mourned Imam's Demise by Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora 225

Chapter: 14. Tributes by some Friends and Associates 243

Chapter: 15. Modesty and Simplicity: The Hallmark of Imam's Life Style by Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora 295

Appendices: I. A. D. and A. H. Conversion System 315

II. Alhaji Sir Abubakar III — Sultan of Sokoto .. 318

III. Alhaji Dr. Kabir Usman — Emir of Katsina .. 327

IV. Alhaji Dr. Shehu Idris — Emir of Zaria 329

Bibliography 331

Index 334

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

	Page
Alhaji Abubakar Imam	frontispiece
Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora	xi
Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara	4
Sir Hans Vicher (Dan Hausa)	5
Dr. R.M. East with Malama Dada Sare (Mrs. East) and Mr. Giles	5
Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara	8
Katsina College Cricket 1st x 1- 1931	14
Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko Gidado.. ..	16
Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Usman Nagogo	17
Imam's Training College Certificate	20
Gaskiya Corporation Building Zaria	34
Malam Ja'afaru, Emir of Zaria	37
West African Press Delegation to U.K...	55
M. Aminu Kano	76
M. Sa'adu Zungur	159
Katsina Old Boys Association — 1940 —	160
Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto and Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa	177
Letter of Appointment to P.S.C...	182
Alhaji Abubakar Imam receiving a present from Mr. Hibbert	183
Letter from Director of Education on Retirement	186
Letter of Appointment as Chairman P.S.C.	187
Public Service Commission Kaduna 1961	188
Garden Party in Government House Kaduna. The Sultan, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III is talking to Alhaji Abubakar Imam and the Emir of Katsina.	209
First National Merit Award Winners 1979	223
Editors of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, 1979	224
Presentation to Imam by Emir of Daura 1981	227

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It is the wish of the promoters of this publication to have prefatory remarks embodied in it, made by distinguished dignitaries, other than the introduction by the Editor General. We are lucky to have obtained the willingness of two outstanding elders who had known the late Malam Abubakar Imam for half a century (1931 — 1981) and whose relationship with him remained cordial over the years until they were separated from him by the inevitable! The elders concerned are Dr. Yahaya Gusau, the Shattima of Sokoto and Pro-Chancellor of the Bayero University Kano, and Alhaji Nuhu Bamalli, the Magajin Gari of Zazzau, a Federal Minister in the First Republic and currently a Director of Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria. We are indebted to them for sparing much of their valuable time to undertake such an onerous assignment.

Alhaji Sani Imam, formerly General Manager, Nigerian Dairies Limited and Alhaji Mukhtar Bello, the Managing Director of the Allied Bank of Nigeria Limited closely followed the progress of this publication and offered valuable comments as and when necessary. Alhaji Ahmed Bello of the Katsina Polytechnic delved into the voluminous records left behind by the late Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara the Wali of Katsina and also the elder brother of Malam Abubakar Imam, and procured some vital documents for the perusal and use of the Drafting Committee of the *Abubakar Imam Memoirs*. We thank them for their invaluable contributions.

We are also grateful to Alhaji Ahmed Talib, one of the respected leaders of our time, for the noble role he has played in tracing the history of Malam Abubakar Imam's family in Borno.

Alhaji Ahmed Umar, the former Principal of the Kaduna State College of Advanced Studies, Zaria, now Rector of Katsina Polytecnic, took a special interest in the book right from the beginning. As a historian his comments

have been of great value to us. In addition, through him, we had access to his College Library and the Kashim Ibrahim Library (K.I.L.) at Ahmadu Bello University, Main Campus, Samaru, Zaria. We are indebted to him for his co-operation.

Several other authorities saw the *Abubakar Imam Memoirs* in draft and offered valuable comments. They include His Eminence, the Grand Qadi of Sokoto State, Alhaji Haliru Binji; Professor Abdullahi Mohammed, Head of Department Library Science, and Dean of Student Affairs of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria; Alhaji Abubakar Tunau (Mafara), the Kayayen Sardauna, a former Civil Commissioner in the defunct North-West State and currently Deputy Managing Director of Impresit Bakolori Nigeria Limited, Sokoto; Mr. Paul Turton (British), a former Principal of several Colleges in Kaduna State (1968 — 1982); and Alhaji Inuwa Dikko formerly Managing Director of Ahmadu Bello University Press Zaria. We are most grateful for their assistance.

His Eminence the Grand Qadi of Sokoto State was specially requested to scrutinise the Quranic Verses and Prophetic Traditions (Hadith) in the quotations used in the book to verify their correctness and relevance. An effort has been made to edit the *Abubakar Imam Memoirs* in a style to depict, by and large, the life-style of the late Malam Abubakar Imam.

Last but not the least, the indebtedness of the promoters of this publication is extended to the several typists who patiently typed and retyped the scripts.

(ABDURRAHMAN MORA),
EDITOR-GENERAL.

THE EDITOR-GENERAL: HIS BACKGROUND

Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora was born at Kaiama in Borgu, Kwara State of Nigeria on 19th July, 1916, and educated at Kaiama Elementary School (1924 — 1928), Ilorin Middle School (1928 — 1933) and Katsina Higher College (Barewa College), 1933 — 1938. As a teacher he was appointed on 26th April, 1938 by the then Zaria Native Authority to teach English, History and Geography at the Middle School.

The Central Government of Nigeria awarded him a scholarship along with three other Northern Nigerian teachers to attend a Professional Certificate Course at the Institute of Education of the University of London (1945 — 1946). He was among the first four Northern teachers ever to be awarded scholarships. On his return to Nigeria he was seconded to the Northern Provinces Administration to teach at Kaduna College (Barewa College) from 1947 to 1950. He was then deseconded back to Zaria Native Authority as Headmaster the Middle School (1950 — 1954).

In 1950, through private study, he passed the Senior Teachers' Certificate Examination in Geography. Between 1952 and 1953, he was awarded an American State Government Scholarship to attend a Teacher Training Programme at Iowa State Teachers' College, U.S.A. He was the first Northern Nigerian to visit the United States under the auspices of the United States Government.

Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora transferred his services to the North Regional Government in 1954 when he was appointed Provincial Adult Education Officer in charge of the former Zaria Province. He was one of the first ten Northerners to be so appointed. In 1959, he changed cadre from education to administration and in 1961, he was seconded to the Federal Government and posted to Saudi Arabia as a Consul and Pilgrims' Officer. When diplomatic relations were established between Nigeria and Saudi Arabia in 1961, he was appointed First Secretary at the Embassy of Nigeria in Jeddah. He returned to the Ministry of Lagos Affairs where on 1st November, 1962, he was confirmed as a substantive Permanent Secretary.

Following in the wake of the first Military take-over in 1966, the Ministry of Lagos Affairs was abolished and in a minor reshuffle of the Permanent Secretaries, he was moved to head the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs until 1967, when he was appointed High Commissioner to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora retired from the public service on 8th July, 1971 and on the following day, 9th July, 1971, he took up an appointment with the Kwara State Government as a Part-Time member of the Public Service Commission (now Civil Service Commission). He was appointed Chairman of the Kwara State Public Service Commission with effect from 9th February, 1976, which post he resigned on 31st August, 1977, on personal grounds.

Kwara State Government offered him another appointment on part-time basis, as a member of the Judicial Service Commission in 1979, during the

Second Republic. Kaduna State Government also appointment him Chairman of the Governing Council of the College of Advanced Studies, Zaria (1984 — 87).

Thus Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora served this country at Local level, Regional level, State level and Federal level, as an educator, administrator and diplomat, continuously for over 39 years.

One of the common threads that ran through these years was his acquaintance with Alhaji Abubakar Imam, whom he first met in Katsina in 1933, the year he was admitted at Katsina College (now Barewa College) as student No. 233. Since then they had been constantly together until the inevitable separated them on 19th June, 1981! Therefore Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora is among the few living persons who had known the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam closely for about half a century. Their very cordial friendship culminated in Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora's becoming a son-in-law of the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam in 1950, thus further cementing the cordiality.

The various services rendered by him over the years were interwoven with committee, council and board memberships since the fifties. Thus he served on the following:

a) Zaria Native Authority Appointment, Finance and Discipline Committees (1950 — 1954).

b) North Regional Board of Education, Kaduna and Moral Standards Committee, Northern Region, Kaduna (1950 — 1954).

c) Central Board of Education and West African Examination Council, Lagos (1950 — 1954).

d Executive Committee of the Northern Region Scout Council, Kaduna (1950 — 1954).

e) Participated on the Sir Udo Udoma (Justice Supreme Court Nigeria) Boards of Inquiry between 1972 and 1973 which investigated into Doctors Trade Disputes in Lagos and Ibadan.

f) Chairman of the Special Committee on Discipline in Post-Primary Schools in Kaduna State (1980).

g) Chairman of Soba Government Girls' Secondary School Parent Teachers Association (1979 — 1986).

h) Member of Zaria Tudun Wada Community Mosque Committee (1977–79).

Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora was drafted into the Special Constable Force in Zaria (1955—1958).

In the fields of politics and Trade Unionism, he was not entirely unconnected. He was a foundation member of the Northern People's Congress (N.P.C.) in 1948, which played a dynamic role in Nigeria Party Politics before and during the First Republic. He was elected its Zaria Provincial President in 1953, but he had to withdraw his membership of the party in 1954, on becoming a North Regional Government Civil Servant.

He was also a founding member of the Northern Teachers' Association (NTA) in 1948. He became its Assistant General Secretary in 1950. That Association eventually merged with the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT). Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora's cherished hobbies include:—

Islamic Studies, teaching Qur'an and Arabic to children and farming.

In recognition of his long meritorious service to the Nation, the Zaria Local Government has named a Street at Tudun Wada, Zaria after him as *MORA ROAD*. His residential house No. 23/25 is on the road.



Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora.

FOREWORD

By

Dr. Yahaya Gusau, O.B.E., O.F.R.,
Shetiman Sokoto and Pro-Chancellor, Bayero University, Kano

Reading through the book you will come to the conclusion that Dr. Abubakar Imam came from a family which could be termed aristocrat, learned and adventurous. The family was certainly adventurous judging from the number of places they moved to and settled during periods when travelling was difficult and dangerous.

From a town in Dikwa Emirate of former Borno Empire, Mallam Muhammadu Gajibo the great grand father of Imam moved the entire family to far away Bida and settled there. Again during the Jihad period of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio and under the leadership of the same Mallam Muhammadu Gajibo the family travelled to Sokoto and settled there. Years later under the leadership of Shehu Usman, the father of Imam, the family travelled through Kano and Katsina to Kagara in the present Niger State. But after the occupation of the area by the British, Mallam Shehu Usman, then Head of the family migrated the whole family to Malumfashi in Katsina Emirate.

The family under Mallam Shehu Usman later returned and lived in Kagara, but Imam though born in Kagara was brought up in Katsina by his elder brother Muhammadu Bello. Later in life Imam came to work in Zaria and settled down eventually in Tudun Wada, where he died.

Malam Abubakar Imam was a remarkable person. He was a friend to all and an enemy to none. He was in reality a friend to those in power, to the rich and to the poor. While in his house he would dine together with the very poor, at the same time he suffered no inferiority complex when he mixed with the rich and those in authority. Infact one could say that Imam held the master key to the doors of all the influencial people within what used to be Northern Nigeria.

Imam had spent a great part of his leisure time teaching and demonstrating to others how to lead a decent and honest life. He was all the time emphasising that people should endeavour to earn their living by their own labour, and that their earnings should be spent wisely. He achieved great success in this campaign, for he left behind many disciples. The Editor General of "Abubakar Imam Memoirs" is no doubt one of his worthy disciples.

May his soul rest in peace, Amin.

Sgd.
Mallam Yahaya Gusau
Pro-Chancellor
Bayero University Kano.

FOREWORD

By

Alhaji Nuhu Bamalli C.F.R.
Magajin Garin Zazzau.

I have been asked to write a foreword to this interesting book on Alhaji Abubakar Imam. I read the script from cover to cover hoping I would discover an obvious omission which I could use as a subject for my foreword but I discovered that every aspect of Imam's official or private life, which I know, was covered in one Chapter of the book or the other. The book, being both a biography and an autobiography, has a greater part of it written by Imam himself which helps to make it all the more authentic. The views also expressed by the eminent personalities whose names are listed at the beginning of Chapter Fourteen of this book are views that neither need addition nor comments. The sum total of these views is that Alhaji Abubakar Imam was a great man. I entirely join them in sharing that opinion.

I am glad that a large part of this book has been written by Abubakar Imam himself as I said earlier and, being an honest man, he did not hide anything about himself. The other part of the book was written by people who by accident or by design were very close to Abubakar Imam and they too, being good people, wrote on how they knew him.

I am one of those few people who lived very close to Abubakar Imam and who worked very close to him. I knew him in his private as well as in his official capacity. In the office, he had his assignment and I had mine in the then Literature Bureau of the Education Department and on to Gaskiya Corporation. He dealt with the production of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* and I dealt with translations and the production of books. But after two O'clock, that is after office hours when we returned home, the relationship took a different pattern from that of colleagues in the office to that of elder and younger brothers each one playing his role very well, with him leading and advising, and I following.

I have been warned not to write a long foreword, and, being somebody who has been brought up under Imam's powerful code of conduct, I must obey and stop here. The only thing that remains for me to say about Alhaji Abubakar Imam is, "May the Almighty Allah bestow His infinite Mercy on his Soul both in his grave and on the Final Day of Judgement. Amin".

Sgd.

Alhaji Nuhu Bamalli
Magajin Garin Zazzau

INTRODUCTION

ABUBAKAR IMAM'S KANEM-BORNO CONNECTIONS

The immediate as well as the remote historical background of this great son of Nigeria, Alhaji (Dr.) Abubakar Imam, who was described as "A Pioneer Ten Times Over"[1], but who, because of his simplicity and modesty regarded himself as a lesser mortal, is worth tracing for posterity and the reading public. This is precisely what this book attempts to do.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam once said to his eldest grandson, Dr. Mohammad Saifuddin Mora, "If anybody asks you about my history and origin, say that my family history is traceable in Borno, my origin is Sokoto, my birth place is Kagara, my town is Katsina and my place of residence is Zaria". As this statement came from him during his last days in the world, it was tantamount to a bequest (*wasiyya*) to be transmitted to progeny, because wills, according to Islamic doctrine[2], must not be suppressed.

Since Abubakar Imam's remote origin is connected with Borno, I would like to give a brief extract from the history of that ancient Kingdom (State) to precede his life history titled: *The Abubakar Imam Memoirs*. This will enable readers have a bird's — eye view of the land of his fore-fathers, the land with its pageantry and old civilisation which, according to Lady Lugard[3], contemporaneously transcended that of most European countries in war equipment and the land from which his great grand-father migrated during the second half of the eighteenth century to the west, in search of a new home.

The exact time of the migration[4] is not known, but most likely it was at the end of the long reign of Mai Ali ben Haj Dunama the 64th King of the Saifawa Dynasty, who reigned at Birni Gazargamu from A.D. 1755 to 1793 (A.H. 1168 to 1208)[5].

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1. See *New Nigerian* of 21st June, 1986 page 5 an article by Alhaji Husaini Hayat, General Manager of the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company Limited, Zaria (NNPC) on Alhaji Abubakar Imam, with the quoted sub-title, as a pre-publication review of this book then being prepared.

2. The upholding of a bequest is therefore in consonance with Quranic injunction, viz: "It is prescribed, when death approaches any of you, if he leaves any goods, that he makes a bequest to parents and next of kin, according to reasonable usage; this is due from the God-fearing. If anyone changes the bequest after hearing it, the guilt shall be on those who make the change. For God hears and knows (All things)". (2:180/1)

3. Lady Lugard, *A Tropical Dependency* P.278

4. The act of a Muslim migration from one country to another for religious consideration, for example leaving a country under the rule of infidels, or for security, or fleeing from sin, is lawful in Islam. The Prophet (S.A.W.) departed from Mecca, to Medina on the fourth day of the first month of Rabi'u Awwal which by calculation corresponded to 20th June, 622 A.D. That Prophetic Migration is referred to in history as the Flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. Migration is called *Hijrah* in Arabic.
There are fourteen Quranic verses pertinent to migration, one of which is the following "They say: 'Was not the earth of God spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)?" (4:97).

5. See Appendix for Conversion system of A.D. — A.H. and vise versa.

Mai Ali ben Hajj Dunama reigned for 40 years. He had numerous children among whom the males numbered 300. It was during his reign that Mohammed Gajibo, the great grandfather of Abubakar Imam, migrated from Borno along with Maina Ibrahim to the West.

Mai Ali ben Hajj Dunama had the discredit of sending an ill-fated military expedition to Mandara, where most of the intelligent men of Borno were killed. He was also reported to have sent another military expedition to Bedde, the result of which does not appear to have been recorded.

The purport of Maina Ibrahim's migration from Dikwa in Borno with his followers to Bida in the south-west, was that his brother defeated him in a chieftaincy contest. That reason was cogent enough, but an ulterior motive which might have prompted the move, might not be unconnected with the Mandara disaster where the elite of Borno were almost annihilated.

Abubakar Imam, his brothers and sisters were born and brought up in an atmosphere of Hausa culture devoid of the customary facial identification marks of the Kanuri people, and none of them have even a smattering of Kanuri language. They have therefore been accepted as Hausa, and they have no proof to be otherwise, more especially as they have not been seen over the years, to be visiting kith and kin in Borno. They have completely lost connection with their country of origin, and by that lapse, they have also lost their Kanuri identity.

CHAPTER ONE

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

I was born in 1911 at Kagara in Kontagora Province, which later became part of Niger Province. At the time I was born, Kontagora and Bida were separate Provinces. Later in 1926 the two Provinces were merged into one to form Niger Province. Offending the sensibilities of the two powerful emirs Etsu Nupe in Bida and Sarkin Sudan in Kotangora was avoided by the neutral name Niger for the Province and the choice of Minna as the Provincial Headquarters.

My great grandfather, Malam Muhammadu Gajibo came from Gajibo town in Dikwa Emirate of the former Borno Empire. He was among the learned Malams at the court of the Mai of Dikwa during the pre-colonial period. When the Mai died his two children contested for the throne but the younger one succeeded and became the Mai. His elder brother, Maina Ibrahim, decided to migrate from Borno with his followers and several herds of cattle. Among his people was Malam Muhammadu Gajibo. They reached Bida after several stops on the way and decided to settle in the vicinity. The Etsu Nupe of the time realising their need for a large grazing area selected Kutigi as a suitable settlement for them. The Prince from Kukawa, Maina Ibrahim, was appointed head of the town of Kutigi and it grew very rapidly. They planted date palms there as well as in Bida. Even though they had mingled and inter-married with their Nupe hosts, the people of Kutigi still retain some Borno practices. For example, they still observe *gani* festivities during the Eid-el-Maulud, the birth-day of the Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W.) as is done in Borno.

During the period of the Jihad of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, Malam Muhammadu Gajibo led a group of learned people to pay homage to Shehu Usman. Co-incidentally they arrived at Sokoto just as Dan Fodio was entering the town after it had been built by his son, Malam Muhammadu Bello. It was related that Shehu Usman, on learning about the approach of this group from Nupe land, stopped at the gate and said, "Let us await the arrival of these pious people who have migrated to be with us." It was there, outside the city gates, that Shehu Usman made his own settlement and built a mosque with the assistance of the Nupe Malams led by Malam Muhammadu Gajibo.

Later Malam Muhammadu Bello extended the town wall to encircle the settlement of Shehu Usman within the Sokoto City proper. Malam Muhammadu Gajibo was appointed *Wakilin Nufawa*, that is Head of the Nupe Community, at Tako quarters near where Shehu's mosque is located.

Malam Muhammadu Badamasi was born in Sokoto into the family of Malam Muhammadu Gajibo, the Wakilin Nufawa. After the death of his father he inherited the title of Wakilin Nufawa in accordance with the accepted traditions.

Malam Muhammadu Badamasi had a son whom he named Shehu Usman in Sokoto. He also had a daughter who later married in Sokoto. Her descendants still occupy the house built by Malam Badamasi in Sokoto. Malam Shehu Usman was my father though my birth was to come at a much later stage in Kagara.

At the death of Malam Badamasi Malam Shehu Usman decided to leave Sokoto and study Islamic books with some famous Malams in Kano and Katsina. He first lived in Katsina, then Kankia, then Gwarzo and finally Kano. From Kano he decided to travel to Kontagora to meet Sarkin Sudan Umaru Nagwamatse. He found Nagwamatse at Tegina. The District Head at Tegina, Madaki Masoyi, welcomed him and found him a place to stay.

After sometime Sarkin Sudan Umaru Nagwamatse directed Madaki Masoyi to move from Tegina and settle at a point along the road used by traders where armed bandits had attacked trading convoys on several occasions. This place was to become Kagara. Madaki Masoyi went with Malam Shehu Usman and a number of their followers. Within a short while the town became a large settlement.

During the period of establishing the town several Malams and brave warriors went to Kagara to give assistance and protection to the settlers. It was at that time that Malam Shehu Usman became acquainted with Malam Muhammadu Maisaje, the Imam of Bobi, who was nicknamed Muhammadu *Maihakuri* (the Patient).

When Malam Muhammadu Mai-saje returned home to Bobi after the establishment of Kagara he told his family at Bobi that he had met one Malam Shehu Usman at Kagara and was impressed by his character and the depth of his learning. He therefore decided to give the hand of one of his daughters in marriage to Malam Shehu. He sent for his daughter, A'ishatu, and told her about Malam Shehu and directed his family to await the arrival of Malam Shehu at Bobi before informing him of this decision, as if predicting that he would not live to perform the proposed betrothal.

A'ishatu reached marriageable age but still Malam Shehu did not come. Her father used to say to her, "Be patient A'ishatu. Your future husband will soon come and I am sure you will be happy with him." Soon however, Malam Muhammadu Maisaje became ill and died. During the period of mourning Malam Shehu arrived to condole the bereaved family. He was told about the promise made by Malam Muhammadu before his death. He immediately agreed to the suggestion and his marriage with A'ishatu was concluded. There were no festivities when the marriage took place as that was the time of the period of mourning for the death of Ai'shatu's father.

During the British advent and their administrative occupation of the Hausaland which started in 1900, with a view to eradicating slave trade and slavery, but more directly to acquire territory, Kontagora was invaded and Nagwamatse the Sarkin Sudan fled to Kaya in Giwa District of Zazzau Emirate. Many of his followers including Malam Shehu Usman fled along with

him. The British expeditionary force pursued Nagwamatse to Kaya and captured him there, and then exiled him to Lokoja. The Ubandoma of Kontagora led the majority of Sarkin Sudan's followers back to Kontagora, while Malam Shehu Usman proceeded to Katsina with the remaining refugees. It may be recalled that Malam Usman was not a stranger at Katsina, having lived there as a scholar. The Emir of Katsina, Abubakar played host to him and gave him 100 bundles of guinea corn at a village called Gwanamarde to feed his followers — the refugees. He also presented him with a mare — a customary present of Royalty to a Malam, a learned man. From Katsina Malam Shehu Usman retraced his steps back to Malumfashi where he settled. The ward where he and his followers settled was then named "GWAMATSAWA", that is, the ward of the followers of Nagwamatse Sarkin Sudan. It still bears that name at Malumfashi.

Nagwamatse spent some time in exile at Lokoja. However the British, at the instance of the new Sultan of Sokoto, considered certain extenuating circumstances which warranted Nagwamatse's reinstatement on the throne of Kontagora. He was therefore released from exile and taken back to Kontagora to continue to rule his subjects as Emir. As soon as Nagwamatse was reinstated, Isa, a son of the Madaki of Kagara was sent to Malumfashi to ask Malam Shehu Usman to return to Kagara in peace and security. He agreed and returned, but some of his people remained at Malumfashi, and their descendants are there to this day.

My elder brother, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara[1], M.B.E., Walin Katsina was a boy of a little over ten years old when he fled with his parents and Nagwamatse. He and another boy were conveyed on a mare. That flight of Malam Umaru Nagwamatse Sarkin Sudan of Kontagora which is called *Gudun Nasara* meaning 'Flight from the Europeans', has a historical significance. It forewarned and forearmed the Hausa Emirs in general; and in particular Kwasau the Emir of Zazzau, Aliyu the Emir of Kano, Abubakar the Emir of Katsina and Mohammed Attahiru II the Sarkin Musulmi (Sultan) of Sokoto against an inevitable British invasion of their territories. It also gave the inspiration to my brother's thrilling novel *Gandoki.*

Footnote: 1. Malam Bello Kagara, born in 1890 at Kagara was one of the African teachers on the Katsina College Staff when it was established in 1921. He transferred with the College to Kaduna in 1938.

In recognition of the meritorious services rendered by him to Katsina/Kaduna College, his name has been immortalised at Barewa College, by naming a College Dormitory (House) after him viz: "Bello Kagara House".

He was a product of the Pioneer Primary School established in Kano by Government and started by Sir Hanns Vischer (Dan Hausa) in 1908. The School was thus popularly known as *Makarantar Dan Hausa.*

During retirement Malam Bello Kagara served the defunct Katsina Native Authority in various capacities. First, as a Junior *Alkali* (Judge), then Chief *Alkali* of Katsina, eventually becoming *Wali* of Katsina, a post he held until his death in 1971.
He was the author of the Hausa novel *Gandoki* and the Biography of the Emir of Katsina titled *Sarkin Katsina Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko.*



Alhaji Muh. Bello Kagara
Walin Katsina—



Sir Hans Vischer
In his famous house at Nasarawa, Kano



Dr. R. M. East with Mr. Giles and Malama Dada Sare (*Mrs East*)

During the British administration, a District Officer was assigned to look after Kamuku Division of which Kagara was the principal town. On the return of Malam Shehu Usman from Malumfashi, the British appointed him as the Alkali (Judge) and the Ma'aji (Treasurer) of Kagara, in addition to his original position as the Chief Imam and his most cherished function as teacher in Islamic Studies.

In 1908 the first government school was opened in Kano under the supervision of Mr. Hanns Vischer (Dan Hausa) to train handpicked young men who would work either as pioneer teachers or as clerks in the Native Administration. The Colonial Administration asked emirs and other leaders to send their children to the school. In Kagara they requested Malam Shehu Usman to give his only son to go to that school. So Muhammad Bello Kagara went to the school in 1910, a year before I was born. Bello Kagara who himself was born in 1890 passed out from the school in 1914 after four years of training as a teacher. He was posted to Zaria to teach at the Provincial School. He spent seven years teaching in Zaria. He became famous in Zaria for his singular zeal in acquiring higher Islamic education in the evenings after school hours from the leading Islamic learned men of the time. Before he left Zaria Malam Muhammadu Bello had been acknowledged as a learned Malam in Islamic Studies.

In 1921, the Katsina Training College was established by Government and from among the most highly qualified Northern Nigerian teachers two were appointed to join the teaching staff of the College. They were Malam Bello Kagara from Zaria Provincial School and Malam Nagwamatse who was then teaching at Bida Provincial School. Both of them were appointed to teach Arabic and Islamic Religious Studies.

EARLY CHILDHOOD IN KAGARA

When I was young and living in Kagara before starting school I was noted for my patience and peaceful nature. I never fought anyone among my age-mates. My father used to comment that I was more calm than any of his other children. There was an incident when I accidentally threw a stone which hit another boy wounding him on the head. The boy ran home crying to his father. His father came with him to the presence of Malam Shehu and stated what I had done.

When Malam Shehu heard that I had committed an offence he could not believe it. He asked the father of the boy, "Do you mean Abubakar or was it Ahmadu?"

The man answered, "It was Abubakar not Ahmadu."

Malam Shehu smiled and shook his head and said, "I do not agree with you. If you had said it was Ahmadu then I would have believed you. I know Abubakar does not even argue with anybody."

The man tried very hard to convince Malam Shehu that Abubakar was at fault and not Ahmadu but without success. He left disappointed and returned home with his child.

The Ahmadu that Malam Shehu was talking about was my immediate younger brother. He was very impatient as a young boy and also as strong as a lion. Whenever one heard children crying in the neighbourhood it would turn out to be Ahmadu terrorising them. All his age-mates feared him. He had been admonished and beaten several times by our father to no avail. On some occasions he used to protect even me, his elder brother, from threats by older boys. Though he was younger he could easily knock me down if he so desired. However, the respect that he had for me as his elder brother prevented him from causing me any harm. I was in fact, the one who used to make him cry with verbal molestation. He was the only person I really bullied. He could handle stronger boys better than me but he dared not return my beating when I inflicted one on him. My mother, A'ishatu (Mama) once told me that my elder brother, Muhammadu Bello, was not as peaceful as I was. The difference between him and Ahmadu she said, was that Ahmadu was always on the look out for adventure but the elder brother, Muhammad Bello, never looked for trouble, but he would not tolerate nonsense from anybody.

Realising that my younger brother was stronger than any of his peers I wanted to test my own strenght. One day I selected a boy who was about Ahmadu's age and challenged him to a fight. The boy whose name was Dan-Mai-Kano struck a wrestling posture. When I tackled him he raised me clear off the ground and threw me down. From that day onwards I never tackled anybody again. I was therefore peaceful by force of circumstances not by nature.

My mother once told me that when the town of Kagara was buil' it was known to be in two camps, Unguwar Alkali and Unguwar Madaki. Unguwar Madaki was more or less dominated by the native tribe the Kamuku, whereas Unguwar Alkali was, by and large, settled by the Moslem infiltrators, mostly Hausa and Fulani. My father was the leader of the first infiltrators.

There were, more often than not, quarrels between the youths of the two sections of the town. My brother Ahmadu always played a prominent role in the quarrels and never gave way. He could challenge two or even three of his opponents. He was an expert boxer. In the town square, where a show of strength used to be staged in the night and Kalangu drummers used to shower praises on him saying: *"Buge Ciki, Buge Gaba. Kai ka san makashin kare!"*. Meaning "Beat him on the stomach! Hit him on the head, you certainly know the vulnerable spot to hit if you want to kill a dog!".

But things changed dramatically in later life. On the contrary, Ahmadu's boisterous manners that characterised his childhood were on the wane during adolescence, so that by the time he reached his majority his behaviour became refined and he was as peaceful as a lamb. I became more hot tempered than any of my adventurous brothers.



Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara

CHAPTER TWO

SCHOOL DAYS IN KATSINA

I remember, as if it were yesterday when on the 20th day of March, 1922, I started trecking from Kagara to Katsina, a distance that took fifteen days to complete in those days. I was then eleven years old. It was in order to obey the command of my father, Malam Shehu Usman, the Imam and the Chief Alkali of Kagara who wanted me to be enrolled in a European school, *"Makarantar Boko"* at Katsina instead of Bida. There was a little tug-of-war between my father and the then Assistant District Officer of Kagara Mr. R. D. Ross who retired some years afterwards as Resident of Sokoto Province.

Kagara Division as it was then called, was in Kontagora Province, and consequently the most ideal school for me to go to was the Bida Provincial School, a distance of 90 miles (144 kilometres) or five days trecking. To be allowed to go to Katsina therefore was tantamount to a sort of migration.

My father wanted me to go to Katsina for two reasons. The first was that my brother Malam Bello Kagara was then teaching at the newly opened Katsina Training College. Secondly, since the conquest of Kontagora by the British in 1902 and the flight of Sarkin Sudan Ibrahim Nagwamatse, and his eventual capture by the British at Kaya in Zazzau Emirate, my father together with a large portion of the followers of the Sarkin Sudan made Malumfashi in Katsina province their second home. The tug-of-war ended with my father winning the pull and having me sent to Katsina instead of Bida. So apart from the choice of school, Mr. R. D. Ross did not meet any opposition from my father unlike the first district officer, Mr. G. L. Monk 'Maisaje' in 1910, who when he wanted to send my elder brother Bello Kagara to Nasarawa School in Kano encountered some reluctance.

This is described in a speech delivered by Malam Bello Kagara 35 years later on his retirement from Government Service as an Islamic Religious Studies teacher at the Kaduna College in 1945, which gave a very vivid picture of my father's first reaction to European schools. It reads as follows:

> "Ladies and Gentlemen,
>
> "Before I open my mouth to say anything, I should first of all thank Allah the Almighty and His beloved Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace). I should also thank all the Education Officers past and present. I should extend my thanks to all of you present here for the trouble you have taken to come and say good-bye to me. Indeed today, I cannot but remember the year 1910, when Mr. G. L. Monk, the then District Officer of Kagara, took me away from my father Alkalin Kagara, Malam Shehu Usman and sent me to school.
>
> "My father was unwilling to release me for one reason and that is, that he was very suspicious of European schools. He thought that the idea behind them was to convert boys to Christianity. He reluctantly agreed only when he heard that almost all the Moslem Emirs

in Northern Nigeria had already sent their sons to the school, and that the teaching of Arabic and Islamic Studies as well as moral training on the divine basis of Islam were among the subjects taught in the school.

"I can remember when he was giving me his blessing and words of good-bye, he raised his hands up and said, 'Oh Allah! I have entrusted this child to Your care. Guard him as a devoted follower of your chosen religion, Islam. Allah You are the best Guide!!'

"Turning to me he said, 'As for you Muhammadu Bello, where ever those Europeans take you, whatever those Europeans do to you, know that Islam is your religion and learning is your tradition. God be with you.'

"By this example you can imagine what a difficult task it was for the Education Department in persuading parents to send their children to school. But now look how rapidly the reaction of parents and boys is changing towards European schools. Indeed, I have experienced tremendous changes in those 35 years of my life as a scholar.

"Now my dear sons of the College past, present and future, I am leaving the College today and the Education Department, but it is only the department that I am leaving. The spirit and the memory will remain in me wherever I go. The College was born in my hands.

"I have not in my life lived in any other place longer than in the college premises. Therefore if I say that I consider the college as my home and the inmates as my family, you may not say that I am exaggerating. I am leaving the college because it is necessary for the old to give way to the young. From 1914 to 1921, we were the bright stars of the Northern Provinces and now look how the world has changed so rapidly that we are being classified among the conservatives.

"I cannot close this brief address without wishing the Education Department every possible success. The success I contemplate is not only in imparting advanced book knowledge to our sons, but also in training them to acquire the wisdom to make good use of the knowledge. From my little experience in the Moslem areas of the North, this success can only be achieved by giving Islamic Religious Knowledge (I.R.K.) prominence in the College curriculum.

"And to you my dear sons, I am saying good-bye but I would like you to cherish these words, the words my father used when he was bidding me farewell thirty-five years ago:

> 'Fear God and do to others as you would like them to do to you! 'Be reliable and show the world by your deeds and not your words that your education has made you better men. In fact, my dear sons remember the verse which says:

"Do good under all circumstances. Goodness cannot Fail to rebound".

That farewell speech delivered by my elder brother, Malam Muhammadu Bello killed not two, but four birds with one stone. It gave the picture of the tradition of my home; the trend of opinion of my father towards Europeans schools; the trend of opinion of all Moslems towards western education in general and the background of my family.

Now turning to my school days, although I was born at Kagara, my brother Malam Bello Kagara never dreamt of changing my domicile but for my admission into the Katsina Provincial School in 1922. So, when all students were given transport money to go home on holiday, I was given a note to the Provincial Education Officer Katsina. Katsina had now become my registered domicile.

Seeing that I was a brother of a teacher of the Katsina Training College, the headmaster thought that I must have started "Karatun Turawa" (European Learning) sometime before. So he sent me straight to class three. After a few days it was realised that I did not know anything. However, instead of having me demoted to class one I was allowed to carry on. Through home coaching by my brother I was able to catch up with the class within one year. So that in my second year our class moved to class four, then five and finally to class six — the top class. In four years I covered the six-year primary school education syllabus.

On completion of class six, I was to be employed as a clerk in the Katsina Native Authority Hospital on a salary of thirty shillings a month but my brother insisted that I must repeat the syllabus of class six to qualify for admission to the Katsina Training College. I therefore had to repeat accordingly.

In 1927, I gained admission to the Training College. Had I not been demoted I would have been in the same class as the late Sir Ahmadu Bello[1], the Sardauna of Sokoto and the first Premier of Northern Nigeria.

Notes

1 Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello the Sardauna of Sokoto was born at Raba in Sokoto on 12th June, 1909. His father Ibrahim District Head of Rabah was the son of Abubakar Atiku II the eighth Sultan of Sokoto, who was a son of Muhammadu Bello the 2nd Sultan of So koto, who was a son of Shehu Usman dan Fodio, the Islamic Reformer at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and founder of Sokoto Caliphate.

The Sardauna of Sokoto was educated at Sokoto Primary School and then was admitted at the Katsina Higher College (later Barewa College) in May, 1926, as student No. 87. He was among the Katsina College Cricket First Eleven in 1931. He was also an outstanding Fives Player. He graduated as a teacher and taught for three years (1931–34) at Sokoto Middle School before being appointed as District Head of Rabah.

A year later, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa[1] came to the college. So he was a year behind me. My admission number was 110.

Although comparatively young in age, yet I was a keen player of football, cricket and hockey. I was infact in the college first eleven of cricket in 1931. Some of my classmates at the time were Alhaji Isa Kaita, the Waziri of Katsina and former Northern Regional Minister of Education, Alhaji Bello Dandango, the Sarkin Dawaki Mai Tuta of Kano and former Chief Whip of the Nigerian Parliament during the civilian regime; and Malam Salahu Fulani, the Daudu of Afon in Ilorin Province. All these three were very bright in class but less interested in games.

In those days Katsina Training College students were paid a subsistence allowance of thirty shillings a month. Each student had to learn to live on his allowance and, if possible, save some against the rainy day. I was appointed Student Treasurer of the college in 1931, when the Acting Principal was Mr. M. W. Oakes, a great disciplinarian. Mr. J. A.J. Bieneman was the substantive Principal and Mr. M. W. Oakes always acted for him when he was on leave.

Notes

In 1938 he was appointed the Sardauna of Sokoto. He was knighted by Her Majesty the Queen of England, Elizabeth II in 1959.

In 1951, the Sardauna of Sokoto and Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa enrolled as members of the Northern Peoples' Congress and transformed the Cultural Organisation, into a political party from that date. Therefore they were foundation members of the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC), as a political party. Through his leadership of the party and his influence, the N.P.C. became the strongest political party in Nigeria. The Sardauna advocated the Northernisation policy and he died defending it. He was not materialistic. He was not known to have owned landed property in Lagos or Kaduna or anywhere in the Federation or the world apart from his simple residential house in Sokoto, and his farm at Bakura.

In benevolence, Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello the Sardauna of Sokoto was second to none during his Premiership of the Northern Region of Nigeria which lasted for twelve years, until his assassination during the first coup in Nigeria. He was a man with commanding personality and he did command respect. The degree of discipline in the Northern Civil Service during his leadership was very high. He was a devout Muslim, who went on pilgrimage and Umrah every year. A few days after his return from Umrah he was assassinated on the 15th January, 1966. He had such an admirable disposition that many non-moslems embraced Islam in his presence. His favourite sporting pastime was Fives.

1 Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was born in 1912, at Tafawa Balawe in Bauchi Province (Bauchi State). He was educated at Bauchi Provincial Primary School up to 1928, Katsina Higher College (now Barewa College) :1928–1933, and the Institute of Education of the University of London (1945–1946). Through private study he passed

When I was appointed the Student Treasurer, Mr. M. W. Oakes wanted to teach me the proper way of keeping cash books. He called me from my classroom to his office and shut the door as was his custom. Then he started to teach me simple book-keeping. When he had finished, he asked me, "Do you understand"? My reply was "Yes Sir!' although I had not understood a thing. While he was teaching me, I was silently reciting verses from the Qur'an, praying that Mr. Oakes might open the door for me to get out!

The following day he called me again to his office, shut the door as usual and asked me to repeat what he had taught me the previous day. I could not, becaue I was so afraid of him that I could not grasp what he taught me. He became angry and disappointed. He frowned at me and showed his disgust by taking a deep breath. He said, "Yesterday, you said you understood whilst you did not. So you told me lies, Mhm?" I replied shivering, "No Sir, I was afraid of you!" He frowned at me again and sniffed. Then he said in Hausa *"Ni dodo ne?"* meaning "Am I a terror?" I did not know when I replied "Yes Sir!" He then smiled and continued to teach me. His smile allayed my fear of him and I was able to feel at home and listen to his teaching with profit.

Notes

the Senior Teachers' Certificate Examination in English. After graduating from Katsina Higher College in 1933, as a teacher, he taught at Bauchi Middle School, eventually becoming its headmaster. After the Professional certificate course at the Institute of Education of the University of London, he was appointed Provincial Education Officer. He was among the supporters of Malam Sa'adu Zungur in his political activities in Bauchi.

He was a member of the first Northern House of Assembly from where he was elected to the Nigerian Legislative Council in Lagos in 1946. He had an excellent command of spoken English. Easily he became one of the dominant Honourable Members of the Nigerian Legislative Council culminating in his appointment as the first Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1957, until his assassination on 15th January, 1966.

He enrolled as a member of the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) in 1951, along with the Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello. As soon as they registered as members of the cultural organisation, it was declared as a political party. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom in 1960.

Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa had a simple disposition and never ammassed any ill-gotten wealth. He was not known to have owned any landed property other than his residential house in Bauchi (a very simple building) and his farm.



Leading Cricket Players 1931

Sitting left to right; Baraya Gwambe, Abba Sherif, Isa Kotto, Usman Katsina, Abubakar Imam, and Iro Yamel. Standing left to right: Mamman Bodinga, Dungus Maiduguri, Ibrahim Walad, Maigari Gwamba, Umaru Beti, Ahmadu Rabah (Sardauna) and Salahu Fulani.

I remember talking about Mr. Oakes with the Emir of Katsina, the late Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo[1] who narrated to me his own encounter with him. This happened before he became Emir but when he was the "Wakilin 'Yandoka" Chief of N.A. Police. The game of Polo had for a long time been a popular game in Katsina. Mr. Oakes was among the Europeans who were fond of playing Polo. During the rainy season the rule was that when it rained no Polo should be played.

One afternoon, there was a heavy rainfall in the town but at the Government Reservation Area (G.R.A.) there was not a drop. So, in the evening, Mr. Oakes rode his horse and made for the Polo field which is not at the G.R.A. but on the other side of the town, to play. He found nobody there as the ground was soaked due to the rain. He went back in anger, sent a messenger to the town to ask Wakilin 'Yandoka, Prince Nagogo to come up to his house at 4.00 p.m. the following day. When Nagogo got the message he was frightened. He knew Mr. Oakes well. He asked his Arabic teacher, Malam Abdurrahman, to help him with prayers. Malam Abdurrahman told him to keep on reciting a certain verse of the Qur'an when he approached Mr. Oake's house on the day in question.

At three O'clock, not four, Nagogo got on his motorcycle put, put, put, made for the G.R.A. (Bariki). On approaching the house he stopped the engine in order not to disturb Mr. Oakes and so add insult to injury. He sat on the grass covered lawn under the shade of a tree reciting the Qur'anic verse from three O'clock to four. Mr. Oakes woke up at four O'clock, peeped through a window and saw Nagogo. He did not talk to him but asked for his afternoon tea. After taking his tea he asked Nagogo to enter. When he entered, murmuring his prayers he squatted on the floor to salute him with the words— *'Ranka shi dade'*, meaning "May you live long!' Mr. Oakes gazed at him and sniffed. He asked, "Why was there no polo yesterday?" Nagogo replied, "It rained yesterday, and the rule was that whenever it rained, there would be no polo." Mr. Oakes said, "Why did you not send to me to say that it rained?" Nagogo, rather than attempt an explanation simply said, "*Na yi laifi, na tuba!*"

Notes

Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo, C.M.G., First Class Chief. Born 1905. Appointed Emir 1944. Educated Katsina Provincial School. Former Member Legislative Council. Former Member House of Representatives. Appointed Northern Regional Minister Without Portfolio 1956; re-appointed 1961. Former member Regional Joint Council. Head of Katsina Native Administration Police and Magajin Gari, Katsina. (1931–44). Pilgrimage to Mecca 1921 and 1933. Visited West Africa troops in Burma 1944. Has visited United Kingdom several times. Presented to His Majesty King George the VI. Outstanding polo player. Awarded C.M.G. 1954; C.B.E. 1948. Accompanied Premier Ahmadu Bello on visit to Pakistan and Middle East countries in 1961. Chairman Kaduna State Council of Chiefs 1967–1981. Died on 18th March, 1981.



Alhaji Muh. Dikko Gidado
Emir of Katsina



ALHAJI SIR USMAN NAGOGO
Emir of Katsina

meaning "that was my mistake and I apologise!" Nagogo knew quite well that if Mr. Oakes reported him to the Emir, the Emir would not hesitate to get him (Nagogo) whipped for that lapse. At last Mr. Oakes accepted the apology with a serious reprimand.

Another Prince of Katsina, Hussaini, also used to narrate his adventure with Mr. Oakes. One day Mr. Oakes was riding towards the town gate of Kofar Sauri and he passed by Prince Husaini sitting on a culvert surrounded by his servants. Husaini turned his face away pretending not to have noticed Mr. Oakes, let alone squat on the ground to salute him. The approaching Mr. Oakes noticed Husaini's deliberate attitude. He therefore pulled up, called him and shouted at him. He knew him well because they used to play polo together. Husaini at once knelt down saying, *"Na tuba, ban ga wucewarka ba ne!"* meaning, "I apologise, I did not see you pass." Mr. Oakes accepted the apology and trotted on towards the town. Husaini then came back to his servants and said, "*Ai dai duk kun san Bature ya fi dan Sarki mulki ko?"* meaning "You surely know that a Europeanis more powerful than a Prince?" The servants replied, "Yes Sir, it is so!" Mr. Oakes was no: a tyrant. What he hated, was conceit especially from students or Princes.

A NARROW ESCAPE

I also remember one great danger from which I narrowly escaped in the month of March, 1932. After our passing out examination we were anxiously waiting for the final assessment of our results for the award of certificates as qualified teachers. The practice was that when the school closed at one o'clock all the teachers went home, but students were expected to come back at three o'clock for afternoon preparation work. One of my classmates by name Sidi Gurin from Adamawa Province, a daring character, went to the teachers' Common Room, opened the door which was apparently unlocked and searched for whatever documents he could obtain regarding the examination results. Luckily he saw the result list in one of the drawers. He came back and reported the discovery to the class. Naturally, we all went one after another to see our results before they were made known to us. I too went to have a look at the results but luck was against me. I was right inside the teachers' Common Room when all of a sudden one of the African teachers, Malam Abdu Zaria, later promoted Senior Education Officer, Northern Region and also given the traditional title of *Galadiman Zazzau* caught me red-handed. He looked at me with surprise and said in a loud voice. "What are you doing here Imam?" I started shivering and said, "Sir, sir, by Allah I was not the only one who came in here"' He then boxed my ear. I ran out to the classroom shivering in fright. I was lucky he did not report me to the Principal. If he had done so I am sure I would have been disqualified'

A week later the result list was displayed on the Notice Board. I found myself and Malam Ladan of Zaria, later the Chairman of the Northern Nigerian Development Corporation and also the *Dan Iyan Zazzau* bracketted in

second position in a class of sixteen. The first was Malam Isa Koto. This was in 1932, when the country was experiencing a serious economic depression.

The salary arrangement of Northern Nigeria for the products of that college was that anybody who failed to obtain a certificate was paid an initial salary of four pounds a month. A third grade certificate entitled the owner an initial salary of five pounds a month and a second grade certificate seven pounds ten shillings per month. A first grade certificate, which no student ever obtained, carried an initial salary of twelve pounds, ten shillings a month.

The Native Authorities had already declared that they could not pay the salaries of Second Grade Teachers. The College then decided to reduce the marks of every student by ten. This brought my marks and that of Malam Ladan to 68½% instead of 78½% which would have given us second grade certificates and an initial salary of seven pounds ten shillings a month. In the case of Malam Isa Koto it was written "undecided" yet he occupied the first position. What happened was that even when the results were reviewed he still scored above 75% which was the minimum point for a second grade certificate. His Native Authority wrote bluntly to say that it had no money with which to pay him his entitled salary of seven pounds ten shillings a month. Malam Isa Koto therefore had reason to start his life as a disgruntled person. But as he was a highly intelligent and hardworking man he rose up to the position of a Federal Permanent Secretary, later becoming an Ambassador to the Ivory Coast. He retired in 1968.

I was very happy for Malam Isa Koto's successful end, because I have never seen a student so intelligent. He was a year behind us but he got an accelerated promotion to our class and became easily the best of the class. He was an all rounder. The only place where I used to beat him was in Islamic Religious Knowledge because of my home background and regular evening lessons from my elder brother.

Three days after the announcement of the results we were all called for the turbaning ceremony which was performed by the famous Malam Nagwamatse of Sokoto in the presence of the Principal and College Staff. The turbaning was the indication that we were no longer students but teachers. From that moment my name changed from Abubakar Imam to Malam Abubakar Imam. When all of us were turbanned, we said good-bye to the Training College.

NORTHERN PROVINCES, NIGERIA.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

This is to certify that Abubakar of Kagara entered the Training College on May 1927. He has completed his course of training to-day and has been awarded a Third GRADE CERTIFICATE (Salary £60-6-78).

The subjects taken in his course were:—

Education-Theory + Practice.
English.
Geography - History.
Mathematics.

His Certificate was obtained under the following considerations:—

CHARACTER
TEACHING ABILITY } 68½%
RECORD OF WORK

He is specially recommended:—

Date 24 March 1932.

I S Hall
Principal, Higher College.

CHAPTER THREE

LIFE AS A TEACHER

In my reports from the college I was recommended to teach English at the Middle School. This I began with all the vigour of a new and young teacher. For the first few years of my teaching career I was almost a nonentity outside the school premises.

During the early thirties, there was a Mr. Rankin who was the English Master at the Katsina Training College. He introduced a new method of teaching English called "Look and Say" Method. If he wanted to demonstrate anything he did it in my class because the two institutions were not far apart. So, I became the first teacher in the North to learn that Method. I was then so highly spoken of, that I was being considered to be posted either to Sokoto to replace Malam Alhaji Dogondaji as headmaster of the Middle School or to be transferred to the Katsina Training College next door to be on the teaching staff. Neither of the two proposals materialised owing to certain unavoidable circumstances. Mr. W. S. de G. Rankin of Katsina College and Mr. Allen, the Provincial Education Officer, Sokoto, were poles apart as far as English Teaching method was concerned. About the time I was being considered for one of the two alternatives, Mr. Allen was transferred to Katsina from Sokoto to take charge of the Katsina Middle School. He found me an expert on Mr. Rankin's method. He said that he had never seen a worse English teacher than myself in his life. He condemned my style of teaching, indirectly of course, criticising Mr. Rankin's method.

He at once started to call me to his office to teach me his own method. I had a very difficult time with him. I who was being hailed as the best English teacher in the North had suddenly turned out to be the worst in the eyes of Mr. Allen.

I began to come out into the public eye in 1935, when the Resident Katsina Province, Mr. R. E. Payne wanted the services of somebody who could understand differences in meaning between reports in English, Hausa and Arabic. They wanted somebody who could compare the Emir's court records on murder cases and see that the three different versions agreed. I was found to be the only person available then. Later when the Katsina Provincial Advisory Board was established, I was chosen and appointed by the Resident to be its Secretary.

This part-time appointment brought me closer to the higher authorities. At that time there were very few cars in Katsina. Very often it was the Emirs' personal car — a 'Sydley' that would be sent to collect me and my files to the meeting. Whenever I saw the car coming I would go into the house to my wife and wait for Ulu, the Emir's driver, to blow the distinctive horn calling for me — "hiii, haa." This was a way of showing my wife how important I was to the extent that the Emir's own car was sent to fetch me to the Palace. I would then

collect my files and with a sense of pride swagger in front of my wife to go ou to the car. The occasional presence of the Emir's personal car in front of my house earned me effective publicity.

IMAM UNDER A TECHNICAL ARREST

I was thus at the height of my glory when one day in 1937 the Emir of Katsina Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko heard that we teachers had never paid the community tax. He sent for us all to his presence at the Palace. When we reached there he said, "I heard that you do not pay community tax, *Kuna jemage* (meaning you have been behaving like bats). You are neither birds nor animals." Turning to Malam Iro Yamel, the most senior of us all with a stern look, the Emir asked, "What is your salary?" Malam Iro replied, "Six pounds ten shillings, Your Highness." The Emir directed him to pay two pounds tax. His Highness then turned to me with the same question and I replied, "Six pounds ten shillings, Your Highness." He said, "You also should pay two pounds tax." Malam Isa Kaita was asked to pay thirty shillings as his salary was not as high as ours then, and the remaining staff paid accordingly. The Emir then instructed a policeman ('Dan Doka) to follow us and bring back the money. Considering that only yesterday I was being conveyed in the Emir's car, it was a sad occasion to see me being escorted by a policeman from the Emir's Palace on foot!

When we were out of sight of the Emir, Malam Iro Yamel, who was the son of the Emir's great warrior, Marusa, turned to the policeman and said, *"Ka ci Uwaka, Wa ka ke bi?....."* Meaning, "You bloody fool, who are you following?" The policeman then stopped. As we were all going in different directions in search of the money, the policeman could not follow us all at the same time. So he left us alone and said that he would wait for us at the entrance to the palace.

We all paid the money that very day. Community tax payable then was at a flat rate of seven shillings per head, and for us to be asked to pay two pounds became the talk of the town. *"Malaman Makaranta yau sun gamu da Dikko!"* Meaning the "Teachers have today faced Emir Dikko's wrath."

Do you know how this happened? It was partly our fault and partly the fault of the Ward Head. He was afraid of coming to the School compound to assess us, and we were not honest enough to call him. The Emir was right when he said that we were behaving like bats. For about five years none of us had paid community tax. So, the Emir multiplied seven shillings by six and ordered us to pay with almost all the arrears. With regard to this episode the one we blamed highly that day was our school-mate and friend Prince Alhaji Usman Nagogo (then Wakilin Doka, Head of Native Authority Police). We expected him to come to our rescue. He was there physically present but did not say a word; not even *"Tuba suke yi,"* meaning "They are repenting."

First Book

In 1933, the Education Department of Northern Nigeria organised a competition for teachers who were interested in writing books of original thoughts in Hausa. The competition was sponsored by the Translation Bureau under Mr. R. M. East. Luckily I was one of the five successful competitors. Among the others were my brother Malam Bello Kagara and Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. My book was entitled *Ruwan Bagaja*, meaning "The Water of Cure." The one written by my brother was titled *Gandoki*, about a gallant warrior, and the one written by Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was a novel entitled *Shaihu Umar*.

However, my first attempt at writing did not receive an immediate acceptance. Writing to Mr. Allen on 30th April, 1934 Mr. East stated as follows:—

ZARIA
30th April, 1934.

Dear Allen,

Many thanks for your note, and for sending back Malam Abubakar's manuscript. I sympathise with the author, and quite understand if he feels a certain amount of resentment at having his book cut about so much. At the same time I don't see how we can publish it as it stands, as he has taken many of his stories almost word for word out of other books, and if we published these under his name it would set a bad precedent. I made a special point of the work being original, when I came round.

Apart from this the book is very well written, quite one of the best that have been sent in, and it would be a great pity if the trouble he has taken were wasted for the lack of the small extra labour required. Actually all that is needed is for him to write five or six short stories out of his own head to replace those which have to be cut out, and adjust the connecting passages so that the narrative runs on continuously.

Of course, we could do all that here, but if we do, it will be no longer his book. And there is the question of royalties. I am proposing to give the author ½d[1] a copy, which, if 3,000 or 4,000 copies are sold works out at a considerable amount. I don't know whether he realises this, and that he cannot be eligible for royalties if he does not complete the book himself.

I should be grateful if you would explain the position to him. There is no immediate hurry. The best thing really would be for him to spend a fortnight at Zaria during the next holidays, and then we could finish off the book together. Would this be possible?

Best Wishes,
Yours,
(Sgd)
R. M. East.

Notes

½d stands for half penny. Under the old British sterling currency system twelve pence made up one shilling and twenty shillings made up one pound.

Following this letter I had to re-write portions of the book to fit with Mr. East's requirements.

Still as can be seen from the following letter (written to me in Hausa and translated into English) more work remained to be done.

69/1934/29.
20th August, 1934.

Malam Abubakar Kagara,
The Middle School,
Katsina.

Greetings and good wishes from Mr. East to Mallam Abubakar Kagara. I wish to inform you that we have nearly finished editing your book. The stories you sent have been included to replace those removed earlier. However though the ending of the book appears similar to stories from "A Thousand and One Nights," I have decided to leave it without any cutting.

There is only one thing which I hope you will try and do; that is to change page one which sounds like the beginning of 'Sindbad The Sailor!' This is in order to avoid readers disinterest if they should feel they know the story already. What you should do is write a brief introduction about the story teller up to the point where you wrote, 'At that stage the host cleared his voice and said, "First of all my name is Alhaji Imam....."

(Sgd)
R. M. EAST
Superintendent of Education
i/c Translation Bureau.

At last by October 1934 the book was ready for publication. I received the following letter from Mr. East:—

The Translation Bureau,
ZARIA.
9th October, 1934.

Dear Abubakar,

We have finished your book at last, and sent it off to the printers. It should be ready in about three months time. I am sorry that you have had such a lot of work to do on it, but I am sure it was worth the trouble. Now that parts of it have been re-written it is quite one of the best which have been sent in.

I have sent a voucher for £1 (One pound sterling) to the P. S. of E.[1] by this mail, which is your share of the prize. You will get some more money as a percentage on the sale as soon as the book starts to be sold.

I hope you will write another book. If it is as good as the last I will certainly get it published for you. I think you have got the gift of writing, and there is no reason why it should not be a very profitable hobby for you. As

1. P.S. of E. stands for Provincial Superintendent of Education

soon as people get the idea of reading and buying books we shall be able to publish larger editions, and give a bigger percentage to the authors.

If you do think of writing another book you needn't make it as long as the last, 15 to 20 thousand words is enough. But you must make up your own stories, or if you take other people's disguise them so that they look like your own! You might write a sequel — "Further Travels of Alhaji Imam" — if you like, or else something quite new.

I hope you will try to do this sometime.
Remember me to my friends at Katsina.

(Sgd)
R. M. EAST.

After the books came out I was further disappointed to note that *Ruwan Bagaja* had just 'Malam Abubakar' as author while *Shaihu Umar* had 'Malam Abubakar Bauchi' as author and *Gandoki* had 'Malam Bello Kagara'. Even *Idon Matambayi* which came fourth in the competition had 'Malam Muhammadu Gwarzo' as author. I felt that simply to say 'Abubakar' did not give me my full recognition. Apart from the name Kagara I had gained the name Imam since when I was a small boy in my father's house at Kagara.

The incident happened when a learned man visited our father. We were then reading the Quran in front of our father. When I was introduced as Malam Shehu Usman's son the visitor placed his hand on my head and said 'Abubakar Imam' Since then I adopted that name. However, since it was my elder brother who registered me in school the name 'Imam' was not used formally until I became a teacher.

I therefore vehemently protested to Mr. East for simply calling me Abubakar. He replied as follows:—

The Translation Bureau
ZARIA.
12th July, 1935.

Dear Abubakar,

I am sorry about your book. Your name appears on the cover, as in the case of the other books. I did not write your full name "Malam Abubakar Kagara" because yours was the first book, and therefore you were "Malam Abubakar." The other Abubakar's book, which came later (though actually it appeared in print before yours), I distinguished by writing Malam Abubakar Bauchi, and so for all other future Malam Abubakars. But you remain just Malam Abubakar, and every one will know that is the name under which you write. However, if you prefer it, we can put Malam Abubakar Kagara on future books.

As to your name not appearing inside the cover, it is not usual to write an introduction to this sort of novel and I was not intending to have one in future books of this sort. The reason I wrote a preface to Malam Bello's book, and a few lines in Malam Muhammadu Gwarzo's book, was that these were the first we did, and the preface was meant as a preface more to the *series* than to the individual book, as you will see if you read it.

I cut out your original introduction because I did not think it was quite, what was wanted, and your first chapter is an introduction in itself. I will explain this to you when I see you. However, if I had known that you set so much *store* by having your name inside the cover as well as outside I would have done it differently. So please pardon the mistake this time, and for your next book we will make things quite clear. I hope we shall have a chance to go through it together, so that you won't be disappointed again.

I have taken care to tell everyone including the D. of E.,[1] and C.I.E.[2] that it is you who wrote *Ruwan Bagaja* so I think you may be sure that there will be no mistake.

Yours,
(Sgd)

R. M. EAST
(Superintendent of Education),
i/c Translation Bureau

These books proved to be quite useful reading material in schools. Having realised the potential of my writing skill Mr. East decided to request my temporary transfer to the Literature Bureau, Zaria. He collected several types of books on European fables and Arabian Nights stories for me to use as background material. I spent about six months in Zaria in 1936 during which time I wrote the three volume *Magana Jari Ce.*

I was given a house at Kofar Tukur Tukur near the offices of the Literature Bureau. I would spend most of the mornings reading stories and discussing various writing approaches with Mr. East. In the evenings I would go to the Native Authority orchard near the General Hospital at Tudun Wada. There I would sit under a tree or go to the footbridge over Kamaca stream to watch the running water. There I did all my writing. The following morning Mr. East would go over what I had written and suggest changes or other stories to be read. In this way all the stories were completed within the six months and I was happy to be back at my teaching post in Katsina.

During my first visit to Zaria, even before I was properly hatched as a writer, I began by criticising the name of the office, *Ofishin Juye-Juye*, given as translation of 'Translation Bureau'. Mr. East readily agreed and accepted the Hausa translation of that as *Ofishin Fassara.* Later on the Bureau's name was further changed to Literature Bureau, *Ofishin Talifi.*

Magana Jari Ce Book 1 was first published in 1937. Books 2 and 3 followed in 1938. The two letters below translated into English from Dr. East indicate the various stages reached by volumes 1 and 2 of *Magana Jari Ce* in 1937 and 1938:—

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1. D of E stands for Director of Education.
2. C. I. E. stands for Chief Inspector of Education.

ZARIA
13th August, 1937.

Dear Abubakar,

Greetings from Mr. East to Malam Abubakar Imam. I got your letter sent to me by train.

I am making preparations for leave and am taking the train tomorrow for Lagos. From there I take a ship home. I cannot therefore write you a long letter. I shall be back soon.

I have finished editing *Magana Jari Ce* 1 and 2 which I am taking with me for printing in England. I am only waiting for the illustrations. Mr. Robertson is doing this work. I think the books will be quite attractive when finished.

With best wishes — till I return.

Yours,
(Sgd)
R. M. EAST

THE LITERATURE BUREAU,
ZARIA, NIGERIA.
18th July, 1938.

Dear Abubakar,

Greetings and good wishes from Dr. East to Malam Abubakar. I was very pleased to receive your letter and hear about Malam Bello (Kagara). This is indeed a happy occasion. May Allah grant us good health.

On *Magana Jari Ce* the main reason for delay is the art work to accompany the stories. However the illustrations for Book 1 have been finished and the manuscript sent to England for printing. When they print they will send it to me to check any corrections before the book is completed. I hope we shall have the book in about two months time. I will send you one copy as gift.

There is a particular writing job I wish to undertake with you and it is quite considerable. It would take us about three weeks working two to three hours daily. Now that you will not be able to come to Zaria perhaps I should try to come to Katsina so that we can work together. What time will be most appropriate? During the school holidays or during term time? I have already notified the S.S. of E.,[1] Kano and only await your decision.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
R. M. EAST.

From the last paragraph in the letter above it is clear that I was invited to go back to Zaria for another writing job in 1938 but I felt reluctant to accept. Dr. East therefore decided to move the Literature Bureau offices temporarily to Katsina in order to get the job done. The two letters below indicate the nature of preparations made before *Karamin Sani Kukumi* 1 and 2 were written in Katsina.

1. S. S. of E. Stands for Senior Superintendent of Education

THE LITERATURE BUREAU,
ZARIA, NIGERIA.
9th August, 1938.

Dear Malam Abubakar.,

Here are the books I spoke to you about. I am sorry I have been so long in sending them. What I want you to do is to glance through them and decide whether any sections in any of them, or any part of any sections, will be of any good to us. I know most of the material is useless, but perhaps it may give you some ideas. You see, this is only a 3rd reader, and comes after a very simple one of the *Aljaman Yara* type, so we must choose very simple stuff. If you find other more difficult pieces which might do, you could put them aside for a possible *fourth* reader.

Will you also look through the "Children's Encyclopaedia" when you have time?

I am also sending you a rough proof of *Magana Jari Ce* Vol. I. Don't be disappointed. It will look much better than this with good paper, binding, etc. This is a private copy for yourself; you'll get another properly finished copy in about six week's time, I hope.

I hope you had a pleasant visit to Kaduna. I'll let you know later definitely when I am coming. I expect it won't be before the middle of September.

Yours Sincerely,
(Sgd)
R. M. EAST
Senior Superintendent of Education
I/C Literature Bureau.

THE LITERATURE BUREAU,
ZARIA, NIGERIA.
15th August, 1938.

Dear Malam Abubakar,

Greetings and good wishes from Doctor East to my friend Malam Imam. I am pleased to note from your letter that you arrived safely back home. I also have written to you on Tuesday, 9th August, 1938 enclosing those books you requested, and our letters must have crossed each other. However, I am happy to hear that you have already started work on the new books.

On the notes about 'English Government' and the Savings Deposits in banks and post offices I will soon send them to you or come to bring them myself. I am pleased that you raised the matter of banking and post office savings deposit which should prove to be quite useful. However, the other matters you wanted notes on should better await my arrival. I will leave here on 5th September and I have written to Mr. Baldwin on our decision.

Your Friend,
(Sgd) R. M. EAST
Senior Superintendent of Education,
i/c Literature Bureau.

For the characters in *Karamin Sani Kukumi* I relied mostly on my colleagues and students at Katsina Middle School. Malam Ahmadu Coomassie was my classmate in the Middle School. He decided not to go to the College but to start teaching in the Elementary School on passing out from Middle School. He was a very good and impressive teacher. I therefore decided to model Malam Bambadiya of *Karamin Sani* on him.

For inspiration I used to visit Rafukka gardens in Katsina during the evenings. Here mostly vegetables were cultivated rather than fruit trees as was the case in Zaria. I also established a special relationship with the college Time Keeper, Basankare, and would stay for long periods with him exchanging stories and funny annecdotes.

My constant friends and companions in Katsina, Malam Isa Kaita and Malam Iro Yamel also gave me additional inspiration on what to write. We used to exchange visits to each others houses and during the school holidays promised ourselves to write each other at least one letter expressing our experiences.

The work on the writing of *Karamin Sani Kukumi* was completed in October, 1938. I was happy that it was over and went fully back into my teaching job at the Middle School. However things were to turn out differently for me very soon.

One morning in November, 1938, Malam Kinna the messenger between the Emir and the school came to the Headmaster Malam Iro Mashi and said, "The Emir wants to see Malam Abubakar Imam immediately." The Headmaster asked *"Lafiya?"* (What is the matter?) and the messenger replied, *"Ban Sani ba"* (I do not know.) I got on my bicycle and pedalled behind Malam Kinna to the palace. I did not know what offence I had committed, I was therefore apprehensive.

On reaching the palace, the Emir, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko said, "His Excellency the Governor, has aksed me to release you to go to Zaria and start an important work on a newspaper production. His excellency said that they had looked all over the North but could not find a better person than you. I am pleased that it is in my domain that the best was found. When will you get ready to go?" I replied, "Whenever you command me, Your Highness."

The Emir then said, "Sallah Day is only five days away from today. I allow you to have your sallah at home. Seven days after Sallah you should move." I replied by saying, "Your Highness, I hear and obey!" Although the Emir's peremptory order was tantamount to conscription, it did mark the end of the difficult time I was having with Mr. Allen.

Dr. R. M. East the Superintendent of Education Incharge of the Literature Bureau, was very delighted when he succeeded in taking me out of Katsina. He expressed his delight in the Journal called 'A Hausa Journal' which was printed later. In it he paid tribute to me in the following words:—

"Last and most important of all, the fact that it was possible to obtain for the post of Hausa Editor of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* the one who is capa-

ble of filling it. Malam Abubakar is a young Higher College graduate. He is one of the few who has not lost, through an intensive education in English, the power to express himself in his own language, and has already written a number of excellent books of fiction. He has infact, a natural genius for writing and exactly the lively literary temparament which is needed for this kind of work. He can make the most unpromising material into a readable and witty article.

"Malam Abubakar has a style of his own which is quite different from the academic and generally lifeless writing of his predecessors, and which will almost certainly have a tremendous influence on future Hausa Literature."

CHAPTER FOUR

EARLY ACTIVITIES AT GASKIYA

During the time Dr. R. M. East was working with me in Katsina on the writing of *Karamin Sani Kukumi* he had told me that they were planning to publish a Hausa language newspaper in order to counter the German propaganda on Hitler's activities and plans for Africa. The paper would appear monthly and would replace the then *Jaridar Nijeriya Ta Arewa* (*Northern Nigerian Newsletter*) that was printed in Kano Native Authority Press and published in English, Arabic and Hausa. He thought I might want to be a regular contributor to the paper, to which idea I readily agreed.

I sent the first articles I wrote for the paper to Dr. East early in October. He replied as follows:—

The Literature Bureau,
Zaria, Nigeria.
17th October, 1938.

Dear Malam Abubakar,

Thank you for the pieces of Hausa you sent. They will do very well indeed.

If you go into your old house, I think we shall be able to make the alterations you want, but I would rather leave it for the present, till we know when you will be coming.

We shall be glad to see your letters with your opinions on the paper, when you have got it ready. In the meantime, we are wondering how many copies we ought to have printed, for the 1st issue. Could you give any idea of the number which you think it ought to be possible to sell in Katsina Province alone (at 1d[1] each) without much trouble? Of course, it will only be a very rough guess. We shall know better after the first issue.

(Sgd)
R. M. EAST
Senior Education Officer,
i/c of Literature Bureau.

I followed with another set of articles on 8th November, 1938, after I had received Emir Dikko's instructions to prepare for transfer to Zaria. He replied again as follows:—

The Literature Bureau,
Zaria, Nigeria.
12th November, 1938.

Dear Malam Abubakar,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th and also for the one you sent before. These ideas will be most useful, and it was a good plan to put them down on paper. I think it is also a good idea to send out suggestions to local corres-

1d — means One Penny.

pondents ,but I am not sure yet about what sort of news people will want to read. We must talk over all this when you come.

Mr. MacFarlane told me that you were anxious to know something definite about when you will be coming, so I wrote to Kaduna. The Secretary has written to ask Mr. Giles when he wants you to come, but Mr. Giles is in bush at the moment, and does not come back till tomorrow. I have written to tell him that you want to get it settled as soon as possible.

Anyway, you needn't worry about it, as it is all fixed, except for the date. If you want to take a holiday, do so, as you will not be going back to Katsina Middle School next term.

I will get Mr. Giles to answer any further points in your letter when he comes.

Sai ka zo (Until you come)
(Sgd)
R. M. EAST
Senior Education Officer,
i/c of Literature Bureau.

P.S. I am going to give you Malam Tafida's house when you come to Zaria, as he is moving into the town.

I also received a letter from Mr. L. C. Giles the Administrative Officer seconded to the Bureau to be Editor of the paper. It reads as follows:

No.G.2/11.
15th November, 1938.

Dear Malam Abubakar Imam,

Dr. East has shown me your letters of the 19th October and the 8th November. I am very glad you are so interested in the Newspaper. I have today telegraphed to the Resident Katsina to tell you now that I have asked Secretary if you can come to Zaria as soon after the *Karamar Sallah*[1] as suits you, i.e., about the last days of November. Come as soon as is convenient to you — but take your own time — I mean, don't let them hurry you too much. I may have to go on tour for a week or so after 30th November: if I do, I will leave a letter for you with Dr. East. Dr. East has arranged for you to have Malam Tafida's house at the Lit. Bureau.

About the Newspaper, you know better than we do what people want to read. We have written to all Reisdents asking them to propose local correspondents for all centres where there are enough Hausas. We wrote that the local correspondent must be someone approved by the Emir and Council as you said: also he must be able to write in a lively style about the things which interest the Hausa, not the sort of things which were put in the old *Jarida;* and he must be energetic enough to try hard to sell the paper in every way he can, for a fairly small reward. Our plan for *local news* (i.e., the things which happen in e.g., Kano, which wouldn't interest Katsina or Zaria and so are not put in the printed part of the paper) is for the local correspondents to write

1 *Karamar Sallah* means lesser Beiram or Eid-el-Fitr.

them out the day before they will receive the paper from us, and get them duplicated or roneo'd[1] at the Divisional Office, the Education Office, or the N.A. Offices, and put the sheet of local news into the printed paper before they sell it. So we haven't asked for local correspondents at places where there are no duplicators. I thought that, for instance, District Headquarters like Maska, would get their papers from the local correspondent at Katsina, he would arrange to get local news from them if there was any, and to send them the paper, and to share the commission on the ones they sold. What do you think?

But I agree that we might get people in the village to subscribe as you suggest they would be proud of being put down as a *'literate talaka.'*

I think that as soon as you come, it would be useful for you to write out instructions to the local correspondents — how to get news, what news — how to sell the paper — how to duplicate local news — and so on. We might also tell them to send you local news for December — say December 8th, although there is no paper being printed in December so that we can see what, sort of stuff they think of writing. Then we can explain what is wrong, if some prepare too much or too little, or write uninterestingly.

I completely agree that the paper can't be called *Jarida.* We want people to realise that this is something quite different. I thought some popular title like *'Kwabo kwabo'* or *'kawo kudi'* or *'Dadin nazari'* — but you will easily think of some good title. His Honour agrees that the paper can be as popular as we like — the first thing is to get people used to buying it. The only way we can find to print the first few numbers is on a machine at the S.I.M. Bookshop Jos — called a Multigraph. I enclose a sheet printed on it. It isn't very pretty to look at, but it is *very cheap.* If the paper is a success, I shall ask that the Zaria N.A. buy a machine like this — then we can print our own paper in Zaria and pay the N.A. a small sum for it. I am trying to get photographs, but don't know if it will be possible at first.

Do you think we should have any world news in the paper?

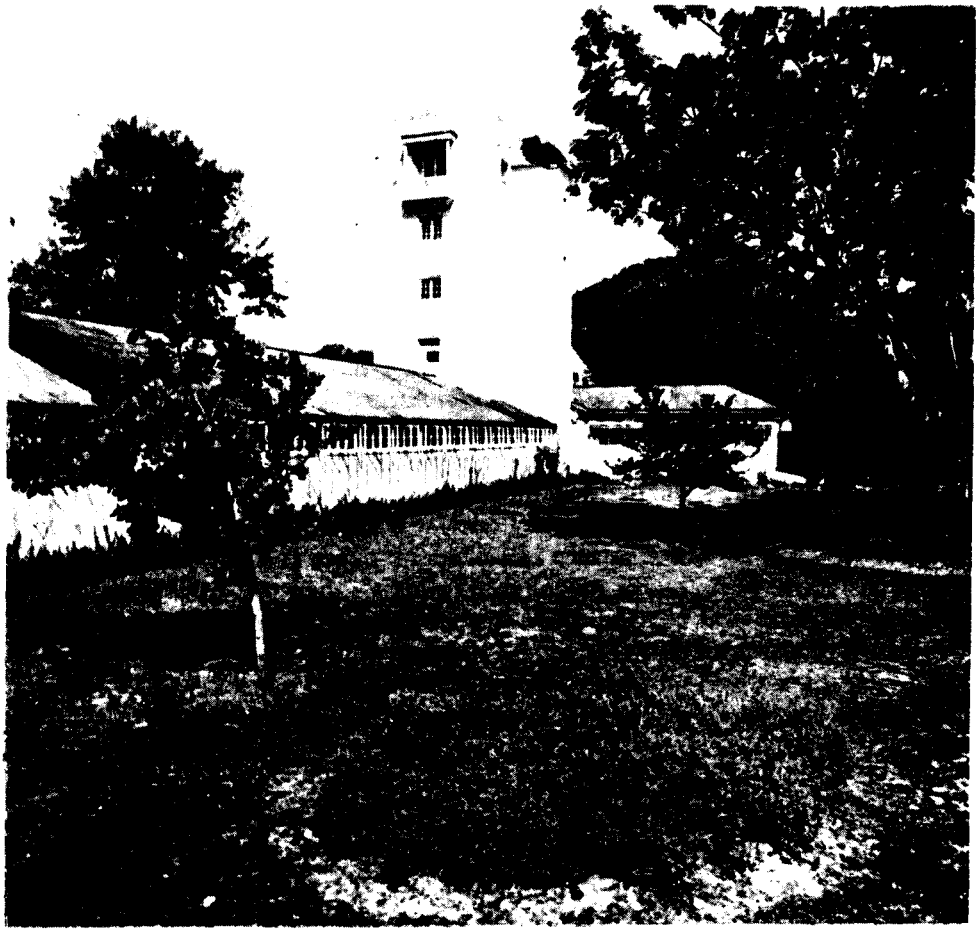
Allah ya sada mu da alheri. (May God grant we meet in peace)

(Sgd)
L.C. GILES
Editor.

When I arrived at Zaria from Katsina I was given the title 'Hausa Editor' and my salary was increased from six pounds ten shillings to eight pounds a month. I suggested *'Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo'* as a name for the paper. The first edition of the paper was printed in January 1939 at the Niger Press, Jos which was owned by the Sudan Interior Mission, an American Missionary Organisation.

The Mission authorities objected to a lot of the phrases I wanted to use. For example, they would not let me write 'Annabi Isa, meaning *'Prophet Jesus'*.

Footnote 1 Roneo is a roller used for duplicating.



Gaskiya Building

To them Isa was more than a Prophet. He was 'The Son of God'. As a Muslim I could not write that because in the teachings of Islam God has no son. The compromise we reached was to call him the *Son of Mary*. Not only my conviction but also my pleasure was to be sacrificed in the interest of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*! When travelling to Jos, by the old Bauchi Light Railway, Mr. Giles would put me down as one of his servants. So my transport was paid out of the Central Administration fund and not out of the money voted for the paper. That meant I had to travel in a Third Class coach on the train instead of Second Class, commensurate with my salary.

In addition to my work as Hausa Editor of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, my brother Malam Bello Kagara and myself were always called to help as Clerks Assistant during the then Chiefs Conferences called annually by the Governor in Kaduna. This brought me closer to the Northern Emirs and Chiefs. It also facilitated contact with the Governor and Senior Government officials of the Northern Provinces. In this way I came to the notice of the highest authorities in the country.

In the early editions of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* we concentrated our effort on enlightenment of the people generally about Government activities. Local correspondents from the Emirates highlighted their reports on the activities of the Emirs. The propaganda from Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy were very effectively checked. Efforts towards general mobilisation of the people and contribution towards the war effort were given great prominence.

At the end of two years, in January, 1941, we decided to introduce a specific editorial column called *Gaskiya Sunanta Gaskiya* (translated as Truth is Truth) in which I presented ideas on the general welfare of the society and as guidance to the people as a whole. Another column introduced, *Takardun Masu Karatu*, (translated as Readers Letters) was an invitation to readers to write freely and comment on articles published in the paper or on anything that required Government attention.

In October, 1942, I got the following letter from the Chief Secretary to the Government in Lagos:—

No. 03142/*S.*6/25.
Nigerian Secretariat,
Lagos, Nigeria,
16th October, 1942.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that arising out of a recent Legislative Council question regarding the appointment of Africans to the Administrative Service, His Excellency has decided to appoint a Committee with the following terms of reference:—

"To consider the question of the admission of Africans to other than Secretarial posts in the Administrative Service, and to make recommendations thereon."

2. It is proposed that Mr. A.E.V. Walwyn, C.M.G., Administrative Officer, Staff Grade, should be Chairman of the Committee and that

it should meet at Ibadan. His Excellency would be grateful if you would agree to serve on the Committee, the other members of which would be:—

The Emir of Zaria, 1
The Oni of Ife,
Mr. G. B. Williams,
Administrative Officer, Class I,
Mr. S. U. Etuk,
Master, Grade II,
Education Department,
The Honourable Jibril Martin, L.L.B.,
Barrister-at-Law.

3. I should be glad if you would let me know at your early convenience whether you would be prepared to serve.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
(Sgd)
Chief Secretary to the Government.

On receipt of the Chief Secretary's letter I replied indicating my acceptance as follows:

October 24th, 1942.

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 03142/S.6/25 dated 16th October, 1942, and to say that I should feel honoured to serve on the committee to which His Excellency has invited me.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
(Sgd)
(Hausa Editor)
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo

When the appointment of the Committee was known, *The West African Pilot* whose founder, proprietor and editor was Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, came out with this Editorial attacking the formation of the Committee:

Notes

1. Emir of Zaria Malam Jafaru. First Class Chief. Born 1889. Educated in schools in Zaria and Kano. Noted Islamic Scholar. Appointed Katukan Zazzau as District Head of Kataf District in 1918. Appointed Emir with the title SARKIN ZAZZAU in February 1937. Served as Northern Regional Minister without portfolio in 1952—56. Died in August 1959.



M. Ja'afaru, Emir of Zaria

WHY THAT COMMITTEE

"As will be seen elsewhere in this issue, Government has appointed a Committee of seven whose terms of reference will be to consider the question of the admission of Africans to other than Secretarial posts in the Administrative Service, and to make recommendations thereon: Of these seven members, we are so happy to note that not less than five are Africans.

"It is true that in the appointment of deserving Africans to the higher posts in the Administrative Service, Government is doing what it is expected to do as trustee. It is also true that by its action, Government has vindicated its fervent desire to relegate the ultimate reigns of responsibility to competent and deserving Africans.

"All that is alright in a way. But what we certainly cannot understand at the moment is the necessity for the appointment of a committee to consider this question. Why form a committee when the records of African Civil Servants lie safely in Government hands, and from which valuable information can be obtained?

"Whatever the excuse, we feel the appointment of a Committee will only tend to cause undue delay. Mind you, we are not attacking the committee per se, but the principle behind the appointment. Why not go straight on to the object and make the necessary recommendations, instead of having first to refer the matter to a committee? No, we honestly feel a committee is not very necessary in this particular instance."

But on my part, having accepted to serve on the committee and realising how very important the assignment was I asked whether I would be allowed to seek the opinions of some of my educated friends. I was told to carry on but must be careful and tactful.

I therefore wrote to various people including the Sardauna of Sokoto at Gusau; the Ciroma of Kano, Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi; the Magajin Gari of Katsina, Alhaji Usman Nagogo. Others were Malam Abba Habib (later the Waziri of Dikwa and Federal Minister for Trade and Industry); Malam Yahaya Ilorin (later Madakin Ilorin and Minister for Health); Malam Iro Mashi Katsina, (later member of the Legislative Council of Nigeria, and also Iyan Katsina and then Talban Katsina); Malam Adamu B. Dikko who was then at Yaba Lagos (later Principal Pharmacy School, Zaria) and also my brother Ahmadu Kagara (later Senior Technical Officer, Ministry of Animal and Forest Resources, Kaduna).

Some of the replies sent to me are presented in the following letters:—

Middle School, Katsina
27th November, 1942.

Malam Abubakar Imam Kagara,
Hausa Editor,
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo,
Zaria.

Thank you very much for your letter and below are our responses to your questions:—

1. *Mixing with Southerners:* We think that this will not be possible, however much educational progress has been made. The reason is that customs and religious beliefs differ. The age-old enmity will be difficult to eradicate.

2. *Hereditary Leadership.* We feel that it is better to leave all leadership positions open to competition. However, sometimes if those who qualify for such positions happen to be the apparent successors they may be given the leadership responsibilities. Furthermore, it is better to retain the position of emir as a hereditary title, but ensure that any successor is educated enough since he will rule over educated people. If no qualified person is available from one dynastic house, a better person from another dynastic house should be appointed. If all the dynastic houses have educated candidates then the most qualified from among them should be appointed. If only one dynastic house produces the rulers then the person to be appointed must obtain the educational qualification required before instalment.

District heads should have similar educational qualifications as for D.O.s (District Officers). They should not be very young men without sufficient experience of managing the affairs of the people. Old College students who have had some experience in administration should be the first to be considered.

3. *Legislature:* It would be better to establish a Legislative Council similar to the British parliament and also to set up a strong Northern Provinces Service. The Legislative Council should be given sufficient powers to make decisions for the community. It should also have educated people as well as those learned in Islamic Studies as members.

Your brother,
(Sgd)
MALAM IRO,
Headmaster, Middle School,
Katsina.

CONFIDENTIAL
No. C/4.
Gusau.
30th November, 1942.

Malam Imam Kagara,
Hausa Editor,

I refer to your letter No. PR/7/49. I asembled a number of Malams and had discussions with them and we reached the following conclusions:—

Africans As Administrative Officers

1. Yes, this is acceptable.

2. We do not however wish to mix with southerners because of the differences in culture until it becomes unavoidable.
3. We prefer mixing with Hausas from different areas e.g., a man from Sokoto may be sent to Bauchi or Borno or Bida.

Training:

1. It is better to start the training in this country at first. For example, a college for Administrative Officers may be opened and experienced District Officers posted as instructors.
2. Trainees should come from noble families.
3. Also educated people should be included.

Hereditary Leadership:

1. We do not desire hereditary succession in this progressive development period except that the paramount emirs and chiefs should continue to be succeeded on hereditary basis.

Legislative Council

1. Members of the Council should be educated and well versed in Islamic Studies. Secondly, those who are associated with the ruling families could be selected. They would have good links with the emirs as well as people in the villages. (As an example, if some matter arises for discussion they could send letters to the people asking for suggestions and later, meet those people individually for discussions. All this should be after they have had some training in administration).

May Allah guide us a-right.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
Ahmadu, Sardaunan Sokoto.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Sardauna's Residency
Gusau.
30th November, 1942.

Dear Abubakar Kagara,

Thank you for your letter which I assure you was received with great pleasure.

Well, I am sending you recommendations which we have dared to make. The reason why I said 'dared' is because Sokoto is not the same as other areas. I doubt if we have the freedom to state the facts as we see them for fear of conservative leaders. Such progressive ideas are discouraged and especially

coming from an enlighted person who is daily being spied upon for any failure that could lead to his retirement. As progress and development are not desirable qualities, one may even find oneself being posted to a distant rural station from where one's ideas will no longer be of any use to the community.

May Allah forbid such an occurance. Whatever you feel about these recommendations, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
Ahmadu Sardauna, Sokoto

Ilorin.
2nd December, 1942.

Editor,
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo,
Zaria.

I received your letter No. PR/7/49 and seen your suggestions. I feel your second suggestion will fit this country much better. All positions should be open to competition by educated people with the exception of the position of emir. Whoever is to become emir should be educated. Members of the emir's council should also be educated. District Heads should be educated but D.O.s, should continue to advise them. The reason for this advice is because some of the D.Os have experience of other countries under British Colonial Rule and they will be in a better position to advise on the development of the areas concerned.

I agree with what you say on the legislative council but this should be linked with the earlier national council established in Abeokuta. The District Heads and some of their people should hold meetings at least twice a year on the development of their respective areas.

In every big town there should be one D.O to advise the ruler. In future all positions in the native authority should be left in the hands of Africans qualified to do such jobs. Only the emir's positions should be hereditary.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
MALAM YAHAYA

P.S. I doubt if Nigerians will be able to govern themselves in the next fifty years without the help of Europeans.

Medical Training College,
Yaba,
25th November, 1942.

Editor,
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.

We received your letter No. PR/7/49 and are very pleased indeed. You have presented sound recommendations even though it will take sometime to reach the stage you suggested. The recommendations are very encouraging and will lead our country to the desired goals. We observed two alternatives given by you, and we feel the second alternative will be more acceptable to our conditions. Our views are as follows:

FIRST: Regarding the question of administrative officers up to the position of Resident it will not be suitable for a Yoruba or Ibo to perform in Hausa areas. Yorubas and Ibos can become administrative officers in their own areas but not in Hausa areas. Both the Yoruba and ourselves are Africans but our culture and traditions differ. You will see a Clerk who has spent years working in the North, but he is not familiar with our culture. The same applies to us Hausas in the South. Europeans who become administrative officers clearly make every effort to understand our culture and traditions, even their progress in the service depends on their effort. We should realise also that Nigeria is a creation of the Europeans. Before they arrived the land existed but they were the ones who carved out the boundaries of present day Nigeria. We lived seperately before, every section administering themselves as they saw fit. The Europeans united us together under a single authority. With this background, if any Yoruba man talks about the progress of Nigeria, his area of emphasis will be Yoruba land. The same applies to a Hausa man. So if a Yoruba or Ibo is appointed as an administrative officer he should stay in his home area. However much he may love Nigeria his love for his own area will be greater and his understanding of his own people will be better. The understanding of a people's culture is a great asset to administration. In fact, even to put a Hausa man in the administration among the Hausas is not a particularly progressive move to be accepted with eagerness. From our own understanding, the Resident and District Officer administer the country in the name of the King of England and advise the rulers in the best methods to administer their territories. If our emirs and N.A. staff have got sufficient education, there would be no necessity to post representatives of the King of England in every province. Emirs will then perform the functions now being performed by Residents and District Officers. If Hausas should reach the positions of Residents and District Officers, then they should become Emirs in Councils, and the functions of Residents and District Heads will become part of the Native Administration. Then the Emir should perform the duties of the Resident. His District Heads would become District Officers, as at that time the term Native Administration will be abolished.

SECONDLY: You have given a suggestion which we feel is more appropriate to adopt to lead us to self-government without the need of any Resident or District Officer. However, this will not be possible until we have a core of educated people whose qualifications are similar to those of the District Officer. These qualifications will not be available in this country and people will have to travel overseas for training. So we feel, if what the Europeans are saying is true, they would give us self-government in the near future, then they should advise our emirs to send our young men to England for higher education, the cost of which should be paid from the native treasury.

This will mean:

1. Europeans will advise the emirs of the need for every treasury in the North to contribute money for the education of our young men in England.
2. Every province will send its most intelligent young men to Kaduna College to obtain the Middle Six certificate. After this they will go to Yaba Higher College to prepare for admission to a University in England. These boys should be the children of Emirs, District Heads and the common people. They should be bonded to serve the government of Nigeria for at least ten years after their return from England. They should also study various different fields. Those who will become teachers will do the B.A. and B.Sc. degrees; others will study for B.Sc. economics and become custodians of the public finances and general administration. The sons of Emirs can study law and do the LLB degree. In their final examinations they should take (a) general principles of English Law (b) Jurisprudence and Legal Theory (c) Islamic Law (Sharia) (d) Public International Law (e) Law of Evidence, Civil and Criminal. Infact there are many subjects under item (c) to (e) but I have picked up those to be useful to the would-be-emirs. We do not mean that when they come back they should practice as lawyers similar to what is happening in the South. They will be expected to work in the government. Other students should aspire to become doctors, veterinary surgeons, agriculturists, engineers: civil, mechanical and electrical. They should also learn telegraphy, telephony and wireless engineering and other similar professions.

When they return they will serve the Government and be posted to the Northern Provinces. Gradually they will replace the Europeans who are doing such work. In this way education officers, agricultural officers, doctors, engineers and veterinarians will all become Northerners. They will also do the work effectively. When you see Northerners make blunders in their job, this is the result of poor education and preparation. However, when they are trained properly and acquire a profession you will be surprised to see how effectively they perform their work. They will not be like our village scribes who assume powers beyond their authority.

On the administration of the country, once our young men begin to come out of the universities, they will be the ones to be appointed District Heads. This position will then become no longer a hereditary post. Only the Emir's

position should remain hereditary. We know of the human feeling for the father to desire that his son should succeed him whether he be a teacher, an administrator or a musician. However, in the administration of the people, this selfish inclination should be removed gradually. For an administrator, the welfare of his people should be forefront in his mind. That is why we as commoners do desire that District Headship should be no longer hereditary. It is not advisable to appoint a youngman as a District Head while that young man is not capable of taking the position of leadership among his people. This is not progress, but a betrayal of trust. It is like inconveniencing thousands of people in order to please a single man. It is still acceptable for the son of a District Head to become a District Head if his conduct and relationship with the people qualify him to be so appointed. Allah will help him in this respect. It is unwise to push someone just to retain the position of his father.

Graduates coming back from U.K. should be appointed as Cadet A.D.O. and posted to their home areas. They should not be given an English title but rather the traditional title of the locality. They should also live among their people. When they have sufficient experience they should be raised to the position of District Heads.

The son of an emir who had studied for the LLB degree will work in the general administration office before reaching the position of a Resident. He may hold the position of a District Head pending the time he will be considered for the position of the Emir which will be equivalent to the position of the Resident. They will then represent the King of England in their own emi rates as they used to represent the Sultan of Sokoto before the colonial days. At that time the representative of the King of England who is in Kaduna, together with a few of his lieutenants will be the only Europeans remaining in the administration. As things are at the moment the position is very much confused. The Resident receives a letter from Kaduna and passes it to the D.O., who then informs the Emir. The people are told by the Emir, that such and such order is from the D.O. The D.O. in turn says, the order is from the Emir. Such confusion should be cleared as quickly as possible. The positions of Resident and D.O. should be reverted to the Emir and his people.

While our young men are training in the United Kingdom others should be selected for training at Yaba Higher College for various trades and clerical duties. At the end all our clerical staff will become people working directly under the Emir. However, before all these changes take place the Emirs must be enlightened to accept the need for them to work in the interest of all the people. If they realise that they can give jobs to their children without any requirement in the form of qualifications, then they may no. take much interest in selecting and financing the right students to train in England.

RELATIONS WITH SOUTHERNERS: This matter will arise after we have reached the stage when all our Residents and District Heads are our own qualified people working under the Emirs. At that stage we shall have in the North only the Chief Commissioner and a few European staff working for

the Government. We shall then also have numerous people who have had training overseas. When Ibos boast of U.K. trained compatriots, we should also be in a position to say 'District Head so and so is an LLB' and 'Councillor such is M.A.' However, if one who possesses £20 agrees to befriend another who has £200, very soon one of the friends will become the servant. If we are not very careful then Ibos and Yorubas will rule over us by being posted to our areas as Residents and District Officers. We do not resent the Southerners but we are quite certain that they are not at all ahead of us in matters of administration. For a long time the Southerners have been agitating for the positions of D.O. and Resident to be Africanised, that is to be given to them. We realise that they are solely interested in these posts for the money and the power attached to them. They know also that if these posts are attached to the Native Authorities they would not get them. Some areas like Lagos do not even have a Native Authority, so many of them desire to be appointed and posted to the North. There they would appear in shirt and tie, drive long cars and enter the Emirs' Palaces with their shoes on. Whenever he drives through the town his own people will be telling the locals "that is so-and-so, M.A., LLB, the District Officer in this town." Behaving as a boss he will speak only in English to everybody.

This is madness and will not take us anywhere. We are sure progress cannot come this way. It is advisable for Hausas, Ibos and Yorubas to help improve their own areas first before we talk about *independence*. Even some of the traditional rulers in Yoruba and Ibo areas are also illiterates. The agitators for independence are only a minority of the educated class who do not possess a proper understanding of the social conditions in the country. They speak as if *Lagos Colony* is the beginning and end of Nigeria.

We therefore suggest that our services should not be open to southerners until we have, working in our midsts, our own people who have trained in England. Those in the South should have more of such people too.

When we reach that stage, it is true as you state, "our relations should be restricted to trade and laws that apply throughout the country." At that time the Sultan of Sokoto will become the Chief Commissioner in Kaduna with the title Sultan. The next person to succeed to the sultanship in Sokoto will be called Emir of Sokoto. The sultan will then represent the whole North and his counsel will be required in all matters affecting Nigeria.

All these are the collective views of the five of us who signed below. You may think that we are dreaming. It is not a dream but our earnest hope for the future. The English have stated on several occasions that they have not come to these lands merely to lord it over people. No, they have come to help us develop our land and open it to trade. They will also train us to administer the people with justice and fairness. When they realise that we have reached a stage of self-sufficiency they would leave us to continue on the foundations

laid. We note also that the English are not dreaming up these ideas, they are telling the truths and expressing their hopes and desires. In India they are only waiting for the end of this war to achieve their independence with mutual understanding among the people of the country.
May Allah grant us goodness. Amen.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
ADAMU B. DIKKO
Master, Pharmacy School
Medical Department.

(Sgd)
I.H. Musa — 2nd Class Dispenser, Medical Dept.

(Sgd)
A. M. Yakubu — 2nd Class Dispenser, Medical Dept.

(Sgd)
C. I. Hassan — 2nd Class Clerk, Police Dept.

(Sgd)
P. O. Ishaku — 3rd Class Dispenser, Medical Dept.

Health Office.
Kagara.

Dear Brother,

Thank you for your letter which contains several questions for me to answer. I cannot answer in great detail because the writing will be too much. So, I am summarizing my answers under a few headings.

1. To appoint Africans as Administrative Officers will be a very good idea provided that the qualifications of the persons so appointed are similar to those of the Europeans. One should also be required to hold this position with justice and fairness. He should also understand that he will work in the interest of the people of this country and not just to help himself or his relations.
2. He should also have the full confidence and support of the government as it is the case with the Europeans. For example, whatever this African may do he should never be disgraced in the presence of his subordinates.
3. The question of heredity should no longer arise so long as a person has educational qualification and is sensible and understanding. If he is an African from Nigeria he should be eligible no matter his place of origin.
4. We now have fear of Europeans and of the emirs which is not a fear of their persons but of their positions. They have the power to punish anyone who goes against them and this power has been derived from the higher authority that placed them in such positions.

5. The question of separating the people of the North from the South is raised mostly from ignorance of the true situation. Most people cannot give any concrete reason for this requirement. We should realise that the people of the North and the South have the same colour and share the same country. The only difference is religion. Now, even in the North, we do not all have the same religion. In the affairs of governning the country religion should not be given priority since everybody is free to practise his own religion. The Europeans who now administer the country do not have the same religion with us and even among them there are religious differences. In government they are all treated equally and everyone is free to practise his own religion. By having greater relations with Southerners we should understand them better and they should understand us better, so that we eliminate the existing enmity caused by ignorance. It is the differences in religion that have caused all the problems in India during this war period.

   In India, it is understood that there are legislative councils for Hindus, Muslims and Christians. Some are more enlightened in the affairs of the world than others. Such mixing is bound to help those with little understanding to know better.

6. It would be a good idea to send some one from the North to work as District Officer in the South. This will help him to understand their customs and traditions and administer them accordingly. For a Southerner coming to the North, the same thing will apply. We shall then be on the road towards better understanding. It will not be wise for the South to advance far ahead of the North because if war should break out in the future affecting one side there would be every likelihood of the other side joining with the enemy. This would be a shameful act for a united country.

7. If an African becomes an administrator I am sure he will work harder than the European, because he understands the traditions of his people better. He would also know all their intrigues better, as well as their good intensions.

(Sgd)
AHMADU KAGARA

P.S. I am rushing this reply to enable it catch the mail service which we have here only once a week. I have got a lot to say but there is no chance.

I also had discussions with personalities like the late Malam Sa'adu Zungur, Alhaji Nuhu Bamalli, Book Editor (later Nigerian Minister for External Affairs,) and my elder brother Alhaji Bello Kagara.

Notes

[1]Malam Sa'adu Zungur was born in Bauchi in 1915, into the family of the then Imam of Bauchi. He grew up as a Quranic scholar and was indeed an authority on the Quran and Islamic studies. He was educated at Bauchi Provincial Primary School up to 1929; Katsina Higher College (Barewa College), 1929-1933 and Yaba Higher

When I had collected various points from various people of the North and studied them all, I then prepared myself for a full and active participation in the deliberations of the Committee. I also discussed with the Emir of Zaria, Malam Ja'afaru, all the various ideas submitted before we departed for Ibadan.

When we reached Ibadan, I was put up in the house of one Lamidi Akande close to the Mapo Hall. They took me to be an Oba. They did not know that I was only an editor of a newspaper and nothing else. When the car carrying me from the station, pulled up outside the storey house, I got out and started to struggle with my box. The host asked, in Yoruba, "Where is the Oba?" the driver pointed his fingers at me. Then all the people who gathered outside to see the arrival of the Oba Imam knelt down saying "*KABIYESI — KABIYESI*" (the Yoruba greeting to a chief).

Having realised how very important I was being considered, I quickly changed my attitude and followed my host upstairs. At that time my lodging place was one of the best houses in Ibadan.

After the three days meeting it was, at last, unanimously agreed to submit the following recommendations to His Excellency the Governor in Lagos.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the experiment be tried of appointing a few (i.e., 2 to 6 as may seem best to Government) African Cadets subject to the following conditions:
   (*i*) Appointments to be made on the same conditions as for Europeans, i.e., candidates must be under 28 years of age on the date of

Notes

College, Lagos 1933—1936. He was the first student from Katsina Higher College and the Northern Region of Nigeria (Northern States) to be admitted into Yaba Higher College,. After completing a course at the Yaba Higher College he was appointed a teacher at the Kano School of Hygiene until 1940, when he was transferred to Zaria School of Pharmacy, and he became its head in 1941.

Sa'adu Zungur has the credit of introducing politics into the North from the South of Nigeria by virtue of his being a student at Yaba Higher College from where he developed an interest in politics. While at Yaba he was believed to have become an active member of the Nigerian Youth Movement. But for ill-health and a short life span (about 43 years old when he died), he was capable of playing a significant role in the political development of Northern Nigeria, although he was somewhat erratic. The NCNC elected him as Secretary-General in 1948, but he decided to resign from that party in 1949, to join the Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa, a cultural organisation which became a very strong political party adopting Northern People's Congress (N.P.C.) as its name. He left NPC in 1954 for the Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU) founded and led by M. Aminu Kano. Malam Sa'adu Zungur died at Bauchi in 1958. He wrote several poems between 1939 and 1952 and the four most notable have been published under the title '*Wakokin Sa'adu Zungur*'.

appointment, they must have an Honours degree at a British University and they will be appointed Cadets on three years probation, or on such other conditions as may be in force from time to time.

(*ii*) African Administrative Officers to be posted only to Divisions where the Chiefs and people do not object to their posting.

(*iii*) African Administrative Officers not, in the early years at least of the experiment, to be posted to Divisions with which they or their families have any connection.

2. That very early consideration be given by Government to making it financially possible for Native Administrations to adopt salary scales comparable with those of government and to employ Africans of the highest education where this can usefully be done."

Early in January, 1943 when I was enjoying my leave at Katsina, I received the following letter from Mr. Walwyn.

No. 29840/73
Secretary's Office,
Northern Provinces,
KADUNA.

5th January, 1943.

CONFIDENTIAL
Dear M. Abubakar,

A difficulty has arisen on the matter of the first recommendation agreed to by our Committee, which reads as follows:
"Appointments to be made on the same conditions as for Europeans, i.e. candidates must be under 28 years of age on the date of appointment, they must have an Honours degree at a British University and they will be appointed Cadets on three years probation, or on such other conditons as may be in force from time to time."

The objection to this wording is two fold, as follows:

a) During a recent debate on Colonial Affairs in the House of Lords the Secretary of State informed the house that the age limit for candidates was 30 and that although a University degree was a normal qualification, those who did not possess one were not entirely ruled out.

b) The use of the word "conditions" is unsuitable, as this includes salary, passages to England and so on, which would not be entirely applicable to African officers.

I think I am right in saying that the main desire of the Committee in making his recommendation was to insist on the possession by an African candidate of the same *qualifications* as his European colleague.

I suggest therefore that the objections to the present wording could be overcome, while at the same time retaining the spirit of the recommendation, by rewording it on the following lines:

"African candidates for the Administrative Service should fulfil the same conditions and possess the same qualifications as are required of European candidates."

This, I think, would fulfil the purpose of the original recommendation without going into too much detail — which is hardly necessary so long as the general principle is made clear.

Would you be good enough to let me know as early as possible whether you agree to this amendment. We do not want to make a recommendation which contains an incorrect statement or a proposal that is not entirely applicable.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
E. WALWYN.

I replied as follows:

c/o Middle School,
Katsina.
(On leave).

The Secretary,
Northern Provinces,
Kaduna.

11th January, 1943

Sir,

With reference to your Confidential No. 29840/73 of the 5th January, 1943, I agree with the amendment as it covers my own desire of supporting the recommendation.

Yours obediently
(Sgd)
ABUBAKAR IMAM
Editor,
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.

Sometime in March I received the following letter with a copy of the report for my signature.

KADUNA.
15th March, 1943.

IBADAN COMMITTEE

My dear M. Abubakar,

I am circulating the report on our Ibadan Committee for signature, but this takes a little time as we are so scattered.

I sent an advance copy to His Excellency for his early information and you may be interested in his comments. He writes "I should like to congratulate you on an excellent and well-balanced report which is a really valuable contribution to our literature on this thorny and difficult subject and on larger problems cognate thereto."

Needless to say I take these congratulations as addressed not to myself but to our Committee as a whole and I am very grateful to you for your very

practical and clear-headed contribution to our consideration of the subject.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
E. WALWYN.

I signed the report and returned it immediately.

A few weeks later, early in May, I got the following letter from the Chief Secretary. I am sure the same copy was sent to everyone of us. Here it is:

No. 03142/S.6/99.

Nigerian Secretariat,
LAGOS.

27th April, 1943.

Sir,

I am directed to convey His Excellency's appreciation for the valuable work you have done as a member of the Committee appointed to consider the appointment of Africans to the Administrative Service. His Excellency is most grateful for your valuable contribution and the very useful report which has been submitted.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,

(Sgd)
CHIEF SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT.

During the one month's stay in Katsina on leave after the deliberations of the Committee, I had also written to the Oni of Ife to thank him for the hospitality shown to us during our stay in Ibadan. He replied as follows:

No. 83/6/34.
THE AFIN
ILE-IFE.

January 25, 1943.

Dear Abubakar,

This is to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant which you wrote from Katsina on leave. It is very good of you to write. It was a great pleasure to me to have met the Emir of Zaria and yourself. A meeting such as that will certainly help all of us in the great tasks that lie ahead. I have received a letter and a telegram from the Emir, all of which I have already replied.

I am sending this letter to your Headquarters so as not to miss you.

Truly yours,
(Sgd)
ADEREMI THE ONI OF
IFE.

CHAPTER FIVE

WEST AFRICAN PRESS DELEGATION TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

In 1943, I was selected to join the first West African Press Delegation to the United Kingdom, mainly to see the war time Britain. This was in the Middle of the war with Hitler — 'The Riddle of 1930s' (*Mazari ba a san gabanka ba*) and the terror of 1940s. This trip was at the invitation of the British Council. The other editors invited were Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe then editor of *West African Pilot* and Mr. Isaac B. Thomas editor of the Yoruba paper *Akede Eko* from Nigeria. From Ghana (then Gold Coast) came Mr. R. B. Wuta-Ofei and Mr. D. G. Tackie. Two editors came from Sierra Leone, Mr. C. E. V. Jarrett and Mr. T. J. Dephon-Thompson, editor of Sierra Leone *Daily Mail.* TheGambia provided Mr. G. W. Downes Thomas, editor of the *Gambia Echo.*

I was then receiving a salary of twelve pounds sterling a month. So when I was approached about the trip, I said I would like to go but that the group would be a wrong company for me.

Dr. East asked me to explain why I said so. I told him that those other members would have plenty of money to go with and I had next to nothing. If we went I would find myself almost as a hanger-on despite all that the British Council would do for us.

Dr. East therefore gave me a loan of twenty pounds. Another European friend, Mr. C. Graham, who was then the Provincial Education Officer for Zaria and a neighbour of mine gave me a present of two pounds. The European Editor of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo,* Mr. H. P. Elliot gave me a woolen sweater, the late Emir of Zaria, Malam Ja'afaru, gave me five pounds, and several other friends and relatives contributed in various kinds.

I left a message to be printed in the next issue of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* (No. 88 of 23rd June, 1943) as follows:

"Dear Readers,

"I wish to say goodbye as I am travelling to England. The arrangements for this journey started about two months ago but as they had not reached a conclusion I could not inform you earlier. As I cannot write to you individually or meet you face to face I am saying goodbye through the paper. I hope you will all forgive me any wrong I did to you and pray for my safe journey and return to Nigeria. May Allah enlighten me with knowledge in this journey that will enable me find out things that will forever be to the benefit of our country.

Sincerely yours,
(Sgd)
A. IMAM."

The Assistant Editor, M. Abdulkadir Makama wrote his own accompanying comment as follows:

SAFE JOURNEY, EDITOR

M. ABUBAKAR IMAM GOING TO ENGLAND

On Friday, 11th June, 1943, M. Abubakar Imam Editor of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* left Zaria by train on his way to Lagos and thence to Europe. He stopped at Kaduna on that day and stayed for a night with his elder brother, M. Bello Kagara, the Headteacher at the College. On Saturday he took another train for Lagos. This journey would appear to be sudden but it is not so. For the past two months arrangements had been going on for the journey but as they had not been concluded we could not leak the information out. The reason for his journey is that the British Government and an association called the British Council requested editors from West African Countries to visit the United Kingdom. (The British Council is set up to enlighten the people on the Culture and tradition of the British people and encourage friendship between the British people and peoples in other parts of the world). When these editors reach the United Kingdom they will be hosted by the Council and taken round to visit various places of interest. This is bound to widen their knowledge in journalism and in the world at large.

We are very pleased indeed with this opportunity. When the selection was made three people were taken. Two people came from the South and M. Imam was the third man. All of us in the North are happy and proud to have our editor represent us in this journey. We pray that this journey will greatly improve his knowledge and widen his talent.

Let us stop here. However, as soon as we have any news about him we shall inform you. Should anyone wish to write him his address is as follows:

Malam Abubakar Imam,
(Member of the West
African Press Delegation),
c/o The British Council,
3 Hanover Street,
London, W.1.

We left Lagos on Friday, 25th June, 1943 in a Dutch boat called *Amstelkirk*. We stopped at Accra, Freetown and Barthurst picking the other editors. It took us nearly six weeks to reach Liverpool. We had to go right in the sea to avoid detection by enemy planes. We reached London on 4th August, 1943. We were eight in the delegation. The whole story of this journey was given in a book I wrote in Hausa on my return, *Tafiya Mabudin Ilmi,* meaning 'Traveling is a Key to Knowledge'.

When we were in the boat, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Editor of the *West African Pilot,* later the first President of Nigeria, drew up a memorandum

which he called, 'The Atlantic Charter and British West Africa'. He asked us to read it and if we agreed to sign our names for submission to the British Government. Two of us refused to sign and one signed with 19 reservations. So it was only four members of the delegation that agreed with Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. On reaching London, Dr. Azikiwe cabled the following press despatch on the Charter for distribution to all West African Newspapers:

"SELF GOVERNMENT WITHIN TEN YEARS PROPOSED BY PRESS DELEGATION

"LONDON, SEPTEMBER 12: The West African Press Delegation to Britain has published a memorandum on post-war reconstruction entitled, 'The Atlantic Charter and British West Africa', embodying social, economic and political reforms.

"The memorandum requested firstly, the immediate abrogation of the Crown Colony System of Government. Secondly, its substitution with Representative Government, viz: Internal responsible self-government after ten years. Thirdly, the introduction of full responsible government after five years.

"It proposed two stages for the crystalization towards political autonomy, the preliminary stage to involve a conscious process of Africanisation in the political and administrative life of the territories concerned.

"Four hundred scholarships should be awarded annually to nationals of the four West African Dependencies for study in the United Kingdom and elsewhere on the following basis:

"200 for Nigeria, 100 for the Gold Coast, 75 for Sierra Leone and 25 for the Gambia.

"This, it suggested, should be done annually for five years. The intermediate stage should find Africanisation assuming a definite shape, thus enabling Africans to act in administrative capacities.

"The delegation also suggested that educational reforms should include free and universal education.

"Health reforms should include schemes for more hospitals and dispensaries.

"There should be an abrogation of racial distinction in the appointment of Medical Officers and Nursing Sisters. Private Practice among State employed Doctors should be abolished.

"Private Practitioners should be employed to serve the State on a part-time basis.

"Preferential treatment in importing drugs should be given to medical Practitioners over private enterpreneurs.

"Yaba Medical Diploma to be recognised by the British Medical Association.

"Nursing Sisters should be discouraged from changing Doctors' prescriptions.



Back row:
Mr. A. R. I. Mellor; Mr. W. A. Fraser; Mr. H. Thomas; Mr. F. Samuel; Mr. W. Sloss; Mr. G. Heyworth; M. Abubakar Imam; Mr. C. E. V. Jarrett;

Front row:
Mr. D. C. Tackie; Mr. I. B. Thomas; Viscount Tonypandy; Mr. T. M. Andrews; Mr. T. J. Deghon-Thompson; Mr. R. B. Wurie-Ofei; Mr. J. Pinder-Wilson;

"It is also demanded that social welfare reforms should include the introduction of health, accidents, and old age insurance, unemployment relief and pension.

"There should be provision for African Police Officers to study criminology abroad.

"Juvenile delinquency should be tackled objectively and asylums headed by more sympathetic alienists.

"Extensive and revolutionary reforms were suggested in agriculture, mining, labour, transport, communication, trade and commerce along the lines of *Post-War Nigerian Economics,* a study by 'ZIK'.

"The memorandum suggested £3 pounds monthly as the minimum wage for unskilled and £6 pounds for semi-skilled labour.

"The practice, by the Elder Dempster Lines, of engaging African seamen in inferior conditions was denounced.

"Political reforms include the right to own a printing press without licence, the right to publish a newspaper without impediment contingent on a future violation of law or obstacle due to the Defence Regulations, the right to employ, the right to travel anywhere in British West Africa and the Empire.

"The delegation urged on a more democratic method in the appointment of Governors, parity in the representation of Africans and non-Africans in the Executive Council, abrogation of the colour bar in the Civil Service, appointment of Africans as High Commissioners to London, democratization of the municipal and rural administration with Chiefs no longer acting as Sole Native Authorities.

"The delegation demanded universal adult suffrage for legislative assemblies, giving constituents the right to unseat inefficient legislators.

"They object to the representation of vested interests in the council and asked that Governors should have no veto power.

"Instead, the colonial office and the Governors should respect the wishes of the people as manifested by popularly elected representatives.

"The delegation believes that only through the appointment of Africans on a parity basis with non-Africans could the exercise of judicial power be effectively realised.

"The memorandum was signed by six delegates on behalf of 10 West African Newspapers.

"Mr T. J. D. Thompson, Editor and Proprietor of the *Sierra Leone Daily Mail* and Mallam Abubakar Imam, Editor of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* did not sign. Mr. G. E. Downes-Thomas, Editor of the *Gambia Echo* signed with 19 reservations.

"The memorandum has been widely distributed among the British Press, personages and organisations". The above Press despatch was printed in the *West African Pilot* of the 12th September, 1943.

I was very happy that Dr. Azikiwe took a keen interest in me even though I refused to sign his "Atlantic Charter". For throughout our sea journey and our stay in England we shared the same room. Of all that my European friends showed me and taught me before I left Zaria, they forgot to advise me to buy a sleeping apparel called pyjamas. Perhaps they thought I had. But I had not. I had only a pair of shorts and a jumper made of white shirting. So when Dr. Azikiwe woke up in the morning he looked like a bridegroom in his beautiful dressing gown, I on the contrary, always woke up as a professional boxer. On reaching England he asked me to buy sleeping robes. I refused because I had no money. I promised myself not to touch the twenty pounds loan given to me by Dr. East as I did not know how I would fare before the end of the journey. Dr. Azikiwe and myself were almost always together. He taught me a lot of things. The only thing he could not teach me was how to dance. I accompanied him to dances and held his coat for him. When he was tired we drove back home. If I had not followed him I would have felt lonely staying awake as if I were a night watchman of the Hyde Park Hotel where we were accommodated.

In London there was an institution called WASU (West African Students Union) Centre, where West African students lived whilst pursuing their studies, but there was not one Northern Nigerian among them. The realisation of this fact impressed itself upon me the great distance that had still to be travelled by the North along the road of progress. For what was interesting about all those students was that very few of them had been sent by their colonial governments. They had made their way there independently, or with the financial help of their parents. I understood that there were even certain organisations in the South which existed for the purpose of aiding students in their studies abroad.

This institution was on many occassions our chief resort after the daily round of sight-seeing, particularly for Dr. Azikiwe, Mr. Jarret and myself. We used to mingle there among people of our own blood, make ourselves at home, and eat our own food for once in a while. The Secretary was a Mr. Solanke, a true Yoruba and a man of great tact. He studied law in Britian. Olu, his wife, intelligent, jovial and hard-working, was as capable as a man in many ways. She particularly participated in all our discussions.

On a certain Tuesday, the members of WASU held a meeting in our honour, at which most of the people attending were Africans. They asked each of us to make a speech. I myself had already had a long talk with Olu on conditions in Northern and Southern Nigeria; she had told her huband of my opinions, and on his invitation I had repeated them to him personally. I was diffident about repeating my view in public in case they should arouse ill-feeling and be prejudicial to the cause of unity between North and South,

but he encouraged me to say exactly what I thought and expressed pleasure at the fact that some outspoken views would be heard.

On the day of the meeting, members of WASU spoke first, and were followed by Dr. Azikiwe, who was heartily applauded. Mr. Jarret, Mr. Thomas and finally myself. We were the only members of the delegation who attended the meeting. Here is a summary of what I said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I have listened with great interest to the speeches made by my brothers on conditions in West Africa, and also on our efforts for political autonomy, which is, certainly, our ultimate goal. But there is one thing we should realise, which is that the political co-operation essential to autonomy must be constructed on firm foundations, and that these foundations must be laid by us before we can ask our freedom of the Europeans. I cannot speak for other countries but certainly there remains a great deal to be done in Nigeria as regards these foundations. So far there is not yet sufficient mutual trust and confidence between Northerners and Southerners. But whose is the fault?

"If the matter is viewed dispassionately, it is clear that it is the Northerners and Southerners themselves who create differences amongst themselves and not, as some maintain, the Europeans.

"Anything I am about to say is not meant to curry favour with the Europeans. I have no blood connection whatsoever with the whites, and my sentiments are with the Africans. If I were able to speak English as fluently as an Englishman I should still not be considered a white man. However, in case there are some members of WASU among you who are uninformed on certain matters, let me tell you of the barriers to full understanding between North and South. The first is that we despise each other. We call each other ignorant. The Southerners are proud of Western knowledge and culture, we of Eastern. Theirs is the knowledge of the day, of the type desired by the European, and since power is in the hands of the Europeans, their type of knowledge is the one recognised rather than ours.

"Let me give you an example of the sort of attitude in the Southerner which the Northerner objects to, and if there is anyone here who will tell us the faults of the Northerner from the Southerners point of view let him get up and speak too, thereby with contributions from all of us, we can make some headway. If we wish for progress, the truth must come out. Now, if a Northerner does anything which is at all irregular, the Southern papers will go all out in giving the incident the widest publicity, with sensational headliness: "HAUSAMAN STABS COUNTRYMAN WITH KNIFE"..... "TWO HAUSAMEN LOCKED IN FIGHT AND EACH LOSES A HAND"..... "HAUSAMAN EATS TOO MUCH RAW CASSAVA AND DIES"...

"Such things do not promote friendly feeling. They show the Hausa up as a backward sort of person. Then, when the Southerners have finished humiliating us in this way, they turn round and say that we are their brothers, and that it is the Europeans who are trying to seperate us from them.

"Take another example. If any of you were to dress yourselves as Moslems, like myself, and attempt to sit on the same seat in a railway carriage with a southerner dressed like a European, there would be trouble unless he knew who you were. I myself, whenever travelling have had to argue with a Clerk before I could get a seat in a second-class compartment. When I first speak to him sometimes I speak in Hausa, pretending that I do not know English; I do so in order to find out how far this unity has gone that we are trying to foster. If you saw the reception I got you would be amazed! You would never say that we were people of the same country. When I saw the matter had gone far enough I would change my language, and he would become friendly as soon as he realised that I could speak English. In the conversation that would follow you would hear him bringing up the question of unity between North and South. But the only road to unity is for Northerners and Southerners to give more consideration to each other.

"Let us take another example. When I left Lagos there were three qualified Northern dispensers in the hospital in Lagos. But in order to get their medicine accepted by the people, these qualified men had to refrain from wearing Northern clothes. In other words, a Hausa is considered an ignoramus. The fact that all these three qualified in their work, and each held a diploma, which for a person wearing a turban, he had gained through hard work amongst others dressed as Europeans, counted for nothing. This question of dress is childish, and we ought not to allow small things like that to divide us. It is the man himself we should think of, not his dress.

"Take, now, the question of marriage. We know that nothing unites races and establishes mutual good feeling more firmly than inter-marriage. But to this day you will hardly ever find a Southern girl marrying a Northerner, though on the other hand Northern girls do marry Southerners.

"Again, last year, an article appeared in one of the Southern papers in which disrespectful language was used against our Emirs. These insults were directed not only at our present Emirs but even at Shehu Dan Fodio, our great religious leader. The article was alleged to have been written by a Hausa. But even if that were so, was it necessary, seeing that it is unity that we want, for such a thing to be printed? It could only give rise to ill-feeling.

"I could go on giving such examples endlessly. There are 11 million Northerners, but we have only one college. This turns out about 12 educated boys a year, at most 15 or 20. In the South there are many schools of this grade. The former Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, told me that much more public money is devoted to education in the South than in the North. But still the Southerners are not satisfied. Last year they started a controversy demanding that they should be allowed to share the only college that we have. This would mean that we should be deprived even of the 15 — 20 boys we produce each year to become our potential leaders. We should then only have two or three a year. When the controversy had died down, we heard them saying 'The Northerners are our brothers! It is the Europeans who are trying to keep us apart'.

"Schools are the light to show the road of progress in each country. All the things we are struggling now to get are for our own benefit and that of our country. But how many people among the 11 million of the North know this if they have not been to modern schools? Southerners are now demanding that Europeans should leave us and give us self-government, but did their past generation demand it? No, they did not, because they were not sufficiently educated to make such a demand justifiable. That is exactly our position now in the North. If the Southerners really wanted to co-operate with us, they should help us in insisting that we get more schools in the North to enable us to catch up with them in western education, and then we could properly unite and demand self-government from the Europeans. So long as the North is behind-hand, the whole of Nigeria is behind-hand.

"Last year the Legislative Council of Nigeria brought up the question of the appointment of Africans to the Administrative Service. The Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, nominated a committee formed of representatives from Northern, Eastern and Western Nigeria, to discuss the matter. The Emir of Zaria, Malam Ja'afaru and myself were chosen to represent the North. The committee of six met at Ibadan and held a conference. But after the conference a Southern paper asked why the Governor had appointed such people to the committee. The Governor, it said merely wanted to waste time. If he meant business he should have selected suitable men from among the large number of educated people available in Nigeria. Such remarks were out of place. No one would say that the Governor was dishonest in asking our advice. Since we in the North have no one who has been to England for his education (except Dr. Dikko) should we therefore be ignored? Is that the way to unity?

"I went on leave last year to Katsina and there I found a book called *Axis Aims In Africa* sent to the Emir from America. The Author was a Southern Nigerian, and in the book there was photograph of the Emir. As I was there at the time, the Emir sent for me. He said, 'Here is a book which has been sent to me. I want you to take it home and read it. And then come and tell me what it says.' I took the book home and started reading it that day. I found it so absorbing, that I could not put it down. As I read, I took notes on each chapter for the Emir's information. When I had finished I went to see the Emir, and there read out to him all that I had noted, chapter by chapter. All the people present were amazed at a Southerner being so rash as to make such statements about the North. I came to the last chapter which discussed the distribution of government posts in Nigeria and the condition of the country after the departure of the Europeans. It began, 'Mr, So-and-so to be Treasurer, Mr. so-and-so to be our Finance Minister, Mr. so-and-so to go to England as our Ambassador'. The author's mind must have wandered, for he completely forgot the North in making his appointments. I was about to go on with my reading when a Palace Guard (*Dogari*) burst out laughing and said to me, 'Malam, just a minute! Have all the posts been given out?'

I said, 'Yes'. 'Well, in that case', he said, 'I think you had better write to this man and tell him that he is not very fair in his distribution. Because according to him in the whole of the Northern Provinces there is not a single man from the Sultan of Sokoto and the Shehu of Borno downwards, who is considered suitable'. I said, 'Well, that is what is written'. The Emir smiled. The others laughed heartily. It is significant that it was a Palace Guard who knew nothing in Arabic or English, who made this illuminating remark. Nearly everyone feels like this in Northern Nigeria. We are not influenced by anything except the truth. It is for that reason that I am telling you of ourselves so that you can understand something about us.

"To return to the point..... our aim is to be united. Well, a few years ago, the Governor of Nigeria said that preparations were being made for the transfer of all the Sabon Garis in the North to the jurisdiction of the Native Authorities. This meant that some form of unity would develop between North and South. We, the educated Northerners, received this proposal gladly and we expected Southerners to do the same. But what was their reaction? Instead of receiving the idea with open arms as we did, they started to grumble at being put under the direct authority of the Northern rulers. Their attitude was very distressing. When the educated Northerners realised this they started to write something to *Gaskiya,* so that the Southerners would know that we were not dumb. I replied 'No, let them carry on. Let us see how far they will go. If we get excited about the matter we shall merely show that we are afraid'. Not long after this affair, they were again heard to be saying: 'Co-operation with the North is what we want; it is Europeans that are keeping us apart'.

"It is always that same between North and South: neither can tell what it is that the other wants. Even if the Southerners, in our opinion, object to the Northern Emirs, we think it would be better for them not to say so. They should first express their pleasure at the unity which is offered between North and South, and then add that there are certain matters which they would like to discuss.

"Let us not deceive ourselves. If we want unity, the first thing to do is to build the foundations of mutual friendship. Northerners and Southerners must not look down upon each other. We are members of one country, and we are all Africans. A man may live a thousand years in England, he may become highly intelligent, but if he is black he is still our brother.

"Now members of WASU, to tell you the plain truth, the common people of the North put more confidence in the white men than in their black Southern brothers. It is confidence in the Europeans which we now want to transplant and establish among ourselves. I therefore want to repeat to you that we must not delude ourselves. We must all realise that a Northerner is as proud of himself as a Southerner. The two halves into which Nigeria is divided are of equal importance. One is not stronger than the other; and it is obvious that there can be no smooth co-operation between two forces if they

are pulling in opposite directions. Members of WASU, and Nigerian Editors, this is the truth of the matter. I have expressed myself before you as a typical Northerner. Now let my critics have their say. I have been talking to you also as a Muslim. Hypocrisy is detestable and only the truth should be spoken. Henceforth everything depends on us, Nigerians. It is no use trying to put the world right before you put your own house in order".

I translated this speech and put it as an editorial in *'Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* No. 101 of December, 1944.

After this speech I had thought that I had added insult to injury and that my friendship with Dr. Azikiwe would come to an end. Surprisingly it did not. Rather it strengthened mutual consultation on all matters affecting Nigeria. Regarding the type of Government Nigeria should have I once suggested to him at that time that from what I observed the ideal Government for Nigeria would be 'A United States of Nigera'. He made a note of it and went away thinking seriously about it.

During our stay in London an arrangement was made by the British Council for us to visit some other cities of England. One of the cities we visited was Birmingham. On reaching the Adelphi Hotel where we were to put up reporters thronged the place. I was in my usual flowing robes and all the other seven were in European suits. So a reporter, an Englishman, who probably wanted to show that he knew a lot of everything approached Dr. Azikiwe, and pointing a finger towards me, he asked, 'Which Maharaja is this?' Dr. Azikiwe replied, 'It is His Highness the Maharaja of Poona Poona!'. The reporter put that down. Next morning our photogragh appeared with the title of 'His Highness The Maharaja of Poona Poona arrived yesterday together with seven of his followers!' We all laughed. I asked Dr. Azikiwe, "Please where is Poona Poona?" He said, "Who knows?".

After an absence of over one month we left London for Liverpool on our journey back home by sea.

By the time we returned to Nigeria a controversy brew over my refusal to sign Dr. Azikiwe's 'Atlantic Charter'. It was started by the *West African Pilot* and involved most of the other Southern papers. A few letters had been sent to *Gaskiya* but they were not published. However, I went into the thick of it as soon as I arrived. I received only one congratulatory letter. It was from Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa who was then the Headmaster of Bauchi Middle School. He wrote in Hausa to congratulate me on the part I played in England. He specially requested that I should regard the letter as confidential and not to have it published in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.* The letter is reproduced below:

Bauchi Middle School.
2nd November, 1943.

My dear M. Abubakar Imam,

I write with all due respect to welcome you back from England. I see that you have returned home to meet with great controversy resulting from lack

of proper judgement by most of our countrymen even among many of us who have attained some form of western education. The main reason for writing you is to express gratitude to you for refusing to sign that document. When I read about it in the *Pilot* even before you returned I began to express gratitude to God. You have surely shown tact and maturity as most of the North is not yet aware of the effects of modernity. We have not yet reached a stage in Western education to be able to boldly request for such things that Zik advised you to sponsor. I know that you are quite aware that your job is a difficult one which requires a lot of patience.

I thank you very much for deciding to use your own sense of moderation and judgement rather than follow other peoples views. You should know that a person in your position will always be open to criticism. Nobdy can satisfy all the requirements of this world except Allah. Whatever blame may be heaped upon you, please take it in good stride and pursue your moderate ideas with vigour.

Your refusal to sign has brought out clearly the need for the people of the North to work very hard in order to fit into the pattern of modern society. What goodness is there in a country where leaders look over their shoulders in envy of some of their followers. If we should accept the Clerks, people of the South, as our leaders, then we shall be lost forever. In my view if we should in Allah's time, become independent the country should be broken into regions so that each section could rule themselves according to their norms and traditions.

They who want us to take over the reigns of power are not even completely certain about what is happening all over the country from their newspaper offices in Lagos. All the things listed show a clear case of misunderstanding. If I could have a chance to meet with them to exchange views I will certainly welcome the opportunity. I personally detest controversy but on a question of principle like this one I am prepared to enter into controversy. There is still a long time to go. We shall not accept to serve the white man and then continue to serve his black substitute.

On the question of black Administrative Officers, do you think the common people will respect a Southerner as District Officer more than they respect their Emir? I am sure everyone will take him as we now take the Clerks. It is therefore better for us to have greater mutual understanding with the people of the South before we unite to rule our country. The Europeans have encouraged them to despise us and we stubbornly despise them so how can we reach a workable solution by their dominating us?

I have written this letter to you as a friend and do not wish that it should appear in *Gaskiya*. I thank you very much for showing that we do not need the Southerners to dominate us. I know what they have said are mere suggestions which have not yet been considered. However, it is from such suggestions that concrete decisions are reached.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd)

ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA.

I decided to answer all the other general critics in my editorial on 27th October, 1943 (*Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* No. 97) as follows:

THE TRUTH MUST BE TOLD: PRESS DELEGATION TO UNITED KINGDOM: 'SELF-GOVERNMENT IN TEN YEARS' Why Did Editor Abubakar Imam Not Sign?

I had planned to write about our experiences in the United Kingdom in this issue (No. 97) of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.* However, this is now impossible. It will have to wait another issue. The reason is that when I returned I found a conflagration of ignorance trying to engulf my home, the northern part of Nigeria. I therefore have to put out that fire before it causes more damage.

On 13th September, 1943, before we returned from England an article about our activities appeared in the *West African Pilot,* a paper based in Lagos. In the article it was stated that all the West African Editors on the Press Delegation to the United Kingdom have written a memorandum to the Government asking for things that should be done for their countries in West Africa. Further it was stated that all the Editors signed the document with the exception of Abubakar Imam, editor, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* and Mr. T. J. D. Thomson, editor and proprietor of the Sierra Leone *Daily Mail.* Mr. C. W. Downes-Thomas, editor of the *Gambia Echo* signed with 19 reservations. The *Pilot* Editor went on to state as follows:

"Surely M. Abubakar Imam and Mr. T. J. D. Thomson have disappointed us for their failure to sign. I am surprised that we still have Africans who will not be bold enough to ask for what they feel is their right".

Well, what is the reason for this?! Since I set foot on Lagos soil on my return journey that has been the question people have constantly asked me: 'Malam, why did you not sign?' Some are even not literate in English and some are not familiar with the details of the resolutions contained in the memorandum. They just heard that others signed the paper but I did not. I have always answered as follows:

'I have travelled to the United Kindgom as a representative of people of Northern Nigeria in order to be their shephered not one of the sheep'.

I have observed that several of my friends in Lagos and Kaduna who saw me off on the journey out did not bother to come and welcome me on the return journey. All this does not bother me. It is good in fact that the matter turned out like this. I am reassured of my view about the danger posed against the North since many of our people are willing to accept statements at face value without thinking deeply about the consequences. This is the type of attitude that would cause confusion among the people and disrupt national development.

Now for the facts. Nigeria is indeed one country but the level of enlightenment in the North is not the same with that of the South. When I undertook the journey to England I regarded myself as a representative of Northern Nigeria, not of Southern Nigeria or Gold Coast (Ghana) or Sierra Leone or the

Gambia. I do not know what their people desire or what they detest. If I were to sign for anything I would be signing on behalf of Northern Nigeria. So neither an African nor a European could force me to sign on anything that is detrimental to the interest of Northern Nigeria. If I had signed I would have done a disservice, saying that the thing I signed for was your major concern and that I was expressing your views. This is far from the truth.

If you have not heard the story in full I will now state exactly what happened. These resolutions which we were asked to sign were not drawn up by the Europeans. We as a group on board the ship discussed the proposals with a view to presenting them to the United Kingdom Government as a demand from West Africa.

Some few months ago, Dr. Azikiwe, editor of *West African Pilot* listed in his paper things which should be done for the people of this country after the war. It is from that list that he selected items that have common relation with other West African countries. All the other editors read his proposal, some recommending additions others alterations. Those who signed believed that their people needed the things indicated. When I looked at the list I did not find a single item for which a previous request was made through me. Then should I sign to please my co-travellers or sign for your interest? Should I carry their views to England or yours?

I reproduce below a list of the items in the memorandum as printed in *West African Pilot* of 13th September, 1943. After each item I will explain my own reasons for rejecting it:

1. The immediate abrogation of the crown colony system of Government. Its substitution with Representative Government, viz: internal responsible self-government after 10 years. The introduction of full responsible government after five years.

Explanation: You have never indicated to me that you are fed-up with the presence of Europeans in this country for me to agree to the fact that they should all pack and go in 15 years time. However, what everyone should understand is that if we should dismiss the white European we are sure to replace him with a black 'European' who has studied this system in England. If we have none of our own then we must look for one from the South.

2. Two stages were proposed for the crystalisation towards political autonomy, the preliminary stage to involve a conscious process of Africanisation in the political and administrative life of the territories concerned. Four hundred scholarships should be awarded annually to nationals of the four West African Dependencies for study in the United Kingdom and elsewhere on the following basis:

200 for Nigeria, 100 for the Gold Coast (Ghana), 75 for Sierra Leone and 25 for the Gambia.

Explanation: We have only one secondary school — the Kaduna College. Most students sent to the United Kingdom are those who pass Middle Six Certificate. Even they are normally selected after they have reached Yaba College,

Lagos. We have at the moment only one person, Jidda Jere, who is studying Pharmacy there.
Last year six boys passed the Middle Six Examination from Kaduna. How many hundreds would you expect to have passed this examination in the South? What my signature would imply is that I agree for Government to use tax-payers money every year to send six boys from the North and 194 from the South for further studies in the United Kindgom. When they come back they would take over the administration of the country. Not having gone with your mandate to make such a demand I decided not to sign the memorandum.

3. The delegation also suggested that educational reforms should include free and universal education.
Explanation: Education is free in the North. Only the people are reluctant to send their children to school. In the last Conference of Emirs and Chiefs a decision was reached to make education compulsory. With this background what justification do I have to take the matter to England?

4. 'Health reforms should include schemes for more hospitals and dispensaries.
Explanation: In the North whenever the Emirs meet the problems of hospitals are considered. More are being built. Our major problem is to enlighten the people to patronise them.

5. 'There should be an abrogation of racial distinction in the appointment of Medical Officers and Nursing Sisters'.
Explanation: Our only northern doctor is M. Dikko. I left without having consulted him to know how he is faring with the Europeans. As for Nursing Sisters we are yet to produce one from the North.

6. 'Private Practice among State employed doctors should be abolished'.
Explanation: Is that what they do? We have not yet received such complaints in the North.

7. 'Private Practitioners should be employed to serve the State on a part-time basis'.
Explanation: We have not a single one in the North. If there is one then he has not declared himself.

8. 'Preferential treatment in importing drugs should be given to medical practitioners over private enterprenuers'.
Explanation: We in the North have no such complaint from our only doctor, M. Dikko.

9. 'Yaba Medical Diploma to be recognised by the British Medical Association.
Explanation: We have only one student at Yaba and therefore await his completion of the course. It looks as if he will not become a doctor.
10. 'Nursing Sisters should be discouraged from changing doctors' prescrip tions'.

Explanation: They have not yet started this practice in the North. If they have we are not yet aware. Even if it were so such small matters could be settled here at home and not taken to England for resolution. For space restrictions this matter will be concluded in the next issue of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.*

PRESS DELEGATION TO THE UNITED KINGDOM: Why did Editor Abubakar Imam Not Sign?

In the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* issue of October (No. 97) I had started explaining to you why I did not sign the memorandum issued by the other editors. I had not completed the explanations for shortage of space. You will recall that I would first present the statement from the memorandum and then follow with my own explanation. Now read on:

11. 'It is also demanded that social welfare reforms should include the introduction of health, accident and old age insurance, unemployment relief and pensions'.
Explanation: This is a very good recommendation. The reason why I did not support it was because I did not see where the money would be found to finance such expenditure. Would the labourers be required to make deposits of compulsory savings as is required of salaried workers? Or would the extra money come from a general increase in Poll Tax? Remember that one recommendation was that the Europeans should leave the country and let us become self-governning. Everything we would require would have to be paid for from our taxes. If the demand for expenditure is increased a corresponding increase in taxation will have to be made. Furthermore it was requested that 'unemployment relief and pension' payments be introduced. What the people now pay as tax is about ten shillings (one Naira) per annum. Presumably each person would be asked to keep his ten shillings as unemployment benefit. Some may in fact claim that ten shillings would not feed them for a year.

12. 'There should be extensive housing schemes for municipal and rural areas.'
Explanation: We in the North are embarking on schemes to enable the peasants benefit from the taxes they pay. It is not only the urban working class that is provided for. The idea in the North is for people who live in disorganised village settlements to be brought together in larger villages or towns where provision for farming, health and education could be provided more effectively. Modern markets could also be provided in this way. I have so many ideas on the general development of the country which I have formed from the experience of my journey to U.K. and which will be presented later.

13. 'Scholarships should be awarded to African Police Officers to study criminology abroad'.
Explanation: Granted. However we in the North are served mainly by the Native Authority Police who are mostly not literate in English. Their leaders would certainly benefit by such courses.

14. 'Juvenile Delinquency should be tackled objectively and asylums headed by more sympathetic alienists'.
Explanation: This matter of juvenile delinquency is current topic in the North. Last year a resolution was made about it in the conference of Emirs and Chiefs. We have sympathetic alienists in our asylums in the North as no complaint has yet reached us on their shortcoming.

15. 'Extensive and revolutionary reforms were suggested in agriculture, mining, labour, transport, communications, trade and commerce along the lines of 'Post-War Nigerian Economics', a study by Zik".
Explanation: This recommendation did not receive general consideration and support of our readers in the North. I could therefore not support something for which I had no prior consultation with you my readers.

16. 'The memorandum suggested £3 monthly as minimum wage for unskilled labour and £6 for semi-skilled labour'.
Explanation: This is a good recommendation. We all desire such improvements, even if the rates could exceed £6. However, in the North at the present time a person who earns £6 is ranked among senior staff. So if labourers are raised to £6 would the senior staff be raised to £15 and £20? How would office staff treat a cleaner who earns £6 when they themselves get £2, £3 or £4?

Another area of consideration is the fact that for each salaried worker you come across there are at least 100 non salaried people. Are these the people to take the brunt of higher taxes for the salaried ones to be satisfied? Would they agree to pay? Also which farmer will agree to spend one year on the farm for his produce to be sold at £3[1] while a labourer earns £6 a month?

17. 'The Practice by Elder Dempster Lines, of engaging African seamen on inferior conditions was denounced'.
Explanation: This recommendation does not affect any of our readers and I am sure not a single man from the North is serving on the high seas.

18. 'Political Reforms demanded include the right to own a printing press without licence, the right to publish a newspaper without impediment contingent on a future violation of law or obstacle due to the Defence Regulations, the right to employment, the right to travel anywhere in British West Africa and the Empire'.
Explanation: Except in this period of war when there are risks in travel I have not yet heard of anyone who desired to travel but was prevented. Northerners mostly undertake journeys to Mecca and even this year they have gone.

19. 'The Delegation urged on a more democratic method in the appointment of Governors, parity in the representation of Africans and non-Africans in the Executive Council, abrogation of the colour bar in the Civil Service, appointment of Africans as High Commissioners to London, democratisation

1 In 1943, the average price per 100 kg bag of guinea corn was about five shillings (¼ Pound Sterling). The average farmer would harvest not more than 20 bags per annum.

of the municipal and rural administration with chiefs no longer acting as Sole Native Authorities'.

Explanation: All this cannot be blamed on me but on my readers. I am yet to receive a single letter of request on such matter. What has mostly been requested is the injection into the Emirs', Councils of people of integrity who are not mere 'yes men' and would stand by what is fair and just. They would accept Allah's rule above the rule of a human being.

20. 'The delegation demanded universal adult suffrage for legislative assemblies, giving constituents the right to unseat inefficient legislators. They objected to the representation of vested interests in the Council and asked that Governors should have no veto power".

Explanation: We have not yet reached the stage of having people from the North represented at the Legislative Council in Lagos. What we have is the conference of Emirs and Chiefs in Kaduna for which we always endeavour to ensure that the Emirs' recommendations are in the interest of the people. How then can I jump to meddle in the affairs of Lagos which does not yet concern me and for which I have no mandate?

21. 'The delegates believe that only through the appointment of Africans on a parity basis with non-Africans could the exercise of judicial power be effectively realised'.

Explanation: We in the North have not yet been asked to appoint a European as *Alkali* (judge). Magistrates are restricted to townships and Sabon Garis and are all European.

"There you are, dear readers. These are the reasons why I did not sign the memorandum. At this stage these problems concern the South rather than the North. However, it is not my intention to divide the country into North and South. Nigeria has been one country since 1914. We intend to reach the same peak and attain our Independence. We are at various stages on our climb towards that peak especially in the educational arena. The journey is bound to be uneven, not as one force advancing together. They are far ahead of us, near the summit and we are nearer to the base of the climb. These things that I refused to commit you may be the same things that I will raise my pen and clamour for when we reach that stage. However, if I had signed you would certainly have criticised me for being rash in taking action without your mandate.

"What I know in all honesty is that not a single editor in this country can claim like myself that all his major decisions are reached after proper consultation with responsible members of his reading public. Any editor, be he in England or in Nigeria, can only make suggestions to the authorities who will make the final decisions.

"In future after I complete the story of our journey to England I will inform you about what we are doing to ensure a progressive development of this country. In those stories you will see the result of some of my efforts on your behalf."

Emir of Zaria, M. Ja'afaru[1] Writes to the Editor:
Dear Editor,

Assalamu alaikum. I expected to read your story about the journey to England as you promised in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo No.* 96 but was confronted with the conflagration that nearly engulfed *Gaskiya.* I prayed for you and took resort to the Hausa saying: *"In ka ga gemun dan'uwanka ya kama wuta, shafa ma naka ruwa"*, (meaning if your brother's beard catches fire moisten your own with water or 'To be forewarned is to be forearmed'). After taking the precaution I now send you buckets of water to spread over the ashes as you have already extinguished the fire. That is the best I can do to assist you in your predicament.

Now, Editor, the fact that you have not signed the memorandum requesting independence for us in 15 years time can-not be blamed on the Europeans for failing to prepare us. Or do they, the Europeans, feel that we can never learn and so want to run back home? Or do they really feel we have reached the stage when we can manage our affairs unaided? If the Europeans really feel that we are ready for self-government then you editor had better tell them not to deny the blindman his stick. The type of administration they found when they arrived on these lands was badly organised. We cannot go back to it. The Europeans should therefore exert more effort to train our people for self-government. They should not behave like the hare that becomes tired of running just on the verge of reaching its hole.

If it is not the Europeans, who are training us, who want to leave us, who else has the power to remove them from the administration of this country? If there are those who feel they can take over, are they thinking of administration or even technical and business expertise? If there is a need for us to send 400 students to the United Kingdom it shows that we are not yet ready. Knowledge is not like water which everyone can just collect with his container. Not even the 400 or any number we send could turn out to be sufficiently qualified to take over. Everything must be done with consideration. Is it sufficient just to know the English language and be able to read English books? Are we not aware that even the Englishmen who come here must pass certain examinations after having achieved university education in their own mother tongue? Some who came without taking the examination found they could not cope and returned. Many of our people do not even understand the basis for taxation. Why, when we are being patiently trained, should we show such ungratefulness? It is like a learner telling his teacher, 'I know everything' after just a few lessons.

Now dear editor, if we could tell the Europeans to leave everything to us how would the administration be organised? Would Kano have the same pattern as that of Zaria? What about the other provinces? What would happen when there is no central authority? My advice is that we should make every effort to understand and apply what the Europeans are trying to teach

us. To the Europeans we express our gratitude and hope that they would be recompensed for their efforts.

Editor, it is better to stop at this point. Here comes my contribution to clear the conflagration whose fire you have already extinguished.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.)
M. JA'AFARU,
SARKIN ZAZZAU.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS:

Your Royal Highness, this contribution is not for me alone but for all the people of Nigeria. If we want to build a strong Nigeria we must start on a sound foundation.

What I have stated in *Gaskiya* is true. The conflagraton is of ignorance. Now that I have explained the situation I have been receiving a stream of letters supporting my stand. They just heard through the grapevine that all the editors signed a document in the United Kingdom but I refused to sign. They now accept what I wrote as correct and realise that we have several stages to go before we reach the desired destination.

The Emir of Misau, the Sardauna of Sokoto, the Ma'aji of Fika, several teachers including headmasters, the students at Vom Veterinary School, students from School for Arabic studies Kano have all written to complement me on my stand. From Minna, M. Abubakar Kuta and from Bauchi M. Sa'adu Zungur sent me telegrams of thanks that God has guided me to take the right decision. The Kaduna College students who are regarded as boys have quite mature and foresighted men among them. The senior class sent a delegation to meet me face to face and express their delight at what I did. The soldiers of the 14th Battalion were very happy when my statement was read out to them, one of them wrote to tell me. M. Babban Gunduma from Keffi wrote to say they were organising a party for me and they had already started collecting donations.

Several letters were received. The reason why I decided to publish only the one from the Emir of Zaria is because of modesty. The Hausa have a saying *'Yabon Kai Jahilci'* (meaning 'Self Praise is a display of ignorance'). I am surprised that people responded so generously in their praises even before I told them all that I did while in the United Kingdom.

Throughout this country only two letters were received criticising me for my action. One came from a Nigeria Policeman, a native of Bauchi and the other from a young teacher in Bauchi who completed his course last year. [The teacher was my old friend Malam Aminu Kano.][1]

Notes

1 Alhaji Aminu Kano popularly called *Malam* Aminu Kano was born on 9th August 1920, in Kano and educated at Shahuci Primary School in Kano; Kano Middle School; then to Kaduna College (Barewa College 1937–1942), and Institute of Education of the University of London (1946–1947). He taught first at Bauchi Middle School and

What surprised me was that the letter of this single teacher from Bauchi was published in Lagos with so much excitement that Bauchi was totally disturbed at my refusal to sign. If you have read an English paper called '*The Pilot*' you would see the severe criticism written against me. I am ashamed of such attitude. I am sure the Europeans will be laughing at us. We, who are claiming to be self-governing in 15 years are already beginning to tear ourselves apart. Malam Aminu's 22 page letter rebutted my explanations point by point in Hausa and then summarised the content in English as followss:

LETTER FROM AMINU KANO

The Middle School,
Bauchi.
2nd November, 1943.

Dear M. Imam,

I am sorry not to have had a short talk with you when I came down to the Literature Bureau when passing on to Bauchi.

I am sending my article on your explanation of the clauses contained in the Gaskiya No. 97 about the demand you (they) made about political economic and social changes in Nigeria in favour of which you did not sign. I will be very much thankful if you can enlighten me more so that I may be able to feel my way through them. At present they are no more than sekeletal explanations and they bear no proof and clear evidence of what you want us to understand.

No, all your reasons are not worth saying and they do not convince me nor any person like me. They are just words coming out from the mouth of one who is in the position of the 'native weapon' of official diplomatic schemes and

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Notes

subsequently at Maru Teachers' College, Sokoto Province (Sokoto State) 1948–50. He was a foundation member of the Northern Teachers' Association (N.T.A.) in 1948 and was its first Secretary-General. He however, forsook that Trade Union in 1953 to found a political party called Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU) and became its leader until the first Republic was toppled in 1966. He was appointed Federal Commissioner for Communication (1967–1971), Federal Commissioner for Health (1971–1974).

During the First Republic, he was a member of the House of Representatives, Lagos (1959), becoming deputy government Chief Whip (1959–1964). He was leader of the Nigerian delegation to the United Nations Conference on Trade Development (UNCTAD) during the First Civilian Government.

In 1978, he was leader of a new political party, People's Redemption Party (P.R.P.). In the 1979, General Elections he was the PRP Presidential candidate. Mallam Aminu Kano definitely worked hard to redeem the masses of this country without the desire for any financial reward. He was not known to have owned more than his residential house and farm in Kano. His publications include *Motsi ya fi zama, Rayuwar Ahmad Mahmud Sa'adu Zungur and Hikayoyin Kaifafa Zukata.*

perhaps hypocrisy, a staunch adherent of the autocratic school who wants everything to go not as people (the masses) want it but as the pseudo — democratic groups want it to go. Your hostility to the South is not strong enough to make a sharp margin between us. Economic reasons which necessitated the political ones are stronger and sharper and keener than any words you may utter. May you like it or not North and South must move together in the same boat. I know that you are wise enough to know that by pointing out the religious differences between us and South to the masses you will reap a great deal of advantage but commerce, education and modern transport are going to be mighty weapons against anyone of your ilk.

If they are the things that trouble the *Mutanen Kudu* where is your alternative for the North? Even if you now display to us something you did for us on your visit, we know clearly that it has been arranged here in order to meet the attacks from people like me. I will never believe that when you went to England you did anything on your own accord, i.e. not officially designed for you. You might have been told all sorts of questions that you would ask the *Manya Manya* (powers that be) which of course would do us harm — by your employers and the Government etc.

You flatly contradict yourself by saying that you don't mean to separate North and South after the amalgamation of 1914. I know you do! Surely you do! Even if you don't you can't apply any weapon to explain yourself rightfully (but wrongly) to the Northern masses and fanatics unless it has something to do with pointing out the differences as I say above.

If the South has gone high up the ladder why didn't you draw your own declaration that will hasten the rate of our climb up the ladder in order that the pendulum of the clock may swing back to the left?

Had you signed that declaration no one would have called you mad among the masses who maintain your paper, for even now they do not understand why you are explaining yourself while they do not ask you to. They don't understand all that is about much less find something wrong with it.

What do you mean by *"Gaskiya wadda muka sani?"* Who are those "*mu*"? Do you mean your masses or your co-sub-editors and bosom friends? I am not of those *"mu"* for I haven't got the least idea of how much you help *"mu"* as you call it.

I am of the opinion that the clause concerning the Emirs' rule through a democratic council which will curtail all their autocratic powers is sufficient enough to prevent you from signing anything. You know the Emirs very well, while reluctantly you yourself are part-emir, like minded. For if you are even 20% nationally minded you should have done better than that.

There will be no progress in this country, we cannot attain a nationhood we can't have a pure democratic atmosphere unless and until we have done away with and completely abolished the system of the unpopular and much hated Indirect Rule. For the heart of the matter which it teaches is dividing the masses and that enables it to stand firmly for which the mere increase of

our knowledge gradually makes incredible. To trace the reason for this would lead me a long way. It is intelligible enough to say that while the essence of Indirect Rule remains the same the mode in which it is expressed changes fast — changes as living languages change (while some become dead), as forms of all Governments change. Thus one day the 'Indirect Rule' formulas will become dead and powerless cabalistic signs. It is by far from being an express image of the general feeling. It is influenced by the opinions of the people gradually but circuitously. Instead of misdirecting the public mind for ever as expected, it now follows with slow steps and at a wide distance. It is therefore necessarily unpopular and more so because the good which it produces is much less than the harm it inflicts. It is a shame to say that after 43 years of the so-called government Northern Nigeria has got only one medical doctor — and that is all! No sanitarians, no politicians, no educationists, no financiers-nay!, even the simple ordinary nursing sister is away from this train. Is that the type of Government capable of shaping a heterogenous population into one and complete nation? How slow are the strides? How dead!

Indirect Rule completely fails to prevent the existing abuses of the courts but has succeeded in bringing them to a more hostile flame. It makes the people lose faith in their chiefs hence it divides the country into four parts:

1) The conquerors who are feared by all.
2) The chiefs who are feared by the educated element and the uneducated ones.
3) The educated (on European learning) who are alone not knowing which master to follow the conqueror or the chief.
4) The uneducated element who are the majority and who suspect (unlawfully) the educated and fear the chiefs but thinking (that) more justice (would come) from the conqueror.

How can such misdirected and misguided people do something to attain nationhood? They have been divided and therefore necessarily ruled. Proverb: 'Divide and Rule'.

"Many wrongs, as we all know have to be endured in this world. Authority is never very good, and moderate injustice and moderate quantity of lies is more tolerable than autocratic governments. But it is with human things as it is with the great icebergs which drift out of the frozen seas. They swim two-thirds under water and one third above and so long as the equilibrium is sustained you would think they were as stable as the rocks; but the sea water is warmer than the air. Hundreds of feet down the slightly warm current washes the base of the berg. Silently in those far deeps the centre of gravity is changed; and then in a moment, with one vast roll, the enormous mass heaves over and the crystal peaks which had been glittering so proudly in the sunlight are buried in the ocean for ever!" (Extract).

It may be that we are under the same process, i.e. we are crews sailing and then running away from the bergs but when they are heaved over by the action

of natural laws we shall direct our sails towards the waters where once there wre bergs.

Let me stop here our dear friend and popular author M. Imam. I must beg you to pardon me for pointing out the hard facts and I personally want to get a private letter from you as I know that this long article cannot be published in the paper.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
al-Amin.

We give thanks to Allah and pray that He should guide us in future as He has guided us in this case.

In all the replies I gave did I do anything wrong? I answered their memorandum point by point indicating the stage reached by us in the North on each problem. My response is a clear report on the level of development in the North, showing where we are on the road to progress. I thought I had done a commendable act by telling the world the position of affairs in Northern Nigeria. If that is not done then by departing from the path of truth one goes into the wilderness.

I stated that we have only one college and that our backwardness in education is due to the fact that the common people distrust European schools. I also stated that at the last Emirs conference in Kaduna it was agreed that some compulsion would have to be introduced in school enrolment. I said that since we reached that stage our aims have been achieved. In this there was no need for sending a delegation to England.

Now hear a funny coincidence. On 10th November, 1943, the day I completed my explanations in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* the *Pilot* came out with a photograph captioned 'people from Bida'. They were first jeered at and then called the type of people I said did not want compulsory education. Another photograph of an office was shown and captioned 'Imam says he does not see any need for a hospital in the north!'. Can this be my true position? How could such attitude lead to harmony and mutual understanding?

One of my earlier actions embarrassed me greatly. Dr. Azikiwe the editor and proprietor of this paper was my best friend throughout the journey to the United Kingdom. The first thing I did on my return was to ask for my house to be renovated so that if Dr. Azikiwe should visit me in Zaria he would have little to complain about me as his host. I had spread the story about having made good new friends in the South, but see now how he treated me. Allah is my best witness.



ALHAJI AMINU KANO

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD LUGARD

On Sunday, 15th August, 1943, Lord Lugard invited the delegation of West African Editors to his house near Dorking. Only four of us were able to accept his invitation. Mr. Ofei of the Gold Coast (Ghana), Mr. Thomas of the Gambia, Mr. Thomas of Nigeria and myself. We were accompanied by Sir Hanns Vischer and Mr. Wilson of the British Council.

On our arrival, Lord Lugard came out and received us with warmth and gratitude. He started to ask us about the problems of West Africa in relation to Indirect Rule. I was surprised to find that Lord Lugard was following closely all that the West African Editors were writing about the subject. Infact he was following not only the comments of the West African Editors but also the comments of all the Editors in the various colonies of Africa where the system was practised. With the exception of Northern Nigeria, he was adequately conversant with the public opinion of the other colonies about the system. This came to light through the discussion that followed and the questions asked by the members of the delegation present. I realised that, Lord Lugard was a very wonderful old man whose sense of humour and capacity to understand problems made him the effective father of Indirect Rule in the British Colonies of Africa.

When he came to the question of Northern Nigeria, the birth-place of Indirect Rule, all eyes turned to me, and I mentioned some of the problems. Lord Lugard at once realised that I was not inclined to say much in the group. He therefore closed the meeting. We returned to London late in the evening.

On Tuesday, 17th August, 1943, Lord Lugard invited me alone for further discussions. I was accompanied by Sir Hanns Vischer. This time I felt more at home and free to explain things in detail. The following is the summary of what I told him or at least tried to tell him:

"As an Editor I have so far not received any letter on any complaint from anybody in Northern Nigeria against the system of Indirect Rule as laid down on paper. But there is one thing which people, especially the educated elements, trouble me about and that is, the way the system is being carried out. They say that the world is changing but Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria is not flexible.

"Lord Lugard asked me what exactly I meant. I said, that I doubted whether there were any Emirs who really understood what the Europeans really wanted or the goal at which they were aiming, because there was a tendency with them to think that once they had pleased the Resident or District Officer, then all was well. Lord Lugard said, 'So they do not know that the best way to please the Resident is to please the peasant?' I said, 'No, their eyes look towards the Europeans and not towards their own people, so much so

that they are in danger of losing touch with their people, without realising the consequences.

"In the olden days", I continued, "an Emir was powerful only if he had the backing of the Council of his War Leaders. Now many forget about the Council since they have the backing of the Resident, because they need the backing of nobody else. Many people think that Emirs are now being educated, because before the coming of Europeans they were autocrats and despots. It was commonly believed by peasants as well as by the educated few that if an Emir wants to injure a person he simply tells the Resident that the person is bad and disloyal. It is also firmly believed that it is no good to appeal to the Resident directly, because he will simply send the appellant to the Emir concerned and the result of the appeal is usually unsatisfactory. Since it appears to the people that they are ruled by one man and by one man only, the Emir, they feel they should also be under the protection of the Resident. But because of the intrusion of the Emirs, the people cannot feel that they enjoy the freedom which the British administration intends for them.

"Lord Lugard asked, 'What is the position of the Council in all this?' I said, 'Members of the Council, as far as the public are concerned, are hand-picked by the Emir himself. They represent nobody but the Emir. When the Council is sitting the Emir is always present. It is no wonder therefore that most of the councillors have no opinion but that of the Emir.'

"Lord Lugard smiled and said, 'So they are what we call "yes-men" '. I said, 'Exactly,' adding that it was also the same with educated men on the Council, they could not behave differently, to do otherwise would be to earn the displeasure of the Emir and others. So a wise peasant with a case should always work through the Village Head to the District Head to the Emir's Council. If a District Head wants to enjoy his post, he tries to win the favour of the Emir. And if the Emir wants to have the chance of exercising full power over his subjects, he tries to woo the confidence of the Resident or the District Officer, if it is in a small division. So that the peasant who should be cared for under British rule, is forsaken and helpless. The way Indirect Rule is practised in Northern Nigeria breeds evil in the Region and it is one of the main factors that hinder the progress of that part of the country.

"If one discusses this with an average Administrative Officer in Northern Nigeria one is considered as another Gandhi, 'a trouble maker'. Many of them insist that the only thing we want is education but education is not the only thing we want. The first thing we want is justice, next freedom, and thirdly education, without which we cannot enjoy our freedom.

"The people are now divided into three classes, the despotic traditional rulers (*Sarakuna*), the disgruntled salary earners (*ma'aikata*), and the forlorn masses (*talakawa*).

"Lord Lugard asked, 'Is that not due to the fact that not all the Chiefs are educated?' I replied, 'It is not entirely that. Even without education, many of our Emirs are wonderfully gifted. They could be good rulers if they wanted

to by deeds and not by words. I myself think that the fault lies with the Europeans. Most of them (the Europeans) do not understand us and most of us do not understand them, because for some reason or other they do not mix with us. But Northern Nigerians think that they understand the Europeans. That is the crux of the matter. There is a proverb that says: "It is not ignorance that is harmful, but false knowledge." How can we understand each other when there is no cordial relations? Normally, the relationship between a European and a Northerner is likened to that existing between a master and a servant. Between them the order of the day is command and obedience respectively. There is no other reason for us to meet. I know that some of them play games with us, but as we look at it, because they want to please themselves, not because they want to please us. Frank discussion is the best method of clearing misunderstanding and solving problems.

'Five years ago the Principal of the Kaduna College, Mr. E. L. Mort, O.B.E. thought of the idea of forming the College Old Boys Association. The products of the College, old and young at first appreciated the idea, and the old College students from all parts of the Northern Provinces started to converge on Kaduna yearly in order to attend the meeting. It began as a very happy gathering where one would meet classmates one had not seen for years. The then Chief Commissioner of the Northern Provinces, Sir Theodore Adams, knowing very well the advantages of an Old Boys Association of a College cooperated with the College Authorities in getting the interested College old boys to attend the Kaduna College Old Boys Association (KOBA) meeting. Whenever he was told the time of a meeting he would send a circular to the Residents asking them to give leave to whoever wanted to attend the meeting.

'Everything went on smoothly for the first two years and after that the whole thing collapsed. Why it collapsed the Europeans did not know. They thought that it was the Old Boys themselves who were not interested. But the true story is this: some of the Emirs began to suspect the association and those who were at their mercy were afraid and so found it safer to withdraw. This is an example of an indirect suppression by the Emirs of free discussion in the Region. But obedience through fear is never lasting. So the Europeans must not expect that imposed obedience on Northern Nigerians by their rulers will continue indefinitely — tension is rising and an explosion is a matter of time.'

"At this juncture, Sir Hanns Vischer asked: 'Do you think Northern Nigeria is going to be another India?' I said, 'I anticipate trouble but not an immediate one — not until the schools produce more educated people, who may be led astray by bad outside influences and propaganda. Everyone admits that Northern Nigeria is beginning to wake up and admire the usefulness of western civilisation. In other words, the region has started to walk while the rest or the world is running. So, until the products of European civilisation in Northern Nigeria are shown the right steps, the right way, the right place, and the right goal by the right people, they may try to run before they can walk pro-

perly. So the success of Northern Nigeria lies in how far the Administrative Officers are able to check the growing danger before it is too late.

'There are many forces which are misleading the educated Northern Nigerians. Among the most notable ones are irresponsible papers that are filtering into the region; irresponsible speeches by political agitators who have come to work in Northern Nigeria from outside and irresponsible clubs and unions formed by those outsiders. These seem to militate against the orderly development of the younger generation of Northern Nigerians who are confronted with many dangers. Therefore without proper guidance they are sure to be misled.

"At present a dangerous idea is occupying the minds of many of the people living in the big cities. It is this: 'You cannot get anything good from Europeans until you ask for it. If you ask for it and they do not give it to you, then shout for it. If still they do not give you, strike for it, then you are sure to get it.' This idea is receiving support from the practice of certain newspaper editors who regularly demand from the Government things which the government is sure to do in any case, and when it is done the editor says, 'We fought for it. If we had not fought for it the Europeans would never have given it to us. These white people are not here to help but to exploit.' By this means the editors, and not the government are winning the confidence of the people. So before such editors win the confidence of Northern Nigeria we want the government to change its policy as follows:

a) To give us what we deserve before such editors say it is they who have forced the government to give it.

b) Anything that the government is going to give the people tomorrow, let it tell the people in advance that they are going to give it in order to forestall the self-centred editors claiming the credit for it. Most of what these editors say I know is wrong, but I doubt if the average Northern Nigerian knows it. I know it because I can read between the lines and because I have the blessing of working with Europeans who are ready to listen to me, to contradict me and to allow themselves to be contradicted by me.

'During my current visit to England I have heard how very well many of the Europeans serving in Northern Nigeria speak of us to the British public. I am therefore convinced that if anything goes wrong in Northern Nigeria it is not because the Europeans serving there have no good intentions towards the region and its people.

'Now this idea — that you must strike for what you want — is contrary to the doctrines of Islam, and as such, it will create problems for Northern Nigeria if it is accepted as a maxim. The word Islam means loyalty and obedience, and in Northern Nigeria that word is being translated so literally that the people do not even complain when they are hurt. We say the more quiet, loyal and

obedient a sheep is the more benefits she gets from the shepherd. How far that saying will work in the Northern Nigeria of today remains to be seen. The only remarks an average Northern Nigerian makes when he is ill-treated is "*Allah ya isa!*" which means "I depend on Allah for vengeance." That is one reason why it is very difficult for the Europeans to understand the people or to find out what is really happening. So unless something is done, and done quickly confidence will be lost in British rule. It is easier to retain confidence than to retrieve it after it has been lost.

"Lord Lugard asked, 'Do you have any suggestions as to what should be done?' I said, 'I am not a politician and I have no experience of any government, so it is difficult for me to say. But from the letters I have received as an editor, and the interviews I have had with friends, educated and otherwise, I have come to the following conclusions:

1. 'Let all the European administrative officers and others turn over a new leaf in their relation and approach to the educated Northerners. Let them bring them up as parents bring up their children. Let there be cordiality between them and not fear and hatred. The Europeans oppose the idea of corporal punishment in schools. They say that respect through fear does not last and is not called respect. A leader should try to win respect from his people by winning their confidence. But many Europeans do not put this into practice, it is mere lip-service. Therefore the majority of the people of Northern Nigeria regard their rulers and the Europeans as unapproachable because of fear and nothing else.

"Furthermore, all Europeans insist that we northerners should not imitate them blindly as do the people of Southern Nigeria but should stick to our own customs. That is sound, but people have found out that many Europeans do not respect these customs which they ask us to stick to. We have now in Northern Nigeria a few educated young men who occasionally dress themselves up in coat and trousers just because they don't want to be treated with contempt. For example, if Mallam Abdu goes on leave and wishes to have an interview with a European, and he dresses himself up in Hausa robes and turban, when he appears before him, normally the European will not show any respect to him. He will expect him to sit on the bare floor before he puts up his case, saying 'Sir', after every other word. Next day, becoming Mr. Abdu just in order to prove that the Europeans are afraid of the people of Southern Nigeria, and hold the Northerners in contempt, he will dress up in coat and trousers, with a necktie, hat, shoes, socks and everything. You will be surprised to see how he is received, because of his European attire. The moment he enters the office the European will get up to meet him, shake hands with him and offer him a seat. This is the sort of thing that makes the people of Northern Nigeria get muddled up and that is why the Southerners generally hold us Northerners in contempt. They say that we are cowards, and that the Europeans are 'mis-educating' us, i.e. deliberately training us to be submissive, so that they can use us ast ools.

"We want a complete change of attitude from Europeans towards Northern Nigerians generally. The Europeans appreciate our ways, but most of them do not show openly. Many of us do not know how much they like us. The new approach, to be effective, should be based on friendship with a genuine desire to guide us. So let the Europeans encourage the idea of inviting their educated young men to tea, dinner, climbing, canoeing, picnics, trips, infact anything that will make them feel at home. This invitation must of course be spread widely and not given to the same very few selected group every time. By this means the young men will be encouraged to express themselves freely which they now only do behind closed doors.

"We know this means extra expenses on the side of the Europeans but we feel that propaganda of this kind at this time is so important that an extra allowance should be given to the Europeans to enable them carry it out. Once that freedom to speak frankly is secured, the European can then use his ability as a leader to uproot all the misunderstandings that he notices are being fixed in their minds, and to plant instead all the things he thinks that are worth planting and thus to prepare his northern friends for better citizenship. Education as given at school is simply a tool and it is not enough to give a man a tool without showing him how to use it. If Europeans are to expect good results from the education they give us they must show us its background, its aims, its whys and its wherefores. Otherwise there is a real danger that, through misunderstandings we may suddenly find that the traditional loyalty and obedience of Northern Nigeria has disappeared.

2. "It is certain that before Europeans can obtain any effective result from mixing with the people, they must bring the system of Indirect Rule up to date, arrange things so that it will be difficult for an Emir or a District Head to behave as an autocrat. So let the Council be an effective body approved by the people and to work for the people.

"By this we are not aiming to introduce the idea of vote casting as yet. No, far from it. What I would like to suggest is that the members of the Council should be hand-picked by four personalities, the Emir, the Resident, the Education Officer, and the European under whom the candidate for the Council is at present employed. In regard to uneducated members, who should be phased out as time goes on, their selection however should rest in the hands of the Resident, the Emir, and the present Council. In each case the member must be accepted by the elders of the section, the part of the country, or the interest he will be made to represent. Whenever possible an heir apparent though not nominated publicly, should be included among the members of the Council.

"Sir Hanns Vischer then said, 'Do you put the Education Officer among the selectors of the Council, because he is the one that knows and has a full record of the character of the educated people?' I said, 'Yes, and moreover it would increase people's respect for the school, encourage the teachers, bring a closer co-operation between the administration and education depart-

ments. At present people think that the education department is a separate body which has very little to do with the Resident or the Emir. That is why nearly every middle school teacher gladly accepts a job outside the education department, even if the salary is below what he receives as a teacher. For as a teacher, he feels he has little hope of getting promotion to an administrative post, but in any other department he is more under the Emir's control and more dependent on the Emir's verbal recommendation. So it seems to him an easy way to obtain promotion if one understands the tricks.

3. "No councillor should hold two posts. It is too much for one man to be a councillor and a treasurer, or a councillor and a judge, or a councillor and a District Head. We want the councillors to be kept busy visiting all corners of the province, hearing what people are saying, spreading useful propaganda of all sorts, infact they are to try to make the peasants realise that it is a blessing to be under the British flag. We are not aiming at perfection or anything near it initially, but only an atmosphere in which intelligence and knowledge can be used freely. Let the councillors, even if they are not educated, specialise in various subjects, for example one in education, another in health and so on. Later those can be replaced by men who are better qualified in the subjects while they themselves can be given other things suitable to their capacity. The quality of the council should continually be rising until we have councillors who are qualified enough to do the work of an average Assistant District Officer.

"Last year the Governor of Nigeria appointed a committee on which I served with the following terms of reference: 'To consider the question of the admission of Africans to other than Secretarial posts in the Administration, in Nigeria, I thought that I should not ask the educated people to advice me for fear that they might support it, thinking that it was an opportunity it would be foolish to miss. To forestall this I prepared some questionnaires which I sent round to almost every province in the North, asking selected responsible and educated people to form committees and advise me on the two questions viz:—

(1) To train Africans for general duties or

(2) To train them for administrative posts.

Nearly every one supported the second alternative.

"Lord Lugard then asked me to explain how I thought the Council should be run. I repeated that I had no experience in government and I was not a politician. It was only the views of some of the younger educated groups that I was giving him. But they thought that the Council should be run on a line like this:—

Anything that crops up in the country, big or small, must first go to the Emir before the Council deliberates on it, with the Secretary taking down the remarks of every councillor. The resolution of the Council will then be taken to the Emir who with the Resident will go through the remarks of each councillor making comments and criticisms as they go along. This will first

give the Resident an opportunity of educating the mind of the Emir indirectly. After that they will take the minutes to the Council chamber and go through remarks of each councillor approving or disapproving each suggestion made, as the case may be. But they should do it in such a way as not to injure the feeling of the councillors. It is in this way that the Emir and the Resident will explain to the councillors to their satisfaction why they, the Emir and the Resident, were taking a certain course of action in preference to others and why certain suggestions made by some councillors should not be adopted. The councillors should be made to realise that they really are responsible men representing the people. The Council will be a sort of school where responsible people would be taught how to collect useful suggestions and how to make them to the Emir. We are not asking for revolution, we are asking for a responsible system of government as explained by Shaihu Abdullahi the brother of Sheik Usman Dan Fodiyo, i.e., a constitutional system with the Emir ruling by the advice and consent of his people. It is not our wish to weaken the prestige of the Emir.

"In each district two councils should be formed, the Village Council and the District Council. The Village Council will hold its meeting of elders, and bring its resolutions to the District Council, which will include all the village elders and the important officials of the district. The District Council will then go through the resolution of each village which has been brought in by the village elders. The resolution of the District Council will then be sent to the Emir who will treat it as explained above.

4. "The idea of forming committees to go into special questions should be introduced also. If any important question crops up, the Emir, the Resident (or District Officer), and the officer concerned with that subject should appoint a committee of suitable men to go through the question before the council deliberates on it. Thus the Northern Nigeria of 1943 would be run with the up-to-date ideas of 1943 and not with the archaic ones, those of 1900.

"At present the Emirs are expected to perform the impossible. For example, two years ago it was found out that for some reason or other school boys were steadily becoming indisciplined. The Principal of Kaduna College, Mr. E.L. Mort, O.B.E. called me to his house and talked to me about it. I told him what I thought was the reason. I went back and wrote a long appeal on the subject in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. After that the then European Editor of the paper, Mr. Elliot (A.D.O.) asked me to see Malam Bello Kagara, of Kaduna College to plan with him what remedial steps we thought ought to be taken. He said our suggestions would be forwarded to the Emirs for discussion. We went and planned what we planned, and asked the views of the Middle School teachers of Sokoto, Kano, Katsina, Bauchi and other provinces. They sent in their written opinions. After that a committee was appointed at Zaria including Mr. Elliot (A.D.O.), Mr. C. Graham (E.O.), Mallam A.R. Nuhu the Senior Visiting Teacher, Zaria Province, Mallam Muhammadu Ladan the Headmaster Middle School, Mallam Balarabe the Islamic Religious Instructor,

the Headmaster of the Judicial School of Kano and the Headmaster of the Elementary School, etc. This Committee went through the suggestions we made and after amendments came to an agreement which was sent to the Sultan of Sokoto under the signature of Mallam Bello Kagara of the Kaduna College. When it was further discussed at the Emir's level some of the most important recommendations were not approved. This injured the feeling of the Malams on the committee. They became disgruntled not on selfish ground but they felt that the Emirs action was prejudiced. Many of the Emirs were not educated, many did not even visit their middle schools except when there was a very cogent reason, or when they were reminded that their names had not appeared in the visitor's book for sometime. But in actual fact we did not blame the Emirs. We believed that it was entirely the fault of the Europeans who misguided the Emirs who were made to understand that they were the 'Sole Native Authorities' and jacks of all trades. They took decision on education, hospitals, judiciary, sanitation, forestry, theology, veterinary work, engineering, in fact on everything. I very much doubt if even Mr. Churchill would know all these things.

"If one talks about this to some Administrative Officers, they say, 'This is how we found you. We do not want to change you'. That is a statement that we never understand. How can Europeans say that they do not want to change us while they give us education? Nothing changes individuals better in the world than education. Once you have given people education you have changed them entirely. So, we want the Europeans to forget the idea of saying that they do not want to change us, they have already changed us for the better. So, I repeat let the Europeans make us their friends without delay before circumstances compel us to become their enemies and reciprocate evil for good.

"People may say that the reason why Europeans do not appear to be considering seriously the growing problems of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria is because there are not in the North, as there are in the South, sufficient number of educated people to trouble them. This is a dangerous assumption. Because it is always the few that lead the many and not the many that lead the few. It is now the few in Lagos who say that they are speaking for the whole twenty two million people of Nigeria. It is also the few in India who have persuaded the British Government to promise India Independence after the war.

5. "As the Europeans are in Nigeria to teach us, they should regard themselves as teachers and nothing else. If they do not do that now, they will merely be preparing the ground for some extremists to bring confusion and trouble, the kind of thing now happening in some of the colonies. We should do everything possible to avoid trouble in Nigeria. We should be taught to do things ourselves and not have them done for us by Europeans. The only things we want Europeans to do for us are what we cannot do ourselves and what they have no means of teaching us to do by ourselves. Theoretical teaching at school is not enough to make a man a good citizen. The time has come for us to start receiving practical training also. At present, the people see that

everything is in the hands of either the Europeans or the Emirs and therefore they can do nothing for themselves. They always wait to be told what to do. They do not take initiative in doing things. This is a weakness for which the Europeans always blame us.

"If you want to teach a man how to swim, you do not leave him on the bank and dive in the water alone, calling him to see how well you can swim. That sort of thing discourages us, and retards the progress of the country. Let the headmasters of the Middle Schools for example, be taught to deal with all official correspondence. Let them write 'I goes' instead of 'I go' and be corrected. By being allowed to make mistakes they will be encouraged to further their study with greater care. This will also make their position more respected by the students, the staff, the councils and the Emir. All this does not mean that the Europeans are being given an easy task. No, they are being given a greater and more difficult task, in that they will be training the minds of Nigerian leaders of tomorrow.

"We know that there is a dearth of well qualified people of Northern Nigerian origin. We also know that the Europeans are hard pressed for time, but we do feel that it is essential that they make the best use of the manpower available.

"Lord Lugard asked me if I could not express these views in my paper. I said I could not. *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* was entirely a government organ, though they call it semi-official. Nothing of this kind would be allowed to go in the paper. People are asking for at least one column in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* where they can express themselves freely and frankly. As this would not be allowed, and as they have no other outlet, they make me a scape-goat. This is where I find that my position is far from being safe. I am surrounded by all sorts of dangers. The people put all their confidence in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* as they have no other paper. The Emirs are encouraged to support it but some of them regard it with suspicion simply because it is a new thing to them. Also because it tries to enlighten the masses about matters some Emirs do not want the people to know.

"At the initial stages we were not allowed to publish any opinions or questions from anybody. The Administrative Officers have not yet made up their minds as to what to do about us or about the paper. They do not bring us near them or ask our views, which are the views of the people, and they do not give us the freedom to write those views in the paper. So whether we are regarded as story-tellers or a public enlightenment agency we do not yet know. We have no definite policy. The only policy we are made to understand is to write in support of the Government always, whether we like it or not. That is why when I was asked to come to England, I said I would like to, only on the condition that if I was asked my opinion I would be allowed to say nothing but what I believed to be the truth, whether it was in agreement with the present Government policy or against it. For when I was offered the post of Editor of the paper, the first question I asked the European Editor, Mr. Giles

was to tell me whether Europeans really want to hear the truth, or whether they are like some of our Emirs who respect only those who say nice things about them. He assured me that Europeans want to hear nothing but the truth. Lord Lugard laughed and said, 'Exactly, we do not want to hear anything but the truth. The truth is what we want.'

"I then went on to tell Lord Lugard that I was wholeheartedly with the Government on the restriction of certain opinions. An irresponsible independent paper would be dangerous, very dangerous, in a country like Northern Nigeria where the people are oppressed and are eager for something to be done about it and anything that is offered to them or suggested may be taken with open arms. Therefore if restrictions are imposed, the restrictions should be absolutely strict, otherwise the forces so kept in check will eventually become a threat to the Government. For it is impossible to expect the educated Northerners to keep quiet for ever while their next door neighbours in the south, the Ibos and the Yorubas, are expressing themselves freely.

"Some Europeans say that eventually *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* should be made a responsible independent paper like the *Times*. But as I have not yet known much of the *Times* I cannot say that I have made up my mind about that yet. The only thing I am afraid of is the idea of allowing irresponsible free speech. We are not yet ripe for the sort of speeches I heard on Sundays at the Speakers Corner in Hyde Park. What I know will be useful for us to start with is freedom to talk frankly to our rulers and to Europeans.

"Lord Lugard then asked me how I would make that possible without a paper. I said I did not know. It was for the politicians to decide. I thought it would be possible through interviews, conferences and committee meetings. Anyhow the thing I was afraid of in a paper is not free discussion but free Hyde Park type of speeches.

"All that we want the Europeans to do is to build a responsible Government in the country themselves and not to wait until they turn out an army of educated young men who would clamour for more power than they can shoulder.

"I think I have made myself clear inspite of my weakness in expressing myself in the English language. I might have possibly given the idea of taking the Government from the hands of older people and giving it to younger educated elite. I really do not mean that, no, no, no ! The young must wait for the old. Grades and degrees do not signify a good leader. A good leader is not necessarily the one who has the highest book knowledge but the one who can use his knowledge, however little to the best interest of his people and not to the best interest of himself. The Hausa say '*Amfanin ilmi aiki da shi.*' The susefulness of knowledge is in its application. Nevertheless, by that we Hausa do not mean that people should not be encouraged to have aspiration for higher education. No, knowledge is the attribute of a good leader. A leader with only elementary knowledge is a leader, but a leader with

higher knowledge and the ability to use the knowledge is a Godsend to the community, and is therefore to be desired.

"I repeat that what I have said above is not a suggestion that should be followed, strictly. People with very little or no experience like us younger men in Northern Nigeria cannot give a direct suggestion on such an important matter. What I have explained is simply the position as people see it and what is in their minds. All those Europeans who have worked in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* especially Dr. R. M. East (Senior Education Officer,) and Mr. Elliot (A.D.O.) can confirm all that I have been saying, as they know very well the sort of letters we have received and interviews which we have conducted.

"Lord Lugard then took down the names of Dr. East and Mr. Elliot and then turned to Sir Hanns Vischer and said, 'This shows that these people have confidence in these two officers and will be willing to accept them as their representatives anywhere.' Sir Hanns Vischer answered, 'Exactly'.

"I said that the ex-governor of Nigeria, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, was becoming more and more aware of the coming dangers in Northern Nigeria when he left. In fact before he left he visited us at Gaskiya and we had a long discussion with him on this problem. In his farewell message to the Emirs of the Northern Provinces he dealt with that problem at length. When he was leaving us he asked me to advertise to the younger educated elements the necessity of asking for representation in the Legislative Council. I drafted an article and passed it round to some friends for comments as I often used to do. But when they read it they turned it down, saying that they were not yet interested in the government of Nigeria as a whole. They did not want to start building from the top. I did not want to hurt their feeling, so I had to shelve the draft.

"Lord Lugard then asked, 'How do you think we can make the Emirs agree to this?' I said it would not be difficult with the present Emirs, who can easily be brought to agree to anything that is not contrary to the doctrine of Islam. Knowing the mentality of my present Emirs, I think something on these lines would be one of the best ways of approach:—

Let the Governor or the Chief Commissioner hold a secret meeting with the first class Emirs alone and appraise them of the possible dangers. Then ask them for a solution. If they can contribute a meaningful solution, they should be congratulated. Otherwise the Chief Commissioner should let them know the government's view regarding a solution. Even then he should not disclose it to them as a command, but as usual, he should be diplomatic. For example, the Chief Commissioner might say, 'We will go and see if the Governor agrees with your suggestion.' Then after one or two months the Emirs should be informed by their Residents that their suggestion has been approved with appreciation and that they should now put it into practice carefully with the help of the Residents or the District Officers. That will be all because if it is not a workable suggestion it will never again see the light of day.

"At present we the people of Northern Nigeria are like patients, and the Europeans are our doctors. If the doctors really want to cure us of our diseases,

it is necessary for them to make us have confidence in them so that we may show them exactly what our ailments are. If a doctor refuses to listen to what a patient says because it hurts, then the patient will have the right to feel that the doctor does not really want to cure him. The people of Northern Nigeria know what is troubling them, but they have no idea of what would be the remedy. I cannot say that the five points above are the remedies recommended by all the people. They are only the result of a research conducted by a very few educated young men with regard to the sort of diseases that they and the other Northern Nigerians complained of.

"Europeans always repeat that they occupied this country because they wanted to see justice administered and that they are fighting for justice. But when the people think of their own traditional rulers with the bundles of injustices inflicted on them they blame the Europeans. Because every act of oppression or extortion on the part of a District Head or a Village Head is known to the people of the area, and so they think that the Emir must know about it too. As they see no action taken, and there is no way of telling them why no action has been taken, they either say that the Europeans do not know what is going on, or that they do not mean what they say when they talk about justice. Some have even begun to suggest that Europeans themselves take bribes and that is why they condone injustice. This is a bad spirit which is growing among the people of Northern Nigeria, and if it is allowed to continue it will do a great deal of harm to the country, as it will destroy the confidence of the people in British administration. It is against this probable danger that I have suggested the five points above as counter measures. To sum up, these are:—

1) That Europeans to give us more moral training, by mixing with us socially.
2) That the Council to be more representative of the wishes of the people so that they will feel that any one who criticises the decision of the Council, criticises them, thus building up a feeling of unity among the Emir, his Council, the Europeans, and the masses, educated and uneducated alike.
3) That the Council should be a specialised body, trained by the Europeans through the Emir. They should move among the people spreading useful propaganda and collecting their views and grievances to bring before the Emir.
4) That more special committees should be appointed to advise the Council, in order to have closer relationship between the old and the young, in finding solutions to modern problems.
5) That practical training should be given to younger people as well as more responsibility, so that they may feel that they are working not for the Emir or the Europeans but for their people and their country.

"Lord Lugard appeared very interested in what I was saying and he kept on taking down notes as I spoke. At the conclusion he asked me if I could put in writing all that I had told him or had wanted to tell him. That is why I have

had to give this long-winded account of our interview. Finally, he told me that whenever I wished to write to him and ask his advice on any matter, he would be glad to help me. With that I thanked him for honouring me with an invitation and granting me an interview on matters partaining to Northern Nigeria. We then shook hands and said goodbye to each other".

The above report was my own summary of the discussions I had with Lord Lugard and Sir Hanns Vischer as contained in a letter I sent to Lord Lugard on my return. He replied as follows:—

Little Parkhurst,
Abinger Common,
Nr. Dorking,
Surrey.
23rd December, 1943.

Dear Imam Abubakar,

It is sometime since I received your extremely interesting letter. The delay in replying is due in part to my having been completely occupied in urgent matters, but still more because I wanted to think over the difficulties which you had described and how I might be able to help and advise you. I have now been able to take some steps which will, I hope promote the plans you had in mind when you talked to me and which you explained so fully in your letter. Further opportunities of making known to people interested in Nigeria the situation you have described (and who can help if they use their influence tactfully) may occur and if so I shall not fail to use them. Meanwhile you would I think be wise in advising your correspondents in Nigeria not to be impatient, but wait and see what the new Governor will do. I have had a conversation with him and I believe that he will be an excellent Governor.

I was glad that the persons whose opinions you asked did not wish to have seats in the Legislative Council at Lagos. That in my opinion is not the best line of progress in the Northern Provinces.

I hope you will write to me from time to time and tell me frankly what is in your mind.

Sincerely yours,
(Sgd)
LUGARD.

The above letter from Lord Lugard was followed by another one from Sir Hanns Vischer ('Dan Hausa) who was the first to open a European School at Nassarawa of Kano in 1908. It was then called *Makarantar 'Dan Hausa*[1]. He wrote to Mr. E.L. Mort, the Principal of Kaduna College and copied it to Dr. East. Mr. Mort sent a circular to all Northern Provinces Education Officers with extract from the letter as follows:—

1. Sir Hanns Vischer was nicknamed "Dan Hausa" because he learnt the language and was conversant with it in a record time. Sir Hanns Vischer was a polyglot. Originally he was a Swiss who came from a European country, Switzerland, where three languages are spoken — German, French and Italian. He had an excellent command of each of them. He then travelled to England for pusposes of further education. There he quickly learnt English. He later took an appointment with the Colonial Office in London and was sent to Nigeria. He joined the Education Department and opened the Nassarawa School in Kano in 1908. He became the first Assistant Director of Education, Northern Provinces.

KADUNA COLLEGRCIE CULAR

No.90/3/484.
22nd December, 1943.

From: The Principal
Kaduna College, Kaduna Junction.

To: **All Northern Province Education Officers**

At the request of the Assistant Director of Education I am sending you the following extracts from letters written recently by Sir Hanns Vischer to Dr. East and myself. They refer of course to the visit of the Editor of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* to England this year.

".....Malam Abubakar has just left. It has been a unique experience for me to meet him and talk to him, and most of all to hear him talk and discuss the present problems of Nigeria and the young people there, with our Chief, Lord Lugard, to whom I took him on two occasions. Abubakar Imam struck everybody by his calm and dignified way, the excellent English in which he expressed himself and his perfect manners, but most of all he reflected a lot of glory on those responsible for the schools where he had trained. I would never have dared to expect for one moment, that the ideals we followed in our Northern Nigerian schools, and hopes we had could ever be fulfilled in such a wonderful way. I can't tell you what this means to me, and I would like all those of my old department who have carried on, to receive my heartfelt thanks. Please pass on my greetings and my thanks to all my old friends.

".....I never heard the best traditions of Northern Nigeria and the ideals we worked for, better expressed than they were by Abubakar. Neither Lugard nor I had an idea of the urgency of these problems but I think we can understand them now, and you can count on us to do all we can to help. Lugard intends to mention them to the Secretary of State before the latter leaves for West Africa. I can only add my very deepfelt thanks for all that all the members of the education department in the North have done to continue the work which I had the privilege to start in 1908".

(Sgd)
(E.L. MORT)
Principal Kaduna College.

*No.*90/3/484*A.*
Kaduna Junction.
22nd December, 1943.

cc: Assistant Director of Education
Northern Provinces.
(A.D.E.N.P. Supt. of Education, Kaduna).
Dr. R.M. East, S.E., Zaria.

The above for your information please.

(Sgd)
(E.L. MORT)
Principal Kaduna College.

My letter to Lord Lugard was first published in summary in the English Magazine 'West Africa' of the 13th of October, 1962. To my mind these are apparently innocuous suggestions by the present day standards. However, they were almost revolutionary at the time they were made. The record of the interview was not allowed to be published even in Hausa by Government, because the British Administrators were perhaps apprehensive of what might happen to me in those days if the contents were disclosed.

This assumption could not have been far from the truth. I remember when I was leading a campaign against the three evils that bedevilled Nigeria, viz:— *'Ci uku wadanda suka ci Nijeriya, Jahilci, Zalunci da Lalaci'* meaning 'Three major scourges in Nigeria:— Ignorance, Injustice, and Indolence'; and also fighting the old practice of squatting down to salute elders and those in authority, suggesting as its substitute the traditional *jinjina* (*Jinjina* means to show up the right hand with four fingers clenched and the thumb pointing up) many of the Chiefs did not like it. During the call for Private Members Motions in the Northern House of Chiefs a first class Emir got up to move a private motion condemning the Editor of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, Abubakar Imam. A point of order had to be called against him by His Excellency the Chief Commissioner, who was then President of the House of Chiefs.

Months after the despatch of my first marathon summary of discussions to Lord Lugard, I wrote a second long letter to him. This was in reply to a letter he sent to me while we were still in the United Kingdom in August, 1943.

However, before I decided on what to write to him I wrote to my friends as usual enclosing a draft and asking them for opinions. The only new comers on the list of friends I sent to were Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Dr. R.A.B. Dikko[1] the first Northern Nigerian Medical Doctor. This is what Doctor Dikko wrote on 13th September, 1944 in response to my draft.

"Malam Imam,

Literature Bureau, Zaria.

"*Na gode da yawa da gaske domin wannan amsa da za ka ba Lord Lugard. Abin da muke so ke nan. Ba a kara ba, ba a kuma rage ba.*

"Naka,
(R.A.B. DIKKO).
M.O.
13th September, 1944."

Notes

[1]He was born at Zaria on 15th June, 1912, and educated at the Wusasa C.M.S. School from 1922 to 1929, King's College Lagos (1929—1931) and the University of Birmingham, England, where he read medicine and became the first Northern Nigerian

This means:
"Malam Imam,
Literature Bureau, Zaria.

"I thank you very much for the answer you intend to send to Lord Lugard. It embodies all that we require. You have just stated what we require, no more no less.

Yours,
(Sgd)
(R.A.B. DIKKO).
M.O"

Two other opinions I would like to reproduce in full here are from Malam Yahya Gusau[1] and my old friend Mallam Aminu Kano.

From Mallam Yahaya Gusau came the following:—

"Bauchi Middle School,
22nd November, 1944

Notes

to qualify as a Medical Doctor. He returned to Nigeria in 1940 and was appointed Junior Medical Officer in the same year, and a Medical Officer in the following year, 1941. In 1953, he was promoted Senior Medical Officer and then Principal Medical Officer in the Endemic Diseases Division in the Northern Region Ministry of Health in 1957.

He was a foundation member of the *'Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa'* and its first president. When that cultural organisation emerged as a political party under the name Northern People's Congress (NPC) in 1951, Dr. R.A.B. Dikko left it, since he was a civil servant.

Dr. Dikko was appointed Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Northern Region in 1962, Following the Military Take Over in 1966, he joined the Federal Executive Council as Commissioner for Mines and Power in 1967, becoming Commissioner for Transport in 1971. He resigned that post in January, 1975, and died in April 1977.

[1]Alhaji Yahaya, as the second name implies, was born at Gusau in Sokoto State in 1916. He was destined to play important roles in the affairs of the Federation of Nigeria. He was equipped with good Western Education which he received at Gusau Elementary School (1927—1929), Sokoto Middle School (1929—1931), Katsina Higher College (Barewa College) (1931—1936), Institute of Education, London University (1945—1946) and Buffalo University, U.S.A., where he attended a course on comparative Education (1954). He held the following positions:— Teacher, Kano Middle School (1936—1941), Teacher, Bauchi Middle School (1941—1945), Teacher, Kaduna College (Barewa College) (1947—1949), Teacher, Government College, Zaria (Barewa College) (1949—1950), Education Assistant and Councillor for Education Sokoto Native Authority (1951—1955), Education Officer, Northern Nigerian Government (1955).

"Malam Abubakar Imam,
Editor of Gaskiya.

"Sir,

"I have with great pleasure received your letter in which was enclosed the duplicate copy of your letter to Lord Lugard, an answer to his question of how the Barclays Bank could help us financially. I have read through the propositions with great pleasure, and I am confident that the demands are what we really need first before anything else. I have allowed Malam Aminu Kano to see the paper but besides that the matter has been treated confidentially as you ordered me to do. I am very grateful to you for approving my ways and ideas and thus allowing me to see confidential correspondence of this nature.

"Our lack of trusted leaders pains me all the time. Take away the British domination and the force behind it, and you will be left with the corrupted states of Northern Nigeria. Before the British occupation things were different. There were leaders trusted and admired by the masses. What is the case now? It has entirley changed. Our young men think that the world is a space to live in and do anything you like — good or bad—undisturbed and unmolested by any being. When they read of a proclamation by the Sultan or any Emir they whistle and laugh. Perhaps because the speaker is not educated. But when a senior educated member says something they also laugh and say "*Yana baza wuri!*".[2] (He is showing off!) Well who is to be the leader? It must be the young men themselves, a condition that has never arisen in any part of the world.

"Surely we need up to date leaders and loyal subjects and since the greater part of your suggestion leads to this effect I give my warmest support.

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Permanent Member, Federal Public Service Commission, Lagos, on Secondment (1955—1959), Secretary Executive Council Kaduna (1959), Permanent Secretary Ministry of Internal Affairs Kaduna (1960), Permanent Secretary Ministry of Justice Kaduna (1961), Provincial Secretary Zaria (1963), and Permanent Secretary Ministry of Lands and Survey Kaduna (1966). He retired from the Civil Service in June, 1967.

Alhaji Yahaya Gusau, two years after he returned from England, got involved in political activities. He was a founding member of the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) in 1948 which became the dominant political party in Nigeria for many years, becoming its first General Secretary (1948—1950). He was a gallant fighter for the Northern Teachers' cause through the Northern Teachers' Association (NTA) of which he was a foundation member (1948) becoming its first General Treasurer (1948—1950). These two organisations were precursors of his becoming fully involved in politics, becoming Member of House of Assembly at Kaduna (1952—1954), and concurrently Member of House of Representatives in Lagos (1952—1955).

Alhaji Yahaya served on a number of committees including Executive Committee Member of Sokoto Province Education Development Fund (1955), Member North-West state Administrative Reforms Committee (1970), and Member Constituent Assembly (1977—1978).

"I have a lot to say but remembering that you are always busy I am afraid of wasting much of your valuable time. But you should not forget that I am always ready and willing to hear your suggestions or offer you an advice when the need arises. I am sending back to you the duplicate letter you sent me.

Yours Dutifully,
(YAHAYA GUSAU)"

From Malam Aminu Kano I received the letter hereunder:

Bauchi Middle School,
27th November, 1944.

Dear M. Imam,

Before I say anything may I know why this Bank wants to undertake such a job unasked? Is there nothing behind it?

Yes, it is very good if this country can get a loan of some money to do business of one kind or another. Our chief difficulties are not the arrangement but carrying out the plans. We are fearfully lacking in honest men; reason being that we do not receive sound education and we are mostly in debt.

(1) One of the most immediate problems of this country is poverty which gave rise to diseases of any kind which hinder progress. There cannot be

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During his retirement, Alhaji Yahaya Gusau was almost as fully employed as during his tenure of office as a Civil Servant. To mention a few of the posts held, he was Member Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (1962 — 1976), Federal Commissioner of Economic Development and Reconstruction; Agriculture and Natural Resources (1967—1970), Chairman Northern States Marketing Board (1970—1977), Chairman Kaduna Textiles Limited (1970—1979), Director Nigerian Tobacco Company Limited (NTC): (1970—1984), Chairman Nigerian Civil Aviation Training Cecntre, Zaria (1971—1974), Member Public Service Commission, Sokoto State (1971—1979), Chairman National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) (1977—1979), Director Shell Petroleum Development Company Nigeria (1978—1985). Member University of Sokoto Council (1977—1983), Pro-Chancellor, University of Sokoto (1984—1986), Pro-chancellor, Bayero University, Kano (1986), Chairman Land Use and Allocation Committee Kaduna State (1984—1985), Member of Jama'at Nasril Islam Executive Committee (1970 to-date), President of BOBA (Barewa Old Boys Association), (1985—1986). He was appointed by the Babangida Administration as Chairman of All-Nigeria Conference on Foreign Policy in 1986 and submitted the Conference Report early in 1987. The Concurrent nature of many of these part-time appointments made him as busy as ever.

For the meritorious services rendered in the Federation, Alhaji Yahaya Gusau was decorated with the insignia of O.B.E. (1963), O.F.R. (1965) and awarded L.LD. (Honourary Doctorate Degree) by Ahmadu Bello University (1970). He was also awarded Hon. LL.D. of Universities of Lagos and Ibadan. In recognition of these services as pertaining to Sokoto State of Nigeria, Dr. Yahaya Gusau has been bestowed with the Chieftaincy Title of the Shatima of Sokoto.

any real progress unless nearly everyone of us is independent. You know that the craftsmen of this country are being liquidated by the European merchants and if this state of affairs goes on increasing the local craftsmen who are the backbone of the country will clearly vanish into non-existence. Therefore the tools of the local craftsmen should be improved so that they may be able to sell their output even if they do not compete with the foreign traders. Unless this country is made self dependent economically we shall go nowhere. So means must be found in order to improve our own crafts to fit the modern commercial conditions. Farming is of course included here.

(2) If the local farmers and craftsmen get improved tools and output they need good roads for transport and they need efficient people to direct them and give them advice on how they get profits, e.g. telling them where to sell their things or advertise to the outside world.

If there must be roads for transport there must be some sort of stations (*Zango*) so that in case of rain etc. the travellers and merchants may feel themselves at home.

(3) EDUCATION: Capable people who are determined to go for higher education can be helped (with loan) and they can easily pay what they owe when they start work.

(4) There should be a shop (or ambitiously a firm) for all especially for the civil servants who by fate or necessity find themselves in terrible debts which demoralise their minds. This shop may have a name with a collective sense so that the people may start to feel that we are one and who knows where it will lead to? This firm or shop should aim at making the best use of turning local stuff into all sorts of things. For example since this country has groundnuts and cotton etc. there is no reason why we should not posses factories of our own for making soap and simple cloth respectively. We must share in producing the modern needs of this country. I never welcome the idea of double exploitation. If we were wise and united we should be able to seize the simple opportunity of providing the natives as well as the foreigners with milk, butter, matches, soap, sugar and what not. It is from these small things that people will start to feel united and proud of their country. Only through extensive planning like this can we be sure of paying the money we owe.

(5) Apart from that you may like to add one vital thing — a local newspaper. This newspaper, call it anything you like, the 'Morning Star', the 'Rising Sun', etc. will be staunchly inclined to moulding the North into the solid mass. It will aim at educating the North socially, economically and politically. A newspaper, independent and free is one of the solutions of spreading pan-Hausa nationalism.

6) HOUSING: We should aim at having typical and unambitious modern houses especially to replace those mud cells in most of our cities and towns. People will pay rent until the completion of the payment. This is not a strong point perhaps for the poor people are unable to cope with such a change.

There are great difficulties on the questions of carrying out the plans and paying the firm its money. But the ways to do these can be found out by an Assembly whose duty is to carry out everything.

We must not forget N.A. civil servants who seem to be neglected on such matters. Nor must we forget about encouraging people to write books for the people to buy.

These are some of the few things I consider to be my suggestions. I am sorry to say that you asked not to say anything about subjects that the government proposes doing. This does not count very much but still there is hope.

I hope you are well and that Malam Makama is well too.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
AMINU.

Having thus collected views from various Northern Nigerian intelligentsia, I submitted the following in answer to Lord Lugard.

Imam Private File
No. 7/167,
Literature Bureau,
Zaria — Nigeria,
9th December, 1944.

Dear Lord Lugard,

I am pleased to be able to give now our suggestions in answer to your letter of the 21st August, 1943 (asking for suggestions as to the ways in which Barclays Bank could best help Nigeria), which you gave me when I was in England with the West African Press Delegation.

I hope you have not been disappointed by my apparent negligence. We have been discussing the post war requirements of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria in recent issues of our paper the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, and trying to explain the problem as we see it.

When I was about to write to you, I wrote to many friends and asked them to advise me. This is more or less what they answered:—

We do not know the conditions under which this help will be offered, so that it is difficult for us to judge whether it should be accepted or not. Yet we feel that the chance given to us, through which to express our opinions, should not be neglected.

As you might have already asked the opinions of Dr. Azikiwe and Mr. Isaac B. Thomas, we propose to leave the problems of the Southern parts of Nigeria in their hands. They are natives of that part, and should be better qualified to suggest the urgent development work that the Southern masses stand in need of.

Our primary need in the Northern Provinces is to see that the standard of living of the masses is raised. At present it is almost as low as it was before your occupation. The masses, especially in the rural areas, are heavily-diseased, ill-fed and under-fed, ignorant, and poverty stricken.

We know that development plans are at present being actively considered by all Provincial Committees. But those whom I have consulted almost unanimously pressed for three things:—

(1) *The Expansion of Education of all Kinds — Elementary, Higher and Industrial*

It may well be that the Bank could assist in this by offering scholarships to enable worthy and necessitious students to avail themselves of opportunities for higher education of every kind, either at Yaba (Lagos) or in England, in America and other suitable places. The higher education required now as a foundation is not necessarily for university degrees, (though if any student proves himself worthy of one he should not be discouraged). But the aim would be to see that the leaders of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria of tomorrow have up-to-date education. By leaders we do not mean necessarily political leaders. No, we mean leaders in every sphere of life. These younger people when they come back, will begin as advisers to the leaders of today. Tomorrow, when their turn comes, they will be found equipped with the knowledge to do the job. It is today and out of the young men of today that we expect to prepare the leaders of tomorrow. The majority of the masses would by then have become literate enough to absorb the ideas of the progressive Northern Provinces.

This is a rather vague statement, but more concrete proposals are not possible till the scheme for Educational Expansion in the Northern Provinces, with other development schemes, have taken definite shape.

(2) *Improvement of Village Industries*

The village industries in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria are still conducted in the old primitive ways which have been handed down from generation to generation. We want the Bank to assist us to progress by helping the Government in providing simple but modern implements and machines to replace our age-long primitive ones. For example, simple spining machines, simple looms, simple saw mills for timber production, simple grinding machines. Infact we think that the time has come in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria when simple machines should take over the production of village in-

dustries from hands and feet! If that could be done, a great deal would have been achieved in raising the standard of living of the peasantry.

We are the eighth greatest groundnut producing country of the world., and yet we still use primitive implements and methods to produce the crop. We are one of the great tin producing countries in the world and yet the country stands as if nothing of the kind is produced in it. We are a famous cotton-growing country and yet we still use primitive instruments to turn it into thread and cloth. Our country produces ginger, rice, benniseed, cattle hides, skin, butter, fish (in the area of Lake Chad and the big rivers,) salt (in Borno), clay, and other things. Infact, we are in a country rich enough to make us richer and perhaps to allow us to stand economically on our own feet, if only we are given the training and the tools with which to finish the job.

But, when we talk of machines, we do not mean elaborate factories. No, those will come but perhaps not yet, not until we have the simpler machines to give us the foundation of real industry.

To sum up, what we want from the Bank on this question of industry is again scholarships to enable suitable men to go abroad and get sound industrial education in the manufacture of the raw materials that are found in this country. After they have finished their courses and have returned, we want each one to be posted to the part of the country where the thing in the manufacture of which he is trained is mostly produced.

Each man will go with the machine with which he will be working, as a demonstrator and teacher. The people in that area will then be encouraged (by deeds, not words) to co-operate. They already buy ploughs or sugarcane crushers now.

They will be taught, helped and guided by these experts in producing materials in greater quantity, or better quality, at a greater speed. The more demand there is the more people are encouraged to supply. Thus, as secondary industries spread, primary industries will spread too. Thus you will find work, so to speak, "Looking for people to do it, and not people looking for work to do", which creates all evils in a country.

(3) *The Opening of the Minds of the Older and Influential People (the Leaders of Today).*

The Bank can help in this by giving these older people opportunities for educational travel. They should be assisted to travel to suitable places, not beyond their imagination and conception, to enable them to see, with their own eyes, how the world is advancing. And thus give them eyes that see, ears that hear, a mouth that speaks, and a mind that will tolerate such things as disregard of primitive customs and superstitions and thus encourage a spirit of curiosity and eagerness to advance.

Muslims of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria should be sent to the Near Eastern countries. There they will themselves see and hear that the religion of Islam does not prevent progress. Since a country can progress with Islam as its faith there is, so far as we can see, no reason whatsoever why that line of

progress should not be encouraged in the Moslem areas of Northern Nigeria, especially as in that area anything Islamic, nay, anything Eastern is what is respected at any rate up to the present time.

A Northern Nigerian Muslim will be more prepared to adopt the practices of his fellow (Eastern) Muslim, and will accept more readily what he hears from the East, than what he hears from the West.

The right people to be sent abroad for such enlightenment are, as we have already said, the influential leaders. These are the Emirs, the judges (Qadis), the Imams and other religious leaders and all men holding responsible posts or likely to hold responsible posts later.

We do not mean that they should be sent on a flying visit, and return home without understanding anything. In any trip they should remain abroad for six months or even more, to enable them to see what are the real duties of a leader towards his people and his country. To see how education is spreading in other parts of the world and so get broader ideas for their duty towards it. To see how health work is spreading and get broader ideas of their duty towards it. To see how industry and industrial education is improving in other parts of the world and get broader ideas of their duty towards it. In short as we have already said, to see how people are led on the path towards progress.

This is essential. For all that we say under sections (1) and (2) are mere theory on paper, and not one of them will produce any worth-while result, until the people themselves have initiative, and are eager to support such schemes, and to carry them out. Until the leaders are interested in the deep sense of the word, and are eager to help support, by *deed* and not by words, success can not be guaranteed.

The leaders can neither help effectively nor support such schemes until they know how to help and how to support them and until they realise that their sole duty in life as leaders is to help and support their people. Thus you see enlightenment of the old is as important in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria as Mass Education, infact as any improvement in the country.

Are we not right if we say that you cannot enlighten a son while his father is in darkness? If you ask the son to lead the blind father you must not expect good and healthy progress in their march. Are we not right to say that you cannot enlighten a commoner and leave his leader in darkness, or the commoner to lead and guide his leaders and expect sound and speedy result? If then we are right to say that if this question of leaders is overlooked the Northern Provinces of Nigeria will become a country where the young educated men, who have been enlightened and taught progressive ideas, are willing to move and the old influential people, the leaders, become stumbling blocks, unwilling to move an inch from their old feelings, superstitions, and conservative ideas. Then the country will produce young men that despise the old, the led that despise the leader, and consequently a corrupted community.

What we want therefore is a "combined operations", the young as the

fighting forces and the old, who have been enlightened to differentiate between good and bad, as commanding officers.

Please remember me to Sir Hanns Vischer, to your brother and the rest of your family. *Salam.*

I am
Sir,
Your obedient grandson,
(Sgd)
(ABUBAKAR IMAM),
Editor,
GASKIYA TA FI KWABO

Lord Lugard replied in these words:—

Little Parkhurst,
Abinger Common,
Surrey.
1st April, 1945.

Dear Imam,

I did not reply to your letter last September, because I thought it would be best to await developments after His Excellency the Governor had decided on his plans. He has sent me the Development Plan, the new Constitution, and his speech to the Legislative Council on March 5th. I also have the full debate on March 13th to 23rd, and the Bill for the Incorporation of the Literature Bureau as the Gaskiya Corporation.

This I hope will place the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* on a basis entirely satisfactory to you. Today (April 1st) is the date fixed, and I write to wish you and the new Corporation success.

I duly received your letter of 1st March expressing your regret on the death of Sir Hanns Vischer. I have sent it to his widow, Lady Vischer. It will give her special pleasure as coming from Northern Nigeria which he loved so much. I was present at his funeral and also at the Memorial Service. The numbers present on both occasions were exceptionally large, and included many Africans.

In your reply to my question as to how Barclays Bank (D.C. & O.) might be of assistance to the Native Administrations in their progress towards self-government without seeking profit for the Bank, you suggest three ways:

(1) By giving scholarships in every grade of education.
(2) By giving scholarships for young men to travel abroad for technical and industrial education and
(3) To enable influential leaders and young men who are likely to become leaders to go abroad for six months or more.

For purposes such as these the Imperial Government is providing £12 million a year and a number of scholarships are being offered. It is not the function of a Bank (which is Trustee of money deposited and whose profits accrue to its shareholders) to act as a Benevolent Fund. What I had in mind

was whether the Bank's agents could help with friendly advice, especially in financial matters.

I shall be glad to hear how you are getting on.

Your sincere friend.
(Sgd)
LUGARD.

Two days after sending this letter to me, Lord Lugard died. Some of his close friends told me that this letter he wrote to me two days before his death was the last letter he wrote in the world.

When I sent a letter of sympathy to his brother Major Lugard, he replied me thus:—

Little Parkhurst,
Abinger Common,
Nr. Dorking, Surrey.
15th May, 1945.

Dear Abubakar,

Your kind letter of sympathy, dated Zaria 23rd April and addressed to The Family of the late Lord Lugard, has reached me today. We last met when you came to see my brother here in August, 1943.

I am grateful for your kind expressions regarding Lord Lugard. He greatly appreciated the good work you are doing.

Lord Lugard's life's work for more than half a century has been devoted to the welfare of Africa and the Africans.

Your sincere friend,
(Sgd)
E.J. LUGARD
Major

Sometime afterwards in the early 1950s one famous British lady, Margery Perham, wanted to write a book about Lord Lugard on African affairs. She asked me to give her all the letters he wrote to me and those I wrote to him. She kept them for a very long time. At last in 1959 she returned them with the following letter of thanks to me through Mr. Stephenson of the then Nigeria House in Britain:—

Nuffield College,
Oxford,
Telephone Oxford 48014.
19th January, 1959.

Dear Mr. Stephenson,

I am very sorry there has been so much delay about the papers you asked me to send back to you. The Lugard papers are very numerous and I am afraid

these got buried completely. Reading them I now understand what Abubakar Imam means.

(1) I enclose two letters from Lugard to Abubakar. The second one was written two or three days before his death and is a great tribute to his energy and clearmindedness.

(2) With regard to the account of the conversation I note what Abubakar says about the record being incorrect. If I make any reference to the interview I will certainly base it on his own fifteen page account. I would be quite willing not to refer to him by name but I expect everyone would know which Northern Nigerian expert at that period visited Lugard and had such a talk.

Perhaps you would tell him how deeply impressed I am on-re-reading this conversation, both by his own wisdom and moderation in describing the situation and by the ready response of Lord Lugard. It so happens that I shall be teaching two Northern Nigerians on the Devonshire Course this term and I shall have at the back of my mind this very able analysis written in 1943.

Again my apologies for this long delay.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)

MARGERY PERHAM.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RICHARDS CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION: THE ROLE I PLAYED

As a result of my unique opportunity of meeting Lord Lugard on two occasions at his house in Surrey, England, it may be interesting to note that Sir Arthur Richards, having been briefed regarding the background of Northern Nigeria by Lord Lugard, on the basis of my documents, did not call any meeting of Nigerian leaders of thought to discuss his proposed constitution. He simply had it drafted and then threw it to the nation for comments.

I wrote an editorial on the proposed constitutional revision in the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*[1] the only Hausa newspaper in the North and in Nigeria at that time. Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa then a student at the Institute of Education, University of London received a copy and he translated the editorial for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Mr. J. Grenfell Williams had found it a suitable material for broadcasting over the Africa Service of the BBC. It was produced by Mr. Henry Swanzy and read by Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa himself on Sunday, 4th November, 1945. (Malam Abdurrahman Mora was with him in the studio when he read the script). In his usual flawless golden voice, Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa surprised the producer with his excellent command of spoken English. He introduced the subject matter, being concise and to the point as follows:—

"EXPERIMENT IN FREEDOM"

BY

MALAM ABUBAKAR IMAM

"I am a Hausa schoolmaster, studying in London at the University. A most interesting document has just come into my hands which I think you might like to hear about. It is an editorial published recently in our Hausa newspaper, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* (which means Truth is Worth More than a Penny).

"The editorial is about the new constitution in Nigeria, under which it is proposed to create three regional councils for Northern, Southern and Eastern Provinces. These will each select representatives to the Central Legislative Council, and so give the people of the North their first direct say in the government of the country as a whole. The Regional Council is to consist of a House of Chiefs, and a House of Representatives. This is what the editorial says:—

> 'Since the publication of the New Constitution, some of our contemporaries in Southern Nigeria have started to criticise it. When we asked the views of our brothers here in the North, we were surprised to find that people in the North have not taken the introduction of the New Constitution very seriously. Many of the educated men think that it is the old

1. *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* No 143 of 26th Sept. 1945

Chief's Conference in a new form so they are not interested. So far only two Northerners Malam A.B. Dikko and Malam Jumare have written to us on the subject.

'It may seem to you that even we, the editors of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, do not take keen interest in this New Constitution as we should, because we have taken so long to express our views about it. It is true that we have taken a very long time before speaking out, but the cause of our silence is not lack of interest. There are some points about the New Constitution that we would like to have cleared up before we express our views on the subject. You know that it is unwise for a herald to speak out if he does not know the exact meaning of the message he is to give.

'Here are some of the things which are not clear to us. First, since the start of the annual Chiefs' Conference in the Northern Provinces, the Sultan of Sokoto has presided as Chairman. It is the Sultan who has directed the debate in every conference. The only European present is the Secretary whose sole duty is to record the discussion. On the first day of each conference His Excellency the Governor and His Honour the Chief Commissioner, attend in order to open the conference, and after making their opening speeches, they leave the Chiefs to their discussion. On the final day, the Chief Commissioner comes again for the plenary session of the conference. But in this New Constitution it will be seen that the Chairmanship of the House of Chiefs has been given to the Chief Commissioner. Is this a step forward or a step backward?

'Secondly, we do not understand who are to represent the Native Administrations in the House of Representatives and how these representatives are going to be selected. It may be that when an Emir becomes a Member of the House of Chiefs, he then appoints a member of his own Council to represent him in the House of Representatives, but the wording of the section is not clear. And yet this is the most important part of the whole Constitution. What we in the North want is unity. A united North must co-operate with a united South to form a united Nigeria. The type of Government we want is one that will unite the Emirs with their subjects; that will make everyone realise that the progress of their country does not lie only in the hands of those holding posts, but in the hands of everyone, be he an official or not. Unless the people can feel that the Representatives are their representatives in fact, have truly the interests of the people at heart, and are not mere, 'yes men', they cannot feel that they have means of making their contribution to the common effort.

'We know that in Northern Nigeria the Emirs are the representatives of the people. If the people were asked to choose their representatives to sit on any council, there is no doubt that they would choose their Emirs. That is most satisfactory at the present day, and it is one of the greatest successes that have been achieved in the Northern Provinces. The people are used to having a leader and they are used to respecting him as such,

but His Excellency made an important point in his speech introducing the New Constitution. He reminded the Emirs that they must make allowance for the changing political attitude of the coming generation. In our view, we have, in the North, come to a point where some legitimate means must be given to the educated members of the younger generation to express their ideas. If openings are not given to them, if opportunities are not made for them to take a real part in the governing of the country, the result will inevitably be the formation of discontented political parties and cliques.

'When it is pointed out that the ordinary man has no way of expressing his opinion, the answer given is usually that any complaints, any expression of views, any suggestion for improvement should be made through the "usual channels". In the case of a Native Administration official wishing to write to the press and put forward his ideas for the improvement of the Administration, implying, probably criticism, he should submit the letter which he proposes to write to complain about some act of oppression to his Village Head. If he gets no redress then to his District Head and finally to the Emir. These are the normal channels and if they were open and unobstructed, all would be well. But it is known that minor and even major acts of oppression are never brought to light until the oppression has become so continuous, so severe, and has affected so many people, that the individuals have been able to complain all together with confidence that their case is absolutely safe.

'The six years of war have brought about much change in the political outlook of the Northern Provinces, and the coming home of thousands of our soldiers will bring more. Already the Governor has seen enough change and progress to justify the introduction of the New Constitution by which the people of the North, or rather their Emirs, can make themselves heard at the Nigerian Legislative Council. Thus the chiefs have the opportunity of learning to express their wishes in the Legislative Council as representatives of their own people. But what about the people? What about the farmers, the salaried officials, the traders and all the rest? What provision is there in the New Constitution for them to start learning how to express themselves? We know that the North is not yet ripe for the introduction of election by ballot. We feel that some scheme should however be evolved which will enable the common man to have his voice heard.

'We have been publishing this Hausa newspaper for the last six years and we have received tens of thousands of letters from the public, and up to this day in September, 1945, we have not heard or read a single remark from anybody in the North, either in an interview or in a letter, condemning the existing system. But while they do not condemn, the people are critical of it. In their criticism they do not call for abolishing of the system but they do call for it to be brought up-to-date.

'The main criticism of the present system that we get from people in the Northern Provinces, is that the Government leaves open opportunities for oppression and selfishness. We would like to see some provision which will make it difficult for an Emir or a District Head to be oppressive even if he wants to. Then the people will feel that they will be able to enjoy the freedom that the British Government intends for them.

'In the old days, if an Emir took to being oppressive, selfish and corrupt, his people often revolted against him. Now the British Government has condemned the practice of revolt even when an Emir misbehaves himself. If complaints such as would have led to a revolt in the old days become manifest, it is the duty of His Excellency the Governor to depose the Emir concerned. So in these present days it is His Excellency who leads the revolt.

'From one point of view this is right but from another it is not so. It is right because His Excellency has taken upon himself the task of defending the interest of the people. It is not right because it is not His Excellency's duty to do that. It is the duty of the people themselves. It is the people who ought to have a way of stopping the oppressor by themselves, for themselves, though not of course by means of revolt as was the method in the old days. If every Province has just and enlightened Emirs, supported by just and enlightened District Heads, and if the present system of Government were brought a little more up to date to enable the people themselves to restrain the oppressor from oppression, the selfish from selfishness, then the Northern Nigeria of today would be content. If the New Richards Constitution is directed towards that goal let us offer our prayers for its success.

'But though some of the points we have mentioned above are not clear to us, yet from what we have begun to understand in so far as the Northern Provinces are concerned, the New Constitution is a step in the right direction. It has set the machinery of progress in motion. It enables the rulers of Northern Nigeria to have a say in the Government of Nigeria, as other sections of the community have had for years. It will stimulate them and give them a say in the control of Nigerian finances. It gives Northerners themselves a chance to appear in person in the Legislative Council, and to say "Yes" when they mean yes, and "No" when they mean no. It will enable representatives of all the Provinces of Nigeria, East, West, South and North to meet together and thus create a feeling of unity, which is the key to progress'.

"That is how the editorial of this Hausa newspaper closes. I hope you have found it interesting".

Henry Swanzy wrote to me immediately after the broadcast as follows: —

Royal African Society,
22 Queen Anne's Gate,
London.
S.W.1.
9th November, 1945.

Malam Abubakar Imam,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
Northern Nigeria.

Dear Mal. Abubakar,

I do not know whether you heard it, but I made use of part of your excellent editorial statement on the new constitution in the African Service of the B.B.C. I would have let you know, or inquired your permission, if I had had time. As a matter of fact, it was used to fill a crisis, owing to another programme falling through, but I had always the intention of using it, in our series "Experiment in Freedom." I very much hope that you approve. I took the advice of several people here, including Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who actually read the script, and they all thought that you would have no objection.

I am having copies of the script made, and will send one of them to you later by sea mail.
With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
(HENRY SWANZY)
Editor.

Sometime afterwards, in the month of October, 1947 when Sir Arthur Richards was raised to the peerage, I despatched this letter of congratulations to him. I produce the whole letter hereunder:—

Gaskiya Corporation
Zaria.
4th October, 1947.

Sir Arthur Richards, G.C.M.G.,
Government Lodge,
Lagos.
Dear Sir,

For a long time now I had it in mind to be writing you letters now and then not in your official capacity, but 'as a friend to a friend' as you asked me to do when we first met at Zaria. But your official position and my own position

compelled me to defer doing so lest I be misunderstood by some of our administrative big guns. But now I cannot but write to express my thanks, infact our thanks, the people of Northern Nigeria, for what you did for us. When I say that I write as a friend to a friend I do not mean as equal to equal. Any ruler who sympathises with your aspirations is really a great friend of yours. It is here that we, the people of Northern Nigeria claim the right of calling you our friend. Your coming to Nigeria, Sir, was a dose for the disease of anxiety and fear that was eating into our hearts. I say this not because I consider myself to be anybody, but because as you know, I am put in a position to hear grumbles of the people of Northern Nigeria.

When I went to England in 1943, as a member of the West African Press Delegation, I had, as you know, interviews with Lord Lugard, Sir Hanns Vischer, members of the Colonial Office, and others interested in Nigeria. I spoke a lot about the dangers that Northern Nigeria was up against.

We discussed this to such an extent that Lord Lugard asked me to write a memorandum on the problems of Northern Nigeria and their solution. I wrote a memorandum on our problems giving the views of some of the educated elements of Northern Nigeria as to solution. This was of course from a layman's point of view, none of us being a politician. The memorandum covered administration, pointing out the relations between the Africans and the Europeans, colour; pointing out its weaknesses and suggesting reforms, social relations; pointing out discrimination, suggesting methods of approach to better understanding of both parties.

In a second letter which Lord Lugard asked me to write I gave the views which I collected from many of the younger generation on the expansion of education of all kinds, elementary, secondary, higher and industrial. They also gave me suggestions covering improvement of village industries as a means of raising the standard of living of the peasants, and giving the leaders opportunities for opening their minds by travelling and through scholarships, which I also sent to Lord Lugard.

When I came back from England I found the younger generation greatly disturbed about what would happen to Northern Nigeria that is so dear to them. The war had brought changes in outlook with such force and within such a short time that the changes were even more than many of the administrators imagined. Many of the administrators did not know how far this had reached and they minimised its force. I was convinced that unless measures were taken, and taken quickly, their thoughts and feelings which were suppressed would one day burst out in a flood that would bring down overnight all that had been built.

It was in this condition of fear and anxiety that Lord Lugard's letter was handed to me. In it he gave me the good tidings that you had been to see him and that he had discussed matters with you, and showed you my memorandum. He charged me to console the younger generation and to assure them that somebody was coming to be Governor who would straighten things out. Well

I must confess that, much as I had confidence in Lord Lugard's judgement, I was doubtful whether you would not just be like others and shut your eyes to, or refuse to believe in the existence of the problems of Northern Nigeria which never came out in the form of cries, petitions, or strikes.

Believe me, Sir, Your coming had been a great blessing especially to the Northern Provinces of Nigeria. Even if people who think only of themselves and their generation, who do not support any provisions made for the generation to come, blame you, they will surely praise you for having started the ball of progress rolling. If it rolled in the right direction, we are to be praised, if it rolled in the wrong direction, we are to be blamed. Allah knows, and we are witnesses, that you have done what you can for Nigeria in general and Northern Nigeria in particular. May He reward you. Amen.

I hope that you will continue to take interest in the affairs of the new Nigeria, the foundation of which you have laid. I also hope that after a few years you will find chance to visit us to see how far we have gone with the buildings.

I know that as you get older it will become more difficult for you to travel, especially to such a far place, but I also hope that by then some means will be forthcoming which will make it possible for a man advanced in age to travel without being shaken about.

I wonder what title you would choose for your new honour. If we were allowed to choose for you, we would surely beg you to accept the title of Lord Richards of Nigeria.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
ABUBAKAR IMAM.

In reply to the above, Lord Milverton wrote:—

29th November, 1947.

My dear Abubakar Imam,

It was very courteous of you to write me in the way you have done in your letter of the 11th October. I greatly appreciate what you have said about my work in Ngeria and my attempt to help the people of Northern Nigeria. The new constitution will give you ample scope for the increasing management of your own affairs. I shall watch the development of Nigeria with the closest interest. Naturally you have my best and friendliest wishes for the future and if ever at any time you think I can be of service I hope that you will let me know. I should like to receive letters from you from time to time telling me how you fare, and if you or any of your friends come to England it would give me great pleasure to see them and have a talk about Nigeria. Please give my greetings to Dr. East and all engaged on the great work of the Gaskiya Corporation.

Yours very sincerely,
(Sgd)
MILVERTON.

P.S. My title takes its name from a village in Somerset with which my family has been connected for over four hundred years. Modesty prevented me from taking the title as of Nigeria. Only Lord Lugard could rightly have done that. So I took as Lord Milverton of Lagos and of Clifton (where I spent my earlier years of life).

Apart from this, I also sent an article to the *London Times*. I was lucky it was published. After the British public have read it, I got this letter from the Editor of another English magazine, *West Africa*.

21st August, 1950.

Abubakar Imam Esq.,
Kagara, Kamuku Division,
Niger Province,
Nigeria.

Dear Abubakar Imam,

I was very interested to see your recent letter to the *London Times* about the constitutional revision.

I wonder if you would care to write me an article of about 1000 words, giving the Northern point of view to our readers. I am sending you a copy of a recent issue, on the front page of which is an article dealing with this subject

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)
D.M. WILLIAMS,
Editor.

I wrote the article requested basing it on the original editorial as translated by Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa for the B.B.C. It was published in *West Africa* of 27th January, 1951.

Following its publication I received the letter below from Mr. E.K. Featherstone:—

No.CII—31.
The Nigeria Office,
5, Buckingham Gate,
London S.W.1.
31st January, 1951.

Dear Malam Abubakar,

I was interested to see your article in *West Africa* of the 27th instant. A reason which I frequently give for the 'backwardness' of the Northern Provinces and which may appeal to you is the fact that in the period of less than fifty years since Lugard reached Kano development of administration has

frequently been interrupted by circumstances over which the local people (whether Africans or Europeans) had no control.

2. For the first ten years there was only a skeleton staff of European officials mainly occupied with getting to know the people and their customs and problems. Then in 1913-1914 a catastrophic famine. The First World War occupied the years 1914—1919 when little more than 'caretaker' administration was possible. For ten years afterwards there was a good deal of development limited of course by the policy which required Colonial Governments to balance their budgets without financial assistance from outside. Then the economic blizzard of the thirties when staff, African and European, was retrenched, development closed down, and plans pigeon-holed. Incidentally the lack of recruitment of expatriates for the service during the years 1931—1935 has lead to a serious shortage of experienced officers at the present time — particularly in the Administrative Service.

3. In 1939 another war, from which Nigeria only began to recover, in 1946—1947, and recovery has been hampered by a genuine shortage of men and materials. Our difficulties are now accentuated by the low production of educated men during the thirties. They would have been the ones ready to take up key posts at the present time in Government and N.A. posts.

4. So out of the last 50 years (48 to be exact) about eighteen were almost entirely unproductive as far as development was concerned.

5. Finally, I would suggest that the worst 'bottleneck' at the present time is shortage of teachers to staff the schools, again partly due to the difficulties I have mentioned above.

6. We get *Gaskiya* and *The Citizen* by air mail, and I always have several to whom I can send it afterwards.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd)

(E.K. FEATHERSTONE)
Commissioner for Nigeria in the United Kingdom.

CHAPTER EIGHT

POLICY REVISION IN GASKIYA CORPORATION

I have already indicated that following my discussions with Lord Lugard in August, 1943 definite moves were made to incorporate the Literature Bureau into Gaskiya Corporation. In fact Lugard wrote to congratulate me on this successful outcome two or three days before he died. The building project was financed by the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and the whole operation was supervised by Dr. R. M. East as Chairman of the Corporation.

By early 1946, we were occupying the spacious new offices in the Gaskiya buildings leaving the old offices at Kofar Tukur Tukur to the Education Department. This sprawling structure over an expansive estate, together with its four storey central tower, capped with a green dome, was the most modern construction at that time. Curious visitors from far and near came to marvel at the buildings and some even to climb to the top of the tower and enjoy the wonderful bird's eye view of Zaria City, Tudun Wada and Sabon Gari.

Printing machinery was not installed until the later part of 1947 and actual printing started at Zaria in 1948. Prior to that period, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* was printed first in Jos (1939—1941) and at the Government Press in Kaduna (1942—47).

As part of the general movement to the new premises at Gaskiya, all the staff were also provided houses within this vast estate. The Europeans had houses nearer the main offices. Some were built with concrete and a few were built in the traditional mud style though roofed with corrugated iron sheets. A special section within the estate was reserved for the African staff. This was all built in mud with iron sheet roofing and called 'Gaskiya Village.' My own house was the only storey building in the Village.

The Chairman circulated regulations for the occupation of the Village houses on 14th June, 1946:—

REGULATIONS FOR STAFF VILLAGE

1. Quarters are provided by the Gaskiya Corporation for its staff rent free.
2. At present the quarters are divided into the following categories:—
   a) Non-purdah, large type
   b) Non-purdah, smaller type
   c) Purdah, large type
   d) Purdah, smaller type
   e) Bachelors' compound.

3. Until confirmed, members of the staff will normally occupy (e) if unmarried, and (b) or (d) if married. When confirmed, they will be eligible to have one of the (a) or (c) types, if one is available.

4. The land, houses and buildings allotted to members of the staff remain the property of the Corporation. No structural alterations or additions of any kind should be made without permission of the Chairman.

5. When a permanent member of the staff has been definitely allotted the quarters which he is to occupy, the Corporation will do its best to ensure that he remains there during the rest of his services, but no absolute guarrantee can be given. If during the time of his occupancy he has made any additions or improvements to the property at his own expense, and he subsequently leaves the service of the Corporation or is moved to other quarters, the Corporation does not undertake to compensate him for work he has done. This is a matter for private arrangement with the next occupier.

6. When a member of the staff has been allotted quarters on the understanding stated in paragraph 5, he may erect other buildings on his plot, subject to the following conditions:—

   a) The position and type of all buildings, including partition walls must be approved by the Chairman.

   b) Houses built for human occupation must conform to the sanitary regulations, e.g. minimum dimensions 12′x10′, and walls 10′ in height. Generally speaking houses built for additional members of the occupier's FAMILY WILL HAVE TO CONFORM TO THE STANDARD OF accommodation already provided by the Corporation.

7. The kitchens and stores provided by the Corporation must not be used for living rooms. Infringement of this rule will render the occupier liable to eviction.

8. The buildings erected by the Corporation, exclusive of the compound and partition walls, will be repaired at the Corporation's expense. Any faults, cracks, leaks etc. should, be reported at once by the occupier. The occupier may, however, be required to pay the cost of repairs which are due to negligence or damage caused by himself or his dependants.

9. The doors, windows and furniture provided remain the provision of the Corporation. Any loss or damage to these must be made good by the occupier.

10. The walls round the 'purdah' houses have been provided in the first place by the Corporation. When, however the occupier has taken possession he will be responsible for keeping them in repair. If the Chairman is not satisfied that an occupier is keeping his wall in proper repair, he may have it demolished. Walls between two compounds are the joint responsibility of the occupiers on each side.

11. The walls built by the Corporation are 6 feet high. If an occupier wishes to add to the height of his wall, he may do so with the approval of the Chairman.

12. In the case of non-purdah houses, boundary hedges are being planted by the Corporation. When these have become established it will be the responsibility of the occupier to keep them trimmed and in good condition.

13. The "Women's Garden" in the centre of the first enclosed set of compounds will be the responsibility of all married members of the community. These may be asked to subscribe to the upkeep of this garden on a scale based on the number of the female members in their family, living on the site.

14. The accommodation in the staff village is reserved for members of the Corporation, their families, and personal servants. No one else, apart from passing guests, may occupy any quarters on the Corporation land without permission of the Chairman. Members of the staff are strictly forbidden to let (accept rent for) any of the rooms alloted to them.

(Sgd),
R.M. EAST.
Chairman,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
14th June, 1946.

There were several complaints from the Muslim members of the staff about the unsuitability of the accommodation provided in the village. I myself was not happy with my own house but restrained myself and tried to restrain the other staff from openly voicing out complaints. I had detected a certain reserve and aloofness in the manner of Dr. East towards me personally since he became Chairman. I therefore did not wish to push myself too much forward to avoid a more direct rebuff.

However, with the successful general strike of 1945 as an example, the Gaskiya Staff formed a union called GASKIYA AFRICAN STAFF UNION (GASU) to agitate for better conditions of service and improvement in their general welfare. Being Hausa Editor and the most Senior African staff I could

not join the Union. Even then I was not involved in the direct management of the Corporation. Dr. East, together with his European assistants, handled all management matters, with the Board of the Corporation as the final authority.

At the time of the constitution of the Board I had been asked to recommend suitable candidates and had suggested Sultan Abubakar III, [1]Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Adamu B. Dikko as members. Dr. East as Chairman had requested Mr. L. H. Goble, Secretary Northern Nigeria and Mr. J. A. E. Silver of Church Missionary Society, Bida to be members. Generally the Resident Zaria Province represented the Secretary at Board meetings.

A revised salary scale was introduced with the aim that staff would be graded according to their worth to the Corporation. My value to the Corporation was then fixed at fourteen pounds a month. All the other Africans in the Corporation were priced on different points below that level. We realised that the African staff were being exploited. The members of the Union were not satisfied with this arrangement and wanted the introduction of a comprehensive condition of service with progressive salary gradings as is applicable in Government service or other quasi-Government Corporations. The grumblings reached a point where the Corporation was faced with the threat of a strike action.

I was then presented with a draft condition of service by the European Editor, Mr. G. Wilson on 20th November, 1946. His letter states:—

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Malam Imam,

With reference to your discussion with Dr. East, I attach hereto six copies of the DRAFT conditions of service. I am sorry that I have not sufficient copies to supply one to each member of the staff. You should keep three of these copies for the information of the Editorial staff, give one copy to Malam Nuhu (Bamalli) for the information of the Book Writing staff, and two copies to Mr. Gundu for the office staff.

These "conditions of service" are NOT FIXED. They are the result of discussion between members of the Board, and have been put into this final draft form with the expectation that they will be passed in this form at the next Board meeting. Until then they may be regarded as the probable conditions of service, and until the Board has passed them, they are the conditions under which we are working, which ought to be understood by every member of the staff. Dr. East has discussed most of the terms with you already, but would no doubt be prepared to give consideration to any amendment which you and the other members of the staff consider imperative.

(Sgd)
G. WILSON Esq.,
20th November, 1946.

1 See Appendix II for a short biography

Having gone through the condition of service I replied Mr. Wilson as follows enclosing my own personal suggestions for improvement:—

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
28th November, 1946.

The European Editor,
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo,
Zaria.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for allowing me, at last, and the rest of the African staff to see the proposed conditions of service for Gaskiya African Staff. I have studied it carefully, side by side with the General Orders (G.O.) for Civil Servants, and enclosed are my comments and suggestions.

In your covering letter, you said that Dr. East had discussed most of the terms with me already I am sorry to say that that is not so at all. I had never at any time been asked to come for discussion of it by anybody. In fact I only saw the conditions of service when it was shown to me on Monday the 11th November. If I had seen or discussed it before I would have made my comments long before any of the junior members heard anything about it.

Members of the staff who had seen it somehow before, had been complaining bitterly to me about it for some time now. When I began to realise that our team is breaking, as the people began to lose confidence in me as a captain, I became confused and agitated. I intended to speak to Dr. East, but thought everything about the conditions of service was strictly confidential and I was not supposed to know it, so in that mood, I collected all the bitter things told me about it by the people and sent to Mr. Elliot whom I consider one of the European friends of the Gaskiya, hoping that he, as a European would speak to Dr. East about it. And when another European friend of the Gaskiya, Mr. Giles, visited us the other day, I went and found him with you in your house and told you all that the staff were saying. If you remember I even called that meeting 'a conference of the big two and a half!' My hope was that either you or Mr. Giles would tell Dr. East about it because as I said, I was made to feel uncertain as to whether my position entitled me to talk to him directly on such a major issue. I was also afraid lest I be accused of not taking responsibility if things went beyond control.

With your permission I am sending copies of this letter and my suggestions to Mr. Giles and Mr. Elliot and others so that they may know my own personal opinion about the matter as I only gave them the views of the other members of the staff at the beginning.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd). A. IMAM
Hausa Editor,
GASKIYA TA FI KWABO.

SUGGESTIONS ON THE GASKIYA CORPORATION PROPOSED CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR AFRICAN STAFF

The aim of the Corporation in general, and of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, a government newspaper, in particular is to give true and unbiased explanations of government activities and public opinion. This aims at clearing misunderstandings and establishing confidence, without which steady progress cannot be possible in any country. To achieve this the Corporation employs a body of Africans and Europeans whom it is hoped will be well-meaning and ready to combine their physical and mental ability on a sort of moral rearmament basis.

But it must be understood that any undertaking of this kind is bound to meet all sorts of obstacles. It has to fight not only external but also sometimes even internal frictions. Outside there are some Africans and surprising enough, Europeans, who are out to spread propaganda for materialistic ends. They poison the minds of young people and urge them to rise against what they term foreign exploitation. They support their arguments by exaggerating the differences between the African conditions of service and those of Europeans in this country.

This malicious propaganda is infilterating into the minds of our little army of African Staff. That is why I am becoming very uneasy. I therefore feel that to succeed in this battle it is imperative that we must fill the Corporation with the best type of Europeans and the best type of Africans. We know that the best type of Europeans are difficult to get because there is a demand for them in Europe, but we must also realise that the best Africans too are not easy to get because there is a demand for them in other departments. So, if our conditions are less favourable than those of the Government which in itself is regarded by many Europeans and Africans as being unsatisfactory we ought not to be surprised or annoyed if personnel in our existing army support our policy only in the office for the sake of the pound (sterling) and start deserting or if no new good type of men enlist.

The Corporation is a *Government* undertaking which one almost compares with the Nigerian Railways . So I think there is no reason whatsoever why the conditions of service under Gaskiya Corporation should be compared with those of the Native Administration, as there is practically no conditions of service for the N.A., except the supreme use of the Emir's discretions. That autocratic policy which may breed all sorts of evils is one of the things which Gaskiya, the association of Africans and Europeans, should stubbornly fight.

With this brief introduction, I now turn to the proposed conditions of service for the African staff.

Salary Scales: In the government you are paid for your responsibility, long and faithful service not disregarded. Here under the Corporation a man is to be paid for his worth and it has not been made clear how a man's worth will be determined. The system of pricing a man at his worth works well on paper

perhaps, but in practice it brings all sorts of embarrassments. For one thing there is instability of responsibility and for the other it creates ill-feeling, because one will say, 'so-and-so is twice as valuable as I am' or that 'a European is so many times as valuable as myself'.

I know that the present Chairman is considered by some members of the staff, especially myself, as a father. But though I myself am confident that under him there will be nothing to fear, yet the conditions of service should be such as will ensure justice, security and fair play under any Chairman. If that is not done, then the staff are apt to worship the person of the Chairman and not to serve the Corporation. So, I suggest the adoption of the government incremental and grading system in place of doubtful promotions.

LEAVE:

'For all grades, 15 days for every year's service, subject to the needs of the Corporation', does not show that the Corporation sympathises with long service, or weight of responsibility. Furthermore making the seniors unhappy will not bring any satisfactory result or output.

To say that 'additional allowances for time spent in travelling may be granted *only in special circumstances* at the discretion of the Chairman' makes not only the seniors but also the juniors unhappy. I know that in the General Orders (G.O.) the government very often uses the word 'may' to imply the discretion of the head of department. This is very good and I suggest that we adopt it in such cases.

TRANSPORT:

On the suggested extension under transport, 'servant' has been ommitted though included in schedules A & B. This may be a typing error.

QUARTERS:

On the question of quarters, indeed we intend to be kinder than the government but we have almost superceded our kindness by using a phrase which implies compulsion in the occupation of the quarters. Members of the staff will prefer getting permission to live elsewhere to getting permission to live in the quarters as they are not like Middle School Malams, nurses or prison warders who have something immediate to look after. Nobody appreciates kindness if he is compelled to take it.

If they have to get permission to use the quarters then nobody will complain that the regulations for the staff village are not congenial, and strict. Moslems will have no cause to complain if the houses have no walls.

DISCIPLINE:

To say that 'any employee may be dismissed on account of debt' is not clear. Any unsettled bill addressed to a member of the staff whether European or African, is a debt.

What are the conducts in a man's private life which the Corporation considers liable to bring disrepute to its name? Can a Moslem be dismissed for living in a non-purdah house? Because, in the eyes of the Moslems nothing will bring more disrepute to the Corporation than to see one of its Moslem members living in a non-purdah house, thus breaking one of the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

In a suggested addition No. 13, I recommend that those committing any of the crimes, a,b,c,d, be queried immediately on committing them and such queries be filed until they are sufficient for a warning, a fine or any other punishment.

In another suggested addition No. 14, unless the Chairman is the employer the dismissal of a permanent staff should be vested in the Board and not in him.

PENSIONS:

Condition 16 has defined the position of employees seconded from the Nigerian Government Service as regards pensions but has omitted those seconded from the N.A.'s (Native Authorities). For example, I myself who was seconded from Katsina N.A. after seven year's service, to Gaskiya in 1939 before it became a Corporation. I cannot feel secure until the position is made clear how the scheme will affect me.

GENERAL:

Condition 19, travelling allowances. The Corporation unlike the Government does not respect seniority or its responsibilities.

On the question of the advance of salaries, I think we should include people of first appointment. This is very necessary indeed if we want to avoid financial entanglements at the initial stages.

Bicycle Advance: So, even if the Chairman considers that the purchase of a bicycle by an African member of the staff will be of some advantage to the Corporation that person will not be allowed to have the advance till he declared that he is poor and cannot pay for it. Even though he declares that he is poor, he must have saved half the cost of it? Furthermore, his private accounts must be audited? But the hope of members of the staff is that the work of the Corporation will so expand that they will get advances for the full cost of not only bicycle but also motor cycles and cars when necessary to repay in easy monthly instalments as is done in the Civil Service.

If the question of having to save half of the cost of the vehicle is to come at all it should be only when the Corporation helps one to buy it for pleasure, to show that Gaskiya is a father to all the members who work hard and behave well, but not when purchase will be to the advantage of the Corporation.

The functions and constitution of the Discipline Committee ought to be defined in the conditions of service if it is to be recognised.

About medical treatment, I suggest that if the Corporation does not make conditions better than the Government, it should not make it worse, e.g. treatment of the family of an employee and dental treatment etc. should be included.

The tables of baggage and ticket allowances show that the Corporation is less attractive than the government service.

To sum up, as it is clear that definitely the Corporation is a government organisation, I suggest that the government general orders be adopted in toto. The long awaited Harrigin Commissions's report is now out. If the government adopts any of its suggestions let the Gaskiya follow. But if in addition Gaskiya wants to show extra kindness it may do so in appreciation of extra hard work.

I do not feel that I am arguing on the platform of justice because I have not seen the conditions of service of the Europeans. If their own conditions compare with those of the European Civil Servants, as those of Africans do with those of African Civil Servants then I will have the courage in showing the African Staff that both sections are making the same sacrifice. So long as the Corporation follows an honest just course in its dealings with every question both external and internal, I am sure Allah will guide it to success.

Dr. East, having studied my comments replied the following day in a minute to the European Editor as follows:—

"This is a very provocative and bad-mannered letter, calculated to give offence not only to me but to the members of the Board — especially the African members who have been doing their best to work out conditions which will benefit both the Corporation and its individual members. The final draft was in fact prepared by one of them.

"The proposal to send copies of this letter (and the statement that similar letters have already been sent) to various so-called friends of Gaskiya, so that they may bring pressure to bear on me and the Board to carry out Malam Imam's wishes, will merely estrange the sympathy of those who are in a position to help him.

"Malam Imam is in a most responsible position and the good tone of the Corporation is bound to be influenced by his own attitude. Whatever personal grievances he may have (and these will always be treated with consideration), he should set an example to the rest of the staff of active and happy co-operation with the Chairman and European Editor. Instead of this he seems recently to have set himself in opposition, and become the mouthpiece — if not the leader — of all the discontended elements. He does not seem to attempt to hide his attitude from the junior members of the staff. As an example, this letter which is of a most inflammatory nature, and can only increase the ill-feeling of those who read it, and should therefore have been kept most strictly confidential, has been given to one of his subordinates to type. Its contents are therefore presumably known by every member of the staff.

"Malam Imam seems to feel himself insulted because he was not consulted on the details of the conditions. You have already said that I would be

willing to talk them over, and I should be glad to hear and consider his views, *if expressed in polite language and a co-operative spirit,* and those of other responsible members, but it should be pointed out that it is not usual for a Service or Firm to consult its employees before fixing their salarier etc., and they certainly cannot demand it as a right.

"It is astonishing that Malam Imam should so misunderstand, or have forgotten, the objects of the Corporation. It is NOT a government department, but an association of Africans and Europeans pledged to achieve certain ends, and subsidised in its initial stages by the C.D. and W.F.[1] Malam Imam is concerned only in comparing conditions with those in Government Service (where he thinks they are not so good). It should be more appropriate to compare conditions with those of an African newspaper, an association for some good object, or a missionary society. The object of the staff, especially of Malam Imam, should be to build up a tradition of public service and loyalty, not to put money and personal advantage always first.

"In point of fact, conditions as a whole (with the exception of pension) are in no way worse than in Government Service, and in some ways better. Several members of the staff are already drawing higher salaries than they would if they were in Government service, even though we are not yet started on revenue-earning production. When Gaskiya becomes a going concern, other members will certainly reap the benefit. None of this is taken into consideration by Malam Imam, who talks about their 'sacrifices'! Nor is there any suggestion that the staff have got any duty to fulfill on their side — e.g. in co-operating in an unselfish and willing spirit to make the thing a success — but only of the benefits which they should get out of it.

(Sgd). R.M. EAST.
29th November, 1946."

It is noteworthy that this minute did not take into account other staff views which were submitted through the Editor on 30th November, 1946. I forwarded the staff views with the following covering letter.

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
30th November, 1946.

R.M. East, Esq.,
D.Litt., O.B.E.,
Officer Incharge Literature Bureau,
Zaria.

Sir,

When you talked to us last week about the Ten Year Plan you asked for suggestions and advice. We therefore met on Saturday, 28th and having discussed matters we found that the things listed below should be considered. In view of the fact that we want large numbers of people to come to our side the

1. C. D. and W. F. stands for Colonial development and Welfare Fund.

office should make the future of the African Staff clear to them. It is owing to this lack of clear future and arrangement that the College boys are now hesitant to take up appointments in this office. So is the Corporation under which we will serve going to:—

(a) Draw up its own service conditions, or

b) Is it going to apply Government General Orders?

What will be the condition of the present African Government Staff? Are they too going to be seconded like the European Staff or not? If not, when are they going to be rewarded by the Government for their service. Also we should like to know whether the Corporation is going to give pension to its retiring employees or gratuity. If either, then on what scale?

Salary Scale and Condition of Rise: We should like to know if posts and their salaries are going to be graded. In Government clerical and other services all posts are graded, and that is much better for the modern boys. For example in the Government clerical service all are clerks; but a third class clerk knows when and what he must do before he can be promoted to second and first classes. Here too we want to see something like Assistant Editors Grades I, II, III and IV.

Agreement of Service: When this comes to be prepared the Corporation shall bind itself to let go everybody who wants to go, and shall also promise to give him an honest and unbiased testimonial of his service with it. The mere fact that a man wants to leave should not be used to prejudice his chance of getting another employment elsewhere.

(Sgd.) A. IMAM
Editor.
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
30th November, 1946.

The European Editor,
(Through the Hausa Editor)
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo,
Zaria.

Dear Sir,

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

With reference to the last paragraph of your letter to Malam Imam dated 20th November, 1946 with regard to the Conditions of Service for the African Staff serving under the Corporation, we beg most respectfully to forward the following comments and suggestions for amendments which we feel are imperative and would be grateful if you would forward them to the Chairman for his consideration:—

GASKIYA CORPORATION: CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR AFRICAN STAFF: COMMENTS BY THE STAFF

Conditions:

2. There should be grading of posts. For instance, there are many Assistant Editors on different salaries but they are not graded. The conditions of service have not stated the maximum salary attainable by the different sections of the African Staff. It is more encouraging to have regular yearly increments than fixed salaries. The system of fixed salaries makes a man's position full of great anxiety and suspense. A man may remain on a fixed salary for an indefinite number of years whilst others jump over him.

3. Such people, however much qualified they may be on other subjects, as far as the Editorial and Book Sections are concerned they have to start learning from the very beginning and the older people are the teachers, then why should they jump over them at the very start? This will cause great uneaseness.

4. A system of regular yearly increments is preferable as it will prevent unfair treatment of members of the staff whose work does not bring them under the notice of the Chairman. It is more hopeful to have a steady rise, depending of course on a man's efficiency, than to have sudden rise after a long period of suspense.

5. Leave should be according to grade. It should be remembered that senior men have more responsibility and therefore require more rest than the younger junior people.

6. This should include people who wish to take qualifying examinations in which case free transport for them should be provided by the Corporation — cf. G.O. The conditions under which one could be granted casual leave should be clearly defined to ensure an even consideration for all members of the staff.

7. We request that anybody who can be given leave after one year's service should be allowed to travel with his family — cf. G.O. The baggage allowance should be the same as in G.O.

10. Occupation of quarters should not be made compulsory. People should be free to choose their own societies and the type of surroundings that will be most suited to them. We will rather pay rents and feel that our liberty in private life is not interfered with than live in free quarters with so many restrictions.

11. As regards debt, we suggest that government method should be adopted. We feel that the approach taken by the Corporation to this problem is ruinous to the members of the staff when it may mean that a man who served the Corporation for, say, ten years can be dismissed on account of any debt. The Corporation then leaves him helpless, without a job and without any means of paying the debt. We suggest other methods of approach, for instance, warning, stoppages of increments and in case of insolvent debts termination of

appointment without prejudice to benefits. We are not clear about the conducts which are liable to bring the name of the Corporation to disrepute. We shall prefer that such conducts be clearly stated.

13. Since no warnings will be given to members of the staff of impending dismissals, provision should be made for members of the staff to leave the service of the Corporation without giving notice or salary in lieu of notice. In any case sufficient recorded warnings should be given of misconduct. The Corporation should clearly state what constitutes 'act of insubordination' so that members can know how to avoid them.

14. We feel that recommendations for dismissal should be made to the Board and the employee given sufficient notice to enable him to make his defence. The method of suspension could be introduced if necessary. Any employee who has been dismissed by the Chairman and later reinstated by the Board will loose the confidence and security he enjoyed before.

16. It is requested that special concession be given to employees seconded from Government service so as to avoid anomaly that will generally exist. If not, the employees so seconded will be deprived of the privilege accorded their contemporaries in Government Service, vide Government notice No. 1361 in Gazatte No. 72 of 29th November, 1945.

19. We suggest that travelling allowances should be given according to seniority as in government service. Naturally a senior man is liable to spend more while travelling on tour than a junior man, the incoveniences suffered on the journey tells more on the senior man than on the junior.

20. We suggest that advances be given to people on first appointment to avoid their getting into debt at the start. Advances of salaries while going on leave, if granted, should be paid by instalments as in government service.

21. When the purchase of a bicycle is to the advantage of the Corporation an advance should be given for its full cost and the payment should be made at the same rate as in government service. Bicycle allowances should be given according to Government rate. Payment of allowance by mileage should be made only when the purchase is not considered to the advantage of the Corporation.

22. The Corporation should make known the hospital it has selected. Free medical attention including dental treatment should be extended to the employee's family.

SCHEDULES A&B: A probationer on £48 and above, should have the same previleges as enjoyed by probationers in Government Service. Baggage allowance to be the same as in G.O.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

In conclusion we feel that these amendments are necessary if the Corporation aims at giving a fair treatment to the African Staff. The conditions as they stand are very unattractive. Most of us on joining were promised even better conditions than people under government.

Service Sheets should be kept where commendation, censures, etc. should be shown, so that a member who wishes to leave the department on his own accord should have no obstacles in his way to getting another job. All that will be necessary when he is leaving, is the reason for leaving.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Yours faithfully,
(Sgd) Staff Representatives.

Realising how very disappointed Dr. East had become with my comments I decided to write him a letter and this time express myself in Hausa. The translation of the letter follows:—

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
7th December, 1946.

Dr. R. M. East,
Chairman,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.

Dear Sir,

It is with deep regret that I have to write and apologise for the tone of my letter, which appeared to you provocative and bad-mannered so much so that you think it is calculated to give offence to you and the members of the Board. I hope you will forgive me. I assure you that I did not write these suggetions which I was asked to make with any such intention. Even If I wanted a fight should I fight you? Who then will co-operate with me? I am sure two things led me into this mess. First my exuberant desire to write in *English*. (I remember you once told me that in such important suggestions or letters I should write in Hausa to avoid such mishap). I have stated my genuine views openly and I assure you *in the name of Allah* that is how you have trained me, to be open and frank without any intriguing camouflage or a desire to please.

The suggestions I made could be viewed from two perspectives. First is the suggestions as they stand. Secondly, there is the choice of language used which in my own case was not good. It is this use of language for which I apologise and am prepared to withdraw. However, the content of the suggestions are my own genuine views which I was requested to contribute to you.

Every recommendation that I made will be supported by reasonable evidence. Whatever action I took also has some justification. If you desire explanation for each point I raised or action I took I will explain clearly.

My personal suggestions, even though in disjointed English, were made purely to help you towards the upliftment of the Corporation, not for monetary gain or personal advantage. If that was my intention I would not have suggested that we adopt Government policies which are in some respects less favourable than our own, as you have commented.

What I mean to say is that only if we follow Government conditions will our present staff and others we intend to attract be more responsive. An example of what happened during the Eid-El-Kabir impressed me very much. While Government allowed only one day holiday for the celebration, we in Gaskiya enjoyed two days of holiday. I wrote on the Notice Board as follows: 'Government has granted one day only, Tuesday, for Sallah. However, Gaskiya has granted two days, Tuesday and Wednesday for the occassion. So everybody must be grateful for this generosity'. That is my intention. I can cite several instances to justify myself but I do not wish to make this letter too long.

Nevertheless in your comments, Sir, you seem to have misunderstood some of my suggestions. This has been caused by my poor English construction. Some examples are as follows in seriatim:—

Para. 2 Mr. Elliot alone was sent a copy of my letter. This is not just to help 'carry out Imam's wishes'. In our Hausa tradition if you have a friend who takes certain action or you heard that he intends to take such action but you feel shy to approach him directly you could urge his close friends to tactfully get him out of such dangerous situations. This is one method.

The second method is what I adopted. If you wish to advise your friend but feel he would not accept then you get a number of his other friends who agree with your suggestions to help you try to convince him. With such advice coming from several trusted quarters a person could object only up to a point and even if he decided to go against all sensible suggestions he would have some regard for your reservations. That was my sole intention. You alone constitute the Board as far as I am concerned. In your own house I even started to state that to Mr. Rankin when I saw him gravitating towards our side. You will never hear me tell such things to someone outside our circle.

Para. 3. 'Imam seems recently to have set himself in opposition...' This statement confused me. I was formerly at ease and confident that not hearing any complaint from you means work is forging ahead satisfactorily. I was certain that any mistake by me will not be hidden from me by you. You would call me and point it out to me and we would clear any misunderstanding. I now think and feel myself far from setting myself in opposition. If I should be regarded as unbending it is only when I see someone trying to trample on the religion of Islam. This attitude of mine is familiar to you for the past ten years.

In other matters I cannot remember a distant or recent occasison when

we disagreed violently. In reality only one aspect of my behaviour has changed recently. When I started work at Gaskiya I was not placed above anyone and did not supervise anybody. As I had no responsibility for anyone I put myself to my work day and night and you know it. I spent nearly three years without bothering to require a second class coach on the train. After a tour I never bothered to submit a claim for out of pocket expenses or any other allowances. My main aim has been to succeed in this undertaking. It is only when I started to have assistants that I became aware of the obligation placed on my shoulders: to do justice towards others. Then I started to make a stand for *truth, justice and fair play* in order to avoid cheating others of their right to attract personal commendation (so that I could be praised).

'Imam has recently become the mouthpiece — if not the leader — of all the discontented elements.....'

This statement, Sir, gave me a shock as it came from the last person I would expect to write such a thing. This is the major cause of my writing this letter to you otherwise I would have kept quiet. In our Hausa tradition if a senior reprimands a junior there would be no question of any explanation, just a quiet acceptance, even if the reprimand is done in ignorance.

Indeed if I do not obtain a full explanation from you for such a grave allegation I will no longer feel confident to continue working in this office. I have resolved *in the name of Allah* who took me away from the caves of Kagara and in His wisdom, brought me to this place, I will serve this country so that after I die there will be no blemish attached to my name. It is therefore my constant prayer that Allah may guide me in carrying out such heavy responsibility, for which I feel undeserving, towards His right path and not towards my own wishes or someone else's wishes.

This is the path I have trodden. You of all people know better the difficulties I encounter. Extremist young men accused me of not fighting for their cause but trying to calm them down with soothing advice. The staff with whom I work have established good relations with me in private life but in the office they regard me as too conservative and almost a bottle neck to their progress. They no longer consider it wise to come to me, rather they go to you directly for anything they desire. If you saw them discussing me after they heard that 'most of the points in the conditions of service have been discussed' with me already you would pity my situation. I felt compelled to disprove them and state the fact by writing 'No Sir,' against that statement.

The accusation that I am the leader of the discontented elements is most unfounded. It is a change whose time has come. Allah is the greatest witness.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.)
A. IMAM,
Hausa Editor.

A Board meeting was held during the month of December, 1946 at which all the staff were called to express their views. This we did and the staff union presented another paper to the Board. Realising that I had expressed all my views at the meeting and in writing to the Chairman, I did not see any need to present another one for the Board or to sign the Union resolution.

Subsequently, things remained as usual as regards to policy. Streams of newly appointed persons continued to flow into the Gaskiya Corporation from different tribes, Yorubas, Ibos, Hausas, Tivs, etc. and all that went on without my least knowledge. Most of the staff brought in did not come with any recognisable record of service — at least not known to me. Some of them were appointed on temporary basis while most of the rest were permanent employees.

The little corporate unity then existing began to crumble. Staff would not channel their grievances through the proper means and the spirit and zeal for service was disintegrating. Throughout the year 1947 little was achieved in the form of improvement to staff conditions. Only increasing additions to staff continued unabated.

On 11th February, 1948 I received the following letter from the Chairman attached to a memorandum addressed to members of the Board and copied to him.

The letter is reproduced below:—

M. Imam,

At a conference a few weeks ago, at which M. Makama was also present you said you wished I should take the place of spokesman for the staff on the Board. You suggested that the senior men and myself should go into matters affecting conditions of service, and I should consider them and explain what was possible and what was not.

I would then appear before the Board as the friend of the staff, ready to persuade the Board to make any alterations possible to make the staff happier.

I was, in fact, very much in sympathy with some of the genuine grievances. and was determined to do what I could to put them right.

You have not, however, spoken again of this, and the staff seems determined to treat me as an enemy to their cause and to write to the Board as a whole. The very promising approach which you suggested has been made impossible by this document.

I consider it most unfortunate in every way. Not only does it make it impossible for me to consider the real trouble and put them right in a spirit of friendliness on both sides, but by its imperious tone it will antagonise the other members of the Board as well, who instead of viewing the complaints with sympathy will oppose even those reforms which they would otherwise have recommended themselves.

With the position and influence you hold, it is your absolute duty to prevent the staff from making a mistake of this kind, and to show them that they are only succeeding in making enemies of those who were their friends.

(Sgd.)
R. M. EAST.

P.S.: I asked you to put up recommendations for increases in salaries of the junior Editorial staff. This letter makes the question difficult.

I answered as follows:—

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
14th February, 1948.

The Chairman,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your note of the 11th February and also for allowing me to see the manifesto sent to you by the African Staff which I return herewith.

Before I say anything, I must first, as a Muslim, tell you that I knew nothing about this manifesto. I did not know when the staff met and discussed it, or when it was written or when it was sent.

It is true that we met with Mr. Holloway and M. Makama a few weeks ago, but it was not to discuss the conditions of service, but the question of proof-reading. That discussion led us to the difficulty we were up against in getting the right people to come for training in the Corporation. That also gave me and M. Makama the opportunity of talking about the conditions of service in the Corporation. We then suggested that you had better always take the position of being the spokesman of the staff at Board meetings and added that you should adopt the idea of inviting the senior members of the Corporation to go into matters affecting conditions of service and other things, there to seize the opportunity of explaining to them what was possible and what was not, so that they might explain to others. You would then always appear before the Board as a friend of the staff. We were then waiting to see if you approved this line of policy which we suggested. If you did then you would call us for a discussion either at your house or in the office. I was waiting for this when I got your note and the manifesto sent to you from the staff as a bomb!

You said that the staff manifesto made it impossible for you to consider the real trouble and put it right. I think that this ought not to be the case. If you know that there are real troubles I think you ought to consider them from the point of view of the interest of the Corporation as a whole and not leave the matter because you are angry that Mr. So-and-so has written a manifesto. Another way of looking at it is by asking oneself what the manifesto said and not who said it. If what they asked was not a special favour but what they deserved, considering general labour conditions in Nigeria then I think it should be considered.

Your last paragraph coupled with what happened last year and what you wrote, that I was the mouthpiece, if not the leader, of the discontented elements in the Corporation, leave me in doubt as to whether you are not preparing the way for victimizing me in the future. Perhaps my ten years stay with

you have served the purpose for which I was seconded here. If so, I shall have no ill-feeling if I was taken back to where I came from. I have satisfaction in the knowledge that I served you honestly and faithfully.I can even say that if I had served Allah with the same honesty and faithfulness I would have now been considered as a saint.

You remarked that with the position and influence I held it was my absolute duty to prevent the staff from making a mistake of this kind. But on this point I should like to make it clear that the position is not as you stated. To every man there are two kinds of influences, that acquired by him in private life through his own examples and the force of his own character, and that given to him by reaching a position of trust and responsibility. While I enjoy full respect in private life as Imam from every African member of the staff, I must confess that in my official capacity you have since 1945 waned my influence by making me only a spectator when framing anything important about the Corporation. It is because the staff have noticed this that they by-passed me in this matter. If I had not a keen interest and a great desire to help my people in the work I am doing this change in attitude would have sent me out of the Corporation long ago. I am not writing emotionally, I mean what I say and am ready to quote instances when required.

In your footnote you said you asked me to give recommendations for increases for the junior staff of my section. If you remember at that time I said that we ought to wait for Mr. Wilson to come back from Jos so that it might not be thought that we did something behind his back.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.),
A. IMAM.

After this incident no further discussion took place between me and the Chairman on the matter. When, however, the Board came to meet on 16th of February, 1948, two of its African members, Malams A. Tafawa Balewa and A. B. Dikko contacted me privately and raised the question of the circular memorandum sent to them and requested my opinion on it. I explained to them that I had known nothing about it until I received a copy with a covering letter from the Chairman. I told them my own version of the story as explained to the Chairman in writing. But when they persisted on knowing my own personal feeling I gave each of them a copy of what I had prepared to submit before the Board in case my own personal opinion would be sought. I reproduce below the copy I gave each of them: —

'In my report on the Editorial Section I explained that the Corporation was up against the difficulty of attracting the right men to join it for training. I went further to say that the ten year development plan, the revised salary scales and conditions of service for government and N.A. employees bring us in open competition with Government and N.A. departments for people with

Middle VI, or even those who have covered the syllabus but failed. This though meant for the Editorial Section is applicable to the other sections especially the authors. I have heard from a college student that none of them is anxious to join the Corporation. (When questioned he remarked laughingly that the Corporation had no condition of service, no pension schemes and no working hours. In fact, he said Africans were being treated as in the old dark days. This remark, though made in a light hearted manner touched my heart). In this connection I may point out that we are in a worse position than the N.As. They usually employ local people, the fact that an employee would be among his own people being used as a bait. In the case of government an employee knows exactly where he stands and what his future was likely to be. Although the government does not offer to station the employee in his home it gives him a sure future. The Gaskiya however has neither the advantage of the N.A's nor that of the government.

But still worse is the fact that some members of the staff are being attracted away from the Corporation. On investigation as to the root cause of this, I discovered the following which are not peculiar to Gaskiya or to Africans, especially in these days of ours.

1. **Conditions of Service:** When people wishing to come here ask for the conditions of service and are told that so far no definite conditions have been approved, they become discouraged. Those in the Corporation feel that when they ask for something it is usually given to them as a favour not as a right. This is because there are no definite conditions to refer to. The man at the top is guided by three things, the General Orders, the draft conditions of service and his discretion and there is no certainty as to which he is going to refer to.

2. **Salary:** In the last Board meeting it was decided that the Harragin salary recommendations would be adopted and in fact salaries were adjusted to fall in line with the recommendations. But staff were left in darkness as to whether the Board suggested following only half of the recommendations. According to their understanding of the recommendations, staff are put on certain scales, not on salaries. But not one of them knows what scale he is running. Every time the staff are comparing this position with that of the government, especially when they see advertisements of a government post with clear terms and sure future to which they are qualified.

I therefore suggest that in these days of scramble for the best candidates, Africans and Europeans, nothing will save us short of making the conditions of service comparable to those of government. When and where government improves its conditions we should do the same. If this is done there will be no question of anybody coming here to say that conditions are worse and nobody will leave here because of conditions of service. In addition to this, if we want always to win the race, the Chairman can use his discretion in certain cases to make things even better than government. This is very necessary especially as

our aim, if I am not holding a wrong idea, is to get a team of patriotic young men who will associate with sympathetic, unselfish and far-seeing Europeans to co-operate and work as friends in such a way as to be a model for others. If we don't follow this how can we succeed in our aims and stop the best people from being attracted away? We can neither make the Corporation a place where people will like dedicating their lives to service or make it difficult for them to leave. Making it difficult for them to leave is very inhuman and opposed to justice the thing that Allah blesses.

3. **The Future:** Like any other worker the African Staff of the Gaskiya Corporation are very much concerned with the future. The staff have been notified that the Corporation is waiting to adopt the N.A. pension scheme when it comes into force. The N.A. pension scheme, they learn (from where, I don't know), is not as good as that of government. That is why many of our people keep their eyes wide open to see a government post advertised. They say that even though a pension scheme of some sort was adopted the position remains as before, because it has not been made difficult for any member of the staff to be dismissed as it has been done in government service.

In fact, the attitude of the African staff towards the whole show is that the progress of the country has not reached that stage where a publishing firm of this size and ambition can pay its way without outside help, even after ten years, much less to be able to pay pension to its highly paid European and its large African staff. It should be remembered that a very great deal indeed of the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund has already gone. It will be going even more rapidly with the increase of European staff. To clear this feeling I will suggest a clear explanation by the Board to the African staff and a written assurance about the future.

This is only a general report, and it is possible that the staff may have individual grievances.

(Sgd.)
A. IMAM".

On the following day I received a note from the Chairman instructing me and the other senior members of the African staff to appear before the Board on that day.

After the Board had finished its business of the session we were made to appear before it, and to my great surprise two of the members apparently acting as spokesmen for the rest suddenly jumped upon us with all manner of rebuke and abusive remarks. And when I requested for an opportunity to explain my mind and give personal views of the situation I was shouted at. And no other member of the staff was allowed to utter a word. We were simply rebuked and disgraced and ordered to move out.

When I left the Board, I started to consider seriously all that had been going on since 1945. I recalled all the unnecessary unfortunate incidents that tended, in my humble opinion, to ruin the foundation which I struggled to assist with all the ability and power at my command to lay, and for the erection upon which a huge national superstructure I have dedicated my life. Under such circumstances I felt that there was no safer course open to me other than to take a peaceful exit from the whole business leaving it in the able hands of my senior compatriot who now appeared to see an easier and safer course to pursue. All my high hopes of dedicating my life to the Corporation with all the strength, determination and ability that God had implanted in me has now been frustrated. And that was why I found it advisable to tender my resignation, the copy of which I reproduce bellow:

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
17th February, 1948.

The Chairman,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.

Dear Sir,

I beg to write first and most important of all to apologise for any wrong that I may have done during my ten years working with you. Secondly, I beg to ask the Corporation to consider terminating my service with it as from the 2nd of March, 1948, and sending me back to where I was seconded from. I have given fourteen days notice in accordance with the labour code.

Though I ask to leave the Corporation I do not say I am leaving the work as I have dedicated my life to it. But I feel for some reasons best known to myself I will be happier to carry on when I am outside the Corporation and not inside it. Wherever I go I shall carry on writing either for the paper or in the form of books. I will then be paid whatever is considered reasonable in each case.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.)
A. IMAM.

Dr. East wrote me back the following day. He expressed himself wholly in Hausa as follows (translated):

18th February, 1948.

Dear Malam Imam,

Thank you for your letter the content of which is quite understood. If you have decided on such a course I cannot prevent you. I have undertaken this job with a single-minded determination and love towards you all. I am still unchanging in my attitude.

However, I have noted that some among you do not desire the spirit of love and understanding but conflict and hate. You who state that you do not like to be disgraced have now disgraced me in public and even among my own people. I have therefore become very disappointed. I have been accused in the Board as lacking a sense of justice that I do not listen to people's grievances and do not allow them to come near me, leaving them to live in poverty. You know very well that this is untrue. All the more painful is the fact that all these people know me very well and have trained under me. I have also personally assisted all of them.

All this did not bother me much until I heard that you also support them and say whatever they have done is correct. This means our long association and friendship together with our resolve to work towards the improvement of the people of this country all count for nothing? You will now support some foolish young men or rely on lies told by an ignorant man with whom you are not related in any way?

I am now getting old in this job and very soon I will relinguish the responsibility. You, however, are just beginning. You have several years ahead of you to devote to the service of your people. You are shouldering a heavy responsibility which no one but you could shoulder. It is not wise, just because of certain difficulties or because you are angry that someone has abused you — a person you hardly know — to decide to throw away this responsibility! You should trust in Allah in all your dealing, not rely on any person.

You must be assured that hate breeds nothing but hate. This letter written by the young men and containing abuse and disgusting allegations alerted in me only the fear that it will result in anger and further abuse. That was exactly what happened. On my honour I never meant it that way. I was thinking about how we could co-operate and improve on our relationships. Now things are beyond my control.

What should now be done is for you and me to forget what has happened and forgive each other so that we can face the task ahead. We should resume our former relationship and hold regular discussion on the best way to improve the conditions of our staff.

I was never the one who broke the relationship, you withdrew voluntarily. The reason why I did not continue to call you for meetings was my observance of your sagging interest in such meetings. You seemed to have developed some harsh quarrelsome attitude whenever you came for such meetings. However I keep reminding you always that one tree does not make a forest. Whatever effort I put into the job unless you show sufficient interest the work will not succeed. In our European custom if you invite a person to your house and offer him even a glass of water, but he does not show interest in a second invitation or reciprocate by inviting you himself you have to leave him in peace as he does not wish to maintain a friendship. It will be disgraceful to persist in wanting to be friendly with someone who wishes to keep his distance. You should also remember that we are all learners. You learn something still from

me and I continue to learn also from you. Whoever says that he knows everything and that no one could teach him anything is a fool. In my view during the time you and the others were opposed to us and accusing us of so many things to the extent of breeding hatred in your minds you returned to a period of great ignorance and misunderstanding.

Now to ask you a question relating to your custom. If a child should ask his father to buy him a bicycle or a gown and the father refuses what would he do? Would the child go to the palace and report his father to the Emir? Or would he report to the elders in the ward that his father was unjust to him? Would the elders force the father to buy the bicycle demanded? You would only see the people laughing at the father for his failure to discipline his son. The father may have to leave the town to save his face or drive the son away from home.

You are aware that all the things provided for these young men since they joined, be it improved knowledge, higher salary or better housing, came through me. In future so long as I remain here such things will continue. If they have a complaint or they need something where should they turn first save towards me? Now they refused to come to me and have gone to others who do not care about them and have caused themselves shame and abuses. They leave me unhappy and disappointed. Would you call this right? To me it is a great wrong coming from foolishness and gullibility.

I implore you in the name of Allah and the spirit of our long association to look at this matter carefully without sentiment and find a way out of this predicament.

Your friend,
(Sgd.)
R. M. EAST.

Dr. East also called me and had a long talk with me two days later stressing the fact that I should withdraw that resignation letter.

I wrote back to him on 14th March, 1948 and stated my firm resolve to leave, giving him several pieces of my previous personal correspondence with him or with others as my justification. This document constitutes all the exchanges from P. 117 of this chapter. The covering letter is as follows:

Katsina.
14th March, 1948.

Dr. R. M. East,
Chairman,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
Dear Sir,

With reference to the interview which you called me for and the discussions we had on the night of the 20th February, 1948 and in the course of which you stated that all my European and African friends in England,

Nigeria and elsewhere who had great confidence in me would be disappointed to learn of the course I was bent on adopting, I attach herewith for your information, a copy of what I regard sincerely as my explanation to all such of my European and African friends as have interest in my career and that of the Gaskiya Corporation and for that matter also to all interested personalities and communities in Nigeria.

The explanation may at a glance appear lengthy, but I hope it would be understood that I have tried my best to give all concerned and all interested some idea of the circumstances which have led me to adopt the course I am now taking. The explanation does not incorporate all relevant information at my disposal, but through modesty I prefer to reserve myself and only to give such explanation as may enable, for the time being, all concerned and interrested to have some idea of what is behind the whole affair before they start to blame me.

Much as I would appreciate to be frank and open hearted in my explanation, I am conscious of the fact that I am doing so through a language of which I possess very meagre knowledge. If under such circumstance, any word, phrase or sentence appears to be wrongly used or placed in a wrong position, my shortcomings would be taken into consideration and my unreserved apology accepted in advance. Allah is the best witness unto the fact that I am always trying to build not to destroy, and for anything which appears contrary I believe the shortcomings and weaknesses of human nature are responsible.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.)
A. IMAM.
HAUSA EDITOR
GASKIYA TA FI KWABO

I continued with an additional submission to the Chairman as follows:

I am submitting the above record of the unfortunate episodes that have led me to tender my resignation from taking active part in the prosecution of the policy of the Gaskiya Corporation under the present circumstances and the state of affairs. Much as I do not like to add anything in the way of appendix, however, I sincerely feel that I must relate personal experiences which every impartial judge could admit as part and parcel of the general trend of affairs. I have no personal grievances as distinct from the general conditions affecting the whole of the present system under a changed attitude of leadership. But I am firmly convinced that my own personal experiences will throw light upon the whole situation, and it is therefore not out of place that they should be related.

My first connection with this institution The Translation Bureau, which later became the Literature Bureau, and ultimately transformed itself into what is now known as the Gaskiya Corporation, was in 1934 when I wrote a

Hausa novel called *Ruwan Bagaja.* That novel was published together with other Hausa novels written by different authors. That connection, however, was not direct but it paved the way for a complete change of my career.

Two years later a request was addressed by the Education Officer in charge the Bureau to the Katsina Native Administration whereby I was required to come to Zaria to write some Hausa readers for the use in Elementary schools. On my arrival at Zaria the officer remarked to me that judging from the first novel I wrote he considered me the only person capable of doing the job satisfactorily. I was engaged for six months on doing the job, and to justify the confidence of the officer in me, I worked day and night. My strenuous labour resulted in the production of three fat volumes which I gave the name of *Magana Jari Ce.* For all that period of working day and night, I was merely paid the same salary I was receiving as a teacher, £6:10:0 a month. I was not blessed with the least material benefit from the sales of the books either in the form of bonus or royalty, though my employers were fully conscious of the fact that I had worked during the strenuous six months for 18 to 20 hours a day. That could not have been my lot as a teacher. However, I was glad that I had done my duty and had also justified the confidence reposed in me. After this assignment I went back to Katsina.

Two years later, i.e. in 1938, the Education Department issued another instruction to the Literature Bureau to produce simple Hausa readers for the use of boys in classes 1 and 2 in the Elementary Schools. The three volumes of the *Magana Jari Ce* had proved too difficult for those classes but were retained as most suitable for classes 3 and 4.

The Education Officer in charge the Literature Bureau in his turn sent once more an urgent request to the Katsina Native Administration that M. Abubakar Imam be released for a month to come to Zaria and produce simpler Hausa readers. This request was turned down flatly by the Katsina Native Authority, and when Imam himself was consulted he expressed his unwillingness to leave his classes in the Middle School for another temporary strenuous work under the Bureau.

When the Education Officer observed that he could not secure his request he resorted to what he considered the only alternative in solving the problem. He temporarily moved his office and staff from Zaria to Katsina to enable him, to get in close contact with Imam and get the books produced. There, I, Imam, had to work for days and nights for one month to write the required book while at the same time I had to devote part of my attention to preparing and correcting class work of my students. Thus my double duty for one month resulted in the production of two small sized volumes of simple Hausa readers entitled *Karamin Sani Kukumi.* The Education Officer expressed his satisfaction with the part I played in the production of the two books. He even thought it fit that I should be paid as a recognition of my double duty, the sum of £6:10:0. That enabled me to receive in this instance a sort of royalty or tip.

Before going back to Zaria the Education Officer repeated his persistent

request by urging once more that I be transferred to the Central Government and specially seconded for a special work under the then Literature Bureau. But I rejected the request despite the repeated explanation for better pay, better condition of service and security. I rejected the request on the grounds that I felt I had a natural desire for the teaching profession.

When the government launched a scheme for establishing a Hausa newspaper to replace the old fashioned *Jarida,* the advice of the Education Officer in charge of the Literature Bureau was sought. The latter thought that the work would be done provided the services of A. Imam could be secured. He expressed his opinion that A. Imam was the only person capable of doing the job successfully. But it was difficult, he maintained, to get the Katsina Native Administration to spare A. Imam. Especially as the latter himself was not willing to leave his teaching profession or his Native Authority.

At an interview given the Education Officer in charge of the Literature Bureau by His Honour the Chief Commissioner Northern Provinces, the condition upon which I was to be seconded were arranged. Certain promises were made to me in consequence. It was during this interview which took place on the 6th of September, 1938, that His Honour promised that he would be prepared to approve a very high salary for an African Editor if the newspaper succeeded. It was arranged that at the beginning I would be seconded to the work pending the initial success of the paper.

Thereupon the Chief Commissioner himself took up the matter with the Katsina Native Authority. Excerpts from correspondence between the two parties are as follows:

"With reference to my memorandum No. K.5802/246 of the 20th September, I am directed by the Acting Chief Commissioner to inform you that it is considered essential that the service of a sub-editor for the revised *Jarida* who is a native of the Northern Provinces should be obtained with a view to his eventually taking over editorship should the paper prove a permanency. Much consideration had led to the conclusion that Imam Abubakar Kagara, at present English teacher in the Katsina Native Administration Middle School, is the only Northern Provinces native who would be likely to make a success of the paper. His Honour is most anxious that every possible effort should be put forward to make the paper a success from the start and I am, therefore, to request that you will consult the Emir, the Education Officer and Malam Abubakar, and say whether the latter can be spared and is willing to undertake the work.

"2. It would, of course, be necessary for Malam Abubakar to live at Zaria and His Honour suggests that he should in the first instance be seconded until 31st of March, 1939 at emoluments higher (because of his living out of Katsina) than his present rate of salary. His Honour would be glad if you would suggest a rate of salary if it is decided that Malam Abubakar can be spared.

"3. I am to add that His Honour would be prepared to approve a high salary for an African editor if the paper succeeded and that, if it did not suc-

ceed, there would be no danger of Malam Abubakar being stranded, in that, in the absence of other employment, Dr. East would be ready, in fact anxious to employ him at the Literature Bureau".

(Sgd.)
A. R. BALLEY
ACTING SECRETARY, NORTHERN PROVINCES'.

In reference to the above, coupled with full explanation of their contents to me by my employers prior to my taking up the new work, I consented to come to Zaria in November, 1938, to start the newspaper in question. When I arrived in Zaria, I was attached to an Administrative Officer under whose guidance I started my new work. The experiment of establishing the newspaper started and the maiden issue appeared in January, 1939. Happily words of appreciation began to flow into the Gaskiya institution from both British Colonial and Native Authorities.

After I had worked for a period of six months His Honour the Chief Commissioner gave the Education Officer and myself an interview at Kaduna on the 10th of May, 1939. During the interview His Honour complemented me on my efforts and on the success of the newspaper.

Furthermore, in Mr. B. G. Bourdillon's handing over notes and the Education officer's *Hausa Journal* and Annual Reports etc., I was showered with praises and congratulations for having made the newspaper a success.

We continued to work harder and harder until 1943 when a Press Delegation from West Africa was invited by the British Council to visit England. I was chosen by the Authorities to be the member of the Press Delegation for the Northern Area. That visit to England gave me a grand opportunity of educating certain interested personalities on the conditions and state of affairs in Northern Nigeria and the part being played by the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.* When I was in England I learned a lot about the British people.

I always recall with profound gratitude the opportunity that my memorable visit to Britain gave me of meeting important British personalities especially those whose connection with and everlasting interest in Northern Nigerian affairs is too well known to require any special emphasis on my part. I have in mind such figures as the late Lord Lugard and Sir Hans Vischer.

In this connection I will refer to the two memoranda I submitted to Lord Lugard on the conditions and the state of affairs that then obtained in the Northern Provinces and the immediate requirements of the people there. It has been the hope of my life since then to see that the considerations given by those interested British figures materialise in the way they were intended. It is towards achieving that end that I have dedicated my life. It has always been a source of anxiety and regret to me whenever I observe some sort of disgression from the road that I have the conviction will lead the Northern Provinces to salvation.

When I was in England I started on my own initiative to record my special and personal impressions of the life gained on the way to and from the British Isles. Quite apart from the records that I prepared for official purposes, I devoted my own free hours for the compilation of my special impressions in the form of a book. With the exception of typing out the notes and reading through the final draft with the Chairman during working hours the book, *Tafiya Mabudin Ilmi,* was the result of my free hours' labour. Through the efforts of Dr. R. M. East, the British Council became interested in the book and got it printed and published. The only benefit I received from the book was the joy of compiling it.

Through my unreserved confidence in Dr. R. M. East both as Education Officer in charge of the former Literature Bureau and now as Chairman of Gaskiya Corporation, I never felt like nursing any grievances over such matters or expressing my unwillingness when my private efforts and rights were being usurped or exploited. But recently I expressed my disagreement when, without any previous notice either officially or privately, I suddenly learnt somehow that the same book was going to be translated into English by the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

To return to the original story. While in England and in the course of my interviews with Lord Lugard I emphasised the fact that Northern Nigeria's salvation under British Trusteeship and guidance lies in enabling the people of that country to secure the services of its real British friends — friends who have the genuine interest at heart of the indigenuous natives, have a genuine respect for the religion of Islam (the dominant religion) appreciate the real shortcomings of the people, their customs, institutions and virtues. I had the courage of mentioning to Lord Lugard that all the virtues and qualities required of a British Officer for Northern Nigeria were possessed by a number of officials now serving there and principally by Dr. R. M. East and Mr. H. B. Elliot. I praised the qualities of the former so highly that Lord Lugard became keenly interested and stated that he would ask the Colonial Office to note that whenever that officer came on leave he should be requested to go and see him so that both should further discuss matters. In fact Lord Lugard did so.

After the departure of Governor Bourdillon from Nigeria finally, I received a personal letter from Lord Lugard wherein he gave me "the good tidings" that he had seen and discussed matters with the Governor designate of Nigeria (then Sir Arthur Richards) and that I should use all the means at my command to console the younger generations and ask them to wait and see what the new Governor would do.

Soon after the arrival of the new Governor to Nigeria what did he do? He visited the Northern Provinces, and when he came to Zaria he paid a special visit to the Literature Bureau. He was entertained by the staff during the course of which he discussed the relevant matters with us and even asked me, as Imam, to send him private letters on many problems whenever I require his advice. After His Excellency's visit, Dr. R. M. East received an official

instruction to go to Lagos. On his return he brought to us the good tidings to the effect that the new Governor was determined to support us in our endeavour. Consequently, in 1945 the formation of the Gaskiya Corporation was approved.

When the Corporation was formed Dr. R. M. East was appointed to be its Chairman. Soon after that the Chairman adopted a special policy under which he introdueed a system of valuing every employee of the Corporation according to his or her worth. There and then I was valued at £14 a month. When the rest of the African Staff noticed that they became apprehensive as to their future prospects. By comparing their value with those offered to their European co-workers they thought that by accepting my price, and as their senior, I had bottle-necked their future prospects and blocked their way to achieving better prices. Especially as the Chairman had said that there was no limit to the salaries of Africans.

When later in 1946 a draft of the conditions of service under the Corporation was prepared for the consideration of the Board the staff were provided with copies for their information and necessary comments. It is from that time that the misunderstandings related above began to crop up and continued to grow until they culminated into submitting my resignation on the 17th February, 1948

I am fully conscious of the responsibility. I have been doing my best to assist in discharging it, but for me to run away from my humble convictions and belief in so important a responsibility or to act as a principal assistant in what I consider digressing from the original aim and object of the Corporation would render me condemned by tender conscience as a moral coward. That is why I prefer to act in the capacity of an outside interested contributor rather than to participate actively in the management of the undertakings. This should be so especially in view of the fact that through my private efforts which appear unrecognised and unappreciated on most occasions by the Management, the Gaskiya Corporation has won the confidence of my people and the sympathy of the outside world. I would be the last man to act or assist in acting towards the betrayal of that confidence or lack of appreciating of that sympathy.

The whole of the above explanation of the circumstances under which I have found it necessary to submit my resignation makes it, I hope, quite clear that throughout my new career since 1934 I have not been pursuing any selfish ends.

On reading the above document I am confident that every responsible person would conclude that I have not been trying to destroy but to build.

Allah is the best of all judges and witnesses.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.),
A. IMAM.,
Hausa Editor,
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.

Malam Sa'adu Zungur, then serving as special correspondent for the *Daily Comet*, a paper published in Kano by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe reported my resignation on 15th March, 1948. The article appears below:—

"THE DAILY COMET
TRUTH, JUSTICE, PUBLIC SERVICE
VOL. 3, 1,066 MONDAY, MARCH 15, 1948
PRICE TWO PENCE

Gaskiya Editor Resigns, North Shocked
Editor of Gaskiya Resigns: Paper is faced with Mass Farewells:
By A.M. Sa'adu Zungur, Our Special Correspondent: KADUNA, March, 14th.

"During the last fortnight, there has been extreme feeling of indignation and dismay throughout the North as the story of Malam Abubakar Imam's resignation from the editorship of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* spread like wild fire. From Katsina to Sokoto and Ilorin to Maiduguri, people have been writing their friends in Kaduna and Zaria anxiously demanding to know the circumstances that prompted their famous Hausa Editor to take such a sudden exit from the Gaskiya Corporation.

"The general opinion is that both the Corporation's Management and Editor Imam owe a full explanation to the country as to the cause or causes giving rise to the unfortunate incident.

"It is also reliably learnt that all other African employees of the Corporation are dissatisfied with their conditions of service and signs go to show that the Corporation is faced with possible mass resignation of African employees.

"A curious note is that employees of the various Northern Native Administrations feel seriously concerned about the Gaskiya episode and are arranging to resign enmass along with the Corporation's employees."

The Emir of Katsina was contacted immediately and asked to locate me and send me back quickly to Zaria to see the Resident, Mr. C. V. Williams. I reached Zaria on 20th March, 1948 and gave the Resident a copy of the document I had written to the Chairman.

He replied the following day as follows:—

The Resident,
Zaria.
21st March, 1948.

Dear Malam Imam,

Thank you for your note. I am glad to know that you are going to meet Captain Money and have a talk with him. I feel sure that it will be helpful if you speak frankly and freely to him about your present difficulties and anxieties.

I am returning herewith the papers which you left with me yesterday, as you may wish to let Captain Money read them. I have read them myself carefully and with sympathy. If I may offer advice regarding them I would say that I think you would do well to show them, in their present form, only to a very limited number of people who are immediately concerned in this matter. I feel that it could do no good to the cause which you have at heart if you permitted these papers, at this stage, to have a wide distribution or publicity. I suggest that you ask Captain Money for his views on these points.

You say in your letter that you leave all this matter in my hands and the hands of Dr. East, and that you await instructions from me. I am flattered that you repose so much confidence in me, but I must remind you of what I said yesterday that I have no standing in this matter other than that of one who is most anxious to help, by advice or by any other means in my power, to bring the present situation to the best possible solution for all concerned.

I confess that I cannot yet see any easy solution and I am still turning the matter over in my mind.

With good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
C. V. WILLIAMS.

Captain Money, also pleaded with me to withdraw my letter of resignation and return to work. He wrote to me as follows:—

ZARIA.
23rd March, 1948.

Dear Malam Imam,

I have read all this and my advice remains the same.

Kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
C. T. MONEY.

I therefore agreed to resume work at Gaskiya immediately.

In the meantime, the Secretary to the Government in Kaduna, Mr. L.H. Goble had written to me since 16th March, 1948. The letter did not reach me until 27th March, 1948 at Gaskiya. I replied on that day as follows:—

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
27th March, 1948.

L.H. Goble Esq.,
Secretary's Office,
Kaduna.

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 16th March, 1948. It was unfortunate that the letter reached Katsina while I was away with relatives at Malumfashi, so the letter did not come into my hand until this morning. The Emir of Katsina asked me to meet him on Thursday, which I did, and he told me about it. Not having received it at the time I wrote the attached this morning to inform you of the position and had actually put it in the mail bag when I got your letter, I had to recall mine.

I have to thank you for your sympathetic approach to this matter. You have asked for the reasons for my taking this step. I cannot do better than to send you a copy of what I have given to the Chairman when he asked me what reasons he should give if he was asked for the reasons of my resignation.

As for calling a special meeting of the Board, I think this is up to you. I am prepared to co-operate in any move that will lead to the success of the Gaskiya Corporation.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.)
A. IMAM.

PS:

So far nobody has this copy but yourself and Dr. East. And so far nobody has seen it but the Resident Zaria Province who advised me to show it to Captain Money as well.

The Secretary wrote me again on 29th March, 1948 asking me to submit a summary giving the background to the reasons why I decided to resign.

I replied as follows:

3rd April, 1948.

L.H. Goble Esq.,
Secretary Northern Provinces,
Kaduna.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 29th of March, 1948. I am sorry that owing to the fact that Mr. Wilson has gone on leave, and a reply to your letter is likely to take some time, I am unable to reply at the moment. When things start to get on smoothly again I shall be able to write you a reply.

I shall be glad to come and talk things over but I would prefer to write first and follow the letter.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.)
A. IMAM.

The Secretary was not satisfied with my letter and sent a messenger insisting that I reply to the letter as requested.

I wrote on 6th April, 1948, as follows:—

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
6th April, 1948.

Mr. L.H. Goble,
Secretary,
Northern Provinces,
Kaduna.

Dear Sir,

Further to my letter of the 3rd of April, I submit herewith as requested a summary which comprised the background for my decision to resign.

There were three points which combined to make me feel that the only course open to me was to resign.

The first was that it appeared to me that the doctrine to which I dedicated my life and which I thought to be one of the foremost of the aims and objects of the Gaskiya Corporation was in practice being swept away. That doctrine is not new, it was the same doctrine that I explained to Lord Lugard in my memorandum to him in 1943. In a nutshell it is this: In dealing with the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, the Europeans should see that they give the people what they deserve before they ask for it. This will be a counter measure to the dangerous idea which is infiltrating into the North, that, "You cannot get anything good from the Europeans until you ask for it. If you ask for it and they do not give it to you, shout for it. If they do not give you then, strike for it, then you are sure to get it". This idea is contrary to the doctrines of Islam and the culture of Northern Nigeria. As such it will be dangerous as a foundation for its progress. There is no way that leads a country to progress but that which follows the line of its religion and culture.

By reading the reasons I gave, it could be seen that this doctrine had been broken since 1945, and wonderfully enough it was being broken in its home the very place where it ought to have the greatest support. The unhappy incident at the last meeting of the Board made me feel that through the Corporation this doctrine had no hope, I have failed. I must choose either to stay and become the leader of the discontented elements, asking, shouting, fighting and striking or alternatively to make a peaceful exit. The former is contrary

to the doctrine, so I chose the latter so as to seek for another channel through which to see if that doctrine would not work before it is too late. Alternatively, as I have told Dr. East, I feel I could be prepared to remain at Zaria independently, if, as an outsider, the Gaskiya Corporation could allow me to use it as a channel for this doctrine. If I did this, then whatever I suffer I shall feel that I did so for the doctrine and not for the price put upon my value by the Gaskiya Corporation.

2. It is clear that the above doctrine cannot be established by one man alone but by a team of people both Black and White, a family where all members could feel that there is no other place for them to stay and dedicate themselves to service. It is with this view in mind that I suggested a review of the Conditions of Service.

Probably not all that I said was possible or practicable, that was why in my letter of the 14th February, to the Chairman, I gave the suggestion that the Chairman should form a Council with the senior members of the staff as his counsellors, thus the management of the Gaskiya Corporation will be by the Chairman-in-Council. This was the idea behind the formation of the Discipline Committee when Mr. L.C. Giles once acted as Chairman.

3. In my long explanation I have given a brief history of my connection with Gaskiya. It will be clear from this that I am so attached to it that I cannot detatch myself from any section of it. If there was a strike in the printing section, for instance, even though I definitely should not be considered to have anything to do with it, people outside are so used to this attachment that I cannot escape blame as far as they are concerned. And if the cause of the supposed strike happened to be justifiable, I would be liable to greater blame for it would be thought that it was I who refused to tell the *Turawa* (Europeans) the plain truth through my desire to gain more favour and more money. People do not know that since 1945 things have changed. I am not consulted in matters of vital importance, I do not even know what sort of people are taken in, how or when. I just come into the office and see a new face. But wonderfully enough when things go wrong I would be reminded that I had the honour of holding the most responsible position in the Corporation, and that the good tone of the Corporation depended upon my attitude.

I feel that as the Board could rebuke me for not knowing what was going on in every section of the Corporation, if the outside world would feel that 'with the positon and influence' I hold it was my 'absolute duty' to prevent the staff from making a mistake, then it is also the duty of the Board to see that I am given sufficient control in the management of the Corporation.

You cannot expect a man to take responsibility unless you give him authority.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.)
A. IMAM.

Matters calmed down somewhat between the Chairman and myself and work continued as usual. I had sent a copy of the letter I wrote to the Secretary to the Emir of Katsina. The Emir, Alhaji Usman Nagogo replied as follows:—

KATSINA,
NIGERIA.
23rd April, 1948.

Dear M. Imam,

Thank you very much for the copy of your letter to Secretary Northern Provinces (S.N.P.) sent to me recently. It is exactly what should be said and I agree with it entirely. Has he responded again?

I am sending Hamza to come with this letter. He is on his way to Bida. Please give him a serious talk on discipline before he proceeds. He is bringing to you a Fulani gown which you might use to keep warm during the forthcoming rainy season.

I showed your letter to *Karamin Alkali* and explained its contents to him. We await your decision on the best way to resolve this matter.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
U. NAGOGO.

NB: I will be in Kano on 26th April, 1948 for the meeting of the Groundnut and Cotton Boards. Then I will travel to Lagos but the date of departure has not been confirmed.

In May the Chairman issued a circular on Gaskiya Corporation Policy. It is reproduced below:—

GASKIYA CORPORATION POLICY

The primary aim of *Gaskiya* and other publications of the Corporation is to promote the welfare of this country and its people, and good relations between all classes. Matter liable to give offence, or excite bitter feelings between *Sarakuna* (Chiefs) and *Talakawa* (Commoners), southerners and northerners, Muslims and Christians, Europeans and Africans, whether editorial or contributed in the form of letter or news-item, is absolutely banned. It is the policy of some papers and political parties to foment public unrest and hatred for their own ends, by setting against each other classes, races and creeds.

This is contrary to the policy of Gaskiya.

WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY LIVING IN NORTHERN NIGERIA, MUSLIM, CHRISTIAN OR PAGAN, AFRICAN, EUROPEAN OR ASIATIC, EDUCATED OR UNEDUCATED, RICH OR POOR, HAS A CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE TO THE COMMON GOOD, AND IT IS OUR POLICY TO FOSTER GOODWILL AND CO-OPORATION BETWEEN ALL.

Anything that hinders this aim is not to be tolerated in any literature published by the Corporation.

Religious Matters: It is the aim of the Corporation to produce literature acceptable to both Muslims and Christians. As it is not possible for the Muslim or Christian members of the staff to judge what will be acceptable to members of the other creed, it is laid down that no matter of a religious or semi-religious nature should be printed, unless it has been passed by the Chairman, on the authority of his advisers as being acceptable, without any doubt, to members of both religions.

Gaskiya Corporation is pledged to support the general policy of Government, but is free to criticise points of detail or implementation of that policy. If any criticism is brought against Government, it should be entirely impersonal i.e. directed against things, not people. Government means the Government of the country which is composed of Africans and Europeans (with an African majority). It must not therefore be made synonymous with the *Turawa* (Europeans).

Members of Gaskiya Corporation may write to the Editor, but the articles or letters must not be published over their own names. The subject matter may either be incorporated in the Editorial columns, or the letter may be published over a 'pen-name' which conceals the writers identity.

(Sgd.)
R.M. EAST
Chairman,
Gaskiya Corporation.

Zaria:
19th May, 1948.

Early in August I received the following letter from the Chairman:—

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
5th August, 1948.

Dear Malam Imam,

As it seems to me that the situation has much improved since I last wrote to you on May 5th of this year, I have decided now to try a change. I propose that you should definitely assume the title of 'Editor, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*', instead of 'Hausa Editor'. You will naturally continue to seek advice from Mr. Wilson and Mr. Cobban on matters where they are able to give it but you will be responsible direct to me for everything appearing in the paper.

At the same time I am raising your salary to £360 per annum, as from August 1st, 1948. This places you on a level with men inside the 'Senior Service Scale'.

I hope our personal relations will always be excellent and that all serious differences are now ended.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
R.M. EAST
Chairman.

The Chairman made a circular letter to the Directors of the Board of Gaskiya Corporation as follows:—

No.S4/14.
19th August, '48.

The Sultan of Sokoto, Sir Abubakar, K.B.E., C.M.G.; L.H. Goble Esq. Northern Secretary, Kaduna; Mr. J.A.E. Cilver, Church Missionary Society Bida; M. Abubakar T. Balewa, Education Department, Bauchi; Malam Adamu B. Dikko, Pharmacy School, Yaba.

Dear Sir,

It may interest members of the Board to hear of the following change in staff organisation. Since Mr. Wilson has been on leave, the editing of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* has been left almost entirely to Malam Imam. As he has shown himself able to carry this responsibility, with occassional guidance, I propose that he shall take the substantive title of 'Editor, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo'* (in place of 'Hausa Editor') and be responsible direct to the Chairman for the conduct of this paper.

At the same time I have raised his salary to £360 as from August 1st, 1948. This puts him on a level with a Government servant inside the Senior Service Scales.

It will be necessary to find an alternative title for Mr. Wilson on his return.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.)
R.M. EAST,
Chairman.
Gaskiya Corporation.

Mr. John Tafida Umaru was promoted to the same grade with me. M. Makama in the newspaper section and M. Nuhu Bamalli in the book section were also promoted. Other staff like M. Abdulmalik Mani, Mr. Kitchener and Mr. Gundu also received appropriate increases.

As this promotion entailed greater responsibility on my part for the paper I became more actively involved in the Management of the Corporation. In 1950 I was given another increase in salary from £360 per annum to £475 per annum. The letter is shown below. Mr. John Tafida Umaru also reeeived a similar increase.

17th April, 1950.

Malam Abubakar Imam,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.

Dear Malam Imam,

I have pleasure in informing you that your salary has been increased to £475 per annum from 1st February, 1950.

(Sgd.)
R.M. EAST
Chairman, Gaskiya Corporation.

CHAPTER NINE

FIRST POLITICAL LEADERS

Training In United Kingdom

In 1945, when I, as the Hausa Editor heard that five persons had been selected for a test preparatory to undertaking a journey to the United Kingdom for studies I asked the European Editor to find out more for me about what they would do in England and what future would be planned for them. The European Editor, Mr. Gordon Wilson, wrote to the Principal of the Kaduna College asking for more light to be thrown to us on these affairs.

Mr. E.L. Mort, the Principal replied Wilson in these words:—

"Kaduna College,
Kaduna Junction,
28th September, 1945.

"Dear Wilson,

"Thank you for your letter of 26th. You know as much as I do about these men who are going to Engalnd. I have no official connection with their selection or arrangements, and such information as I — or anyone else in Kaduna — have been able to get has been wormed out of Lagos by private letters from me.

"However, for your questionnaire.

"**Names:**

(i) Malam Abdurrahman Mora, Teacher, Zaria Middle School.
(ii) Yahaya (of Gusau), Teacher: Bauchi Middle School.
(iii) Bello, Headmaster, Kano Middle School.
(iv) Abubakar, Headmaster, Bauchi Middle School.
(v) Othman Ja'afaru, Headmaster, Katsina-Ala Middle School.

2 "They are to spend one year in United Kingdom (scholarship £300).

3 "I believe the object of their visit is rather the general widening of outlook than academic qualification. They will not be taking degree courses. It is the Director's wish that as many men as possible should get this wider experience in the future (but don't put that down as an official statement). Malam Bello of Kano is to take the course in Colonial Education at the Institute of Education, in London which is part of London University. The course is under Dr. Margret Read.

4. "After their return, I am sorry but I have no idea at all. No promises have been made to them; indeed they have been left in complete ignorance of the whole thing, as indeed have I. It is in my opinion a scandal that they should have been given so little information, but there it is.

5. "Any other information. No, I don't think so. All have been staying with me in turn for a week or more (except Othman Ja'afaru who arrives tomorrow), and I have learnt a lot about them — more than ever the selection committee found out!

"Now if you want my private opinion, not for publication, the whole thing has been most disgracefully mismanaged. Lagos could have given warning of their choice two or three months ago; they did nothing and now the men are being bustled off at a few days notice, without proper time to pack their wives, make their financial arrangements, get their outfit, or adjust their minds to the adventure. Correspondence is conducted indiscriminately by the C.S.G.[1] and D. of E.,[2] with S.N.P.[3] and A.D.E.[4] If anything goes wrong it's my fault. I sincerely hope that the next lot will be more humanely treated; as for myself I shall be out of reach of kicks in the pants — thank God.

"Sorry if I'm disgruntled, but who wouldn't be?

"Yours
(Sgd.)
E. L. MORT".

Eventually, four out of the total number of invited candidates were selected to be pioneer students under the auspices of the Education Department of the Government of Nigeria for the one year teacher education course at the Institute of Education of the University of London. They proceeded to England for the 1945/46 session. They were: Malam Bello Kano, Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Malam Yahaya Gusau and Malam Abdurrahman Mora.

The nature of the United Kingdom course which they were to attend was not disclosed to them until they arrived in London. Before their departure from Nigeria they anticipated something higher, if not a degree course at least a Diploma. Nevertheless, they availed themselves for the short professional certificate course with a feeling of disappointment. They had reason to feel disgusted because both Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Malam Yahaya Gusau were holders of the Nigerian Senior Teachers' Certificates in addition to the Katsina Higher College Teachers' Certificate, majoring in English and Mathematics respectively. Equipped with that Senior Teachers' Certificate which, in their view, was equivalent to the London Matriculation Examination which then was the requisite qualification for entry into the British Universities, they felt that they should have been considered as eligible for a degree course or be given a special concession and be exempted from part one of the Bachelors degree accordingly. With regard to Malam Abdurrahman Mora, he had registered to sit for London Matriculation Examination in about 1943,

1. C.S.G. —Chief Secretary to the Government, Lagos.
2. D. of E. — Director of Education, Lagos.
3. S.N.P. — Secretary, Northern Provinces, Kaduna.
4. A.D.E. —Assistant Director of Education, Kaduna.

aspiring for a degree course as a government sponsored student. He was however, advised in good faith by his Provincial Education Officer (an expatriate) to withdraw with a very strong hope bordering on conviction that he would be sent to England as a government sponsored student for a degree course and therefore his taking London Matriculation Examination would not be necessary. He therefore withdrew his registration in anticipation of the London Course. (When the degree course proved abortive, Malam Abdurrahman Mora, despite his Teachers' Professional Certificate of 1946 took and passed the Nigerian Senior Teacher's Certificate Examination and majored in Geography in 1950).

As the first four Northerners successfully completed the one year professional course and had shown examplary conduct throughout their stay in the United Kingdom, the Nigerian Government was encouraged to send another group of four Northerners who had been selected at the original interview in Lagos in 1944. They were Shettima Shehu Ajiram, Headmaster, Borno Middle School; Malam Salahu Fulani from Ilorin Middle School; Malam Aminu Kano from Bauchi Middle School and Malam Zakariya Dimka from C.M.S. Middle School Wusasa, Zaria. They went in the 1946/47 academic year.

Perhaps in order to make amends or provide an incentive with a view to encouraging others to pursue the Professional Course which evidently had become unpopular, Malams Bello Kano and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa who had been headmasters before the London course, were almost immediately promoted as Education Officers on their return from England, to serve in their respective Provinces, Kano and Bauchi. Malams Yahaya Gusau and Abdurrahman Mora were seconded by their respective Native Authorities, Bauchi and Zaria, to teach at the Kaduna (Government) College, (now Barewa College Zaria) as Tutors.

The third batch comprising Malam Isa Koto from Kaduna (Government College), Malam Nuhu Bayero from Plateau Middle School Kuru, and Malam Adi Mbewi from Katsina-Ala Middle School (Benue Province) went to England in the 1947/48 academic year.

Although the Professional course had lost much of its popularity with Northern teachers, it lingered on for two more years before it was changed for a more academie course, but still the alternative course envisaged by the Lagos Central Government for Northerners was not a degree course.

In 1950, the Education Authorities in Kaduna invited about ten North ern teachers to an interview for another course to replace the professional certificate course. Among the invitees were some of the Professional Certificate holders viz: Malam Yahaya Gusau, Malam Isa Koto and Malam Abdurrahman Mora, as if the Northern Education Department has acknowledged the inadequacy of the Professional certificate. All the prospective candicates appeared before the interviewing Panel together and were told the reason for their call. After that they were interviewed individually. None of the holders of the Professional Certificate of the Institute of Education of the University of

London showed any interest in the new course. One of them who was reported to be very bitter foi having been invited at all, was alleged to have said that the new course was another dubious course and therefore he was not interested in it. The bitterness of this group of men would appear justified judging from the fact that right from the beginning, the professional course was rather hastily planned and slovenly co-ordinated. To add insult to injury, after the successful completion of the course by the pioneer group, there seemed to have been an element of discrimination in their treatment regarding promotion. While two of their number were promoted as Education Officers in the Senior Cadre of the Native Authority Service, the other two were merely seconded to teach at the Kaduna College. There was a proposal to absorb both of them into the Regional Government Civil Service but somebody became a bottle neck, eventually becoming an obstacle. Their promotion did not come until years later.

You will recall that in my original memo to Lord Lugard a suggestion was made to broaden the general outlook of suitabe Northerners by arranging short overseas sight-seeing trips for them which were to embody short Local Government Courses designed for that purposes. It will be pertinent to mention at this stage the noble role the British Council played in that regard. In 1946, it sponsored seven prominent educated Northerners to attend a short Local Government course in England. Those who benefited from the British Council sponsorship were: Malam Muhammadu Ribadu[1] from Adamawa; Shettima Kashim Ibrahim from Borno; Malam Yahaya Ilorin from Ilorin;

1 Alhaji Muhammadu Ribadu (popularly called "Power" in political circles) was born at Balala in 1910, in Adamawa Provin ce(Gongola State) and educated at Yola Provincial School. He taught there from 1926 to 1931. The Provincial School was upgraded to Middle School in 1930. In 1931, he left teaching and joined local government administration as Chief Accountant. He was appointed district head of Balala in 1936, before becoming treasurer of Adamawa Native Authority. In 1946, he was among the group of Northerners that attended a local government course in England, sponsored by the British Council. In 1952, he received the British decoration, the M.B.E.

He actively participated in politics, becoming one of the leaders of the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC). When he died in February, 1965, he was Federal Minister of Defence. He was a very influential and popular figure in the Nigerian politics.

Alhaji Muhammadu Ribadu was a very simple person and a devout Moslem. He was a regular reader of the Holy Quran, completing its recitation once every month. He was also fond of voluntary fasting. He was in the habit of performing the pilgrimage to Mecca every year. He came back from pilgrimage in 1965, and went to Yola, where he performed the opening ceremony of a mosque he built there, before returning to Lagos. He returned in a very poor state of health, which confined him in bed.About a week later, he passed away. His body was convey d by air to Kaduna and then to Yola for burial. Many mourners, among them Permanent Secretaries and other dignitories accompanied the remains to Kaduna.

Malam Shehu Ahmed Sarkin Shanu from Kano, Malam Aliyu Makaman Bida[1] and Malam Shuaibu Na'ibi Abuja both from Niger and Malam A.R. Nuhu from Zaria. The course included visits to a number of British cities and many other places of interest. They each played a significant part in nation-building.

By 1950 twenty-five candidates had benefited from either the one-year Teachers Professional Certificate course or the three months Local Government (Summer) Attachment Course. All the twelve provinces were represented with Bauchi, Benue, Kabba and Plateau sending one each; two each from Adamawa, Borno, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto; three from Ilorin and four each from Kano and Zaria.

There was little widespread political awareness in the North until after the return to Nigeria of those Northerners from England and those ex-servicemen who saw action in East Africa and the Far East. Their individual and group contribution towards the general enlightenment and awakening of Northern masses had such tremendous impact on the development of political awareness in the North. There was also *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* always serving as a medium for the exchange of ideas and as a catalyst for further enlightenment.

Several Northern Emirs together with some of their children and councillors had also visited United Kingdom during the 1920's and 1930's. The Sultan of Sokoto, Malam Hassan Dan Mu'azu, together with the Emir of Gwandu, M. Usman Shehu, visited the United Kingdom in 1934. The Emir of Kano, Alhaji Abdullahi Bayero and the late Sultan, Sir Abubakar III (the then Sardauna of Sokoto and a Councillor in the N.A.) accompanied them. The Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko visited the United Kingdom in 1921, the year the College was opened in his domain. He travelled by boat from United Kingdom to Jidda and performed the holy pilgrimage. His son Usman Nagogo, then quite a young man and several Councillors accompanied him. He repeated the same Journey in 1933.

Notes

[1]Alhaji Aliyu Makaman Bida who was born in 1907, at Doko near Bida; was educated at Bida Primary School up to 1921 and Katsina College (Barewa College) (1921—1927). He taught at Bida Middle School, eventually becoming its headmaster. He was given the traditional title of Makama by the Etsu of Nupe in 1938. As a student he was an athlete, setting a record in 100 yards, which was not broken until 1934, by Dasuki of Ilorin at Kano, during the Athletic sports Meeting between the North and the South.

The Makama of Bida was among a group of Northerners who attended a local government course in England in 1946, under the auspices of the British Council. He was one of the leaders of the defunct Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and at the first coup in Nigeria, when the first Republic was toppled by the Military, he was Minister of Finance in the Northern Region. He served as patron of NPN before he died in 1980.

Alhaji Alhassan Dantata[1] a leading merchant of Kano, had made the pilgrimage in the early 1920s after visiting the United Kingdom where he was presented to King George V.

Notes

[1]The only Northern Nigerian businessman who went to Mecca via Europe was a Kano-based trader, Alhaji Alhassan Dantata. He was born at Bebeji in Kano Province (Kano State). He specialised in two trading commodities-kolanuts and groundnuts. Before the British advent there was a famous kolanut trade route from Hausaland to Gwanja with Kumasi as centre in the gold Coast (Ghana). Alhaji Alhassan Dantata got established at Kumasi from where he sent kolanuts to Hausaland. Sometimes he shipped kolanuts by sea to Nigeria. In about 1912, groundnut trade flourished in Kano, because the product was on demand by the European Commercial firms for export to Europe. Alhaji Alhassan Dantata returned to Kano about that time to participate in the Groundnut trade. Soon he almost monopolised the groundnut market and most of the Kano groundnut pyramids were his.

Inspite of the groundnut boom, he did not forsake kolanut trade from Southern Nigeria to the North. In that too, he became the leading trader. By the time he died in 1955, he was said to be the richest man in Nigeria. After him his sons have kept the commercial flag flying high but not necessarily in groundnut or kolanut trade. With Western education backing them up, they engage in a variety of commercial and industrial enterprises. To mention only two among his sons who survive him, Alhaji Aminu Dantata and Alhaji Sanusi Dantata are today among the wealthiest people in Nigeria.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

A local government course was conducted at Kano in 1950, which was attended by many headmasters of the Northern Middle Schools including the Headmasters of Kano Middle School, Bida Middle School and Zaria Middle School and many Northern Teachers. During the course Alhaji Muhammadu Kobo (Emir of Lapai) and Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora privately expressed the desire to pay a courtesy call on Alhaji Alhassan Dantata at his house. The host Headmaster Alhaji Muhammadu Gwarzo agreed with pleasure to lead us there. Three of us (in 1950) rode on bicycles through Kano City to the house of Alhaji Alhassan Dantata. We found him at home. Alhaji Muhammadu Gwarzo introduced his counterparts from Bida and Zaria and Alhaji Alhassan Dantata received us warmly and generously befitting very important visitors, in keeping with a Prophetic tradition that:

> "Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day Either speak good or keep silent, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his neighbour, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his guest".

May Allah rest the soul of Alhaji Alhassan Dantata in perfect peace, and may He shower blessings on his children who survive him, Amen.

Agitation For Social Reforms: Mallam Sa'adu Zungur:

In 1940, M. Sa'adu Zungur having completed his training as the first northerner to attend Yaba College, Lagos and after a stay in Kano was posted to Zaria to teach at the newly opened Pharmacy School. He was always full of ideas about progressive improvement and general development of the country. He immediately began to organise an association which he called, 'The Zaria Friendly Society'. He invited all the educated people and most of the local dignitories to the launching of the new society. His Royal Highness, the Emir of Zaria, Malam Ja'afaru, was invited as Guest of Honour to launch the new society and bless it.

The former Middle School (now Al-Huda-Huda College) was the venue for the launching ceremony. The assembly Hall was full to capacity. Many invitees attended the meeting with a measure of spontaneity. The staff of the Middle School, realising that the Emir had accepted the invitation and would attend in person were in full attendance. They included Malams Sanusi (Headmaster, 1937—40), Alhassan (former Headmaster, 1933—35), Moh. Ladan (Headmaster, 1940—49), A.R. Nuhu (Headmaster, 1935—37, then Senior Visting Teacher), Aliyu 'Dan Yari (Visiting Teacher), 'Zailani, Abdurrahman Okene, Jumare Zaria, Abdurrahman Mora (Headmaster 1950—54), Aliyu (School Carpenter), Jamo Makeri, Tanko Soba etc.

Malam Sa'adu Zungur who was the promoter delivered a very long address in Hausa in an attempt to explain the new idea in detail. The maiden speech was so long that it virtually became a lecture. He misassessed the mentality of the majority of his audience who were not used to such lengthy harangues. The meeting was protracted to sunset and the time for Magrib prayers was enroached upon. Apart from M. Sa'adu Zungur himself perhaps nobody in that gathering was used to such long speeches. Therefore many of the invitees appeared to have become bored and disgusted.

At last an opening availed itself to the Emir. He rose as the Guest of Honour to say a few words. He was brief but to the point. He said, "As you have started this society with enthusiasm let it last, but whatever you do, do not be unmindful of God". He then pronounced a blessing on 'The Zaria Friendly Society.'

Many people do not know M. Sa'adu Zungur beyond his name and his famous poetry. He suffered constantly with lung trouble and was destined to have a short life span of 43 years (1915—1958) during which he achieved quite a lot. If he had lived longer he would certainly have played a more significant role in the political development of Northern Nigeria. Though he was sometimes erratic in his actions he was always brilliant, dynamic and fearless. Coupled with these qualities he was a great Islamic scholar. He was also instrumental to the formation of the 'Bauchi General Improvement Association' in the early 1940s.



AHMAD MAHMUD SA'ADU ZUNGUR (1915—1958)



KOBA Group Photograph
Group photograph taken in front of the College in 1940, *at the second meeting of the Katsina/ Kaduna Old Boys Association.*

Caption with list of names on photograph of KOBA meeting 1940. See photograph page 160

Sitting on the Ground:- Left to Right, (1) Armiya'u, (2) person unidentified, (3) Usman Koto, (4) Mamman Daku, (5) Abdu Gusau, (6) Jima Ilorin, (7) (A.R.) Nuhu Zaria, (8) Abubakar Imam, (9) Abdurahman Mora, (10) Hassan Rafin Dadi, (11) Shuaibu Na'ibi, (12) Mamman (Sule) Zaria.

2nd Row Sitting on Chairs:- Left to Right (1) Usman Gwarzo, (2) Muhammadu Mayo, (3) Salahu Fulani, (4) Isa Kaita, (5) Bello Kano, (6) Alhaji Dogon Daji, (7) Mallam Bello Kagara, Head Teacher, i/c Students Welfare and Arabic Teacher, (8) Yahaya Ilorin, (9) Ladan (Hunkuyi) Zaria, (10) Muhammadu Fate Bauchi, (11) Iro (Mashi) Katsina, (12) Anike Bida.

3rd Row Standing:- Left to Right (1) Ade Mbeyi, (2) Yazidu, (3) Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, (4) Shehu Yabo, (5) Abdurahman Okene, (6) Mustafa Kano, (7) Ibrahim Tako Bida, (8) Sadiq Borno, (9) Zanna Maina Bukar, (10) Shehu Kano, (11) Jumare Zaria, (12) Inuwa Kano, (13) Aliyu Danyari, (14) Garba Bauchi, (15) Shehu Ajiram, (16) Sule Isa.

4th Row Standing:- Left to Right (1) Bello Dandago, (2) Umaru Agaye, (3) Abdukadir Zaria, (4) Jimada Pategi, (5) Mamman Tureta, (6) Baraya Gombe, (7) Usman Lapai, (8) Sanusi Zaria, (9) Mahmud Zayam.

The Old Boys Association: Aminu Kano Factor

Another major factor towards political awareness in the North was the formation of the Kaduna Old Boys Association in 1939. Mr. E.L. Mort O.B.E. then Principal of the College initiated the idea and provided the College premises to the Old Boys to meet and have free discussions among themselves. In this regard, the Principal enjoyed the co-operation of the then Chief Commissioner of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, who gave a directive to the Residents in the Provinces to permit the Old Boys of Kaduna College, who were working under the various Native Authorities, and who wished to attend any Annual General Meeting of the association, to do so. Thus the 1940 General Meeting of KOBA (now BOBA) was attended by 49 Old Boys from all over the Northern Region. After that successful meeting however, some highly placed individuals seemed to have developed suspicion for the association and apparently to have worked towards its indefinite suspension.

During the KOBA second Annual General Meeting of 1940, Malam Aminu Kano, then a student at the College, staged an interesting play in Hausa depicting business transaction at Kano market, to entertain the visiting Old Boys. Observers viewed the play entitled "*Kai Waye A Kasuwar Kano?*" as politically inspired, capable of doing more harm than good to the stability of the region, and more especially with a global war on. The observers' views and their probable recommendations to shelve the activities of KOBA for a while might have been respected by the Competent Authority. Be it as it may, Mr. E.L. Mort, O.B.E. never again accepted to host any KOBA meeting up to the time he retired from the Nigerian Service in 1946. Major A.W.A. Spicer who succeeded him as Principal for the next eight years, never agreed to associate with KOBA. In actual fact that play portrayed Aminu Kano as a potential politician with a radical view.

Effect of World War II:

The outbreak of the Second World War which in Northern Nigeria people called 'Hitler's War' also contributed towards political awareness. Although the war was fought away from Nigerian soil, yet its effects rippled in the country. Several Divisions of the Nigerian Army were sent to the Far East: India and Burma to confront the enemy — the Japanese – and assist in halting their westward advance in order to join hands with the Germans in the Middle East. It will be recalled that Japan joined the war on the side of Germany and Italy against Britain, France, Russia and America.

Malam Abdulkadir Makama of the Gaskiya Corporation was on a Press Delegation to India and Burma. During the delegation, he was conferred with the title of 'Captain', so he was called Captain Makama. He came back to Nigeria full of ideas about freedom and on his return he published a series of articles in the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. This contributed greatly towards

broadening the outlook of Northerners in general. He published a book titled *Kyaftin Makama.*

Here at home squadrons of British Air Force planes flew over Nigeria day and night to reinforce the Middle East Command to enable it repulse the Germans under Rommel, who had already landed in North Africa and were heading towards Egypt and the Suez Canal. Nigeria was therefore always conscious of the major war. People started to think beyond the boundaries of Nigeria.

Following the defeat of France by Germany on the European Front, it appeared as if the former French West African Colonies would surrender to Germany, and if they did, Nigeria would be exposed to a direct German attack, operating from those colonies which have common boundaries with Nigeria, namely Cameroons (then Trust Territory), Chad, Niger and Dahomey (now Benin Republic). Perhaps having regard to that possibility, contingents of the Belgium Congo (now Zaire) Army were sent to Nigeria. Some of the soldiers were camped at the present site of the Institute of Administration of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Hence the name 'Kongo' which has become so popular for the campus of that Institution. Naturally, the Congolese soldiers' stay in our midst must have been of some advantage to the immediate locality financially and socially.

In Nigeria itself, Home Defence Corps (or Civil Defence Units) were organised in various strategic points including Zaria. Some of us were trained to handle army rifles, some as First Aid Operators. A Cavalry Detachment of the cavaliers was camped in the premises of the Pharmacy School, Zaria, which had been commanded. All these must have had salutary effects on the general enlightenment of the people of this country. However, the danger of a German infilteration into Nigeria appeared to have been averted by General De Gaul of France, who refused to surrender his forces to Germany and organised a resistance from his base in the United Kingdom.

After the fall of Germany in 1945, and with victory for the Allies, a grand Victory Parade was organised in London in 1946. Contingents from the former British Dominions and Colonies including Nigeria, participated in the Victory Parade. Almost all the overseas contingents were camped at Hyde Park, London.

The sum total of the experiences gained by our soldiers in India, Burma and London must have contributed in no small measure in broadening the outlook of those soldiers in particular and the Northern Nigerian masses in general through information via *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.* The invasion of the region by modern ideas was rapidly gathering momentum. The young educated Northerners, wherever they might be, seemed to be working towards getting themselves united, lest they become prey of the old regime. Whatever happened to one person say at Maiduguri, it would not be long before the edu-

cated young men of Sokoto heard of it. The information would ripple through the region, as it were.

Four Major Disturbing Instances:

During the early 1940s, four major disturbing instances set the mind of the younger educated Northerners in rebellious frames. They were:—

1. At the town of Gaya in Kano Province the ears of one Malam Muhammadu Gaya were boxed by a nonentity, a hanger-on of the District Head of Gaya, simply because Malam Muhammadu Gaya walked in front of the house of the District Head with his shoes on.[1] In those days when despotism was the order of the day among the Northern autocrats, such a display of 'arrogance' could not be tolerated. Indeed, such a behaviour was considered by the ruling class as a rebellious act which deserved an instantaneous deterrent punishment! Thus Malam Muhammadu Gaya was beaten up with impunity.
2. In Sokoto Province, Malam Ahmadu Raßah the Sardauna of Sokoto was arrested. Whether or not he committed the offence for which he was tried and imprisoned by the Sultan's Court the young educated northerners strongly felt that the conviction was a victimization and that it was most unfair. The Sardauna was discharged and acquitted on appeal to a Higher Court sitting in Zaria. The Sardauna himself gives an account of the incident in his Autobiography, *My Life,* pp. 58—59 as follows:—

"It was while I was at Gusau that an incident took place which very nearly put an end to my career in the administration: it shows you that, however well and virtuously you may live, things do not always go as one would like them to.

"One afternoon a friend came to me in my house in Gusau and said, 'Look, a plot is being arranged against you, so that you will fall into an inescapable trap'. When I asked what sort of plot, he said that people were being organised to lay complaints against me so that I would be involved in a court case. I replied; *'Tawakkaltu Alal-Haiyillazi Layamutu'* (I depend on the Soul that never dies). A week later, I heard that some Fulani (nomadic cowmen) were being told to say that they paid cattle tax to me which never went into the Treasury.

"After necessary investigations by an instigated Administrative Officer who was specially sent for the purpose, I was summoned to appear before the Sultan's Court. I was tried and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. Knowing my own reputation and standards and the way the case was tried, I ap-

1. To wear shoes while walking along with a dignitory, or meeting him or passing infront of his house was regarded as a sign of arrogance. The golden rule was to take off the shoes and carry them in your hand until you were out of his sight!

pealed to the Supreme Court. The learned Judge, (Mr. Ames), with two Muslim jurists, allowed my appeal and I was therefore acquitted. My dependence on the soul that never dies proved right. Some people now think that I might have drunk a certain Koranic verse connected with Prophet Yusuf which led to his imprisonment in Egypt and later his prominence. How true this is, is left to you to judge.

"There were more than two thousand people outside the court in Zaria; they went mad with excitement when the result was announced. My return through Gusau was a triumphal procession".

In 1945 the 'Sokoto Youth Social Circle' was founded with the active, though not open, support of M. Ahmadu Raɓah, Sardauna of Sokoto. In 1949, the Waziri of Sokoto, who was a nominated member for Sokoto in the Legislative Council, died and Malam Ahmadu the Sardauna of Sokoto was nominated to take his place in the Council.

3. Thirdly, an unpleasant situation arose in Bauchi, between Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's clique and the royalists. They formed the Bauchi Discussion Circle but the Native Authority prevented them from holding regular meetings. It was only after a strong representation was made to the Resident that their meetings were granted official sanction. Indeed, I sympathied with the Emir of Bauchi, because at that material time, Bauchi appeared to be a dumping ground of young radicals —Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Malam Sa'adu Zungur and Malam Aliyu Abubakar were indigenes of Bauchi, while M. Yahaya Gusau and M. Aminu Kano were posted there, as if to reinforce the local army of revolutionists.

4. Encounters of Mr. X (Name withheld) with A Native Authority in the early 1940s as found in a note made by the Late Dr. Imam

Mr. X. had three major encounters with the Native Authority while he served as a teacher at a Middle School in 1936—41. In each case his upright stand for justice and fair play prevailed over the dictatorial and oppressive tendencies of the ruling class at the time.

The first case occurred when, without any notice, he was paid his salary for the month less 10 per cent. When he enquired from the then headmaster, he was informed that a general deduction of all staff salaries had been authorised by the Emir as contribution towards the building of the City Mosque. He refused to take his salary until the deduction was returned, saying any voluntary contribution should have received his prior consent. The European Superintendent of the school at the time supported him in this contention and his salary was paid in full. However, the Native Authority got to know about this incident and marked him down as a potential troublemaker.

Secondly, it was decided to organise a Civil Defence Force as that was the period of the Second World War (1939—45). All staff in the Native Autho-

rity were asked to assemble one afternoon outside the Emir's palace for drills. A Prince as Head of the N.A. Staff came to the parade ground dressed in full military uniform and the D.O. and some military officers were in attendance. The staff were arranged in various groups and the Middle School teachers were each given a detachment to lead in drills and other exercises. Mr. X. raised his hand and asked a question as to whether the drills were to be a compulsory or voluntary exercise. He was asked to go nearer to the parade commander and state his question. He went and was told that it was in fact a voluntary exercise. He told them then that as they did not request for his prior consent he was not going to participate in the drills. This incident was reported to the Resident of the Province at the time who was in the habit of visiting the Middle School in the afternoon to watch games. He visited the school while Mr. X. was officiating at a football match. He waited until the end of the game and confronted Mr. X. with a demand to know why he refused to volunteer for the Defence Force drills. Mr. X. told him that he was drafted on the parade ground and told to lead a detachment which did not seem to him to be an exercise of a voluntary nature. The Resident realising that this failure of communication came from the Native Authority, accepted Mr. X's reason and dropped the matter. However, the Native Authority was very angry with him and planned to implicate him in a serious allegation.

One day one of the students who was a descendant of the ruling family of the area came into the classroom in which Mr. X. was teaching. It was not his class and without any greeting to or excuse from the teacher he strode to another boy's desk, took a ruler and turned to go out. Mr. X. called him and rebuked him for his disrespect and took away the ruler.

The following day Mr. X. received a summons from the Emir's Court to appear the day after. When he reached there he found out that the Emir had come outside the palace gate and was holding court in the open courtyard in front of the palace. The boy was also there and was asked to state his case. He told the court that Mr. X. had called him *shege* (meaning bastard) and he demanded recompense. Mr. X. did not care to challenge the boy's allegation. One of the Emir's court member's tried to prompt him to say something to defend himself but he refused to say a word.

Therefore the court decided to accept the boy's version and imposed a punishment of eighty lashes against Mr. X. Mr. X. refused to accept the verdict and said he would appeal to the Resident. He was allowed to go. He reported this matter to the Superintendent of Education at the Middle School before going to see the Resident.

As he was riding on his bicycle towards the Residency he met the Emir's Councillors coming back in a car from there. He met the Resident and told him the whole story. The Resident asked him to go back to the school. The following morning it was raining heavily when the Emir and his entourage visited the school. Mr. X. was asked to go and meet the Emir in the Head-

master's office. This meeting proved to be an anticlimax. The Emir told him that the decision of the previous day had been cancelled. The Emir also told him to feel at home that he was not only expected but required to treat all those boys as his junior brothers and discipline them accordingly.

After the Emir left, Mr. X. decided that he was no longer going to teach in that school. He told the Superintendent of Education about this decision and refused to do any more school work. After one week of staying at home the Superintendent came to him with a letter of posting to another Middle School.

EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

In Kano sometime in 1945 a stalwart by the name Malam Abdullah Raji became the General Secretary of an organisation called the Northern Elements Progressive Association (NEPA). The name of the President remained undisclosed. However, to all intents and purposes the Association was a political party in the making. In 1947 M. Abdullah Raji became the President of another organisation called the 'Zikist Movement in the North'.

The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC)

In September, 1948, there was a concurrence of two events, one in Kaduna and the other at Zaria. We in Zaria were making efforts to form an organisation stronger than the Zaria Friendly Society, which had existed only in name. Also in Kaduna with the indigenous staff of Kaduna Government College initiating a move, a group was trying to organise something similar to our own aspiration, each group not knowing what the other was planning.

On a Saturday evening in October, 1948, Dr. R.A.B. Dikko invited a group of friends for a discussion at his house. Eleven of us accepted the invitation including Malam Ali the Turaki of Zaria and Malam Umaru Agaie. After the usual exchange of greetings, Dr. Dikko disclosed the reason for his invitation, which was in connection with the founding of an organisation to be called *Jamiyyar Mutanen Arewa* meaning an association of the Northern People. After deliberation, we all unanimously approved the idea and the proposed name for the organisation. On the same evening in Kaduna, Mr. M.D. Rafih, a Nigerian Railways Inspector, invited his educated friends to his house to have tea with him. About a dozen educated young men answered the call including Malam Isa Koto, Malam Yahaya Gusau, Malam Abdurrahman Mora, Malam Aliyu Mai-Bornu and Malam Haliru Binji. Discussing over tea, the host opened discussion on a suggestion regarding the formation of a cultural organisation. All those present at the meeting reached a consensus over what they called a 'progressive idea'. In further deliberation, *Jam'iyyar Matunen Arewa A Yau* evolved as a name for the proposed association.

Later on when this coincidence came to light, I was sent by the Zaria group to meet the Kaduna group and propose a merger of the two identical

organisations. The mission was successful, but it was after a lengthy debate that the Kaduna group agreed to drop the words *"A Yau"* after amalgamating the two bodies. Thus the *Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa,* as a Northern Nigerian cultural association, was simultaneously founded at Zaria and Kaduna in October, 1948. Later the Hausa name for the association gave way to an English name as suggested by Malam Sa'adu Zungur, viz: *'The Northern Peoples Congress'* (NPC).

On June, 26th, 1949 the first convention of the Northern Peoples' Congress was held at Kaduna to select protem officers, among other things. The following were selected:—

President	—	Dr. R.A.B. Dikko
Vice-President	—	Mr. M.D. Rafih
Secretary-General	—	Malam Yahaya Gusau
Treasurer-General	—	Malam Abubakar Imam

The cultural society grew from strength to strength until government was aware of its existence. At that material time a great majority of the active members and officials of the society were government civil servants, e.g. Dr. R.A.B. Dikko, Mr. M.D. Rafih, Malam Isa Koto, Malam Aliyu Mai-Bornu and Malam Haliru Binji. Since the Northern Peoples' Congress had not yet been declared a political party, government could only tactfully remind the civil servant adherents to the cultural association, of the provisions of the relevant Government General Orders, namely, G.O. 40B. The G.O. has since 1977, been amended to *Civil Service Rules* and G.O. 40B has been replaced by Civil Service Rules No.04212 which stipulates as follows:—

"Political Activities

"No Officer shall, without express permission of the Government whether on duty or leave of absence:—

a) hold any office, paid or unpaid, permanent or temporary in any political organisation.

b) offer himself or nominate anyone else as a candidate at any election of members of a Local Government Council, or a State or Federal Legislative Council.

c) indicate publicly his support of, or opposition to any party, candidate or policy.

d) engage in canvassing in support of political candidates. Nothing in this Rule shall be deemed to prevent an officer from voting at an election".

To side-track this provision of the Civil Service Rules however, we explained that the Northern Peoples' Congress was a cultural society, among the aims and objectives of which, were:—

a) To wage war against *Jahilci, Lalaci, Zalunci,* meaning to campaign against the three evils — Ignorance, Indolence and Injustice. (This was my suggestion as I had consistently throughout the forties waged a campaign in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* against them.)

b) To make public collections to build a Polytechnic. (This was Dr. Dikko's idea.)

But in actual fact the so-called cultural society was a potential political party in the making.

We have reason to believe that the Government was becoming more and more suspicious of the very popular organisation. It therefore started to make investigations. An Administrative Officer by name Captain Money who was doing a special duty as Public Relations Officer (P.R.O.) was sent to interview me. He met me at my office at the Gaskiya Corporation and asked whether our union was a political party in the offing. I said to him that for all I knew it was a cultural society, and our aim was to build a Polytechnic and eradicate the three evils — Ignorance, Indolence and Injustice. Captain Money who was an old friend of mine, looked at me straight in the eye and said, "Imam, you can befool some people some of the time, but you cannot befool all the people all the time."

Newspaper Editors all over the country wrote editorials against the founding of the Northern Peoples' Congress. I too, must dance to the tune of my employer. I wrote a lengthy editorial in the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* full of criticisms regarding the new party from a Northern Nigerian point of view.

The Northern Teachers' Association (NTA)

In the same year, 1948, that the Northern Peoples' Congress was born, a trade union for Northern teachers named *"The Northern Teachers' Association"* (NTA) was founded. The foundation members included, M. Isa Koto, Malam Yahaya Gusau, Malam Abdurrahman Mora, Malam Aliyu Mai-Bornu, Malam Nuhu Bayero, Malam Haliru Binji, Malam Aminu Kano, Shettima Ajiram and Malam Zakariya Dimka.

Shettima Ajiram was selected its first President General, Malam Yahaya Gusau the first Treasurer-General, Malam Aminu Kano the first Secretary-General and Malam Abdurrahman Mora, Assistant Secretary.

Northern Askianist Movement:

In 1951, in accordance with a publication in the *Daily Comet* of 22nd March, 1951, Malam Muhammad Mustafa Danbatta reported that a political party was formed at Kano by the admirers of the views and ideas of Malam Aminu Kano. It was called the '*Northern Askianist Movement'*. Its President was Malam Mudi Sipikin and Secretary, Malam Mustafa Danbatta. About 150 people were the new party's foundation members. Regarding the source of the name, history students will recall that before the European exploration of the interior of Africa which was followed by the colonial domination of all West African Countries including Nigeria, three powerful Kingdoms rose, declined and fell one after the other, in Western Sudan. They were Ghana, Mali and Songhay. "Askia" was the royal title adopted by Songhay rulers and the greatest of the Askias was Mohammed Abubakar Askia the Great who ascended the throne in 1492.

It was expected that the new political party would be as dynamic as the Askias, judging from its ambitions, aims and objectives which included:—

1. "To fight for fundamental human rights for the Black race the world over in America, South Africa, England, etc.
2. "To promote awareness among the Black race to enable it know its rights and entitlements.
3. "To eradicate injustice.
4. "To persuade the Colonial Office in London to stop sending out to Nigeria expatriates who would be agents of destruction and exploitation.
5. "To establish, before the end of 1951, a Polytechnic.
6. "To send a delegation of two men to Russia, France, America and also Britain with a view to wooing the sympathy and support of those countries for the party to achieve its lofty aims and objectives".

I really do not know why this seemingly promising political party should fail to live up to expectation. Nevertheless, like some of the earlier organisations, political, social and cultural it lived a short life and faded away, achieving very little, if at all.

The Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU)

It will be recalled that Malam Aminu Kano was a foundation member of the Northern Teachers Association (NTA) in 1948. He forsook it in 1953 to form a political party which he called the 'Northern Elements Progressive Union, (NEPU). Whether or not 'NEPU' and NEPA' were one and the same

party with only a slight alteration in the nomenclature, I cannot say for certain. But with the birth of the former the latter seemed to have disappeared from the scene. NEPU also presumably absorbed most of the membership of the Askianist party.

The three organisations that finally survived were:—

a) The Northern Tearchers' Association (NTA) with Shettima Ajiram as President.

b) The Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) with Alhaji Ahmadu Raßah the Sardauna of Sokoto as Leader.

c) The Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) with Malam Aminu Kano as Leader.

While (a) above was a Trade Union, (b) and (c) were political parties.

Their counterparts in Southern Nigeria were:—

1) The National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) with Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe as Leader.

2) Action Group (AG) with Chief Obafemi Awolowo as Leader.

3) Kamerun National Congress (KNC) with Foncha as President.

After the 1959 elections, Chief Awolowo, the Action Group Leader went to the Federal House of Representatives and Chief Akintola succeeded him as Premier of the Western Region. In 1962, there was an open clash between the supporters of Chief Awolowo and those of Chief Akintola. In the confrontation, Chief Akintola was supported by the NPC controlled federal government, and so his faction emerged victorious. Therefore, Chief Samuel Akintola deserted the Action Group and formed a new political party with his followers in the Action Group (AG) and the defunct Western Regional branch of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC). He named the new party the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). He then entered into alliance with the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC).

So that by the time partisan politics was introduced into Nigeria and was in full swing, there were two strong political parties in the North — The Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and the Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU).

CHAPTER TEN

ACTIVITIES IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

In 1949, when the Resident of Niger Province, Mr. (later Sir Bryan) Sharwood-Smith (popularly known as *Mai Wandon Karfe*) realised that an army of Northern educated young men was growing from strength to strength and becoming politically conscious, he thought of teaching the Emirs the necessity of giving respect to people, particularly Northerners, for what they are and not for what their parents were in order to help broaden their outlook. He invited me to tour Niger Province, presumably with that idea in view, that of enlightening our Northern Emirs and Chiefs to change their attitude towards their subjects.

I went to Abuja, Lapai, Agaie, Bida, Kontagora and Kagara. Wherever I went I met a big crowd of people including important and educated people in the Division waiting to meet me. Mind you, nobody briefed me of what to talk about. But I simply talked about what I wanted, and people asked me all sorts of questions. A young girl of about five years old in Abuja asked me: *"Edita, Wa ya fi kowa a duniya?"* meaning who is most important of all people in the world? I replied her, "Allah" meaning 'God' and she said "Mhm" meaning 'I concur'.

When I was on my way to Bida I came to Lapai and met my classmate and playmate M. Muhammadu Kobo, the Emir of Lapai. I put my mouth near his ears as if I was going to whisper something important to His Highness. I simply said to him, "Look at Muhammadu Kobo with ears like that of a hare!". He laughed and all the hangers on seeing the Emir laughing started to praise him in the Nupe language saying "Bagadoji! Bagadoji!" They did not know what I was whispering to him. "Bagadoji" is an abbreviation of *"Bagi gan Doji"* meaning in Hausa *"Maza sun fi Maza"* that is some personalities are more superior than others.

When I came to Baddegi I found Bida N.A. Councillors sent there to meet me, with a chain of N.A. Policemen who mounted a Guard of Honour for me. I am sure I was the first commoner to inspect a Guard of Honour in the North. When I finished, the head of police gave a salute (*Ya Sara*). I said in my mind *"Ka sara wa banza".!* ("You have saluted a nobody!").

The Police car led the way for seven miles, the distance between Baddegi and Bida town. I was taken straight to where I was to put up, the house of Malam Ibrahim Tako who later became Galadiman Bida and Federal Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence.

In the evening all District Heads in the Emirate, Alkalis and Village Heads gathered at the Emir's Palace to receive me. My host Malam Ibrahim Tako was to lead me from his house to the Palace. When we were driving in his car he showed me one of the old royal palaces and said, "This is called the House of Masaba. The mother of the present Emir (Etsu Nupe, Alhaji Muh. Ndayako) lives there".

I said to him, "Is she there now?" He said "Yes Sir!" I asked what present I could take to her and ask for her blessings. He replied "In our Nupe custom we prefer to give presents in even numbers. So if you give eight shillings that would do". I said, "No, that is too small". He said, "If you give more, the Emir will not be happy". I then decided to give her ten shillings. I did not know that the whole Bida was anxiously waiting to receive the Honourable Guest. The Emir being apprehensive as to whether something might have happened, sent another councillor to trace us. When they came to the old palace they were told that I was with the mother of the Emir being blessed.

The councillor went back and told the Emir. The news was then announced in the crowd. You cannot imagine how happy the Emir was with that news. He said to the crowd, "We have no more power. We have to be patient until after she releases him". When I arrived you cannot imagine the warmth with which I was received.

When I was proceeding to Kontagora from Bida the Emir asked Malam Ibrahim Tako to ask me tactfully and find out what present I would like to have. Malam Ibrahim Tako told me in plain words what the Emir asked him to find out from me. He said that he could not think of how he could ask me without me detecting his intention.

I told him to tell the Emir that I did not want anything but his blessings. The Emir was surprised. He took me right inside his house, introduced me to his wives and showed me even his bedroom. In the end he gave me a present of the gown he was wearing together with his bronze kettle for performing ablutions.

At Kontagora, the Sarkin Sudan Umaru Maidubu, said to me, "Imam you are now in your own home. Please always direct what sort of things you want to eat or to drink". I replied that I would prefer fresh milk to anything else. The Emir then ordered fresh milk be made available for the duration of my stay.

Do you know what I did? My best food was local porridge (*fura*) but I did not want the Emir to know that the "Bature drank *fura*". Luckily he sent in the milk always together with plenty of *"fura"*. Do you know what I did? I asked my Private Secretary, Malam Abu Musawa with whom I went, to stay in the waiting room (*Zaure*) and keep visitors there whilst I was mixing my *"fura"* by myself.

In the N.A. Prison I found only three prisoners cooking for the rest. I asked whether three prisoners could cook food for all the inmates of the prison. The warders said, "We have only sixteen prisoners in all. The prison becomes full only during the dry season when non-indigenes invade us".

From Kontagora we went to Kagara, my birth place. I put up in my father's house. The next day we drove back to Zaria. On the day I began the tour, the Resident who arranged it, Mr. Sharwood-Smith left Nigeria for England on leave. When he came back, I sent him the reports telling him all the various presents I got on the tour and how I reciprocated.

When Mr. Sharwood-Smith returned from leave in the same year, 1949 he was promoted Resident, Sokoto Province. He also invited me to tour Sokoto, I remember one funny instance when the Sultan of Sokoto (later Sir) Abubakar III invited me to his palace to have dinner with him. The soup for each of us was in an earthen pot with a lid on top. When the Sultan opened his pot of soup he found no soup inside, the cook forgot to fill his but filled mine and the other guests. The Sultan had to call for soup. We were all amused by the modesty and humour of His Royal Highness when he called for soup. We all burst into laughter.

While in Sokoto province, I took the opportunity to investigate three matters which had been food for thought for me for sometime.
These are:—

a) The Tijaniyya and their way of life.

b) National Insignia (Honours) and medals.

c) The publication of the books written by:—

   i) Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio, the Islamic Reformer in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria during the first decade of the Nineteenth century.

   ii) Muhammadu Bello, son of Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio and Sultan of Sokoto.

   iii) Malam Abdullahi, brother of Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio and first Emir of Gwandu.

I discussed the above mentioned matters with His Royal Highness the Sultan, and at my request, I received a letter from the Sultan's Palace, an English translation of which is as under:—

Sokoto.
2nd November, 1949.

Malam Abubakar Imam Kagara,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.

With the Authority of His Royal Highness, the Sultan, I am writing this letter to you in reply to yours concerning your enquiry about the following matters:—

(i) The Tijaniyya and their way of life.
(ii) National Insignia (Honour) and medals.
(iii) The books of Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio, Muhammadu Bello, Malam Abdullahi and Malam Gidado.

I am to inform you that you will get the answer for (1) above from the Waziri of Sokoto, (2) from the Resident Sokoto Province and (3) from the Sultan.

2. The Sultan has further directed me to inform you that he has been informed of your advice regarding the publication of the books written by Shehu Usman, Bello, Abdullahi and Malam Gidado. His Royal Highness has recalled that the desirability of publishing those books on which you feel so strongly, has been discussed with you since your arrival here. I am commanded to inform you that your advice has been accepted accordingly and that also to thank you for your reminder. Furthermore, I am to inform you the Sultan has the matter on hand and that before the books are assembled, he would like to have your views on the following:—

(i) That since you do not have an Arabic printing press, where do you intend to take the books to for printing?

(ii) That wherever the books are sent for publication, a Malam who is conversant with them should accompany them for purposes of proof reading.

(iii) That your advice is also requested to reach us, as to how this matter will be conducted.

3. The Sultan would also like to have your opinion on the above before the books are assembled. Finally, I am to thank you for making such personal efforts in this matter and for the tangible assistance you have rendered, which His Royal Highness has realised with appreciation. He prayed that God may grant us good health and perpetual peace, Amen. I, the undersigned, send you herewith my best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
MALAM SULE ISA,
Sultan's Secretary,
Sokoto.

When I was leaving Sokoto His Royal Highness the Sultan presented me with a fine horse, among other things. I sold the horse to the Emir of Zaria, Malam Ja'afaru for twenty pounds sterling.

Subsequently *Infakul Maisuri* by Sultan Bello was printed in Arabic and *Li'ya'u Hukkam* by Abdullahi plus several other books written by Sheikh Usman 'Dan Fodio were printed in Gaskiya.

Mr. Sharwood-Smith was again transferred to Kano as Resident Kano Province. He once more arranged a similar tour for me to that Province. When I was asked, as usual, to say where I wanted to put up in Kano, I replied that I would like to stay at the house of one 'Danja Kafinta at Fagge, since that was my usual place of lodging in Kano. The Emir of Kano Alhaji Abdullahi Bayero must have been disappointed that I did not ask the Ciroma of Kano, his eldest son to accommodate me.

One of the programmes drawn for me in Kano was to go to Dawakin Tofa with the Emir to witness the opening of a District Council there. I travelled in the same car with the Ciroma, Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi, who later became the Emir of Kano, immediately succeeding his father on the throne.

Among the presents the Emir, Alhaji Abdullahi Bayero gave me at the end of my tour, was one of his own costly flowing robes, a woollen *Abaya* (cape).

I adopted a policy to show Mr. Sharwood-Smith whatever present I got from the Emirs of the provinces I had toured; Niger, Sokoto and Kano. I also submitted a written report on each tour.

I WAS ELECTED A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

In 1950 the first semi-democratic election was introduced into Northern Nigeria. It was called the 'Electoral College'[1] System. It was an improvement on the provision in the Richards Constitution.

When interested politicians were busy campaigning to be elected, I did not make any move, because I had no intention to stand for election. A number of my friends, noticing my attitude, felt disappointed. At last, Malam Saidu Zango (later Iyan Zazzau) and Malam Ango Soba took courage and approached me. They said to me bluntly, "If you do not stand for election, take it from us Sir, that you have committed an offence against the entire people of Zaria Province and it will be regarded as a betrayal of trust and loss of confidence that the people of Zaria have reposed in you". The two young men had been so close to me since their school days that I could not rebuff them. I therefore gave them a green light that I would accept a nomination from the competent authority. Malams Saidu Zango and Ango Soba, having obtained my mandate must have canvassed for my nomination.

When the Native Authorities were authorised to nominate suitable candidates to stand for the election, the Katsina Native Authority directed Malam Isa Kaita, a classmate of mine at Katsina College, to write me and find out whether or not I would like my name be included among the Katsina Native Authority nominees. At the material time when Malam Isa Kaita wrote, the Zaria Native Authority had already decided to include my name among its nominees. I therefore gratefully declined the Katsina offer accordingly. That is how I succeeded in being elected.

At that time in the Northern Provinces, some members were chosen as members of the Regional Legislature as well as members of the Federal Legislature. I was among those who played that dual role.

At that stage of political development in Nigeria, no party in the Northern Provinces emerged or was recognised as a political party. The Northern Peoples' Congress (N.P.C.) was a cultural organisation, while the Northern Tea-

1. The Electoral College System was an indirect way of election conducted from the village and ward levels to the district and township levels until a single person emerged as winner.



Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardaunan Sokoto and Premier of the Northern Region together with Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Prime Minister of Nigeria. 177

chers' Association (N.T.A.) was a Trade Union. There was also the Northern Element's Progressive Association (N.E.P.A.) Therefore the Northern members as a whole, were participating not on party basis. In other words, they did not represent any party, unlike their Southern counterparts who were either members of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (N.C.N.C.) or of the Action Group (A.G.). Because of this, the views of the Northern members at the Federal Legislature were tantamount to those of Government messengers. This was indeed an embarrassing situation for the North and its members.

Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was a member from Bauchi for the Nigerian House of Representatives and so was Malam Ahmadu Raɓah from Sokoto. On our journey back from a meeting in Lagos the two gentlemen decided to join the N.P.C. A special meeting was arranged for 1st October, 1951 at which they will enroll as members. They visited me at my residence No. U.1. Sabon Layi, Tudun Wada, Zaria (now No. 19/20 Imam Road, Tudun Wada, Zaria) on that date. We sat down and started discussion on immediate problems facing the North. The venue of the party meeting was No. U6, Tudun Wada, Zaria, the first Headquarters of the NPC. When the house was full I led them there. They delivered speeches to the full house and then requested us to declare the cultural association as a Political Party forthwith. On that very day they asked to be enlisted among the foundation members of the new born political party, Northern Peoples' Congress. Thus Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Malam Ahmadu Raɓah became founding members of the Northern Peoples' Congress (N.P.C.) as a Political Party.

In compliance with the G.O., members who were Civil Servants like Dr. R.A,B. Dikko, Mr. M.D. Rafih, Malam Isa Koto, Malam Aliyu Mai-Borno and M. Haliru Binji withdrew from the Party.

LIFE AS AN HON. MEMBER

General jealousy of the position of the Hon. members soon became evident owing to the double remuneration they were priviledged to enjoy. Therefore, initially the parliamentarians did not experience a happy life. Civil Servants, owing to the exigencies of the service were not allowed to stand for election. Only Native Administration employees and private individuals participated. The Hon. members were entitled to receive their full salaries from their employers in addition to £60 (Sixty pounds sterling) per month as allowances for being members of the House. In some cases the allowances payable to Hon. members exceeded their salaries. To add insult to injury the Hon. members were also given vehicle loans to facilitate their movement to Kaduna or to both Kaduna and Lagos as appropriate. The envious situation developed to such an extent that hooligans made disturbing remarks like "*Kudinmu ne*", meaning "It is our money", at parliamentarians as they drove in their cars. Party slogans apart, this disgruntled set of people seized the opportunity to air their jealousy and give vent to their anger.

With regard to receiving double remuneration, I opted to accept only half of my Editor's salary when I realised that I was away from my desk very often either to Kaduna or Lagos to attend the function of the two Houses and the numerous committees and Boards. I asked the Gaskiya Corporation to pay me only fifty percent of my salary every month, and the request was acceded to. Really, I did not see the justification of my drawing a full salary from my employer, when by virtueof my being an Hon. Member, I had become a quasi-part-time member with the Corporation.

As regards the unhappy relationship between the Parliamentarians and the masses, I came to realise that the hostility mostly generated not from the illiterates but from the half-baked educated young men, who did not aspire for higher learning but seemed satisfied with their Middle School qualification. I decided in 1953, to contact that group of people in my constituency to find out whether any meaningful views could come out of them for the House. By such contact I thought that I would be killing two birds with one stone: I would be learning from the young men and also be teaching them indirectly. The result was however a rebuff though the body I contacted in writing was an organised one: the Federated Union of Native Administration Staff (F.U.N.A.S.), Zaria Branch. Unfortunately F.U.N.A.S. misconstrued the friendly gesture, and their itemised reply to my invitation which I have translated from Hausa to English, has clearly shown the union in true perspective. It reads as follows:-

"Alhaji Imam,

"I have been directed by the Federated Union of Native Administration Staff (F.U.N.A.S.), Zaria Branch, to refer to your recent letter concerning the assistance you are seeking from the Union to facilitate your deliberations at the Legislative House at Kaduna.

1. "Has it just dawned upon your intelligence that you should start consulting people pertaining to your assignment as a parliamentarian?
2. "What had prevented you from doing so before?
3. "Are you not being paid a fat salary and handsome allowance for that duty?
4. "You cannot make scapegoats of us.
5. "To my mind, your election as an Hon. member of the House was based on suitability, as such, we cannot teach you to do your work, while you get the financial reward.
6. "Without doubt, we in Zaria very much regret the type of members imposed on us. However, there is no deity worthy of being worshipped but Allah. i.e. We rest our case with God.

"However, I now wish to acquaint you with our following grievances:-

a) "The roads in Zaria City should be developed to measure 30 feet in width.

b) "The Kofar Tukur-Tukur road to the city market should be reconstructed with concrete culverts and a bridge over the Kamacha river.

c) "A road should be built from the prison yard to Unguwar Magajiya to measure 30 feet across.

d) "The road to the Barebari Praying Ground via Kofar Kona is a disgrace to motorists and those on bicycles or on horseback.

e) "Is it possible for the Government to assist in improving the building of the Zaria Central Mosque?

f) "The N.A. should make regulations regarding farms in Zaria City so that the boundary between any two farms shall not be less than 10 feet wide.

g) "The N.A. should enforce the rules and regulations of environmental sanitation regarding houses and farms in Zaria City. Areas round the houses and the farms must be kept clean and tidy.

h) "If any N.A. employee has been promoted to senior status and is therefore entitled to own a car, it should be the responsibility of the N.A. to build a road to his house and also to maintain the road.

i) "The Government should tar the road leading from the Emirs' Palace to Kofar Doka and from the Palace to the City market.

j) "The existing roads in Zaria City are too narrow, they should be widened to double of their present width.

k) "Workers or the labour force are bitterly complaining that they have no representatives in the two Houses to present their views and convey their grievances.

l) "There should be a motorable road from the Unguwar Taba to the City market.

m) "There should be a motorable road from Rimin Daza to the City market.

n) "The N.A. should review the salary scales of its employees, particularly the Heads of Departments so that no Head of Department who is conversant with English should receive not less than £360 (Three hundred and Sixty pounds sterling) a year and those with no smattering of English to receive not less than £300 (Three hundred pounds sterling) per annum.

o) "We want an extension of pipe-born water system in Zaria City. There are some wards which have no access to pipe-born water yet they are paying water rate. Also a more powerful engine or engines should be provided at the Water Works to ensure stability in the flow of water.

p) "We want electricity supply to be extended to Zaria City.

q) "The conditions of service of the N.A. Police ('Yan Doka) and Prison Warders should be improved. They should have houses with pipe-born water and electricity supplied in them, like what is obtained for the Nigerian Police. Their salary is a disgrace commensurate with their assignment. They have become so disgruntled that they have lost spontaneity in their duty. Debt, gambling, drinking and receiving bribes are common threads in their rank and file.

r) "I do not understand the role of the traffic police. Instead of preventing excessive speeding and overloading of vehicles, these offences are on the increase. Most of the N.A. Police ('Yan-Doka) and drivers do not appear to know their responsibilities. They should be re-orientated, so that ignorance and confusion are removed from them.

s) "Why is it that no N.A. employee has yet been promoted to senior status, though before the establishment of C.T.C. (Clerical Training Centre) most provinces were sending their staff to Zaria N.A. for training?

t) "Why is Zaria retrogressing in almost everything not withstanding that it is the centre of the Northern Region? Also any development proposal for Zaria seldom takes off. Cannot this undersirable situation be corrected?

u) "The N.A. should increase the bicycle basic allowance to 12/6 (Twelve shillings and six pence) a month in line with Government. Likewise the car basic allowance and mileage allowance for N.A. employees should be equated with those for Government Civil Servants.

"I trust that you will deliver the goods in their entirety but if you feel that you cannot, return my document to me. May Allah help us all. Amen".

(Sgd).
A. S. (FUNAS).

The taste of the pudding is in the eating, is a wise saying. I had tasted the life in both Houses — the Northern House of Assembly and the Nigerian House of Representatives and had gained a lot of valuable experiences and made many friends. I had also wittingly or unwittingly tested my popularity with the general public with the above disclosed result. It is now up to me to pass judgement on myself. It was abundantly clear to me without reasonable doubt that a vocal section of the electorate in my constituency had passed a vote of no confidence in me. They did not know how much I had sacrificed in the interest of the people of Zaria who voted me in. I therefore decided to resign my membership of the two Houses and revert to my professional authorship. So, I decided to go when the going was good. I was thus the first Hon. member

Letter of Appointment as Full Time Member of Public Service Commission

In reply please quote number and date

No. P.10662/88.

CIVIL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,

NORTHERN REGION,

KADUNA 18th Jan. 1955.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam,
Zaria.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has nominated you to be a member of the Public Service Commission for the Northern Region, and to ask you whether you would be prepared to serve in this capacity.

Membership of the Commission is not an appointment in the Public Service, and you would be required to leave the Government Service in order to assume it. Pending a decision as to whether your present appointment should be regarded as being pensionable under the Government or under the Katsina Native Authority, you would be regarded as being on leave without pay in the public interest, on the understanding that, if it is finally decided that your present appointment is pensionable under the Government, you would retire from the Government Service on attaining the age of 45. As a member you would be entitled to an allowance (which would, of course, be non-pensionable) at the rate of £1,200 per year, and in addition to such reimbursements in respect of transport and subsistence as may be approved from time to time for Members of Committees and Commissions. A copy of the Chief Secretary's Circular showing the current rates is attached for your information. You would be entitled to receive in full, while drawing the allowance, any pension for which you might be eligible in respect of your previous pensionable service under the Katsina Native Authority and under the Government. The appointment, not being a Government post, does not carry any entitlement to Government quarters. Should you at any time in practice occupy a Government quarter, rent would be charged at the rate of £10 per month.

The appointment would be effective from the date on which you notify your acceptance of it, and would be for a term of three years in the first instance, though it may be terminated at an earlier date by the giving of reasonable notice by either party.

I understand that you have discussed with the Chairman of the Commission, (Mr. P.D.Hibbert) the arrangements for your attendance at meetings and other matters affecting the appointment.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

N.R.Rogers

for Ag. Civil Secretary,
Northern Region.



Alhaji Abubakar Imam receiving a present from Mr. F. D. Hibbert, Chairman, P.S.C.

to resign from the House. Many of my friends thought that I had acted foolishly when I tendered my resignation, but every disappointment is a blessing in disguise. Soon after my resignation, the Northern Regional Government offered me a post as Superintendent, Northern Regional Literature Agency (NORLA) on a salary of £770 per annum with a car basic and children allowances, etc. My aggregate income in this capacity was more than what I earned as an Hon. member. I accepted the offer with gratitude.

In January, 1955, I was appointed part-time Commissioner of the Northern Nigeria Public Serverce Commission (P.S.C.). I attended the functions of the Public Service Commission concurrently with my substantive post as Superintendent (NORLA).

In 1957, I was promoted full time member of the Public Service Commission, and thus automatically relinquished my post as Superintendent, North Regional Literature Agency (NORLA).

When I was a part time member of the Public Service Commission I used to travel from Zaria to attend the meetings in Kaduna, until I attended one hundred full meetings without missing a single one. In recognition of this, the Chairman, P.S.C., Mr. F.D. Hibbert signified his appreciation by presenting me with a certificate of merit. My membership of the Regional Public Service Commission was the beginning of further promotions to come.

At the Public Service Commission, Mr. Randall E. Ellison succeeded Mr. F. D. Hibbert as Chairman and continued in that capacity until after the attainment of our independence in October, 1960.

About two years to the Nigerian Independence that is, in 1958 many unfortunate and embarrassing utterances featured in the Northern House of Assembly with regard to the stay or not of expatriate officers in the Northern Service. By then, self Government was in sight in the North to precede the forthcoming independence. Hon. members of the House embarked in asking questions calculated to embarrass expatriate officers. They tacitly criticised the speed at which Northernisation policy was being implemented. The political atmosphere was charged with a desire for the expatriates serving in the North to pack up and go, except doctors, engineers and similar technical professionals. The hardest hit were administrative officers. Such was the unsavoury situation in the North when in 1960, my Chairman Mr. Randall E. Ellison was awarded the insignia of C.M.G. in appreciation of his meritorious services.

During the Budget session of that year, the Head of the Public Service Commission that is, the Chairman, P.S.C. was invited to the House of Assembly in session and priviledged to address the House. That was a very high honour for one who had played a significant role in the development of the region. The invitation to the House was after Mr. Ellison had been decorated with the Honour of C.M.G. The House was full and the Chairman Public Service Commission made an animated speech which he rounded up with a great sense of humour. Among other things, Mr. Randall E. Ellison expressed profound gratitude to the Northern Regional Government for the great honour

done him with regard to the award of C.M.G. and the unique invitation to address the House in session. He then asked to be told the precise meaning of C.M.G., and when no answer came from the floor of the House he stunned the House with the following concluding words of his address:

"I think "C" means Chairman, "M" means Must and "G" means Go: "Chairman Must Go". This wonderful sense of humour was received with a standing ovation. The House was mad with a prolonged applause it had never before experienced in its history. I was at the House with my Chairman when he delivered that memorable speech, but I was far from being amused. On the contrary, I read the closing remarks of Mr. Ellison's address between the lines and I became full of guilty conscience. I thought that some of the expatriate spectators in the House would think that the whole episode was a clever design by me to embarrass Mr. Ellison, so as to quicken my succession of him in the office. It would be difficult for me to repudiate such an allegation or exonerate myself from blame under the circumstances. I am a Northern Nigerian second in command to the Chairman P.S.C. and the Northernisation Policy was being vigorously pursued. In the event of such an allegation, I would have no alternative but to invoke Allah and implore the Hon. members of the House who moved the motion to invite the Chairman P.S.C. to address the House of Assembly and all the other Hon. members of the House to bear me out that I had played no part whatsoever to inconvenience Mr. Randall E. Ellison. Neither did I canvass for his being awarded C.M.G. nor recommend that he should be invited, with an ulterior motive to address the House. I was apprehensive for sometime but after all, I might have been unduly afraid of my own shadow.

I continued to work with Mr. Ellison at P.S.C. as a full-time member after that, giving him my full co-operation and respect, until he voluntarily decided to retire from the North Regional Government Service the following year. Following the retirement of Mr. Randall E. Ellison, I was promoted Chairman P.S.C. and became the first indigene in the North to occupy the seat on 11th February, 1961. My team included the following seasoned personalities: Alhaji Abdullahi Danburan Jada from Adamawa (a former Regional Minister of Animal and Forest Resources) was a full-time member. The following part-time Commissioners were also appointed: Alhaji Bello Dan Barwa, Makaman Kano (a former Northern Minister), Mr. O. Olajide, a highly respected Yoruba from Lagos (a retired Civil Servant of Northern Nigerian Regional Government) and Alhaji Abdu Gusau, the Garkuwa of Sokoto (an Engineer from Sokoto Native Authority).

During the seven years of my Chairmanship of P.S.C. all our decisions were unanimous except on two occassions when we had a division. But on the whole, I very much enjoyed the co-operation and confidence of my colleagues — the Commissioners. The Hon. Premier of the Northern Region under whose port-folio Public Service Commission was, completely insulated the Commission from the interference of politicians, in compliance with the relevant pro-

Letter from Director of Education

Telegrams:
EDUCATION

Telephone:
400 (P.B.X.)

No. E.14/275/43
The Ministry of Education,
Kaduna,
Northern Nigeria

30 August 1957

Alhaji Abubakar Imam, O.B.E.,
c/o The Public Service Commission,
Northern Region, Kaduna.

Dear Alhaji Abubakar,

Thank you for your letter dated 19th August about your retirement and for what you say in your paragraph 2. I for my part should like, on the occasion of your retirement, to say first how sorry we all are that you have decided to retire and secondly to thank you for all you have done for Education since you first entered the service of the Katsina N.A. as a teacher in, I believe, 1932.

Your actual period of service in this Government Department has been very brief. Nevertheless almost every boy and girl who has passed through a Hausa speaking primary school during the past 20 years or more has had his life brightened and enriched by the existence of the numerous books in Hausa of which you have been the author. The "Magana Jari Ce" series will always remain as your memorial in the schools of this Region.

During your long period of service under the Literature Bureau you became widely known in the Hausa-speaking areas of West Africa as the Editor of "Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo" and much of the success of that enduring publication during its early days was due to the wise editorial guidance which it had from you. The North is particularly indebted to you for the way in which you initiated campaigns against the three chief enemies of the Region, namely JAHILCI, LALACI and ZALUNCI. Much of the stirring of the public conscience that has become apparent during recent years stems from the vigorous lead which you gave during the early years of the newspaper. It was true service in the cause of Education of a very high order.

It is gratifying to know that as a member of the P.S.C. you will still be giving valuable service to the Northern Region, and since so many matters of educational concern come before the commission you will still be in close touch with our affairs. I thank you too for the valuable services you have rendered on numerous Advisory Boards and special enquiries and hope that your services as an Adviser on these boards, etc. will still be available.

With all good wishes from the Education Department for a long and prosperous "Retirement".

Yours sincerely,
P.E. Ellis

vision of the Constitution. We were thus able to discharge the onerous duties of the Commission without fear or favour. Finally, the highlight of the tenure of my office was the absolute confidence the Premier Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto reposed in me and the Commission.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
KADUNA,
NORTHERN REGION,
NIGERIA.

11th February, 1961.

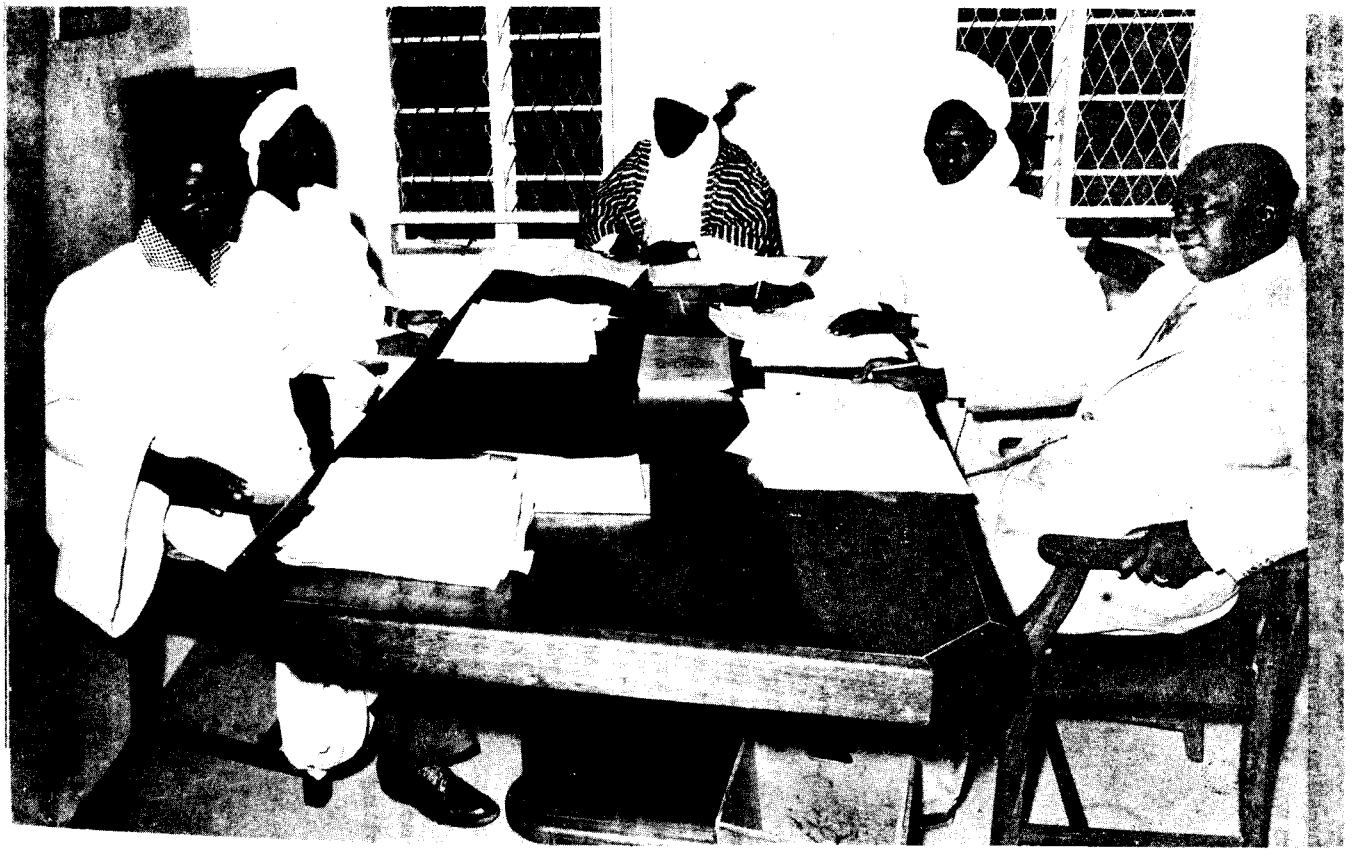
My dear Alhaji Abubakar

Having signed formal approval to the Premier's recommendation that you shall be appointed Chairman of the Public Service Commission, in succession to Mr. Ellison, I am writing to offer you my very warm congratulations. I am sure that you will bring to this appointment not only the valuable experience of your previous duties with the Commission, but also the high principles and sense of service which have marked the work of the Commission since its establishment.

I send you my sincere good wishes in what will be sometimes a difficult but always, I believe, a rewarding assignment.

Yours very sincerely,

Alhaji Abubakar Imam, O.B.E.,
Public Service Commission,
Kaduna.



Alhaji Abubakar Imam as Chairman of P.S.C. in 1961. Sitting from left are Alhaji Sule Katagum, Alhaji Abdullahi Dan Buram Jada, Alhaji Bello Kano and Mr. O. Olajide.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND PILGRIMAGE PROBLEMS

Nurul Huda Primary School:

In 1948 a trader who was then living in the South, Alhaji Ġambo Sawaba, came to see me in my position as Editor, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. He complimented me on my numerous articles and editorials which gave guidance to the people. He stated that the Hausa communities living in various places in the south lacked good schools to send their children. They had asked him to come to me to request that I establish a school for their children where both Islamic and secular subjects would be taught.

This discussion was conducted in the house of that famous Mauritanian Arab, Alhaji Baba Ahmed, at Tudun Wada, Zaria. I was singled out because at that time my name had spread far and wide by virtue of my being Editor. I was nearly brought to tears by this demand which I felt would be a heavy task on any individual. I turned to Alhaji Baba and sought his advice. He advised that we should contact Alhaji Shafi'i, son of Malam Saidu Bida, for assistance to establish the school. Alhaji Shafi'i was a kind hearted and generous trader also living at Tudun Wada, Zaria. Alhaji Baba assured me of his own support and active co-operation to get the school started. I met Alhaji Shafi'i that afternoon and discussed the matter with him. He readily agreed to provide whatever financial assistance was required and said he had about seven children and wards who could be enrolled in the school immediately. With my own children and those of Alhaji Baba Ahmed the nucleus of a school was started.

Within a short period about twenty children were registered for the school. I then approached a friend of mine, Alhaji Haliru Binji, who had, early in 1949, been transferred to Zaria as an Arabic Teacher of Barewa College, to draw up a syllabus and scheme of work for the school. He willingly undertook the task and recommended that we should engage the services of a keen student he knew from Kakaki, Zaria City, named M. Shuaibu Usman.[1] After the initial interview he was engaged as a teacher on a salary of £3 a month. The first class was opened in the sitting room of my house. We conducted the school in this way with full co-operation and complete understanding of all the parents and teachers.

Soon the school expanded, and required two classrooms rather than one. I gave another room upstairs in the house for the second class. Subsequently the school moved to another house which I had started to build but converted into an orchard. There more rooms were built to serve as classrooms and dormitories for children who were then coming from as far away as Sierra-Leone.

1. Alhaji Shu'aibu Usman now serves as Upper Area Court Judge in Kaduna State.

The three friends, Alhaji Shafi'i, Malam Haliru Binji and myself later decided to build a proper school for the children. Alhaji Shafi'i purchased two plots of land on which the school classrooms were built. I purchased three plots and built a reception class on one, a kitchen and dining room on another and the third became the dormitory. From 10th October, 1950 which corresponds to 1st Muharram 1370 A.H., the school began to be called Islamiyya School and moved to its new premises.

During that period I wrote the three volume *Tarihin Annabi* (History of the Prophet) and completed a fourth volume on the Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-Khulafa'ar-Rashidun*) called *Tarihin Islam*. M. Haliru Binji wrote *Ibada Da Hukunci* books 1 and 2, *Littafin Addini* Books 1 and 2 as well as *Mu Koyi Larabci*. M. Naibi Suleiman Wali,[1] then working at NORLA, Zaria, also contributed with *Mu Koyi Ajami* and *Tauhidi A Saukake*. The School Headmaster, M. Shuaibu Usman himself wrote *Addini A Saukake* and *Mu Kara Kyautata Addininmu*. Alhaji Baba Ahmed wrote *Almajiri da Malami, Masu Hikima Sun Ce* and *Matambayi Ba Ya Bata*.

The school became a model for many others that were established all over the Northern Provinces. When the Government realised the contribution the school was making towards education they decided to extend educational grants to the school. The Emir of Zaria, Alhaji Muhammadu Aminu[2] allocated a large piece of land to the school in 1960 which it now occupies. The school was then given the name Nurul-Huda Primary School after my return from a visit to Pakistan in 1961. The supervision of the buildings was done free of charge by Alhaji Muhammadu Wule.

Apart from Alhaji Shafi'i, many other parents made donations to the school in cash and kind. At one parents' meeting Alhaji Muhammadu Makarfi, then working at Veterinary Department, Zaria made a very big donation of £20 (Twenty Pounds sterling).

In 1962 when the Local Education Authorities came into existence the school was taken over by Zaria Local Education Authority. It retains the name Nurul Huda to this day.

During the early period of the school's establishment boarders were charged £2 per month per child. However after the take over of the school boarding requirements declined as by then Islamiyya schools were springing up in many places all over the country and beyond.

Some of the first set of pupils included Tukur Imam, who rose to become a Deputy Registrar at College of Advanced Studies, Zaria, Ahmadu S. Musa Ag. Registrar Sharia Court of Appeal, Abuja, Mustafa Muhtar, a doctor in private practice in Kano and Yusuf Usman from Katsina, who later studied

1. Naibi S. Wali: The Deputy Grand Qadi (Judge) of the Sharia Court of Appeal, Kano. His other publications include *Tarbiyya Ga mutum, Duniya Ina Za Ki Da Mu?* and *Mu Koma Kan Hanya*.
2. Aminu, Sarkin Zazzau (1959 – 1975). First Class Emir. Born 1908. Educated at Zaria Middle School 1926 - 1931. Sanitary Inspector 1931. Appointed Sarkin Sabon Gari and President of Mixed Court, 1938. Became District Head of Sabon Gari with title Iyan Zazzau in 1944. Had visited United Kingdom, United States of America and Saudi Arabia. He Died in Feb. 1975.

in Sudan and became an Ambassador. Others are Muhammad Abubakar, Senior Editor, Northern Nigerian Publishing Company Limited, Zaria, Abdu Namalama, a businessman in Zaria, Safiyanu Babale and Umaru Yusufu, the last two of whom became teachers in the school. Umaru Yusufu is in fact now serving as an Arabic and Islamic Studies teacher for Katsina State Government while Safiyanu Babale is a businessman. M. Salihu Kontagora joined the school at the early stage as a teacher and was Headmaster when the school was taken over by Zaria Local Education Authority.

From among the earlier sets of enrolments we have Dr. Muh. Saifuddin Mora, a director of Zaria Clinic, Alhaji Halifa Baba Ahmed, a director of Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, Lagos, Alhaji Abubakar Abdulkadir, former Managing Director, Nigerian Industrial Development Bank and Kamaruddin Imam, Editor with Huda Huda Publishing Company Limited, Zaria. We have also got some leading businessmen like Alhaji Tijjani Musa in Jos, Alhaji Dada Ali Muhtar in Kano and Idris and Zainu Ali both in Zaria.

As an assessment it is clear that Nurul-Huda was a pioneer and a model in the field of education in the North. Many people especially businessmen who tended to disregard formal western style schooling readily accepted the idea and sponsored schools all over the country. Government itself recognised the vital need for Islamic education and supported such schools with grants-in-aid. Even when they were fully taken over subjects taught included a wide range in the Islamic disciplines. We now have Islamic Studies courses at University level and the hope for the future will be to establish privately funded wholly Islamic Universities.

PILGRIMAGE PROBLEMS

During the Budget Session of the House of Representatives in Lagos, early in 1953, I tabled a Motion for the establishment of a 'Nigeria Office' in Jeddah to cater for the welfare of Nigerian pilgrims going to Saudi Arabia every year. The Motion was adopted with some minor amendments. I therefore planned to undertake the pilgrimage in that year and report back in more detail what required to be done.

I received the following letter from Mr. Bruce Greatbatch then Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Minister for Local Government and Community Development, Northern Region. The Minister in charge was then M. Ahmadu Rabah, Sardaunan Sokoto.

No. 11783/277.
Office of
The Minister for Local Government and Community Development,
Northern Region.
KADUNA, 23rd June, 1953.

Dear M. Abubakar,

The Chief Secretary to the Government has recently been in correspondence with the British Embassy at Jeddah regarding a proposal made by Alhaji Haruna dan Kassim, of Kano to establish a hostel for Nigerian pilgrims at Jeddah. The Embassy has suggested that there is little scope for such a hostel at Jeddah, where there is already organised a special 'pilgrim town' which provides accommodation and food at the lowest prices possible. In Mecca, however, there are similar arrangements and we are approaching Alhaji Haruna to enquire whether he would consider altering the site of his proposed hostel to Mecca.

It seems, however, that this might overlap with the provisions of the Motion adopted at the recent meeting of the House of Representatives, for the establishment of a 'Nigeria House' in Mecca for the welfare of Nigerian Pilgrims. The Chief Secretary to the Government has asked us to find out in more detail exactly what you, as mover of this motion, and its supporters had in mind. It appears from the letter which has been received from the British Embassy in Jeddah that the Saudi Arabian Government would not be likely to approve of the establishment of anything in the nature of a 'Nigeria House' if it were sponsored by the Nigerian Government, but would probably have no objection to such a project if it were privately sponsored by Moslems.

Could you therefore let me know what are your ideas on the subject, and we will consider what are the most promising ways in which the Government could help, without incurring the opposition of the Saudi Arabian Government.

Hoping you are well, with all best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd).
(B. GREATBATCH).

I replied Mr. B. Greatbatch on 1st July, 1953 indicating my intention to perform the Hajj. I also wrote on the same day to the Sardauna of Sokoto requesting permission to be absent from the duties of the House to which I received a favourable reply. The letters are shown below:

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
1st July, 1953.

Mr. B. Greatbatch Esq.,
Office of the Minister for
Local Government & Community
Development, Northern Region,
Kaduna.

Dear Mr. Greatbatch,

Thank you for your letter No. 11783/277 of the 23rd June. Indeed the wording of the motion asked for a 'Nigeria House', but in my speech to introduce it I explained my ignorance in thinking that it conveyed the same meaning as 'Nigeria Office'. What I really meant was not a House for the thousands of Nigerians that go to Mecca, but a Nigeria Office in Mecca, such as we have the Nigeria Office in London. It was this new wording, Nigeria Office, which the House supported. Its function, I repeat, would be the same, or as nearly the same as possible, as that of the Nigeria Office in London.

I do not know if any explanation by me now can give a more vivid picture of my intention than the speech I made to introduce the Motion. I therefore ask you please to refer to the speech. I tried as far as possible to see if I can trace a copy anywhere in my cupboard but I could not. But it can easily be traced by the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Furthermore, it may interest you to hear that I am proposing to go to Mecca this month or early next month for pilgrimage. I am writing a separate letter to the Minister for Local Government and Community Development asking for permission. If the Nigerian Government think it advisable to give me an introductory letter to the British Embassy in Jeddah I will be willing to discuss the question there. In fact I am ready, when I go, to be at the disposal of the Nigerian Government for anything, and, on my return I will submit a report to the Government.

Yours sincerely,
A. Imam,
MEMBER HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

cc:
The Minister for Local Government
and Community Development,
Northern Region,
Kaduna.

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.

1st July, 1953.

The Minister for Local Government and
Community Development,
Northern Region,
Kaduna.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to inform you that I am proposing to go to Mecca on a pilgrimage this year and to ask, through you, if the Government will kindly allow me to absent myself from the next sitting of the House of Assembly for the purpose.

I ought to have asked for the permission earlier, but the reason why I did not do so was because I was waiting to hear who would be the Northern Regional Representatives to the coming London Talks.

The Hajj this year will fall round about the 20th of August so the proposed journey will not interfere with the next House of Representatives Meeting as well.

Ina fata Allah ya sa a yarda mani. (I pray to be granted permission)

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

A. IMAM
MEMBER HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

No. 179.
Kaduna.
4th July, 1953.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 1st of July, and to say that the Government have no objection to your proceeding to Mecca on pilgrimage during the period mentioned.

I am to ask that you should in due course notify me of your return to Nigeria.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,

(Signed.)
CLERK OF REGIONAL LEGISLATURE.

I completed my arrangements for the pilgrimage and paid for the return air ticket to Jeddah to the Nigerian Pilgrim Society Limited in Kano. The fare was £135:6s. (One hundred and thirty five pounds six shillings).

We left Kano by air on 27th July, 1953 arriving Jeddah in the evening of 28th, after a one day stopover at Khartoum, Sudan.

Before my departure, I had discussed the matter of 'Nigeria House' or 'Office' in Saudi Arabia with Mr. B. Greatbatch and promised to write a full report on my return. He followed this with a letter on 31st August, 1953 to serve as reminder to me when I came back.

No. 11783/322.
The Minister for Local
Government & Community
Development,
Northern Region,
Kaduna.
31st August, 1953.

Dear Malam Abubakar,

With reference to our discussion on the question of a 'Nigeria House' for Nigerian pilgrims before your departure for Mecca, I should be very glad if you could find time to telephone me and discuss the matter as soon as possible after your return. We have had a further letter on the subject from Lagos, and I should be most interested to hear your views in the light of your own experienees on the pilgrimage.

Yours sincerely,

Sgd.
(B. GREATBATCH).

My comprehensive report on the pilgrimage follows:

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
25th September, 1953.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Minister for Local Government and
Community Development, Northern Region,
Kaduna.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter No.11783/83 of the 31st August, 1953, which came after I had left for Mecca, I write now to inform you that I have arrived back safely.

Pilgrimage is not only a religious duty but an education in itself. I have made lots of notes hoping to write in the very near future another book similar to *Tafiya Mabudin Ilmi,* for the Gaskiya Corporation.

As regards my motion on the question of a Nigeria House for the welfare of Nigerian Pilgrims, I now can confirm with authority that an organisation of whatever form in Saudi Arabia, for the welfare of Nigerian pilgrims is most desirable.

In addition to what I have seen or suffered I have made lots of investigations on this problem. Though unofficially, I visited the British Embassy three times for discussion. I found the Consular most untiring, co-operative and helpful. Through such interviews, I realised that even the Embassy will greatly welcome any attention that the Nigerian Government can give to the many hundreds of Nigerians who pour to Saudi Arabia yearly for pilgrimage, even for the sake of retaining the good name of Nigeria abroad.

People who go to Mecca from Nigeria do so either by air or by road. Those going by road trace the beginning of their sufferings from Borno, where everything happens, behind-the-door, before pilgrims could get passports or before they could get innoculation.

If all that is overcome, then creeps up another great problem of changing money from this currency to that. One who has never experienced this can hardly imagine the tremendous amount of loss that pilgrims incur in the course of such a transaction. Much of that loss, I found out, was through the ignorance of pilgrims. Some of them think that before they cross Nigeria for French Territory they first of all must change their money into French currency. And before they cross the French Territory over to Anglo Egyptian Sudan they have to change all to the Egyptian currency. And before they cross over from

the Sudan to Saudi Arabia, the same thing must happen again. All that change is given to you at a very reduced rate by people who make their living on that alone. In fact before all that is gone through, if a pilgrim leaves his home town with say one hundred pounds, he at last finds himself in possession of a sum not more than seventy pounds to spend in Saudi Arabia. And when he leaves for home he starts the process again from the other end with what remains in his hand. We who went by air were more lucky, as we were all warned at Kano Airport not to cash our cheques in the Jeddah market but in banks. We were warned that on reaching Jeddah we would be met by people with persuasive tongues who would try to drag us to the market to cash our cheques there instead of the bank.

It so happened that we met swarms of them. They said if you gave your cheque of say one hundred pounds of British currency to the market, they would get a hundred and ten Egyptian currency for you — a profit of ten currencies. Many people were so foolish to allow themselves to be caught by that simple trap. Yes you will of course get a hundred and ten Egyptian pounds but what is the value of the said Egyptian currency in Saudi Arabia? It was when such people came to use the notes that they began to lament the tremendous loss their greed, or to be milder, ignorance brought to them.

Of all these the most striking disappointment that a Nigerian pilgrim meets on reaching Jeddah is the absence of a genuine leader. A leader that one will have confidence in because he knows better and his honesty is not questionable.

The role that such a leader will play in Saudi Arabia cannot be exaggerated. At present the absence of one goes a long way to spoil the good name of the black race, or *Takari* as they are called in Saudi Arabia. I have gathered from reliable sources a confidential report on the activities of my people, the *Takari.* In a nut-shell this is what the report embodies: "*Takari* are so miserable and so uncultured, displaying such a savage conduct that few people can really like them".

I will give one instance as an example. On our arrival, we found that people especially those coming by air had to pay some seventy two riyals as *mudawif fees.* All pilgrims from all parts of the world had been paying that for years. But the condition was still that the poor or *Musakin* as they are called in Arabic are exempted from paying it. In the past all *Takari* were considered *musakin* judging by the way they used to treck to Mecca, stopping at odd places to work as labourers so as to get more provision for onward march.

During these years things have changed. Hundreds of *Takari* now go either by road (vehicles) or even by air. When they start to go back they buy lots of expensive things. This made the Saudi Arabian Government to change its policy. It said that it had now been established that not all *Takari* were poor, then every *Tukururu* who came by air was not a *miskin* and so must pay the fee as do all other pilgrims of the world. Not only those going by air but also those going by road must pay unless it can be proved clearly that a man is

really poor and unable to pay anything if not all. The problem now remains how to know and mark people who are really poor and unable to pay, and people that can pay all or part of that due. This is indeed difficult. I will tell you a disappointing experience I encountered. A man, whose name I withhold, insisted that he was poor and unable to pay this *mudawif* fee. He made such a tremendous amount of noise in Jeddah that a Representative of the British Embassy called me on one side and asked if I could confirm that the man was really poor. And if I did they would take my words to write and ask the Government to exempt him from paying. I said I could not as we did not come in the same group nor from the same province. I did not know what happened to him afterwards. But the next time I met him was when he was talking of going to Egypt on an educational tour, before proceeding back to Nigeria. I was extremely surprised and disappointed when I heard that from him. As I could not keep quiet I asked him, "What on earth are you talking about? How could you possibly go to Egypt for sight seeing when only the other day you were explaining that you are extremely poor and unable to pay *mudawif* fees?" He smiled and replied, "Don't mind them". Now if our people are to behave like that how can the Saudi Arabian Government know who is poor among us and who is rich?

Now going back to the question of a leader, what happened during this Hajj season on this question of *Mudawif* fee is enough to indicate the necessity of having one. When our people went, they displayed a lot of disgraceful behaviour in Saudi Arabia about this money. People simply went about calling out *zalunci, zalunci, zalunci* (extortion!). Now if there is a leader such a disgraceful act would not have happened, as it will be his duty to represent the mob and go to the *Hukuma* (Authorities) to find out the actual position. It may surprise you to hear that there was a time when our people thought of going in a mob to the house of His Royal Highness, Amir Faisal and shout out for help, against this *mudawif fee.* Luckily I was there. Some who thought I would not pay, were disappointed to find me going forward to pay and get my receipt. I told them that if I did not pay I could not count myself a victim, to justify making such a complaint.

I was arranging to go to the British Embassy with the receipt to find out the meaning of this money about which we knew nothing prior to departure from here, when one man called M. Sanda na Ibrahim Musa Gashash, whom the Pilgrims Society sent to look after the welfare of pilgrims in Mecca came to me. He could have been very helpful if he could speak either Arabic or English. Nevertheless he became to me a great ally. Five of us Alhaji Sanda, Alhaji Wakilin Misau, Alhaji Muhammadu, Alhaji Usman Manin Gwarje, the Senior Dispensary Attendant at Funtua and myself kept ourselves away from the rest of the mob, hired a car for one pound an hour and made for the British Embassy, persuading the mob to wait for us. We went and met the Consul who was very pleased to meet us especially when I showed him the correspondence that went between me and the Nigerian Government on the

question of my motion for the welfare of Nigerian Pilgrims and the establishment of a Nigerian House in Mecca. Alhaji Sanda also showed him the letter of introduction which he brought from the Resident Kano Province, indicating that he was the representative of the Nigerian Pilgrims Society.

After the normal conversation had finished, we laid before him the question of this *mudawif* fees which we had no previous knowledge of. He explained to us all about it as outlined above. He even went to the extent of calling a Representative of the Embassy asking him to go to Abu Zaid in the name of the Embassy and ask him to explain to us what services we are to expect from our *Mudawif,* for whom this money is collected. We went and got full explanation to our satisfaction. Abu Zaid was the transport Agent of pilgrims who is officially empowered to collect these dues. The interview with Abu Zaid ended in such a cordial manner that Abu Zaid asked me to bring ten other *Takari* to his house that day for lunch. The five of us then went round explaining to the rest the position of that money. But some did not believe us. I do not blame them. As they insisted that either the Nigerian Government or the Saudi Arabian Government must shoulder this blame of not having informed pilgrims of this fee before they left.

This was nothing compared with a more disgraceful display of uncultured behaviour which our people, some of the group that went by road, showed on the eve of our departure. The people wanted their passports back after visa, but Abu Zaid's Clerk could not finish all the hundreds of them in the possible time that the people wanted them. That quarrel went so far and the mob was out of control. Abu Zaid himself had to ask the protection of police after his clothes were all torn to pieces.

The ring leaders were arrested and sent to police charge office. After a time that day they were pardoned and released. (All *Takari* take the advantage of the fact that His Majesty the King of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, did not want anybody to touch his beloved guests the *Takari,* whose love of the Prophet was so great that they trecked from distant lands solely to answer the call, and visit the grave of the Prophet of Allah. According to people, His Majesty always recalls the sufferings of the *Takari* going to Mecca in the days of old, when they were killed or taken into slavery). If fighting had not been prohibited during Hajj season who can say how many such instances will happen in one season? Imagine people coming from different parts of a country like Nigeria, meeting in an airport, and all flying to a country of different nationality. The guests cannot speak the language of the hosts and the hosts cannot speak the languages of the guests. And there was no leader to be the spokesman. How do you imagine such a visit?

Every instruction given to the *Takari,* however legitimate, is thought of as a trick to cheat them. Very often, one who understands both languages (Arabic and Hausa) hears people quarrelling for no reason. An Arab trying to explain something in Arabic to a *Tukururu* and the *Tukururu* questioning and answering him in Hausa, in the tone of somebody thinking of himself to

be a wise *Dan Birni* (clever person) who could not be cheated. Or you hear a Hausa man explaining something in Hausa to an Arab who guesses what is being said and answers back in Arabic. By so doing the result is very funny. For you would hear each one of them talking his own nonsense. How can there be friendship or confidence in an atmosphere such as that?

Some people may perhaps argue that he who wants to help his own people need not be officially appointed by others to do so. Yes, that is true to a certain extent. But however much you want to help your people, you can't have the feeling of being a shepherd to them unless you are officially appointed to help them. Furthermore such an official recognition will win for you the confidence of the people.

There was many a time when M. Usman Manin Gwarje and myself, wanted to persuade some patients to follow us up to the Hospital. We found many that were so ill-advised by the others that they preferred to remain helpless in the house. In fact there was one Kano man whom we tried to send to the hospital but he was discouraged by others. Consequently, when the time for homewards journey came, nobody remembered him. There in Mecca he was left, in the hands of whom no one can say. If there was a leader such a thing would not have happened. We, who remained behind, heard about this poor man at the last minute. So M. Mani went and told one Lawal Dogo to take the man to the hospital, in the name of Allah. Whether he did or not we cannot now say.

My motion that was unanimously passed in the House of Representatives last meeting was asking for the possibility of establishing a Nigeria House in Mecca for the welfare of Nigerian Pilgrims. I am pleased that the Government of Nigeria agreed in principle to do everything possible that will go for the welfare of Nigerian Pilgrims. But having now gone, seen, heard, felt and talked over matters unofficially with some high ranking officials of Saudi Arabia I have come to the conclusion that the help that Nigerian pilgrims need at once from the Government of Nigeria at this stage, at any rate, is not a Nigeria House in Mecca. To sum up, what I have to suggest is the following:

1. **Pilgrims Commissioner:** This should be an officially appointed person to accompany Nigerian Pilgrims yearly to Mecca. Nearly all the Muslim countries of the world, I was officially told, have such a Commissioner. His qualification should be, among other things, the ability to speak Arabic. If he can speak English as well so much the better. He must also be a man of strong personality, integrity and honesty. He must also be a man full of life and determination, one who can make his way through odds and ends to get to the bottom of things that will be of help to his people and at the same time retaining the good reputation of Nigerians.

   Pilgrims Commissionership should not in any case be a full time job. No, it is a three months' job for the first year, when the Commissioner should be expected to be there two months before the Arafat. As this

will give him time to get known to the officials, the Institutions, the rules, the general public, including His Royal Highness Amir Faisal of Jeddah and in fact to all that the British Consul will think necessary. The duty that the Pilgrims Commissioner should be expected to perform can all be collated from what has been said above.

2. **Dispensary Attendant:** The Pilgrims Commissioner should be accompanied by a Dispensary Attendant, who should be supplied with a box full of various medicines. The drugs should be for the treatment of the following:—

    a) malaria
    b) desentry
    c) vomitting
    d) diarrhoea,
    e) catarrh,
    f) cough, pile and a diatetical chart.

    All major cases should be transferred to the proper hospital. It will not be difficult to hire a big hall or *tafarfara* for the Dispensary. The cost of it will not exceed thirty pounds sterling for three months. I have seen and officially learnt that many Muslim countries keep not only a dispensary but a proper hospital in Mecca and medicines for their people. I visited the Pakistan hospital at Madina and interviewed the Doctor, a very nice man.

3. **Accommodation:** The places where pilgrims put up are two in Mecca. Those coming by air mostly put up at Masfala where the standard of living is a little bit high. Those coming by road mostly put up at Jarwal which can be called the town of *Takari.* If not for the difference in climate the Pilgrims living in Jarwal will forget that they are in a foreign land.

4. **Money Matters:** Every penny that any intending pilgrim should officially be expected to pay should be known to him in advance. The Government of Nigeria should now see to it that at Maiduguri and Kano, pilgrims are briefed as to what to do and what not to do in Saudi Arabia, how to behave and how not to behave etc. Furthermore, vices indicated already on what happens, 'behind the office or the hospital', before a pilgrim gets passports or innoculation especially in Maiduguri, as I was told, should be investigated and removed.

5. As it will be unwise for the Muslims of Nigeria to expect the Government to do everything for them in Saudi Arabia, the Emirs can be approached to consider the possibility of opening a collection in aid of Nigerian pilgrims. Names of all people who had ever gone on pilgrimage can be collected from village level. A circular could be sent to

them, asking them in the name of Islam to give a charity (*Sadaka*) of at least one pound towards the fund. Rich people can pay as much as they can give and all the people interested should be approached for *Sadaka*. In the first year much of this money can be spent in buying tents (*hemomi*) for Nigerian pilgrims to use in Mina and Arafat. In subsequent years other things can be thought of and bought. I have seen, and officially learnt that many Muslim countries do the same. In short this is the end of the summary of my experience. If the Government wants me to express an opinion on any part or to explain anything in greater detail I will be only too pleased to do so to the best of my ability. I do not think that the Honourable Minister will think me as *"Sarkin Karanbani"* (being too excessive) if I ask his permission to cross the bars of my terms of reference and give the following further suggestions:

(i) As Nigeria is now the greatest of all the British dependencies in the world, I will suggest that the Nigerian Government consider the possibility of giving the British Consul in Jeddah and his Sudanese Assistant an opportunity of taking an educational tour round Nigeria to enable them see the homes of the *Takari*, the people they represent at Jeddah. Not only these but also some Arabs from Saudi Arabia etc. can be given the same opportunity, to enable them to see for themselves that we are not as backward as some people tell them. I have never known that we have much to be proud of until after I had gone to Saudi Arabia.

(ii) I must admit that I have never before been so proud of my nation than when I met some two Nigerians in Saudi Arabia. The first is one Bukar Afindi whom I met at Jeddah, an employee of the British Bank of the Middle East. He spent so much of his own spare time and money in helping Nigerian pilgrims that I began to wonder if he was doing all that for nothing. Through investigation I gathered that he was doing all that for no pay. I learnt that it was when he looked round and saw his people scattered about without anybody to shephard them that he began to feel ashamed of himself as a member of that nation. So he took it upon himself to do the job in his spare time. How far that is true I do not know as I did not put up with him nor near him to enable me to go deeper into the root of the matter. Personalities like the Emir of Kano Abdullahi Bayero, the Ciroma of Kano Sanusi, the Emir of Daura Abdurrahman, and all pilgrims that had ever gone close to him can explain more accurately. If it is established that he was really doing that for nothing then I will not think it a *Karanbani* if say the Sultan, on behalf of the Muslims of Nigeria, should send him a letter of blessing.

Another person whom I would not like to praise as he is my very close friend and brother-in-law, is Alhaji Usman Manin Gwarje, the Senior Dispensary Attendant of the Funtua Dispensary. He did extremely well and spent much out of his money to help such Nigerian pilgrims that put up at Masfala. I will however ask anybody interested to investigate from this year's pilgrims who put up at Masfala. If that is the example of the effort of the Native Administration, I will only say splendid! In the name of Allah I close.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.)
A. IMAM,
Member of the House of Representatives.

I received the following reply:—

No. 11807/S. 4/21.
The Ministry for Local
Government & Community
Development,
Northern Region,
Kaduna.
23rd October, 1953.

M. Abubakar Imam,
Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.

Dear Sir,

PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA

I am directed by the Minister for Local Government and Community Development to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th October on the subject of the Pilgrimage to Mecca, and to say that the Minister has found your report of great interest. It is now being studied and considered in detail and a further letter will be addressed to you as soon as possible.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd.)
AG. PERMANENT SECRETARY,
MINISTRY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,
NORTHERN REGION,
KADUNA.

What made me happy about the report I submitted on that year's Pilgrimage was that all the suggestions or recommendations in the report were accepted and implemented. Not a single one was left out.

Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardaunan Sokoto, on becoming Premier in 1954 also became the Pilgrims Leader every year until his death in 1966.

CHAPTER TWELVE

MEMBERSHIP OF BOARDS, COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

When I was a member of the House of Representatives I served on several committees in both Lagos and Kaduna. At the same time I served on the Supreme Council of the Northern Peoples Congress (N.P.C.). In January 1951 I was appointed to serve on the Board of the West African (now Nigerian) Institute for Trypanosomiasis Research in Kaduna. I also served as a member of the Hausa Language Board. When the Northern Self-Development Fund was established in 1951 I was included among the members of its Board.

Apart from the above appointments, I was very often saddled with a host of other assignments. The telegram and letter reproduced below are self-explanatory:

Priority Telegram:

From: Civil Secretary, Kaduna.
To: Resident, Zaria.
Date: **22nd November, 1952.**

EC2006X Grateful if you would inform Abubakar Imam that Executive Council would be grateful if he could arrange to visit Kaduna on 25th November in order to meet Sir Sidney Phillips on 26th to give views on Nigerianisation. Consider presence in Kaduna most important. Civ. Sec.

No. 5019/7.
Zaria.
23rd November, 1952.

copy to:
Emir of Zaria (In duplicate).

Will you please hand one copy to Malam Abubakar Imam and ask him to act accordingly.

(Sgd.)
DISTRICT OFFICER (i/c),
ZARIA DIVISION.

Having received the above message, I quickly summoned a meeting of the young leaders of thought of my constituency. After having thus been fully armed by them I prepared the following document which I submitted to Sir Sidney Phillipson after the discussion:

NIGERIANISATION

AFTER full discussion with the intelligensia of my Constituency the following are the points I wish to present to the Nigerianisation Commission:

1. It should be clearly understood by the Commission that when a Northerner clamours for Nigerianisation, he does not mean that all Europeans should go overnight and give way to people with degrees from other Regions. What he means is that he should be given every chance to manage his own affairs. To achieve this, the first and vital point is the Regionalisation of Civil Service personnel of the already Regionalised Department.

2. There should be Regional Public Service Boards in addition to the Central one. The composition of every Regional Board should have the majority of the indigenous people of the Region.

3. When a vacancy occurs, the Regional Public Service Board should satisfy itself first beyond any shadow of doubt that there is no indigenous person from the Region available for the post before looking for people from other Regions or outside Nigeria.

4. At present the North is lagging far behind in this race due to the fact that much attention is being paid to academic qualification — there is not a single Northerner holding a senior service appointment in the other Regions. In order to speed up the closing of the gap, the Northern Public Service Board, should therefore, give great consideration to experience and good conduct. The present administrative responsibilities shouldered by Northerners by virtue of their experience and good conduct should justify the above.

5. If at all there is a necessity of appointing somebody in a Region from other Regions or from outside Nigeria, such an appointment should be on contract basis.

6. In the Northern Region where the Native Administration Staff form the bulk of the available educated elements, the Government should not confine its promotions to its employees only. Suitable N.A. officials should be given the same opportunity by the Government. Where this occurs, such employees can remain with their N.A.'s though paid by the Government. This is important for the uniformity of progress especially in poor N.A.'s. This system if adopted can even go further to make it possible for poor N.A.'s to employ efficient people on scales of salary that will be attractive, though not as high as that of a Senior Post.

(Sgd.)

ABUBAKAR IMAM, M.H.R.
(ZARIA PROVINCE).

Five months later this other letter also follows:

No. 479/903.
The Resident,
Zaria Province.
24th April, 1953.

Sir,

The Civil Secretary, Northern Region has informed me that Mr. H. L. Hopkinson, Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, will visit Kaduna from April, 29th to May 1st. Mr. Hopkinson is anxious to meet you and other Northern Members of the House of Representatives during his visit and I am therefore to request you to arrive in Kaduna on April 29th. I understand that your meeting with the Minister will be arranged for some time on April 30th.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant.

(Sgd.)
C. V. WILLIAMS,
RESIDENT, ZARIA PROVINCE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW REVISION

As the question for self government was fast approaching the Minister for Local Government, the Sardauna of Sokoto, drafted an amendment to the Local Government Law. He intended to present the amendment before the House. But before doing so, he sent round to some members, myself included, asking for comments. I submitted my comments to him as under:

Gaskiya Corporation,
Zaria.
6th January, 1954.

The Leader,
The Northern Peoples' Congress.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter No. 55/513 of the 19th December, 1953. Before I go on any further, I beg to explain that these observations are being submitted as a result of a private meeting I called of representatives from nearly all the political parties in Zaria Province, Heads of Departments and their staff, members of the Emir's Council including the Waziri of Zaria, three District Heads, *Malams*, traders, farmers etc. The meeting took place last Sunday, the 3rd January, hence my apparent delay in submitting my comments.

AMENDMENTS

After reading the bill over and over again, I realise that the more one reads it the more one realises that there is much to appreciate in it. If we were not threatened by the words "Self Government in 1956", this bill is one that can pass through both Houses almost smoothly.

But in view of the fact that in 1956, or immediately after, self-government will be either in hand or within reach, then any Native Authority Law, the meeting expressed, must be such that can meet the need not only of today but also of the future. So the little time for us between now and 1956, can be considered as a 'Practising School' period for the implementation of the provisions of whatever Local Government Law we may introduce.

1) It is the view of the conference in Zaria that all Emirs should now be advised to take the title of, and perform the function of 'Chief and Council'. It is better for the prestige or their position, and also better for them to honourably change now than to wait for 1956 to change them. The conference therefore suggests that in this bill chief shall always mean 'Chief and Council'.

2) **Formation of Native Authority Councils**

It is the view of this conference that election and nomination of people to form the Native Authority Councils should not be left in the hands of one man. The composition of it also must be such that will answer the need of 1956, and the political problems it will bring.

3) **District Officers:** This conference recommends that District Officers should play the role of advisers to Native Authority Councils only. But they can retain their power of reviewing cases of death sentences passed by the Emirs' Courts. And furthermore, they should help vigorously to see justice is carried out in any sphere of the Northern life.

4) In the absence of a Native Authority for some reasons or other, the conference suggests that the Resident should form a Caretaker Native Authority with him or his representative as a member, to carry out the work before a proper Native Authority is appointed.

5) The conference also prays His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, that whenever an occassion arises for a new chief to be installed, a committee of responsible people should be formed to sit together with Traditional King-makers. But this committee must be widely representative of all sections of the community within the jurisdiction of that chiefdom or emirate.

6) In conclusion, I gave the meeting the following point not for discussion at this forum but as food for thought:



Garden Party at Government House Kaduna. Imam and Emir of Katsina paying attention to comments by Sultant Abubakar III. Emir of Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero sits at left. In the middle ground (seated) can be seen Sir Kashim Ibrahim, Governor, discussing with Waziri Junaidu of Sokoto and Alhaji Ali Akilu, Secretary to the Premier.

We are now moving quickly towards self-government, and self-government means taking over the running of the machinery of Administration in our hands with the Governor as the head of the executive. Then who should that Governor be? We must start thinking of that machinery now lest the Northern Region wakes up one morning to find that not only the Policy but also the people who carry out the policy are under the mercy of unsteady political leadership.

Thus the meeting closed. People went away talking among themselves on this last point.

(Sgd.)
Alhaji Abubakar Imam,
Member House of Assembly and House of Representatives.

When the Minister got the replies from all the various people he wrote to, he realised that the amendment being sought as drafted by him will certainly be defeated. Young people, like Abubakar Imam (I was just forty-two years old) wanted to see a more dynamic action taken. The Minister then, the Sardauna of Sokoto, after introducing the bill, withdrew it, saying that he wanted members to have more time to think over the problems before he returned the bill for debate. It was never returned to the House of Assembly, during the time I was a member.

During this period there were many offers of appointments which I found unable to accept. I was blamed by my friends whenever I turned down an offer on part time basis. A case in point was the Chairmanship of the Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation which was offered to me by the Governor General in Council in his letter No. 5570/S.1/83 of the 8th March, 1957. If I accepted that, I was told, I would receive both my salary as Permanent Member of the Public Service Commission as well as £60 a month for this part-time assignment. I found that I could not do justice to my conscience if I accepted both salaries.

I therefore submitted the following reply to the Chief Secretary of the Federation:

15th March, 1957.

The Chief Secretary of the Federation,
Lagos.

Sir,

I have the honour most respectfully to refer to your letter No. 55/70/S.1/83 of the 8th March, 1957 to which I have replied earlier by telegram. I would like to express very sincerely that I am most grateful for having been considered for this important responsibility. I have come to the conclusion that, much as I would have liked to accept the offer, three things, taken together, are likely to be an impediment to a satisfactory discharge of the proposed duties especially as a weekly or fortnightly visit to Lagos will be, at least during the initial stages, a necessity.

These are:—

a) the nature of my present post — which entails at least a weekly visit to Kaduna;
b) the geographical distance between the North Regional and the Federal Capital — which is over 500 miles; and
c) the time factor.

2. When I considered the three factors deeply, I found that it would be difficult for me to satisfy my conscience and discharge each duty to the very best of my ability.

3. While I should like to thank you again for the very kind offer, I trust Sir, that you can appreciate the reasons given above.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Sgd.)
ABUBAKAR IMAM

The Chief Secretary acknowledged the receipt of the above letter in the following words:—

No.5570/S.1/133.
Office of the Chief
Secretary of the Federation,
Lagos,
Nigeria.
22nd March, 1957.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th March, 1957, and to convey to you, on behalf of His Excellency, the Governor General in Council deep regret that you have found yourself unable to accept the appointment of Chairman of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation.

2. The Governor General in Council fully understands and sympathises with the reasons which have led you to come to this decision.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Sgd.)
Chief Secretary to the Federation

Likewise I was unable to accept a membership for the 1960 revision of the salaries of Government Servants. The correspondences to that effect went as follows:—

Dear Mr. Seaford,

I have given very deep consideration to the complications and implications of my serving as a Member of the Commission for the Revision of the Salaries of Government Servants.

I strongly feel, however, that what such an appointment would breed particularly from political circles would be incompatible with my position as the Permanent Member of the Public Service Commission.

I am sure this is an honour given to me and am grateful for it but I feel sure that it is in the best interest of this Government that I should not, in my present position, become involved in any duties that will expose the Commission to claims of participating in Civil Service Union and Political matters.

I would be very grateful therefore, if I could be excused from the membership of the Commission. Would you please therefore pass my deepest regrets. to Mr. Johnson.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
(ABUBAKAR IMAM).

Premier Office,
Kaduna.
23rd September, 1959.

My dear Alhaji,

Many thanks for your letter of today. I am very disappointed that you are unable to accept appointment as a Member of the Commission for the Revision of the Salaries of Government Servants. I know that you are far better qualified in everyway —head, heart and experience, than anyone else and that you have the esteem and respect of everybody.

On the other hand I do understand and respect your views. I am afraid that we shall have to lose you for the second best.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd),
HENRY SEAFORD.

In the field of journalism I was appointed Honourary Vice Chairman of the Nigerian Institute of Journalists in March, 1956. The letter below refers:

THE INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISTS (NIGERIA BRANCH)

152, Clifford Street,
Yaba, Lagos.
19th March, 1956.

REf: No. IJ/AWS/7.

I am directed to inform you that at the last meeting of the local branch of the INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISTS held at the residence of the CHAIRMAN, A.K. Blankson, Esq., Managing Director, Zik's Enterprises Limited,

King George Avenue, Yaba, Lagos, it was unanimously decided that you be requested to take up the HONORARY VICE PATRON of the Local Branch of the Institute.

2. I shall therefore be grateful if you will kindly acceed to this request. With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
ABDUL W. SALAU,
ORGANISING SECRETARY

I replied to this letter accepting the position and asking for further details on the activities of the Institute.

The reply came as follows:

THE INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISTS (NIGERIA BRANCH)
22, Fagbayimu Street,
Ebute Metta,
Lagos.
10th July, 1956.

Ref: No.IJ/NB/AWS/16.

Dear Alhaji Abubakar,

Referring to para. 3 of your letter of the 17th April, 1956, I must apologise for the delay in replying you earlier, and which I am now doing with apology for the long delay.

2. The formation of the branch of the Institute is without prejudice to any existing journalistic organisations in Nigeria. I am to add also that the formation of the Nigeria Branch of the Institute had received the blessing and approval of the Council of the Institute of 2nd July, 1955, and the General Secretary Stewart Nicholson.

3. The branch of the Institute's primary object is the promotion by all reasonable means the standards of journalism and status of journalists in Nigeria.

4. Meantime, may I thank you for accepting the honorary Vice-Patronship of the local branch of the Institute.

With all our good wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
ABDUL W. SALAU,
ORGANISING SECRETARY.

EDUCATIONAL

In the educational sphere I was appointed a member of the Board of Higher Muslim Education. I also became a member of the School Advisory Boards to Government (now Barewa College), Zaria, Government Secondary School (now Government College), Katsina and Government Secondary School, Ilorin. During my tenure as a member on the Zaria Government College Advisory Board, we had to grapple with a very delicate issue. At the 5th meeting of the Advisory Board held on the 5th December, 1957, we were made to understand that the Northern Region was being partitioned into two camps for Muslims and Christians — another Pakistanism. We kicked against that very dangerous policy but the Ministry of Education insisted. The following self-explanatory circular to call the members of the Advisory Board is a testimony:

No. GCZ/2303/90.
Government College,
Zaria.,
10th/ March, 1958.

To: All Members of the Advisory Board of Government College, Zaria.

RECRUITMENT POLICY

With reference to the last sentence of paragraph 12 of the minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the Advisory Board held here on 5th December, 1957, I give below a statement on recruitment policy from the Ministry of Education.

> "Government College, Zaria should in future recruit Muslims from Sokoto, Katsina, Kano, Bornu, Niger, Zaria, Bauchi, Adamawa and Ilorin Provinces. Christians from all these provinces should go to Government College, Keffi".

2. At the same time I enclose a copy of a booklet on Rules and Routine at Government College, Zaria.

(Sgd.)
E. L. RUSSEL,
PRINCIPAL

I dragged the battle tooth and nail until the Advisory Board succeeded in getting the policy suspended indefinitely. My own son, Mustafa, had passed out from that College in December, 1957 and I knew that at least one of his classmates was a Christian from Wusasa, Zaria. The tradition of that College since its opening in 1921 was to admit Northern boys without any discrimination. The main purpose, to my mind, for the opening of Government College, Keffi in 1949 was to reduce the long distances that students had to endure to reach the College.

SERVICE UNDER THE MILITARY REGIME

On 15th January, 1966, Nigeria had its first coup d'etat in which Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of Northern Nigeria was brutally murdered in his house in Kaduna. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria suffered the same fate in Lagos. Chief Samuel L. Akintola, the second Premier of Western Region of Nigeria in succession to Chief Obafemi Awolowo, was also killed in Ibadan. Chief Festus Sam Okotie-Eboh, the country's Minister of Finance and Brigadier Zakariya Maimalari together with several army officers were also killed.

With the take-over of the reigns of government by the military, General Johnson Thomas Umunakwe Aguiyi-Ironsi was ushered in as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Head of the Federal Military Government.

During the night of the coup d'etat in Kaduna there were clear military movements around Television House in Kaduna which was just across the road from my house. During the early morning (Ramadan) meal time around 4.00 a.m. some of my boys said they heard the sound of something like a bomb falling further north along the road to Zaria. We did not realise the enormity of that day until early in the morning.

When it was confirmed that the Sardauna had died and was to be buried in the Sultan's house in Kaduna I prepared to go to the funeral. I had tried earlier to go to my office which was next door to Government House but was prevented by the soldiers on patrol duty from doing so. I was being driven in my personal Mercedes Benz 220 saloon car but they mistook it for a Government vehicle. When I explained to them a more sensible sergent came forward and said to me, *'Baba*, do you have a smaller car?' I said, 'Yes I have a Holden pick-up which I use as a farm vehicle'. He said, 'Good, you had better go home and park this car. Then use your pick-up for your journeys'.

At the funeral as soon as the burial was over people started to become jittery over an extended stay to receive condolence visitors. A curfew had already been clamped down on the town and no one was being allowed either in or out of Kaduna. Some airforce planes were sent to hover over the Unguwar Sarki and Nassarawa areas to reinforce the military presence. It was decided not to stay too long and everyone dispersed almost immediately.

I had formed the habit of spending my weekends in Zaria. On that day I could not travel. I could not even go to visit my farm, *Dubu Goma* on the outskirts of Kaduna. At home I was faced with a situation of danger by virtue of proximity to the amoured contingent at Television House. I therefore decided to move with my family to a secluded area of the G.R.A. near Unguwar Rimi where we spent the next two days.

During the Ironsi regime he visited Kaduna and a party was held in his honour at which I was present. He asked me about the Public Service Commission of which I was then Chairman and requested to know the criteria we used for promotions of Civil Servants. I told him that it was based on qualifi-

cation, experience in the service and recommendation, all of them taken with flexibility. As soon as I finished he doubled up with laughter calling me 'Mr. Flexibility!' Throughout that party that was how he called me whenever I caught his eye.

A second coup d'etat came on 29th July, 1966, less than seven months from the first one. In it General J.T.U. Aguiyi-Ironsi was kidnapped and assassinated. Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon emerged as the Head of State and was destined to rule this country until 1975, when his government was overthrown by General Murtala Mohammad in a bloodless coup.

Following in the wake of the second coup however, General Gowon's administration created the first twelve states out of the former 23 Provincial units and Lagos, which have now become history.

NORTHERN REGION (provinces)

1. Adamawa
2. Bauchi
3. Benue
4. Borno
5. Ilorin
6. Kabba
7. Kano
8. Katsina
9. Niger
10. Plateau
11. Sardauna
12. Sokoto
13. Zaria

WESTERN REGION (Provinces)

1. Abeokuta
2. Ondo
3. Oyo

MID-WESTERN REGION (Provinces)

1. Benin
2. Warri

EASTERN REGION (Provinces)

1. Calabar
2. Ogoja
3. Onitsha
4. Owerri
5. Port-Harcourt

LAGOS (Capital Territory).

The Gowon administration carved out 6 states from the former Northern Region and 6 from the defunct Southern Regions and Lagos, with effect from 27th May, 1967, as follows:

Northern States

1. North-Central (Katsina and Zaria Provinces).
2. North-Western (Sokoto and Niger Province).
3. Kano (Kano Province).
4. North-Eastern (Bauchi, Borno, Adamawa and Sardauna Provinces).
5. Benue-Plateau (Benue and Plateau Provinces)
6. Kwara (Ilorin and Kabba Provinces).

Southern States

1. Western (Abeokuta, Ondo and Oyo Provinces).
2. Mid-Western (Benin and Warri Provinces).
3. East-Central (Onitsha and Oweri Provinces).
4. South-Eastern (Calabar and Ogoja Provinces).
5. Rivers (Port-Harcourt Province).
6. Lagos (Federal Territory).

INTERIM COMMON SERVICES AGENCY (I.C.S.A.)

As a result of the breakdown of the former regions of Nigeria into twelve states, it became necessary to massively deploy civil servants from the central administration to man the new states. But so as not to create vacuity with regards to pending issues particularly in the Northern Region an organisation was established called "Interim Common Services Agency" (I.C.S.A.) to handle such matters common to the states which could not be disposed of before deployment or any latent issues which could not be shared out to the states. I was appointed Chairman of the Interim Common Services Agency Appointments Board in 1968. Waziri Adamu Fika was appointed its Secretary. With me on the I.C.S.A. Appointment Board was Mr. O. Olajide, who was at that time a Permanent Commissioner in the Northern Region Public Service Commission. Mr. O. Olajide has been highly commended by all who knew him for his efficiency, thoroughness, dedication and loyalty. Mr. Olajide seemed to us as if he had the Government Orders (G.O.), now civil Service Regulations, at his finger-tips. He was so conversant with them that it would appear as if he had memorised them by heart. He died in 1972 in the service of the Northern States.

The Interim Common Services Agency (I.C.S.A.) which has since been abolished had served a very useful purpose. A case in point would illustrate this fact. Four Senior Assistant Secretary Supernumerary posts were created in the North Regional Government service in 1959, and Alhaji Yahaya Gusau, Alhaji Abdurrahman Okene, Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora and the late Alhaji Ali Akilu were appointed to them. Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora was not confirmed in the post before he was seconded to the Federal Government and posted to Saudi Arabia as a Consul and Pilgrims Officer. While he was in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria established Diplomatic relations with that country and he was promoted as First Secretary at the Embassy of Nigeria in Jeddah. It did not occur to him, however, that he should pursue the question of his confirmation as Senior Assistant Secretary (S.A.S.). After serving in Saudi Arabia for about a year as a seconded officer, he was absorbed in the Federal Service and posted to Lagos in 1961, with promotion as Deputy Permanent Secretary. In 1962, he acted as Permanent Secretary and was confirmed in the top post in November, 1962. In 1967, during the second military regime he was appointed as High Commissioner to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and he retired from Public Service in July, 1971. When the question of his retirement benefits arose, a missing link was detected in the records of his long service. That is, he was not confirmed in his SAS Supernumerary post all those years. It was the Interim Common Services Agency (I.C.S.A.) that put his records straight retrospectively. That was a typical example of the functions of the defunct I.C.S.A.

STATUTORY CORPORATION SERVICE COMMISSION (SCSC)

In 1969, a Statutory Corporation Services Commission was established by the Federal Government named Federal Statutory Corporation Service Com-

mission (SCSC), with headquarters in Lagos. I was appointed one of its Commissioners. About a year later, a branch office of SCSC was opened in Zaria and I was put in charge.

The SCSC which is now defunct served those corporations the establishment of which was by statute that is, by a legislative enactment especially an Act of Parliament or an Ordinance made for the establishment of a Corporation and meant to be permanent. These corporations included the Nigeria Railways Corporation, the Nigeria Airways, the Nigerian Ports Authority and the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria (E.C.N.), now known as National Electric Power Authority (NEPA).

When I was going to take up this new appointment in Lagos I travelled by car via Kagara my family home in Niger State and Kaiama in Borgu, Kwara State, accompanied by Alhaji Abubakar Tunau the Kayaye of Sardauna and Alhaji Gambo Sawaba a stalwart of the defunct Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU). The purpose of my journey via Kaiama to Lagos was to see my friend and son-in-law, Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora who was then spending part of his earned leave from Pakistan. I took the opportunity to pay courtesy calls on the Dangaladima of Kaiama, Alhaji Suleiman; the Ex-Emir of Kaiama, Malam Haliru Kiyaru II and the District Head of Kaiama, Alhaji Umaru, all of them uncles to Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora. Our entourage spent the night at Kaiama.

It is not within the purview of this book to discuss how I discharged the duties attached to the Statutory Corporation Services Commission, but in keeping with the general government policy such a high-powered body would be responsible for the recruitment, promotion and discipline, etc. of the staff of the corporations within its jurisdiction; just like the Civil Service Commission the Judicial Service Committee or any of the Boards or Governing Councils of the other parastatals, clearing matters pertaining to top posts with governments.

In February, 1974, I and my colleagues from Lagos including the Chairman of the Commission, Chief Ajewumi and one Mr. A.O. Ogizi, who was once a teacher at Barewa College, visited Sokoto as guests of the North-Westtern State Government. We were accompanied by Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora. We arrived in Sokoto on 12th February, 1974. On 13th February, 1974, the Governor of the North-Western State, His Excellency Usman Faruk (then Chief Superintendent of Police) threw a big cocktail party at the Government House in our honour. Many V.I.P.s who were my friends attended the party; too numerous to mention all, but they included the following:— Alhaji Abubakar Tunau, the Kayaye of Sardauna and also Commissioner for Information, Home Affairs, Establishment and Training at the time; Alhaji Haliru Binji (Grand Qadi of North-Western State); Alhaji Ibrahim, Magajin Garin Argungu (Commissioner for Finance); Alhaji Abdu Gusau the Garkuwa of Sokoto; Alhaji Ja66i Bunguɗu; Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, the Barade of Sokoto; Alhaji Shuaibu Na'ibi of Abuja (Chairman North-Western State Public Ser-

vice Commission); Alhaji Ibrahim Tako, the Galadima of Bida (Civil Commissioner); Alhaji Umaru Gwandu (former Speaker of the Northern House of Assembly); Alhaji Muhammadu Bida, the Iya of Sokoto; and Alhaji Abdullahi Kure (Secretary to the North Western State Military Government).

The visit of the SCSC Commissioners coincided with the famous Argungu Fishing Festival and it therefore formed an important item on the programme of visits drawn for our group. The Fishing Festival included the Argungu Annual Motor Rally, otherwise known as the Argungu Safari Rally.

On 14th February, 1974, the party drove to Argungu about 104 kilometres (65 miles) from Sokoto to watch the Safari Rally which was a National event.

The Argungu Safari Rally:

All the visiting Commissioners of SCSC were watching the Safari Rally for the first time. A number of questions were therefore asked, which the North-Western State Ministry of Information, Home Affairs, Establishments and Training adequately answered in a brochure as follows:—

"The Argungu Motor Rally was promoted and organised by the Sokoto Motor Club, in care of the Ministry of Information, Culture and Social Development, Sokoto. The Sokoto Motor Club was formed early in 1972, under the Chairmanship of Alhaji Abubakar Tunau, Kayayen Sardauna, who was also the then North-Western State Commissioner for Information, Culture and Social Development.

"The Argungu Safari Rally was held under the General Competition Rules of the Royal Automobile Club (R.A.C.) of Great Britain, and categorised as National Rally.

"The 1974 Argungu Safari Rally, the second to be organised by the Sokoto Motor Club, was started from Green Springs Hotel, Ibadan, on Monday, 11th February at 9.00 a.m. and it finished at the Argungu Festival Village on Thursday, 14th February, 1974, with overnight halts or resting periods, at Argungu (11th February), Kaduna (12th February) and Bagauda, Kano (12th February).

"The first car was flagged off by the Military Governor of Western State. The second leg was flagged off from Argungu by the Military Governor of North-Western State on the 12th February, at 9.00 a.m. The third leg was started from Kano Race Course on 13th February, at 1.00 p.m. by the Kano State Military Governor, while the fourth and last leg was started off in Kaduna by the North-Central State Military Governor at 9.55 a.m. on the 14th February, 1974.

"The 1974 Argungu Safari Rally which covered approximately 4,000 kilometres went through many places including the following villages, towns and cities:— Ogbomosho, Kaiama, Ka'inji, Yelwa, Jega, Sokoto, Illela, Sabon Birni, Kaura Namoda, Dutsen-Ma, Dambatta, Gumel, Hadeja, Katagun, Bulkachuwa, Azare, Kwanar Garko, Rano, Ningi, Bauchi, Jos, Kaduna, Tegina, Kontagora, Rijau, Zuru, Gummi, Yabo and Argungu.

"The 1974 Festival was attended by many distinguished personalities including the first Lady, Mrs. Victoria Gowon together with Madamme Aisha Hamanni Diori of Niger Republic. Military Governors: — Governor Abba Kyari of North-Central State, Governor Diette Spiff of the Rivers; and several Emirs and Chiefs from all over Nigeria. The cars that participated in the Argungu Safari National Rally were many and were of various types and models. No casualty was reported."

Argungu Agricultural Fair:

After the exciting and interesting Argungu Safari Rally, the SCSC Commissioners were conducted round the stands of the Agricultural Fair, which was organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Trade and Industry of the North-Western State. A number of questions were asked regarding the origin of the articles on display. We were told that the articles came from the North-Western State, other states in the Federation and from abroad for example, tractors. Private Companies all over the country sent in goods for purposes of advertisement. A few traditional dancing groups were there to entertain visitors and at the same time to publicise themselves.

We then returned to Sokoto for the night.

The Argungu Fishing Festival:

The following day my colleagues and I accompanied by Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora returned to Argungu to watch the famous Grand Fishing Festival which was an Annual event. Before the commencement of the festival the visitors were shown round the Festival Village, which was already thickly populated by spectators who came from distant places and who required accommodation for a couple of days.

The Fishing venue is *MATAN FADA* on the River Rima on the western edge of Argungu town. The place where the preliminary displays for example, swimming, diving, and canoe racing, take place is called *MALA*. The festival pavillion was gaily decorated with flags and buntings and provided with comfortable chairs reserved for the invited dignitaries (V.I.P.s).

The other side of the bank of the Rima River was thronged with hundreds of anxious fishermen with their various fishing equipments.

The Emir of Argungu His Royal Highness, Alhaji Muhammadu Mera and the Military Governor of North-Western State His Excellency (CSP) Usman Faruk were among the early arrivals at the Festival Pavillion to receive distinguished invitees from home and abroad, who included the first Lady, Mrs. Victoria Gowon, Madamme Hammani Diori, State Governors, His Royal Highness the Emir of Borgu, Alhaji Musa Mohammed Kigera III and His Royal Highness, the Emir of Daura, Alhaji Muhammadu Bashar. The presence of His Royal Highness Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, the Sultan of Sokoto highlighted the occasion.

From the opposite bank of the festival river, the famous singing girls from neighbouring Niger Republic with their able bandmaster, Mamman Gao, entertained the large gathering at regular intervals with their musical voices with clappings to match. The whole show was very spectacular and presented in a grand style. Everybody waited for the zero hour which was ushered in by a gun fire. Swimming, diving for a particular object and canoe racing at MALA preceded the Fishing Festival. Then hundreds of fishermen plunged into the river at MATAN FADA. The festival, which lasted about three hours, was very impressive. Many of our Commissioners who were seeing the grand fishing festival for the first time, were very impressed. Prizes were distributed by Madamme Aisha Hamanni Diori to the winners of the various events.

A Trip to Birnin Kebbi:

When the festival was over, we drove to Birnin Kebbi about 48 kilometres (30 miles) from Argungu, as guests of His Royal Highness, the Emir of Gwandu, Alhaji Haruna Rasheed, C.F.R. We were warmly received by the Emir. The Emir and I had been great friends since our Katsina College days. It may be recalled that in accordance with the Order of Precedence among the Northern Traditional Rulers the Emir of Gwandu comes third next to the Shehu of Borno. His Royal Highness, Alhaji Haruna Rasheed, C.F.R. was also the President of the defunct Northern House of Chiefs in Kaduna.

At the Palace of the Emir, we were feasted with a sumptuous lunch after which His Royal Highness further honoured us by personally conducting us round Birnin Kebbi town. Among the places of interest visited were the new Central Mosque and the Secondary School. During the tour Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora remarked that he was visiting Birnin Kebbi for the first time. His Royal Highness retorted with: "You ought to be ashamed of yourself". The sharp royal response was most befitting for Alhaji A. Mora who, the Emir had known for many years, and who was not unaware of the cordial relationship that had existed between Gwandu Emirate and Borgu (Alhaji A. Mora's division of origin). He also knows that the two divisions have much in common, as a section of Borgu was under the Gwandu emirate. The first European School that served the western emirates including Borgu[1] was opened in Birnin Kebbi in 1910.

The SCSC visitors to Birnin Kebbi expressed profound gratitude to the Emir of Gwandu for his very generous hospitality. We then drove back to Sokoto via Argungu for the night and back to Zaria on 16th February, 1974.

1. When provinces were first carved out in Northern Nigeria by the British administrators there was Kontagora Province which included Borgu. At that material time a pioneer Governemnt Teacher Training School was established at Birnin Kebbi, which pupils from Borgu attended until the time an elementary school was built at Kaiama in Borgu in 1924. Moreover, Illo which is an integral part of Gwandu Emirate of Sokoto State, is geographically and ethnically Borgu. The Local people of Illo speak a dialect of the language spoken in Babanna, Bussa, Wawa and Kaiama districts of Borgu Local Government Area. It is claimed that the two Local Government Areas, Gwandu and Borgu with the River Niger as the natural boundary between them (except the Illo encroachment area) have so much in common that during the 1975 state creation exercise, Borgu agitated to be merged with Sokoto State.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMISSIONER (OMBUDSMAN)

Soon after our return from Argungu, I received a letter from the Secretary to the Military Government of the then North-Central State (now Kaduna State) indicating the Governor's intention to appoint me as the Commissioner for Public Complaints.

The letter stated that I would serve for a period of 3 years and would be eligible for re-appointment. The letter had the reference *No. MG.* 63/42 and was dated 9th February, 1974. It was signed by Alhaji Garba Ja Abdulkadir.

I accepted the offer and agreed to start work on 1st April, 1974 as indicated. It was a big relief for me to have my main base now changed to Kaduna and I would travel there without much difficulty from Zaria. The Office was based in my former house in Kaduna.

I found the job equally tasking and challenging. Though now confined to Kaduna State I discovered so many problems relating to various institutions which I tried to unravel for the benefit of the common people. I had my greatest difficulties with top Government officials especially some of the Permanent Secretaries. However, very soon I established good working relationships with all concerned. Even some of the senior traditional rulers realised the impositions that many of their subordinates were exacting on the common people and through my intervention and quiet persuasion made positive amends.

I presented my first annual report on activities as Public Complaints Commissioner on 18th July, 1975 to the Governor (then Brigadier) Abba Kyari. Soon afterwards on 29th July, 1975 a bloodless coup d'etat brought in General Murtala Mohammed to replace General Yakubu Gowon.

General Murtala must have appreciated what I was doing for I was not only reconfirmed in my position but the idea of Ombudsman was introduced for the whole country in October, 1975. The letter of appointment to me stated that "the Supreme Military Council has approved the setting up of a Public Complaints Commission, and that you have been appointed a Commissioner". It went further to state that "The Supreme Military Council took great pains to search for men of impeccable integrity before making these appointments, and your appointment to this Commission is a testimony to your good name". The reference of this letter is *No.*59304/103 and it was dated 28th October, 1975, coming from Cabinet Office, Lagos.

Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule was appointed the first National Chief Commissioner for Public Complaints and I was given permission to continue as Commissioner for Kaduna State. I had the fortune during this period to have with me as assistants the untiring Alhaji Balarabe Fatika as Secretary and Colonel Swantong (Rtd.) as Assitant Secretary. Alhaji Husaini Mashi and Alhaji Muhammadu Wule served as Investigators. We had a very cordial relationship throughout my term in office as Commissioner.

I was happy to note that the Public Complaints Decree of 1975 was going to be enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution of 1979. However, I decided to

vacate the post having served for a sufficiently long period of time (April 1974—September, 1979).

A party was given to the recipients of the National honours by General Obasanjo on the eve of the transfer of power to an elected civilian Government. At that party I was among the first four persons in Nigeria to be honoured with the country's highest award — National Merit Award. In addition to the Award Certificate a cash award of ₦10,000.00 (Ten thousand Naira) was included.



1st National Merit Award Winners: 1979. Sitting together with the retiring Head of State General Olusegun Obasanjo is the Chairman of the National Merit Award Committee and Emir of Bedde, Alhaji Umar Suleiman. The two recipients on the left are Professors Chinua Achebe and Adeoye Lambo. The other two on the right are Dr. Abubakar Imam and Dr. Pius Okigbo.



Editors of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. This photograph, taken in January 1979, shows from left Alhaji Abubakar Tunau, Kayayen Sardauna (Editor: 1957 — 59); Alhaji Sambo Mohamed Yelwa (1959 — 62); Dr. Abubakar Imam (1939 — 54); Alhaji Uthman Mairiga (1962—78); Alhaji Abdullahi Khalil (1978—83). It was taken during the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the publishing of Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THOUSANDS AT HOME AND ABROAD MOURNED IMAM'S DEMISE

By
ALHAJI ABDURRAHMAN MORA

"TO GOD WE BELONG, AND TO HIM IS OUR RETURN" (QUR'AN, 2:156)

The life of anyone of us is controlled by predestination and whenever the hour of departure strikes nobody can protract or diminish it. "To God we belong, and to Him is our return". (Holy Qur'an, 2: 156).

Although we are constantly being reminded of death as a necessary evil which comes when it will, and which rotates among us as a daily phenomenon, yet we are far, very far, from getting used to it. Whenever it strikes it is unexpected and sudden, very often agonizing and always throwing bereaved families, relatives, kith and kin, friends and well wishers into days of mourning! Nevertheless, how many of us get set for the inevitable journey to the great beyond by heeding the teaching of the Messenger of Allah (May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) when he said:

> "Be in the world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer"[1].
> "At evening do not expect (to live till) morning, and at morning do not expect (to live till) evening. Take from your health for your illness and from your life for your death"[2].

IMAM WAS TAKEN ILL

Generally speaking, Alhaji Abubakar Imam enjoyed satisfactory health throughout his life but for occassional minor ailments. As far as I can remember it was sometime in 1939 that he was admitted into the General Hospital, Zaria (now Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital) with a somewhat minor complaint, for a few days. Since then, until the sudden attack early in March, 1981, of what started as a mild stomach disorder, he was always quite healthy and fit. He visited Kano from Zaria one morning on a private business and to collect his principal domestic servant, Alhaji Musa Adamu (Jamiyya), who was there supervising a building project for his master, at the Gwagwarwa ward in Kano. Before he left Zaria for Kano, Imam felt a mild stomach trouble which he did not anticipate would develop into anything serious.He did not therefore bother to seek medical treatment to suppress it. By the time he reached

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1. Both traditions that form the Fortieth Tradition of An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith were reported on the authority of Ibn' Umar i.e. the son of 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both — father and son) and were related by al-Bukhari.
2. "Take from your health for your illness and from your life for your death". That is, while you are in good health and able to perform your religious duties, you should take advantage of the good health and perform to the best of your ability to compensate for the period you may be indisposed and incapacitated. The same applies to the state of being alive.

Kano the ailment deteriorated into a stomach upset of a serious nature. It developed into diarrhoea. Still he did not seek medical advice in Kano. He, together with Alhaji Musa Adamu (Jam'iyya) and his personal driver, Dahiru Gangara, left Kano for Zaria in that stage of poor health. By the time he returned to Zaria he was so exhausted and weak that he could not stand on his feet without the support of one of his boys. So on his return to Zaria, he was rushed to a private Clinic, because A.B.U. Institute of Health was not functioning owing to a prevailing trade dispute.

He was discharged after staying at the Clinic for a couple of days, but he continued to receive treatment as an out-patient. He felt so relieved that he was able to travel to Katsina on 19th March, 1981 to condole the royal family on the death of the Emir of Katsina His Highness, Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo, who died on 18th March, 1981.

When he felt better, a party was organised in his honour on 2nd May, 1981, by the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company Limited, Zaria (NNPC) at Gaskiya Corporation Building, Zaria. The purpose of the party was to relaunch some of his works.[1] His Highness the Emir of Daura Alhaji Muhamadu Bashar graced the occassion by being Chairman. The Emir of Zazzau His Highness, Alhaji Dr. Shehu Idris,[2] C.F.R. was represented by the Waziri of Zazzau, Alhaji Nuhu Yahaya. Many other very important persons (V.I.Ps) attended the launching ceremony. They included the Grand Qadi of Sokoto State, Alhaji Haliru Binji, the Kayayen Sardauna, Alhaji Abubakar Tunau Mafara; Alhaji Ibrahim Magajin Garin Argungu; Justice Naibi S. Wali from Kano; the Magajin Garin Zazzau, Alhaji Nuhu Bamalli; Alhaji Tijjani Malumfashi; Alhaji Baba Ahmed and Alhaji Gambo Sawaba. The Chairman and Managing Director of Gaskiya Corporation Ltd., Alhaji Muhammadu Inuwa Mora and the General Manager, Northern Nigerian Publishing Company Limited, Zaria, Alhaji Husaini Hayat were joint sponsors. I myself was a guest at that function.

Alhaji Sani Kontagora, Magajin Rafin Kontagora and former Nigerian Ambassador to Niger Republic was also there as was the then Public Complaint Commissioner for Kaduna State, Alhaji Bello Uthman. Also from the Ministry of Education Kaduna many people came including Alhaji Altine Liman Mohammed then a Director for Primary Education. Alhaji Yusufu Ladan came from the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria and some of their staff gave a good radio coverage to the occassion. Alhaji Yusuf Aboki then Director of Kaduna Polytechnic was also present.

Also from Sokoto Hajiya Hasana Umaru and a number of other staff from Rima Radio covered the occassion. Mr. & Mrs. Jean Boyd as well as many University staff and students came from Sokoto. The delegation from the Centre for the Study of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano was led by Dr. Ibrahim Yaro Yahaya. That from Ahmadu Bello University,

1. Cased editions of *Magana Jari Ce, Tafiya Mabudin Ilmi and Tarihin Annabi Da Na Halifofi*
2. See a brief biography at Appendix iv.



Alhaji Muhammadu Bashar, Emir of Daura making a presentation to Dr. Abubakar Imam in the courtyard of Gaskiya Corporation Ltd., Zaria on 2nd May 1981. Standing at left is Alhaji Muh. Mora then Chairman and Managing Director of Gaskiya Corporation who was also Chairman of the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company.

Zaria was represented by Professor Dalhatu Mohammed, Head of Department of Nigerian and African Languages, and Alhaji Umaru Ahmed who was then Director of Centre for Nigerian Cultural Studies Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

At the launching ceremony many speeches were made in praise and appreciation of Imam for all his labours and wide literary productivity. In his response to the speeches Imam thanked everybody for the honour done to him and said he felt as if it was a farewell gathering. He closed his short speech with his famous prayer *"Allah Ka nuna mana gaskiya, Gaskiya Ka ba mu ikon binta. Allah Ka nuna mana karya, Karya, Ka ba mu ikon kinta"*. (May God show us the Truth and give us the power to follow it. May God show us Falsehood and give us the power to reject it).

In the evening an episode from *Magana Jari Ce* was dramatised by a group from the Centre for Nigerian Cultural Studies led by Alhaji Umaru Danjuma Katsina. The meeting and evening performance were the last public engagements of Alhaji Abubakar Imam. He never regained his normal health.

IMAM HOSPITALISED

Alhaji Abubakar Imam's indisposition developed into complications affecting his liver and kidney. Hypertention was also detected. It therefore became necessary to admit him into the A.B.U. Teaching Hospital, Tudun Wada, Zaria for the purpose of closer observation and proper medical care. He spent about three weeks at the hospital before he died.

A visitors' book was opened and maintained for the convenience of visitors who might find the patient asleep during his stay in the hospital. The number of daily visitors was very large. His sons and nephews who were working in Kaduna drove up every day after office hours to see him.

Even on his hospital bed Imam was taking lessons on Islamic studies whenever learned friends visited him. One day in my own presence he asked Alhaji Usman Birnin Kebbi, a noted Islamic scholar living in Zaria, about ablution in a bowl of water by a sickman who could not get down from his bed, whether such a man was allowed to wash his face, hands and feet into a bowl of water. The answer was that he could perform it that way provided he used an empty bowl with somebody assisting with water from a kettle.

The Emir of Minna his Highness Alhaji Ahmadu Bahago sent two among his own closest relatives to see Alhaji Abubakar Imam at hospital. On their way back they were involved in a fatal motor accident in which both of them died on the spot. Their bodies were removed to A.B.U. Hospital inKaduna. Several days passed before the bodies were identified.

Before he was taken ill, Imam once cracked a joke with his eldest grandson, Dr. Muhammad Saifuddin Mora, and said: "Now that you are a medical

doctor, you must not let me die", and they both laughed. Dr. M.S. Mora was in charge of the Missau General Hospital in Bauchi State when he heard about his grandfather's illness. He took time off and came down to see him. He stayed at Zaria to the end of the illness.

When hope was turning into despair concerning Imam's survival, some of his friends suggested that he should be flown to a specialist hospital in London, but the competent authority of A.B.U. Teaching Hospital, Professor F. Fakunle, opined that one of his major complaints was in connection with his liver, and that at that material time a liver transplant was not possible in England. The U.K. question was therefore shelved indefinitely. Professor Fakunle however commended the courage of Dr. Imam and his compliance with medical advice.

A day or two before he breathed his last, Imam asked to see Sheikh Abubakar Mahmoud Gummi who was in Kaduna and myself as his most senior son-in-law. The request came, as a matter of urgency, as if he wanted to make a will. When I went to him he said, "*Shi ke nan,*" literally meaning "that is all' and those were to be his last words to me. A few minutes later Sheikh Abubakar Mahmoud Gummi arrived from Kaduna. After asking after his health, the patient whispered something in the ear of the Sheikh. I visited him again the following day and found him speechless, but he proffered his hand for a shake which I shook, not knowing that he was bidding me the final farewell!

His eldest grandson Dr. M.S. Mora was constantly with him at the hospital and was by his bedside among the A.B.U. doctors when Imam became unconscious. Everything humanly possible was done to make him live longer but in vain. Surah 10, verse 49 of the Quran is relevant here: "Say: I have no power over any harm or profit to myself except as God Willeth. To every people is a term appointment: When their term is reached, not an hour can they cause delay, nor (an hour) can they advance (it in anticipation)". On Friday, 19th June, 1981, at 3.52 p. m. Alhaji Abubakar Imam's hour of departure to the great beyond struck. *"Inna Lillahi wa Inna illaihi rajiuna!"* (To God we belong, and to Him is our return). At the time of his death Professor Fakunle remarked that he had never seen a stronger man physically, spiritually and morally.

It was Dr. M.S. Mora who broke the sad news to Alhaji Baba Ahmed and myself that Alhaji Abubakar Imam had succumbed to death. He was seventy years old (1911 — 1981) and left behind his wife and fourteen children; seven males and seven females with 42 grand children.

IMAM'S FUNERAL

On Friday, 19th June, 1981, the nation was shocked with the sad news of the irreparable loss of Alhaji Abubakar Imam at the Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Zaria. At seventy, Imam was ageless. He was one of those fortunate few who never seem to grow old.

Now to the funeral arrangement. For the convenience of the bereaved family some of whom were away from Zaria, the relatives and other sympathisers who would wish to be present at the funeral and in order to announce the sad news to the nation over the radio, the funeral was delayed to the following day, Saturday, 20th June, 1981. The authorities of the A.B.U. Institute of Health very kindly co-operated and agreed to keep his remains overnight.

The time for the funeral was fixed at 9.00a.m. but before then over a thousand people had gathered at No. 19/20 Imam Road, Tudun Wada, Zaria which was the deceased place of residence. The Emir of Zazzau His Highness Alhaji Dr. Shehu Idris, C.F.R., who was abroad at the time was represented by the Waziri of Zazzau, Alhaji Nuhu Yahaya, together with members of the Emirate Council and other eminent personalities.

People came from all over the country, with large groups coming from Sokoto, Katsina, Kano, Jos, Kaduna, Kagara, Minna, Kaiama and Lagos, some of them travelling overnight, to attend the funeral.

The Governor of Kaduna State was represented at the funeral by the then Deputy Governor, Alhaji Abba Musa Rimi, with a large delegation. With grief in the hearts and tears in the eyes of the bereaved family, it was difficult to have seen and identified everyone of the very large funeral gathering, especially as a condolence book was not opened.

A relative of the deceased, Malam Abubakar Mai Ni'ima, from Maska Sabuwa in Funtua Local Government Area, conducted the funeral prayers after the body had been washed and shrouded by Alhaji Gambo Sawaba, Alhaji Umaru Aboki and Alhaji Baba Ahmed. He was buried in accordance with Muslim rites at Dambo Cementary near the graves of his senior wife Hajiya (Mrs) Aminatu Imam who died suddenly of heart attack on 12th September, 1979, and his grandson Mu'azu Mora who was tragically drowned in a well on 1st November, 1980, at a tender age of 10 years. Thus that great chapter was closed for ever! May Allah grant them pardon. Amen.

PERSONAL CONDOLENCES

The three customary mourning days were observed from dawn to dusk during which hundreds of people, mostly those who did not have the opportunity to attend the funeral, called in person to offer their condolences. For several weeks after, condolences came from distant places. For lack of space we can only mention the following:

> The Head of State, President Shehu Shagari sent a delegation led by his personal Physician, Dr. Dalhatu Sarki Tafida. He also sent a condonlence letter through his Royal Highness the Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Dr. Shehu Idris, C.F.R. a copy of which is reproduced in this chapter.

The delegation from His Royal Highness the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, was headed by his son Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Mai-Wurno,

Ciroman Sokoto. The Chief of Kagara, His Royal Highness Alhaji Attahiru came himself. The delegation sent by the Emir of Borgu, His Royal Highness Alhaji Musa Mohammed Kigera III was led by his brother Alhaji Zakari Mohammed, Sarkin Agwara. It delivered two letters, one to Alhaji Sani Imam and in it was enclosed *N*100.00 for the family of the deceased and the other was addressed to me. The Emir of Kaiama, His Royal Highness Alhaji Mohammed Tukur Mora Tasude II sent a five-man delegation led by the Ubandoma of Kaiama with a letter addressed to me which enclosed ₦50.00 for the family.

A delegation was also received from the Emir of Gwandu His Royal Highness, Alhaji Haruna Rasheed and another from the Emir of Daura His Royal Highness, Alhaji Muhammadu Bashar. At the time of Imam's death theth rone of Katsina was vacant following the demise of the Emir Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo, but the Magajin Gari of Katsina Alhaji Muhammadu Kabir Usman[1] (now the Emir of Katsina) came in person to offer condolences on his own behalf and on behalf of Katsina Local Government Area of which he was District Head. He also generously presented *N*50.00 as a personal donation to the family.

Three other delegations came from Kaiama sent by the ex-Emir of Kaiama, Malam Haliru Kiyaru II; Alhaji Suleiman the Dangaladima of Kaiama who was not allowed by his sons to come in person on the ground of old age (he was then ninety-nine years old); and from the Kaiama Community. The three delegations were led by Alhaji Ahmed Haliru the Sardauna of Kaiama; Cpl. Zubairu Ango Suleiman; and Alhaji Umaru Bani the Sarkin Makera of Kaiama respectively.

Many individuals also came to express their sympathy and pray for the soul of the deceased. They included:

1) *From Kano:* The Makama of Kano and District Head of Dawakin Tofa (later Madaki of Kano) Alhaji Dr. Bello Kano; Alhaji Aminu Kano the President of the defunct People's Redemption Party (P.R.P.) with a large following: Dr. Isa Hashim; Alhaji Abubakar Kaiama resident in Kano and M. Haroun Rashid Adamu then Managing Director of Triumph Publishing Company Limited, Kano.
2) *From Katsina:* The Talban Katsina Alhaji Ibrahim, the Tafidan Katsina Alhaji Musa 'Yar Aduwa (now Mutawalli): the Sarkin Yakin Katsina Alhaji Hassan Rafin Dadi; the Wamban Katsina Alhaji Dammalam; the Sarkin Fadan Katsina Alhaji Damale Kaita; Sarkin Arewan Katsina Alhaji Muhammadu Rabi'u, Alhaji Abu Jika, Alhaji Barau Yaro and many other dignitaries.
3) *From Azare:* The Madakin Katagum Alhaji Sule Katagum who presented *N*300.00 for the widow of the deceased; and Alhaji Muhammadu Bawa Bulkachua (former Ambassador); were among the early arrivals.

1. See a brief biography at Appendix iii.

4) *From Ilorin:* Alhaji Jimada the Nakordi of Pategi.
5) *From Lagos:* Alhaji Aliyu Magaji a very close old friend of the late Imam. He presented *N*500.00 for the bereaved family.

CONDOLENCE TELEGRAMS

In addition to the personal calls 19 condolence telegrams were received from the following: the Owelle of Onitsha, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe from Nsukka; Waziri Adamu Fika from Lagos; Dr. N. Pweddon from Yola (Imam's Prospective Biographer); Alhaji Shehu G. Omar Ilorin; Alhaji Adamu Salihu Kano; Alhaji Datti Ibrahim Sokoto and Mr. Adeniran, a Pharmacist in Lagos. Others are M. T. Omar Kaiama; Sa'adu Aluko Ilorin; Alhaji Musa Sanye Pategi; Alhaji Shekarau Omar Bauchi: Oti and Family Kaduna and Alhaji Dr. Chief Aliyu Adeyanju, Ebute Metta, Lagos. The rest are Abdu Ali Bida; O. T. Ososami, Yaba, Lagos; Dan Momo Kano; Salihu Ahmadu Zaria; Vincent Okoye Kaduna and Bayo Salami Ilorin.

Owing to space limitation only two of the telegrams received have been reproduced and these are from the Owelle of Onitsha and Alhaji Adamu Salihu Kano:

The Owelle of Onitsha Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe:

THIS IS WITH SADNESS THAT I LEARNT OF THE DEPARTURE OF MY FRIEND ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM KAGARA STOP THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO HE WAS MY CONSTANT COMPANION DURING WEST AFRICAN PRESS DELEGATION TO LONDON STOP SINCE THEN OUR FRIENDSHIP HAD LINGERED THROUGH THE YEARS STOP NIGERIA HAS LOST A GREAT JOURNALIST AND POET IN HIS DEMISE STOP MAY ALLAH GRANT REPOSE TO HIS SOUL STOP ZIK".

He sent it in care of the Emir of Zazzau.

ALHAJI ADAMU SALIHU KANO

ACCEPT MY HEARTFELT CONDOLENCE FOR THE GREAT LOSS OF OUR BELOVED FATHER ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM WHO DURING HIS LIFE TIME CONTRIBUTED IMMENSELY TOWARDS OUR DEVELOPMENT SOCIALLY ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY AND VEHEMENTLY FOUGHT AGAINST LAZINESS ILLITERACY AND CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA STOP MAY ALMIGHTY ALLAH GRANT HIM ETERNAL PEACE AMEN STOP ADAMU SALIHU.

CONDOLENCE LETTERS

About one hundred and forty condolence letters were received. The most notable ones are from the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari; Alhaji Muhammad Awwal Ibrahim, Governor of Niger State; Alhaji Abubakar Tatari Ali, Governor of Bauchi State; Kaduna State Legislature, Jamma'atu Nasril Islam (National Headquarters); the Emir of Borgu; the Emir of Daura; the Emir of Kaiama and the Chief of Moroa, Malam Tagwai Sambo. Others are the Vice Chancellor of University of Maiduguri Professor Jibril Aminu (now Minister of Education); Public Complaints Commissioner Alhaji Bello Uthman, Kaduna; Chief Commissioner Public Complaints Commission (Headquarters, Lagos), Mr. Firminu H. E. Brisibe; New Nigerian Newspapers Limited, Kaduna; University Press Limited, Ibadan; Rap Industrial Publicity Limited, Kaduna South; Nigeria Dairies Company Limited; Nigerian Hoechst Kaduna; Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria; Reverend Canon H. O. Mohammed; Alhaji Adamu Ciroma; the Dangaladima of Kaiama Alhaji Suleiman; Malam Mohammed Banengo Haliru Kaiama; and Alhaji A. B. Haliru (Koton Karfe) from the Ministry of Works and Transport Kwara State. The rest are too numerous to be mentioned but from overseas condolences came from the following: Alhaji Muntaka Commassie from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; Mr. Randall E. Ellison from London, England; Professor A. Neil Skinner from Wisconsin, U.S.A.; Mrs. Margarent G. Skinner from Wisconsin and Mrs. Mary O'Hara from North Queensland, Australia.

For obvious reasons only a few of the letters have been published and they are as follows:

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
STATE HOUSE, LAGOS

24th June, 1981.

His Highness,
Alhaji Shehu Idris,
Emir of Zaria,
Emir's Palace,
Zaria.

Your Highness,

CONDOLENCE ON ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM

I learned with shock about the death of Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam on Friday 19th of this month. I therefore write to express the deep sympathy shared by myself and my Government on this sad loss to the whole country Nigeria.

The late Dr. Abubakar Imam has become famous in this country for his effort toward general enlightenment of the people as a first generation journalist

and writer during the colonial era. He entered this profession at the time most people in the northern part of Nigeria looked upon western education with suspicion and fear as an influence that would have a damaging effect on the religion and culture of the society. His influence helped in a tremendous way to wipe out this fear from the minds of the people. Dr. Abubakar Imam led that small group of northern Nigerians in the great enterprise of establishing the Hausa paper *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* which up to the present has no equal in popularity among Nigeria's indigeneous language newspapers. His talent and foresight led him to write *Magana Jari Ce* and *Tafiya Mabudin Ilmi.* His books helped to mobilise people to develop themselves by themselves. They have become reference materials on the social, cultural and economic life of the people of this country. They have also strengthened the fame achieved by late Dr. Abubakar Imam.

The late Dr. Abubakar Imam was not only versed in western education; he was well learned in the Qur'an and Islamic judicial system of Shari'a. So wide was his experience and dedication to justice that his last public office was as Commissioner for Public Complaints in Kaduna State.

Please extend my condolence to the family and friends of the late Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam. May Almighty Allah grant him pardon and strengthen his family and all our people the patience to sustain the loss. May Allah help us and our successors to emulate his good example.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd).
ALHAJI SHEHU SHAGARI
PRESIDENT OF FEDERAL REPUBLIC
OF NIGERIA.

Ref. No. GHNS/13/121.
Office of the Governor,
Government House,
Niger State of Nigeria,
Minna.
22nd June, 1981

Alhaji Sani Imam,
Local Government Secretariat,
Kagara.

Dear Alhaji Sani,

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE

I am writing to convey to you and the entire family of the late Dr. Abubakar Imam my profound grief and sorrow on the death of Dr. Imam which occured in Zaria this last Friday. Dr. Imam's passing away, particularly at this critical time in the political evolution of this country, cannot but be seen as a big

blow. However, we can take consolation in the very fact that the numerous scholarly literary contributions of the deceased during his life time would for a long time to come provide a material source for the enrichment of our social and political outlook.

May Almighty Allah be pleased with the soul of this legend of our time and grant his bereaved family the will and fortitude to bear this great loss.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
MUHAMMAD AWWAL IBRAHIM
GOVERNOR
NIGER STATE.

Ref: No. GH/HEP/S/N/149.
Government House,
Bauchi State,
Private Mail Bag 59,
Bauchi.

24th June, 1981.

Alhaji Sani Imam,
Livestock and Meat Authority,
Kaduna.

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE

I am writing these few lines to join thousands of others who in one way or the other condoled you on the death of your illustrious father the late Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam. At least in the Northern part of this country, the late Abubakar Imam was unparalled in the significant role he played in the literary field. His writings and the famous newspaper, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* of which he was the founder are still clear testimony of his great contributions towards educational development of this great country in general and Northern parts of Nigeria in particular.

2. On behalf of myself, the Government and entire people of Bauchi State I wish to extend our heartfelt sorrows and sympathies for this great loss. I am sure you will be kind enough to extend these condolences to the family of the deceased. I pray that God, Almighty will grant him eternal peace and happiness in Heaven. May his soul rest in perfect peace. Amen.

(Sgd)
ABUBAKAR TATARI ALI.
GOVERNOR
BAUCHI STATE

Ref: No. LEG/S/100/Vol.1/31.
Kaduna State Legislature,
Lugard Hall,
P.M.B. 2125,
Kaduna.

26th June, 1981.

Alhaji Mustafa Imam,
Tudun Wada,
Zaria,

CONDOLENCE: THE LATE ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM

The Kaduna State House of Assembly, deeply regrets to hear the death of the late Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam, great pioneer in Hausa Journalism, authority in Hausa language and literature and a great learned man.

2. We have no words to express the depth of our sorrow and the irreparable loss of the late Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam. Please accept our condolence.

3. A delegation of five Honourable Members led by Honourable Alhaji Muhammad Lawal Sarkin Fulani Shekiyel, has been sent by the Honourable House to condole you and all the remaining members of the family.

4. We pray Almighty Allah to give you and the Family fortitude and courage to bear the loss.

5. *ALLAH YA JIKANSHI YA RAHAMSHESHI, ALLAH YA BADA HAKURIN RASHINSHI. AMIN.*

Yours in Sorrow,

(SGD)
BELLO LADAN
CLERK TO THE LEGISLATURE.

Jama'atu Nasril Islam,
National Headquarters,
P.O. Box 96,
Kaduna.

23rd June, 1981.

Tel. Islam

Telephone 212048.

The Bereaved Family of
Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam,
Zaria.

Assalamu alaikum.

TO CONDOLE THE DEATH OF ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM

I am directed by Jama'atu Nasiril Islam (National Headquarters) to write you this letter of condolence on the death of the late Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him and rest his soul in perfect peace. Amen.

It will be recalled with appreciation that the deceased was a foundation member of this organisation. He continued to play a significant role towards the aspiration of Jama'atu Nasril Islam, and he remained a source of inspiration for the advancement of Islam to the end of his life. We pray that Allah may compensate him with a befitting reward.

I am to reiterate to you the sympathy of Jama'atu Nasril Islam on the mournful incident and pray that Allah in His Mercy may grant you the heart to bear the irrepearable loss with patience and calm. Amen.

Yours in Islam,

(SGD)
M. B. MAHMUDU
ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMISSION
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS

e/o 41 NORMAN WILLIAMS STREET
SOUTH-WEST IKOYI, LAGOS

Ref. No. PCC/HQ/ADM/21/S.7/229.
26th June, 1981.

P.O.M. 12710
Telegrams Complaints
Telephones 680596

Alhaji B. Uthman,
Commissioner,
Public Complaints Commission,
9 Hospital Road,
P.M.B. 2015,
Kaduna.
Kaduna State.

ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM: LETTER OF CONDOLENCE

It was with a very heavy heart that I received the news of the sudden death of Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam, former Public Complaints Commissioner, Kaduna State.

2. Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam had rendered very valuable services to this country, in various capacities. But he excelled himself in the diligence with which he carried out his duties as Public Commissioner, Kaduna. It is on record that he employed the powers of this Commission in giving succour and redress to the aggrieved in Kaduna State to the admiration of all.

3. On behalf of my fellow Commissioners and the entire staff of the Commission I extend to you my condolences over the sad loss of such a cherished and upright Nigerian, and implore you to pass same on to the members of his family in this their hour of grief.

4. May God give them the courage to bear this irreparable loss; and may the soul of Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam rest in perfect peace.

(Sgd.)
Firminu H.E. Brisibe,
Chief Commissioner,
Public Complaints Commsision.

UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI
BAMA ROAD,
P.M.B. 1069,
Maiduguri,
NIGERIA.
24th June, 1981.

Ref. No. VC/A.97/Vol.1

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Alhaji Mustafa Imam,
Chief Pharmacist,
Ministry of Health,
Kaduna State,
Kaduna.

Dear Mustafa,

INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHI RAJI'UN !

On behalf of the Council, Senate, Staff and Students of the University of Maiduguri, I wish to extend our deepest condolences to you and to the entire family on the sad loss of your illustrious father, Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam. *Allah Ya ji Kanshi. Allah Ya rahamshe shi. Allah sa ya huta. Allah Ya kyautata namu karshen. Sannu Mustafa. Wannan hasara tamu ce duka. Allah Ya ba mu hakurin jimrewa. Amin.*

The name of the late Dr. Abubakar Imam is undoubtedly a household word in this part of the country and in all the places where Hausa is read. It will be superflous to try to recount here his achievements in *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo, Magana Jari Ce, Tafiya Mabudin Ilmi, Tarihin Annabi* and a host of other literary superlatives through to the chairmanship of the Public Service Commission of the former Northern Nigeria and his role as the first Public Complaints Commissioner in the country amongst his many admirably accomplished assignments at the Federal, State and Community levels. *Allah Ya saka mashi da rahama da jin kai.*

He was truly a great man, a public servant, a devoted Muslim and a shining sample to his fellow men of all callings and of all ages.

We pray to Allah to shower abundant mercy on the soul of your late father and to give us all the courage and the fortitude to beat this great loss.

Once more, *Allah Ya ji kansa. Allah Ya ba da hakuri.*

Yours sincerely,

(SGD)
JIBRIL AMINU,
VICE-CHANCELLOR.

New Nigerian Newspapers Ltd,
P.O. Box 254,
Kaduna.
22nd June, 1981.

Phone: 243386—8.
Alhaji Mustafa Imam,
Ministry of Health & Social Welfare,
Pharmacy Inspectorate Division,
Kaduna State,
Kaduna.

Dear Sir,

DEATH OF DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM

I am writing to convey the condolence of the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the New Nigerian Newspapers Limited on the death of Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam.

The whole period of service of the late Dr. Abubakar Imam to the New Nigerian Newspapers Limited has not only been historic but was a most useful period for the Board, Management and Staff. His mature and fatherly advice and guidance in the conduct of the affairs of the New Nigerian Newspapers Limited at all levels had been examplary. It was this guidance which has indeed been the foundation on which the Company has been building its journalistic professional integrity.

The last part of the late Dr. Abubakar Imam's services to this Company was as a Consultant to our vernacular Newspaper *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.*

It is a great pity that he has not lived to see the fruit of the generous consultancy services he had started giving for the improvement of the general content and quality of the very paper he had the honour to edit as its first Editor.

May Almighty Allah forgive him, and may his soul rest in perfect peace. Amen.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.)
Alhaji Tukur Othman,
Managing Director.

32, Oppidans Road,
Hampstead,
London NW 3 AG.
July 18th, 1981.

Dear Alhaji Mustafa,

I heard recently from Malam Bello, Makaman Kano, who was over here for medical treatment, the very sad news of the death of your illustrious father. Alhaji Abubakar Imam. I am truly very distressed indeed to receive this news of the death of my old friend and greatly valued colleague.

As you know we were together on the Public Service Commission of the Northern Region 1958—1961, and I was very glad that he was chosen to succeed me as Chairman when I retired in 1961.

He had a very distinguished career in the public service of the North. First, his valuable pioneering work as author and translator of Hausa fables and stories. Second, as the Editor of *Gaskiya*, which brought him so much well deserved fame in the North, and throughout Nigeria. Third, as the lively motivating force with Dr. R.M. East of Norla· Fourth his work in connection with the Public Service in several important assignments after 1961.

The North has good cause to thank Allah for his work, his particular genius in language and administration and for his very special gifts of friendship.

I pray that he may rest in peace.

Allah ya ji kansa. Amin.

In deepest sympathy,
Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
RANDALL E. ELLISON.

2215 Eton Ridge,
Madison,
Wisconsin,
53705 U.S.A.
2nd July, 1981.

Dear Uwargida and Hajiya,

I am writing this letter to sympathise with you on Alhaji Abubakar Imam's death. I was shocked when I heard the sad news. Please accept my heartfelt condolence on the great loss. May Allah give you the heart to bear the irreparable loss with calm and may Allah grant Alhaji's soul rest in perfect peace. Amen.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam and my husband were old friends. My husband told me that when Nigeria achieved Independence and he was leaving the

country for good, Alhaji Abubakar Imam was the only person who saw him off at the railway station. He will never forget that.

My husband, Benjy and I are well except that our hearts are filled with grief on Alhaji's departure.

By the courtesy of Alhaji Bello Mohammed this letter of condolence is coming to you. With regards.

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.)
MARGARET H. SKINNER.

A record of all the correspondences has been kept while the condolence telegrams and letters were all acknowledged.

As soon as the Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Shehu Idris, returned from his overseas visit a large group of Imam's relatives and friends visited him and received his condolence at the Palace.

A GROUP OF THE BEREAVED FAMILY TOURED TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR SYMPATHY

After the rude shock given by the passing away of Alhaji Abubakar Imam had been absorbed and sustained, a group of TEN was organised to tour round to express appreciation for sympathy. It consisted of some of the late Imam's friends, in-laws, sons and nephews as follows:

1. Alhaji Ibrahim H. Musa
2. Alhaji Gambo Sawaba.
3. Alhaji Muhammadu Jibo, M.F.R.
4. Alhaji Sani Imam.
5. Alhaji Mustafa Imam.
6. Alhaji Bashir Ibrahim.
7. Malam Kamaruddin Imam.
8. Malam Najmuddin Imam.
9. Malam Surajuddin Imam.
10. Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora.

We visited a number of cities or towns including:— Katsina, Kano, on to Dawakin Tofa, Sokoto, Birnin Kebbi, Minna, Kagara (Niger State), New Bussa and Kaiama (Borgu Local Government Area of Kwara State), and thanked the V.I.P.s. of those places for sending condolence delegations or calling personally. Also in keeping with and accepted etiquette, the group condoled them on Imam's death. In addition, it sympathised with the Emir of Minna on the tragic death of two members of the delegation he sent to visit Alhaji Abubakar Imam at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Zaria. The reciprocal visits were very much appreciated.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

TRIBUTES BY SOME FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES

1. Alhaji Muhammadu Bashar, Emir of Daura 243
2. Alhaji Ibrahim Mashi, Talban Katsina 249
3. Alhaji Isa Kaita, Wazirin Katsina 252
4. Alhaji Ahmadu Coomassie 255
5. Alhaji Baba Ahmed 256
6. Alhaji Haliru Binji 262
7. Alhaji Abubakar Tunau, Kayayen Sardauna 272
8. Alhaji Ibrahim Halilu Musa 276
9. Alhaji Abdu Gusau, Garkuwan Sokoto 279
10. Alhaji Muhammadu Wule 280
11. Alhaji Muhammadu Jibo, M.F.R. 281
12. Alhaji Usman Mani, Funtua 284
13. Alhaji Husaini Mashi 289
14. Alhaji Aliyu Dan Yari 290
15. Alhaji Musa Adamu (Jam'iyya) 291

IN ACTIVE POLITICS WITH MY GUARDIAN ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM

BY

ALHAJI MUHAMMADU BASHAR
EMIR OF DAURA

There is no doubt that I am among many Northern Nigerians who bene fited by being associated with the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam. I know some areas of his endeavour, some of the efforts he made to help his fellow countrymen and I am conversant with a number of his virtues. He looked very simple but he was firm and thorough in whatever he did. His fearless and benevolent disposition made him a popular public figure. He was a disciplinarian at home as he had been at school as a teacher. He was never soft with his students or his children. He was a man who did not spare the rod in his training programmes. That was the man who became my guardian in 1938.

I knew the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam when I was a student at the former Katsina Middle School where he was a teacher. When I was admitted into the Middle School, my late father, the Magajin Gari of Daura requested Alhaji Abubakar Imam's elder brother, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara (Wali of Katsina) to be my guardian. Malam Bello Kagara was an Arabic Teacher at the Katsina Higher College (Barewa College). When the college was being removed to Kaduna in 1938, he had to relinquish his guardianship of me and return me to my grandfather, the late Emir of Daura, Alhaji Abdurrahman. The Emir then gave me a letter to the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam with a request to take over my guardianship. Alhaji Abubakar Imam was firm with me as indeed he was with his own children. In due course, I became used to his strict method of home training from which I benefited eventually.

In 1945, I gained admission into the Kaduna College (Barewa College) as student No. 531. After I had completed my secondary education, I attended a course at the Institute of Administration, Zaria, otherwise known as Kongo. Again Alhaji Abubakar Imam then editor of the Hausa Newspaper, the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, was asked to look after me. Whenever I asked him for some money he would take me to task with machine-gun questions: "What are you going to do with it? Is it really necessary that you should have it? Did you not take something last time you came to see me?" To avoid such questions I stopped asking him for anything. If he asked me whether I needed anything I would answer in the negative. But he was regular in giving me my subsistence money and pocket money.

Two years after the course at the Institute of Administration, Zaria, I was selected as an Honourable Member of the Northern House of Assembly. From among the members some were further hand-picked to the Legislative Council in Lagos. I was among the lucky ones selected and so was Alhaji Abubakar Imam. In those days Legislators were selected purely on merit without discrimination of either ethnic grouping or locality. But to the best of my knowledge, the first Legislative Council that was established in Northern Nigeria, when I was still at school was the Council of Chiefs, with a few northern elites like Malam Abubakar Imam, Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Sardauna of Sokoto and the Makaman Bida in attendance. The Council of Chiefs played an important role in initiating development projects in the Northern Region. But it was the House of Assembly and the Northern Members at the Legislative Council (House of Representatives) in Lagos that eventually led the traditional rulers to the attainment of self-government for the North.

Before the inaugural meeting of the Legislative Council in Lagos, Alhaji Abubakar Imam voluntarily convened an unscheduled meeting of the Northern Members with himself serving as a moderator or co-ordinator. The meeting took the form of a miniature orientation course to enlighten and broaden the outlook of the members. At the meeting he informed us about the existence of a Northern Cultural Association at Zaria, which was founded in 1948, to serve

and protect the interests of the Northern Region of Nigeria. It was also to defend the rights of the Northerners. The cultural organisation was called *"Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa"*. Thus from the inception Alhaji Abubakar Imam won the admiration, confidence and support of his Northern colleagues. At that ad-hoc meeting he stressed the importance of working together as a team and speaking with one voice to avoid a possible Southern infiltration to divide us and rule. He urged that no loophole should be allowed to facilitate southern domination at the Legislative Council. At that meeting, which was convened in 1951, were personalities like Malam Aliyu Makaman Bida (Alhaji Aliyu the Makama of Bida, North Regional Minister of Education and then of Finance); Malam Ahmadu Ra6ah, Sardaunan Sokoto (Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of the Northern Region); Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria); Shettima Kashim (Alhaji Sir Kashim Ibrahim and first Indigenous Governor of the Northern Region); Malam Muhammadu Ribadu (Alhaji Muhammadu Ribadu and Minister of Defence); Malam Bello Kano (Alhaji Bello Kano the Makama of Kano, a Northern Minister at that time, and later the Madaki of Kano); Malam Shehu Ahmed Sarkin Shanu of Kano (Alhaji Shehu Ahmed the Madaki of Kano); Malam Yahaya Ilorin (Alhaji Yahaya Ilorin a Northern Minister and currently the Madaki of Ilorin); Malam Ibrahim Mashi (Alhaji Ibrahim Mashi formerly Sarkin Gabas then Iyan Katsina and currently the Talba of Katsina); Malam Muhammadu Sanusi (Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi, N.A. Treasurer, then District Head of Takalafiya and later Waziri of Zazzau) and the rest of us. We unanimously endorsed Malam Abubakar Imam's proposal without reservation and pledged to stand by it through thick-and-thin.

Having regard to the foregoing, I can take the liberty to say that Alhaji Abubakar Imam was the first Northern Legislator to enlighten his northern colleagues for the progress of the Northern Region in particular and Nigeria in general. Intially, he was our spokesman in Lagos. Before the Northern members would depart for Lagos for a Legco meeting, a preliminary meeting would be held in Kaduna to go through the agenda. The views of Abubakar Imam were usually regarded as very important at such meetings, by virtue of his scholarly inclination and reading habit. If an item was a type to be handled by radical youngmen, such members would be selected to speak on it on the floor of the House. But if it required the handling of experienced and seasoned legislators Malam Abubakar Imam was almost always the first to set the ball rolling. Indeed as a pathfinder, he found the way and showed it to us before he left us for good.

The Northern Cultural Association *Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa* of which Alhaji Abubakar Imam was a founding member, changed its name to "Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC)", and it was declared a political party in 1951, at its Annual General Meeting held at Tudun Wada, Zaria. The National President, Dr. R.A.B. Dikko was in the chair when the epoch-making decla-

ration was made, following the enrollment, as members, of the Sardauna of Sokoto and Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.

When elections through the Electoral College system were introduced to supersede the hand picking method and to be a forerunner of election through the ballot-box, the colonial administrators split up Nigeria into three political regions: Northern Region, Western Region and Eastern Region and gave all of them equal representation at the centre, Lagos. Alhaji Abubakar Imam then at the zenith of his political power in both Houses in Kaduna and Lagos, was quick in observing that the allocation was done arbitrarily with an ulterior motive, since it was not based on any acceptable criterion for example, population of each of those regions. He at once advised his Northern Colleagues to protest against the lopsided allocation of seats among the three regions. He argued that the division of seats was so made in order to enable the South (Western and Eastern Regions together) to dominate the Northern Region numerically at the centre. At that material time, the Northern Region alone had more than half of the population of Nigeria. He strongly advised and insisted that the Northern Legislators should demand nothing short of one half (Fifty per cent) of the total number of seats at the Legislative Council in Lagos.

The question then arose of how to approach the problem with a view to solving it in favour of the North. He again suggested and it was agreed that a delegation should be sent to the competent Authority in the matter and protest against the arbitrary seat allocation among the three regions and also demand fifty per cent of the total seats for the North. A delegation was sent accordingly, but it failed to make any headway. The authority concerned was adamant to rescind its decision. As a next step to be taken under the circumstances, to retrieve the legitimate share of the Northern seats at the centre, Abubakar Imam suggested that Northerners as a body should all contribute money to appeal to the Colonial Office in London, in pursuance of our inalienable demand. As usual, the suggestion was unanimously supported. The traditional rulers were then put in the picture and they all blessed the move. Therefore a fund raising machinery was set in motion. A government public collection permit for a region-wide public collection was obtained. The people of the North donated generously to the Appeal Fund and a substantial amount was realised. The delegation was about to take off to appeal to the Secretary of State for the Colonies at the Colonial Office in London when the Nigerian Government indicated that it would reconsider the seat allocation situation as requested and demanded by the Northern Region, and it was accordingly reviewed in favour of the North. So the question of going to England was shelved indefinitely.

Now as that victory had been won what should be done with the funds already collected? Government's advice was sought on the issue, and it advised that scholarships should be awarded to suitable Northern Students to pursue higher learning overseas. The advice was accepted and ten students were ac-

cordingly awarded scholarships to study in England and elsewhere overseas. The term "Overseas" however precluded countries like Egypt to become recipients of such students. The term "abroad" would have been more appropriate and all embracing. All the same, the beneficiaries successfully completed their overseas training and are today holding high positions of trust in the Federation of Nigeria.

In 1953, we attended the Legislative Council in Lagos with a specific request for funds to develop Northern Region, and our Southern counterparts tabled a motion for self-government for Nigeria. We solidly voted against the motion, because to accept it would tantamount to allowing ourselves to be stabbed in the back. At that material time, the North did not have a single civil servant serving in Lagos. Even in the North itself only a few had attained senior service status. Moreover, we had a dearth of schools — primary as well as secondary. We were lamentably behind the South in Western education. Our Southern colleagues insisted that self-government must be granted. Alhaji Abubakar Imam strongly advised his Northern colleagues not to yield an inch because concurrence then would be detrimental to the North. He urged that the motion be put in abeyance to enable the Northerners give thought to it and study it in detail. When we returned to the North it was suggested and agreed that we should suspend Richard's Constitution and with it, the question of self-government; but alternatively, the regions should embark upon self-development projects which should be finance-aided by the central government.

Evidently, Alhaji Abubakar Imam was one of those politicians who did not aspire to cling to House membership or to use the opportunity of being an Honourable member as a spring board from which to jump to power. He was a pathfinder pure and simple, and as soon as he had delivered his "mission", as it were, he resigned both memberships of Kaduna and Lagos and returned to his cherished profession — authorship. He was the first Honourable Member of the Northern House of Assembly and the House of Representatives to resign his membership on personal grounds, when many members would leave no stone unturned to perpetuate their stay. Disappointment would appear to be one of the main causes of his untimely resignation. He was always straight-forward in all his dealings, be it official or private. Perhaps he sensed that politics was a dirty game and a thankless undertaking. So he withdrew from politics when the going was good. Once on the floor of the House of Representatives, he ably contributed to a debate on Third Party Insurance. He strongly attacked the policy from Islamic point of view. He was unanimously misunderstood by our Southern counterparts but we, particularly Muslims among the Northern block, understood and supported him. Nevertheless we were defeated. That isolated incident might have been the last straw that broke the camel's back. His exit from politics was a great blow to the North.

At home in the North, Alhaji Abubakar Imam, through his powerful, pen made the unity of the traditional rulers a reality. As a person with tremendous

foresight, he was able to see through certain dubious development plans the European administrators had for the North. They knew fully well that in the North the masses were solidly behind the traditional rulers: — Emirs and Chiefs, who were then very powerful; in contrast to the South, where there had been general awakening and some development, thanks to their being more advanced in Western education. The colonial rulers sensed that if the power of the Northern traditional rulers was not curbed, they might become a bottle-neck to real development and progress in the Region. With that conviction, they appeared to have devised certain policies calculated to gradually minimise the power of Emirs and Chiefs. But Alhaji Abubakar Imam, through his sugar-coated writings in the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, the only Hausa paper then in circulation in Nigeria, wittingly counteracted the curbing efforts being made by the Government. He relentlessly continued to seek the views of the traditional rulers on major issues, thereby indirectly broadening their outlook and making them aware of vital matters in the offing.

It should be recalled that Abubakar Imam was the first Hausa Editor of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, with the establishment of which general awakening seemed to have been ushered in the Northern Region. Imam's only ambition in life was for rapid development and progress in the North, and through his foresight and bold suggestions, the North was able to make some progress in education, health services and communication links in roads and highways. For example, as a result of his London trip in 1943, on the First West African Press Delegation, he met Lord Lugard on two occassions through Sir Hanns Vischer. His meeting with Lord Lugard and subsequent correspondence with him yielded valuable dividends. The central government of Nigeria started awarding scholarships to suitable Northerners in 1945, to study in England, and also the British Council started sending elderly educated Northerners on sight seeing trips to England in 1946. Alhaji Abubakar Imam was ever active doing something, either writing something or engaged in a meaningful discussion with somebody about the progress of the North, in one aspect or another.

Any critical reader of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* in 1939 through the forties would not fail to recognise the euphemistic style adopted by the editor, Alhaji Abubakar Imam to convey messages of enlightenment to the traditional rulers, the elite and the masses of the Northern Region of Nigeria. Right from the beginning, to encourage literate Northerners to acquire a reading habit, he named the Hausa Paper *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* that is, truth is worth more than a penny. The paper was then sold for a penny (Today you cannot get it for less than 50 kobo). The price of the paper was made within the reach of almost every literate Northerner, although the purchasing power of a penny was very high. In those good old days one could fetch a good fowl in the market for two to three pence. Today one can hardly get a sizeable chicken for less than ₦10.00 (Ten Naira). In some parts of Northern Nigeria at that material time, the minimum labour wage was 4d (four pence). Therefore, it was a big sacrifice for an unskilled worker to give a penny a month to obtain the Newspaper and

get true information about the war and current events. It was a wonderful strategy to have launched the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* in 1939, to coincide with the outbreak of the Second World War otherwise known as Hitler's War in the North. Many people read the paper religiously from cover to cover because it initially circulated once a month.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam had a popular prayer which he repeated often in the *Gaskiya Tu Fi Kwabo*, it is "May Allah show us what is right and give us the courage to abide by it, and may He show us what is wrong and give us the courage to avoid it".

In all the literary works of Alhaji Abubakar Imam, I am most impressed with his *Tarihin Annabi Da Na Halifofi* (Life of Mohammed and the Rightly Guided Caliphs) because he explained everything simply and clearly, so that the least brain can understand. Before that publication, beggars singing the praises of the Prophet (SAW), were prone to exaggeration. That book has greatly enlightened the Hausa reading public. May God forgive his sins and rest his soul in perfect peace. Amen.

(Sgd.)
Muhammad Bashar
Emir of Daura.

MY MEMORIES ABOUT MALAM ABUBAKAR IMAM

BY

ALHAJI IBRAHIM
THE TALBA OF KATSINA

I first met Malam Abubakar Imam in 1932, at the former Katsina Middle School, where I was then Headmaster. He and Alhaji Isa Kaita (now the Waziri of Katsina) passed out as teachers in that year from the Katsina Training College (now known as Barewa College). They were both presented to me at the same time. After the usual greeting formalities, I asked them about their areas of specialisation or their fields of interest as teachers. While Malam Abubakar Imam would have an option for teaching English, Malam Isa Kaita showed more interest in geography. I therefore assigned them to teach the subjects accordingly, although among the older teachers, some combined two subjects.

Soon Malam Imam showed, by action, that he was a force to reckon with. He was diligent in the performance of his official responsibilities to my admiration. He was so dedicated that he had no room for idle talks or vainglorious activities. He never shelved his responsibility. Many often than not, he remained in his classroom during breaks between lessons, correcting students' exercise books or programming next day's lessons. Students almost always

found him in the classroom. This is a testimony of his good home up-bringing. That is why I had more confidence in him than any other teacher at that material time.

I had a tough time to fight against general lethargy among the Katsina Middle School teachers at the time, but with Abubakar Imam, I had nothing but appreciation, because of his sterling character and quality as a teacher. With regard to co-operation and loyalty to constituted authority, Imam was second to none. If you were looking for him during school hours, and you went to his classroom you would most certainly find him there. He usually preceded his students to the class, while most other teachers had to be reminded that lessons were on and that their respective students were waiting to be taught.

Among his colleagues that is, the other teachers at the Katsina Middle School (defunct), Malam Abubakar Imam had a high sense of humour and he was most approachable. Among his friends, he appreared to have a most cordial relationship with Alhaji Ahmadu Coomassie, perhaps because they were birds of the same feather, in that English was their specialisation as a school subject. Whatever it was, he appeared more at home with Ahmadu Coomassie than any other teacher.

Imam was so married to his subject – English and to writing that these two eclipsed any other interest, with particular reference to games: indoor or outdoor, except of course, during inter-house matches or athletic sports meetings to mark the end of the school year. He also graced inter-house matches with his presence and acted as an umpire at cricket matches between the Middle School and the Katsina Training College (Barewa College). I wish to recall here that he was on the 1931 Katsina College Cricket First Eleven. Regarding his private writings, he had never shown me what he was writing and I did not seek to know what it was about, since that private undertaking did not prevent him from discharging his normal duties to my satisfaction. At any rate, God has enjoined Believers in Islamic Religion against asking unnecessary questions. The pertinent sura and verse are at 5:104 of the Holy Quran, viz:

> "O ye who believe! Ask not questions about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble".

His elder brother, Malam Bello Kagara, who was also his Islamic studies teacher, was however in the picture regarding his journalistic propensity. He also wrote a novel at that time.

Malam Abubakar Imam, as a teacher, was a disciplinarian who did not spare the rod on erring students. In awarding and administering punishment he made prompt decisions and effected them immediately. He punished them himself, he did not report them to me, the Headmaster. Gradually, his students realised that idleness was his number one enemy. In due course, they turned over a new leaf and became more dedicated in their studies. Thus Malam Abubakar Imam succeeded in teaching them by example.

During the evenings when teachers generally took part in football, cricket, hockey and fives among students, Abubakar Imam would be absorbed in writing something worthwhile at school, or correcting student's exercise books.

He was fond of giving home work to students and to stimulate their interest in learning, he took pains to go through every exercise book in detail. The following morning the students concerned would be anxious to attend his class to see the results of their home work, among other things.

Both Malam Abubakar Imam and I lived in the school premises. We lived happily together in an atmosphere of absolute cordiality and understadning at home and at school. The understanding and cordial relationship which existed between us culminated in my marrying one of his younger sisters and God has abundantly blessed the marriage.

The Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko once summoned all the Middle School teachers including Imam to the palace for evading tax. The Emir took us to task to explain why we did not pay tax for several years. We explained that the non-payment of tax was not deliberate, but that human nature being what it is, people seldom paid tax without being asked to pay. We contended that we knew very well that payment of tax was a civic duty but that no tax collector had visited the school to demand payment. After listening to our futile excuse, the Emir commanded us to go and pay tax including arrears without further delay.

Towards the end of November of 1938, a European called Dr. East, visited the Katsina Middle School and discussed the question of Malam Abubakar Imam's release to take up a government appointment. He first consulted the Provincial Education Officer. In my capacity as Headmaster of the school, I was acquainted with the matter and I advised that Malam Abubakar Imam's elder brother, Malam Bello Kagara, should first be approached on it. The visitor and his host proceeded accordingly, but eventually they paid a courtesy call on the Emir, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko. They must have been so directed by Malam Bello Kagara, since the Emir was the head of the Katsina Native Authority, which was the employer of Malam Abubakar Imam. At the palace, the visiting European informed the Emir that the government required the services of Malam Abubakar Imam in connection with the production of a vernacular newspaper (in this case, a Hausa newspaper) to serve the country, Nigeria. He explained that the request for Abubakar Imam's release to be trained to do that job became necessary, since he was found to be the most suitable person for that kind of work. The Emir conceded to the request. After the visitor, who was accompanied by the Katsina Provincial Education Officer, had departed, the Emir sent for Malam Abubakar Imam and acquainted him with the request for his (Abubakar Imam's) release. The Emir said that he was happy that it was in his Emirate that the best person was found for the work the government had in mind. He then peremptorily asked Imam when he would be ready to leave for Zaria to take up the new appointment. Imam replied, "As Your Royal Highness directs". When Imam returned from the Palace he told me about the Emir's directive to which he had no alternative. I said, "What can we do under the circumstances?" A week or so later, Malam Abubakar Imam said goodbye to the Middle School and to us and departed

for Zaria, where he arrived on Thursday, 1st December, 1938. Imam's departure to Zaria did not really come as a surprise, because he had been so much involved in writing books which were used in schools. However, Katsina's loss became Nigeria's gain.

To the best of my knowledge, Malam Abubakar Imam was in the good books of the late Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo. After the demise of the Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko in 1944, after having ruled for 38 years, all the Katsina College Old Boys who were indigenous to Katsina Province, including Malam Abubakar Imam, addressed a joint representation to the Resident Katsina Province, expressing our views and choice regarding succession to the vacant throne, and our unanimous choice was Alhaji Usman Nagogo, who, by the grace of God, succeeded his father in the same year. On becoming Emir, Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo recognised Malam Abubakar Imam as one of his principal private consultants. Although Malam Abubakar Imam lived mostly at Zaria and Kaduna his visits to Katsina were frequent to meet the Emir at the Palace or at the Emir's farm at Kurmiyal. During any Sallah Day, after the Eid prayers, Malam Abubakar Imam would drive to Katsina and stay for a day or two over the Sallah festival. Indeed Malam Abubakar Imam had a special place of honour at the Palace of Katsina, during the 37 years' meritorious reign of Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo (1944 1981), whom he survived for almost three months. When Malam Abubakar Imam attended the late Emir's funeral from Zaria on 18th March, 1981, he was looking very ill. Alas! he was destined not to live long after the death of Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo. He also passed away in Zaria on Friday,19th June, 1981, and his death was a great shock and an irreparable loss to the nation. Following the announcement of the sad news, Alhaji Muhammadu, Kabir Usman, the incumbent Emir of Katsina, then in his capacity as the Magajin Gari of Katsina and District Head of Katsina Local Government Area, personally condoled Imam's bereaved family at Zaria.

May God, in His mercy, rest the souls of the late Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko, Emir of Katsina (1906- 1944), the late Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo, Emir of Katsina (1944 —1981), the late Alhaji Muhammadu Bello (Wali of Katsina) and the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam, in perfect peace. Amen.

(Sgd)
Ibrahim Mashi
Talban Katsina.

FROM ALHAJI ISA KAITA THE WAZIRI OF KATSINA

Dr. Abubakar Imam was born at Kagara in the year 1911 and I was born in Katsina almost in the same year. He was admitted in the Katsina Provincial School, the only Elementary School in Katsina then, a few months before me. I joined him in 1923 after my elder brother Mamman Kisagare was withdrawn from the School.

We lived in the same compound, in the house captained by the late Alhaji Maman Ja who later became Maradi, the Village Head of Kurfi.

After four years we were admitted to the Katsina Training College in 1927. Whilst we were pursuing western education, Imam and myself continued to study the Qur'an and Arabic literature under Malam Bello Kagara, his elder brother who later became an Alkali in Katsina and then Wali of Katsina. I became completely part and parcel of the family though my father was the Waziri of Katsina at that time.

We passed out from the Training College successfully and were employed by the Katsina Native Authority as teachers. After six years we parted company, as he was transferred to Zaria. During the six years we were teachers at Katsina Middle School, we saw a lot of each other.

It was during his teaching career that Imam started writing books in Hausa like *Magana Jari Ce, Karamin Sani Kukumi* and many others. It makes me laugh whenever I read any of these books, because most of the characters were either our children or servants. There were times when he wrote quite a lot of the stuff right in our midst before or after meals. Among us was the late Iro Yamel who had a wonderful sense of humour. Whilst Imam was throwing about page after page of his thoughts, Iro Yamel would pick up one very important page and hide it somewhere. When the time came for the indefatigable Imam to collect all the pages to read them through, he would find that somewhere there was something missing. It would not be difficult for all of us to realise that Imam was in a quandry and we would all burst into big laughter. And I would say to them."If you could care to give me a shilling I would ride my bicycle and see a sooth sayer (*Boka* or a *Malam*) to come to help you". He would there and then, through intuition, realise that there was a page missing and Iro Yamel would be the predictor *Boka* to produce the missing page.

It was worth recalling that during the School holidays we would take a pledge that we should all write each other. Imam would always be the last to write each one of us, and believe me, almost all of us would receive somebody else's letter, that is, the letters were deliberately misaddressed containing all the humour and rubbish which Imam could write to make one laugh like mad. When any of us received Imam's letter he had to go into the bush to read it because if one read his letter in the public where people were around one could not help laughing to attract the attention of the people around who might think that one was mentally deranged.

Imam performed the Pilgrimage in 1953 and after he had narrated to me all his experiences, I became determined to make the journey also in the following year, 1954. After my return from the pilgrimage I wrote very extensive notes of my experiences in addition to the experiences of Dr. Imam

and put up the whole to the Premier of the Northern Region, as I was then his Minister of Works.

The Premier became very interested and very enthusiastic to perform the Pilgrimage. In 1955, the Premier the Sardauna of Sokoto accompanied by some Emirs and Ministers, performed his first pilgrimage. Since then the Premier never failed to go to Saudi Arabia every year either for pilgrimage or Umra or both, up to his assassination in 1966, only four days after his return from Umra.

In 1941, two years after the outbreak of the 2nd World War, Imam and Dr. East interviewed some Northern Nigerian teachers in order to select two to be assigned to the Gold Coast (Ghana) Broadcasting Service, so as to broadcast the war news in Hausa to the whole of West Africa. Malam Bello Dandago, later Sarkin Dawaki Maituta of Kano and myself were selected by the panel.

Dr. Abubakar Imam, as he later received a Doctorate degree from Ibadan University, became very well known when he became the first Editor of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. He became a friend of many Emirs and Chiefs and was very friendly with the late Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. His house in Zaria was visited many times, by the late Prime Minister. During such visits he would sometimes invite the late Prime Minister to go hunting and also to gather wild fruits like *"gwanda"* or *"tsada"* around Zaria or Kaduna.

Imam was very pious, always humble and friendly. He lived a simple life. He hated injustice and performed creditably when he was holding the post of Commissioner of Public Complaints in North Central State and also when he was holding the Chairmanship of Public Service Commission for the whole of Northern Region of Nigeria.

Finally, I would like to end this short memoir of Dr. Abubakar Imam, C.O.N., by recalling an incident which always reminds me of his wonderful sense of humour. Just one hour before we closed at the Middle School on 10th October, 1938, he sent one of the students to my wife, instructing the boy to inform her that I had seen the Doctor that morning and that the Doctor advised me to take lots and lots of salt in my meal, and so, it was my wish that my *"fura"* which was prepared that very day should be mixed with lots and lots of salt. My wife never doubted the sincerity of the messenger and she mixed my *"fura"* with a cupful of salt!

When we all returned home, he (Dr. Imam) asked the follwing teachers: Alhaji Iro Yamel, Alhaji Usman Iyaiyai (nicknamed No-blood), Alhaji Abdu Randawa to go together outside my house as he was sure I would like to see them for a very important matter. He narrated to them what he had done and they all sat down outside my house waiting to hear the explosion from the house. When I returned to my house, I said my prayers and sat down to enjoy

the newly prepared "*furar gero*". My wife being unaware of the plot brought it to me without a word thinking that she had obeyed my instruction to the letter. When I tasted the "*Fura*" I spat everything out and shouted at the top of my voice what was the matter with her. She told me what had happened. I realised what happened and informed her that Abubakar Imam must have been the brain behind this plot. I immediately made for the door and found all my colleagues outside my house laughing to their hearts content!

(Sgd)
ALHAJI ISA KAITA
WAZIRIN KATSINA

APRIL, 1985.

A TALENTED WRITER

BY

ALHAJI AHMADU COOMASSIE

I knew Imam since when we were school boys in Katsina. I think we are both about the same age. I lived in the Palace of the Emir of Katsina the late Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko and he lived with his elder brother, the late Walin Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara at the Katsina Training College. We are not related but became very close friends. When I arrived in Katsina from my home in Kumashi (in Ghana) I was admitted into class four in the Provincial School since I had started primary education at home. I joined Imam and Isa Kaita Wazirin Katsina in that class in 1924. The three of us proved to be highly competitive in class. In 1926 all three of us were selected to go to the Training College but I refused to go and opted to start a teaching career at the elementary school.[1] They returned from the Training College to join me as teachers at the Middle School.

Imam left for Zaria in 1939 to start the newspaper *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. I joined him in Zaria in 1954 at the establishment of NORLA (North Regional Literature Agency). I was then in Adult Education and Imam was in NORLA. He moved to the Public Service Commission in Kaduna and I followed soon to become Permanent Secretary in Kaduna.

We had a very cordial relationship throughout our association together. He was a very energetic, hardworking person who never assumed any airs of superiority and gave everybody due respect. His major occupation was seek-

1. M. Ahmadu Coomassie took the Training College examination in English in 1938 and passed.

ing for knowledge and basing all his actions on the just principles of Islam. He became a writer from the first year of his teaching career. Even I myself have been featured in one of his books titled *Karamin Sani Kukumi,* where I appeared as M. Bambadiya. Only my former teaching colleagues like Isa Kaita (Wazirin Katsina), Musa 'Yar'aduwa (Tafidan Katsina now Mutawalli) and Usman Iya-iyai knew the reason why Imam gave me that title. We lived together in Katsina, in Zaria and in Kaduna. We lived in the same compound at the Middle School Katsina and used to eat together at that time.

His talent and stamina enabled him to be in the fore-front of major developments in the country. As a leader he was fair and just towards his subordinates. His sense of justice and upholding of truth, however bitter, drew him close to the Emir of Katsina, Muhammad Dikko. When he was in Zaria he also became a regular adviser to the Emir of Zazzau, Malam Ja'afaru.

He was in politics for a few years but his politics was a world away from the current type of politics. He spoke the truth however bitter it was and stated clearly what could be done and what could not. He withdrew from politics when he realised that it was becoming full of confusion and contradiction.

May Allah grant him pardon. May Allah ensure our re-union with him in Paradise. Amen.

(Sgd).
ALHAJI AHMADU COOMASSIE
KATSINA.
14:3:85

MALAM ABUBAKAR IMAM AS I KNEW HIM: (1939 — 1981)

BY

ALHAJI BABA AHMED

Before I narrate what I know about Malam Abubakar Imam (May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace) I ought to introduce myself first.

I, Baba Ahmed was born in 1890, at a town called Ni'ima in Mauritania. After I had completed an Islamic study course at an Islamic School at Ni'ima I followed an adventurous life tending cattle, which took me to Senegal, Mali, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Niger and Chad. I then visited France through North Africa. I came to Nigeria in 1918, and my first place of call was Ibadan, from where I proceeded to Benin (Bendel State), selling hides of cattle purchased from Kano. In 1929, I arrived in Zaria and put up at Tudun Wada with a man called Sahabi (May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace). After staying in Zaria for ten years, I went on Pilgrimage to Mecca (1939). When I came back from Hajj, until 1942, I was engaged at the Literature Bureau, Zaria to assist with

translation from Arabic to Hausa. That was where and when I became acquainted with Malam Abubakar Imam in his capacity as the Editor of the *Gaskiya TaFi Kwabo*.

I am grateful that a decision was taken to contact me regarding some background information about Malam Imamu — to hear from the horse's mouth as it were. I want to give a detailed account of Malam Imamu, but I cannot write. Such a comprehensive work however, would take me over two years writing day and night, to mention all his good qualities.

I first met Malam Imamu at the time he joined the "Literature Bureau" at Zaria from Katsina. Among the indigenous staff of the Literature Bureau were the following: Malam Imamu, Malam Umaru Jisambo (Typist), Malam John Tafida Umaru, Sarkin Wusasa (later Dangaladiman Zazzau), Malam Nuhu Bamalli (now the Magajin Garin Zazzau) and Malam Shekarau, Messenger.

Many Malams also used to attend meetings at the Literature Bureau from all over the Hausa States. Among them I knew Alkalin Zango, Malam Muhammadu (May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace). He and Malam Sambo the Magajin Gari of Kaduna were very close associates before the Magajin Gari was posted to Kaduna as District Head. We were also acquinted with the Magaji. One day the Alkalin Zango, Malam Muhammadu, visited me with two gentlemen from Kano and Katsina. During the course of our discussion, they said they would like to translate some Arabic books into Hausa therefore they would like me to teach them how to use an Arabic Dictionary and then they would refer to the Hausa Dictionary by Bargery to find correct meanings of words. I attended a meeting at the Literature Bureau with those Malams, Malam Umaru, Malam Tafida and Malam Imamu. Malam Nuhu Bamalli whom I had known since he was a boy (because I married a girl from their house) was also at the meeting. Since that meeting, Malam Imamu had been visiting me almost every day. He was living at Kofar Tukur-Tukur and I was staying at Tudun Wada. He visited me regularly almost every night on his bicycle, notwithstanding the poor condition of the weather. I became apprehensive for his security, because of the distance involved and the remoteness of the road he took. So I implored him not to be visiting me alone at night. But he said, "Nothing will happen except what God has destined". Such had been our relationship until the day we buried him.

To the best of my knowledge Malam Imamu was a man who kept his words. In keeping promise, he was second to none. He was among those fortunate individuals who always kept their promise.

Malam Imam (may he rest in perfect peace) came to us from Katsina with his knowledge (both Islamic and Western), and immediately he arrived he started to mix freely with the local people. Among his first acquaintances were Malam Muhammadu Aminu who was then Sarkin Tsabta but subsequently became Iyan Zazzau and District Head of Sabon Gari before eventually becoming the Emir of Zaria (May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace), Alhaji

Shafi'i (May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace) and Alhaji Baba dan Bazariye.

Because of the confidence I reposed in Malam Imamu, when I was negotiating a marriage at Anguwar Juma at the house of the Chief Alkali of Zaria, Malam Muhammadu Lawal, I appointed him as my co-ordinator. When he was going to Jos to print a book entitled *Ikon Allah* of which he was a co-author, he appointed Malam Muhammadu Sanusi (later the Waziri of Zazzau) as his representative in the marriage transaction.

At that material time there were impediments regarding Islamic religion in this part of the country but Malam Imamu satisfactorily coped with the situation. The Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) establishment at Wusasa was almost his next door neighbour but he played a role so well that he tacitly discouraged the infiltration of Christianity into Zaria City without offending his friends at Wusasa, with whom he from time to time had controversial religious discussions. Nevertheless, converts into Christianity from among Moslems could not entirely be ruled out, but by and large, they were from the Southern villages or from areas outside northern Zaria. It was he who initiated the question of writing books in Hausa on Islamic religion. The first book produced is *Almajiri da Malami* written by me (Baba Ahmed), followed by *Ibada Da Hukunci*, by Alhaji Haliru Binji, and Malam Imamu wrote *Musulunci* and *Tarihin Annabi*. But before Malam Imamu could obtain permission for the authorship of these books, many hurdles had to be cleared. Many Malams in the North were strongly against the idea. They maintained that writing Islamic books in Hausa was un-Islamic and therefore it must not be allowed. The matter was so important that it was deliberated on by the Emirs at a meeting of the Northern House of Chiefs at Kaduna. The Chiefs saw nothing wrong in writing books on Islam in Hausa language. They said that it was up to individuals to respect or disrespect such books, and that the *onus* would be on those who disrespect them.

Malam Imamu was the first to establish an Islamiyya school in the North with the exception of Ilorin. The school which was subsequently named "Nurul Huda", was eventually taken over by the State Government as Nurul Huda Primary School, Tudun Wada, Zaria. The school had a humble beginning at his own house. The Islamiyya school attracted pupils from many towns in Nigeria and from Sierra Leone. The senior wife of Malam Imamu, Hajiya Aminatu Imam (May Allah rest her soul in perfect peace) took the responsibility of looking after the pupils of the pioneer school who were boarders. As the classes grew bigger becoming a school, Malam Imamu's house could not accommodate it, therefore a separate building, as a school, became necessary and it was provided through the generosity of Alhaji Shafi'i and the educational expertise of Alhaji Haliru Binji.

There is no strength nor power save in God, The High, The Magnificent. May God reward him for his good deeds. May God reward him for his good

deeds. May God reward him for his goods deeds. I beai witness that he lived among his friends in absolute confidence. There was a time when a friend of his, Malam Yusuf Gurshe, entrusted him to build him a house. Malam Imamu did his best to be economical in the project, so much so that the master bedroom was too small to accommodate a family bed with a mosquito net hanger. Malam Yusuf Gurshe was therefore rightly upset and he showed his displeasure openly, which could have provoked a lesser mortal to retaliate, but Malam Imam did not lose his temper, and their friendship remained unaffected by that unfortunate lapse.

In his relationship with chiefs, Malam Imamu was their staunch supporter, whatever their status. Some of his friends used to crack jokes with him by calling him a prince or somebody who had been brought up by a chief. Even when the Northern People's Congress (N.P.C.) was founded he was in the forefront in his support for the chiefs, notwithstanding his importance in the party. It was at a later date that N.P.C. seemed to have turned over a new leaf against the chiefs. However, my position regarding the chiefs has always been clear, I am theirs and they are mine.

One day a number of friends including Malam Imamu were with me in front of my house, when a message came to me from the Emir of Kano with a *Jabba* dress of fine quality plus three pounds sterling (£3:0:0) which was a lot of money in those days. The messengers then called Malam Imamu aside to deliver to him a verbal message from His Highness the Emir of Kano, but that message was not accompanied by any gift whatsoever. All the same, Malam Imam was made a scape goat of the presents given to me, Baba Ahmed. When he got up at a political meeting to speak he was booed down by sarcastic remarks referring to the present of *Jabba* and £3:0:0 that he had been muzzled up by the chiefs, so that he could not say anything against them. This unfortunate situation escalated to the extent that Malam Imamu felt his position between the chiefs on the one hand and the Europeans on the other, very uneasy, as if he were between the anvil and the hammer! That is, he was being suspected by either party for double dealing. There was an allegation that he was being honoured by the Europeans because he was disclosing the secrets of the chiefs to them, and a counter allegation was that his loyalty to the Chiefs was too much. He sensed this when he was given an assignment at the House of Chiefs. He did not enjoy that assignment owing to the misunderstanding that surrounded this inclination. But the fact is, Malam Imam was with the Emirs and Chiefs up to the time of his death. Condolence delegations and letters received from Emirs and Chiefs to the late Imam's bereaved family bear witness to this fact.

It is interesting to note that Malam Imamu got the bulk of his Islamic studies from his senior brother, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara the Wali of Katsina, whom he regarded as a father figure. The respect he showed his elder brother was tremendous, likewise the love he had for his junior brother Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara (May the souls of all of them rest in perfect peace).

Malam Imam used to tell us that although he was senior to Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara the latter was his defender against odds, because he was more strongly built, but that he (Ahmadu) never took undue advantage of his physical strength to bully him, his elder brother. For that Malam Imamu once embraced his junior brother in our presence.

God is Supreme! I can recall Malam Imamu's sterling quality as a disciplinarian. He strongly objected when his friends indulged in the habit of giving his children small presents, say 10k. He would stretch his hand and say, "Give it to me if you are doing it out of sincerity of purpose, or give it to its mother, because nothing spoils children like gifts of money. It creates a dangerous precedent in the mind of the child, it makes it a begger and a source of embarrassment to you and other visitors to the house." That was indeed a concrete and an invaluable contribution towards proper child up-bringing in this part of the world, where such small gifts to children were the order of the day rather than the exception.

Malam Imamu was a man of tremendous foresight. During his visit to England in 1943, on the first West African Press Delegation to London, he refused to sign an *Atlantic Charter* drawn up by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe to demand Independence for the British West African Colonies and Protectorates, saying that, "I am representing a community and the Emirs and Chiefs of Northern Nigeria did not give me such a mandate". Before the Delegation returned to Nigeria, certain National newspapers did not make a secret of their displeasure at Malam Imam's bold stand and up in the North, he was not spared either by some of the progressive elites — as if he would be stoned on the streets of the North on sight. They misunderstood and miscalculated the problems involved at that time as far as the North was concerned. In such things as always, God's time is the best. Eventually, Nigeria achieved Independence without sweat.

I have never seen a more liberal person regarding domestic servants than Malam Imamu. I remember that Malam Musa Adamu (Jam'iyya) was his farm labourer whom he paid wages for work done. Gradually, Musa gained admission into Malam Imamu's family in confidence, to the extent that he was entrusted with the affairs of the house and became the custodian of his pocket money. Malam Imamu fully paid the marriage expenses of Musa when he got a wife. He also paid his return passage to Mecca on pilgrimage. Moreover, he presented him with a house. On his death bed, Malam Imamu made a will that Malam Musa Adamu (Jam'iyya) and his family be accommodated in his (Imam's) personal residence until Musa's death. Malam Musa Adamu (Jam'iyya) is a living witness of these facts and Malam Imam's bereaved family can also testify.

Malam Imamu was always bold and frank regarding telling the truth however bitter and unpalatable to the receiver. I do not know whether the story I am about to tell will be of interest to you, I found it of tremendous interest. His Highness, the Emir of Gwandu, Alhaji Haruna Rasheed and Malam Imamu

had been great friends since their Katsina College days, long before I knew the Emir of Gwandu. Therefore when Alhaji Haruna Rasheed was appointed the Emir of Gwandu in 1954, he sent a telegram to his very intimate friend, Malam Imamu with the good news that : *"Yau kai Allah ya ba Gwandu"* meaning God has today graciously granted you that leadership (Emirship) of Gwandu. Malam Imamu showed me the telegram at Barewa College, with a request that he would like me to accompany him to Birnin Kebbi to congratulate the new Emir of Gwandu forthwith. The following morning I asked the Principal for a three-day leave of absence, which he approved. We travelled in a commercial transport from Zaria to Sokoto overnight and we spent the night at Sokoto motor park. Early in the morning, Alhaji Yahaya Gusau drove to the motor park and saw us. Perhaps somebody who knew us hinted him that we were at the motor park. Alhaji Yahaya Gusau dashed away with us in his car and reported the incident to the Sultan, who directed that a car be provided for us for the duration of our stay. The Sultan showed his displeasure that we spent the night at the motor park in Sokoto! We explained that we arrived there late in the night. The Sultan then assigned us a car to convey us to Birnin Kebbi and back. We spent a night at Birnin Kebbi and returned to Sokoto. When we were at the Palace taking leave of the Sultan, he was dispatching his son Bello Mai Wurno to Barewa College in Zaria through the guardianship of M. Ja'afaru the Emir of Zazzau. The Sultan signed a cheque book for Bello to enable him withdraw money from time to time at a Bank in Zaria. At once Malam Imamu disapproved of that arrangement on the ground that it would militate against the boy's good conduct and effective training. The Sultan endorsed Malam Imamu's observation but said that he had already taken decision accordingly and the Emir of Zazzau was awaiting development, that is, to receive the boy. His Highness added that he entrusted any necessary correction regarding the arrangement to God and to us — Baba and Imam.

Bello Mai Wurno lived up to our expectation, as a boy with an exemplary character worthy of being emulated. Every Friday when he went to pay his respect to the Emir of Zazzau, His Highness would give him one pound sterling (an equivalent of about two Naira) out of which the boy would give me five shillings (fifty kobo,) and he did not use a single cheque of the cheque book at his disposal.

Under the circumstances, the foregoing is the little I can say about the late Malam Imamu. May God forgive his sins, have mercy on him and compensate him with the Paradise. Amen.

(Sgd.)
BABA AHMED, 1
Alkali Road,
Tudun Wada, Zaria.

1. Alhaji Baba Ahmed died on Thursday 5th November 1987 at 11.10 p.m. in his house at T/wada, Zaria. May Allah grant him repose. Amin.

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF ALHAJI ABUBAKAR IMAM

BY

HALIRU BINJI
GRAND QADI
SHARIA COURT OF APPEAL
SOKOTO STATE OF NIGERIA

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was the son of Malam Shehu Usman Alkali of Kagara, Niger State, and a younger brother to Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara, Wali of Katsina (May God rest the souls of all three of them, Amen). He was a very sociable man and a good mixer. The door of his house at No. 19/20 Imam Road, Tudun Wada, Zaria was always open to visitors and everybody irrespective of creed or colour. He was so popular a figure that even Traditional Rulers held him in high esteem. He was liked and respected by civil servants, politicians, religious leaders and other very important persons and the commoners. His house at Tudun Wada was a forum for discussion of all sorts of topics — religious, philosophical, political, business, commercial, industrial, agricultural or Arabic studies. The friendly gathering always had a quasi-club appearance. Anybody could participate in the discussion.

I can boast that I am so conversant with the affairs of Alhaji Abubakar Imam that I feel able to write a complete book on that great Nigerian. But in order not to dominate the show, I shall limit my observation to a few things.

1. AN ADVOCATE OF ISLAM

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was a devout Muslim and a great advocate of Islam. His proprietorship of Nurul Huda School bears testimony to this fact. In 1950, he established an Islamiyya School at Tudun Wada, Zaria, which was the first of its kind in the northern part of Nigeria. He started in a very simple way with a class of boys in his own sitting room (living room). Soon the class became popular, thanks to the modern teaching method adopted. Later, girls refused to be left out of it; they also enrolled so the sitting room soon became too small to accommodate the increasing number of pupils. Therefore more classes were opened in some of his other houses nearby. The pioneer pupils were drawn from Lagos, Sierra Leone, and Kano. They became boarders in his residential compound. Many others were day pupils from the local catchment area, viz: Tudun Wada, Zaria.

Ten years after establishing the school, Alhaji Abubakar Imam acquired a sizeable parcel of land at Tudun Wada, on which he built seven modern classrooms. Because of his pushfulness the school which had been named Nurul Huda, was recognised by the North Regional Government as a grant aided Primary School in 1962. It was a modern school with particular attention

being given to Islamic studies Arabic language and general character moulding based on the teaching of Islam.

For that gigantic and creditable undertaking, he found support in the late Alhaji Shafi'i, a Tudun Wada based Nupe businessman and my humble self as I was then an Arabic Master at the Barewa College. While Alhaji Shafi'i shouldered the financial aspect of the school, I, as a manager, directed how the school should be run, what was to be taught, and how to teach it. In other words, I prepared its syllabus and curriculum and also offered the needed supervision.

God blessed the school right from the beginning and many of its products are today holding very high positions of trust in the Federation and community. Among them are aeroplane pilots flying the international commercial routes, medical doctors and business tycoons. God is to be praised.

Owing to his love for Islamic religion, Alhaji Abubakar Imam, many often than not, initiated discussions at his house on controversial or not very clear Islamic topics, with a view to finding their logical conclusions. We might call such a friendly gathering of learned men a *Qiyas* or a symposium, where they compared notes and gave analogical reasoning with regards to the teaching of the Qur'an, the Hadith and the *Ijma'a*, which is the *Third Foundation of Islam. Ijma'a*, in Arabic means a unanimous consent of the *Mujtahidin* or the learned doctors of religion. *Qiyas* which is also an Arabic word, is *the Fourth Foundation of Islam.* The *First* and *Second Foundation* being the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic Traditions (Hadith) respectively. Any matter not readily discernible in the Qur'an should be looked for in the Prophetic Hadith and if not found there, the *Ijma'a* of the learned doctors of religion should deliberate over it, and if the root of the matter is still difficult to reach, then a symposium or *Qiyas* should be held for the learned men to compare notes and give analogical reasoning with reference to the Qur'an, *Hadith* and *Ijma'a* of the learned doctors of religion, and their finding will be final. So, Alhaji Abubakar Imam's discussion group was in consonance with the Prophetic Tradition.

For a period in 1950, Alhaji Abubakar Imam and Alhaji Ahmed Talib enrolled as my students of *Tafsir* that is, translation of the Holy Qur'an with commentaries. Alhaji Imam suggested that in doing so we should try to kill two birds with one stone that is, while they were learning the translation and commentary in Hausa, the same should be committed to writing. I wholeheartedly accepted the suggestion and we proceeded accordingly. We had translated up to one sixth of the Qur'an when the exigencies of the service separated us. Therefore that noble idea was suspended indefinitely.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was born to write, and he was an author of many books including *Tarihin Annabi* that is, The Biography of the Prophet (SAW) and other religious books; but I would like to leave the authorship aspect of his activities to journalists like Alhaji Abubakar Tunau Mafara the Kayayen Sardauna.

2. JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY

Alhaji Abubakar Imam held several high positions of trust in the service of this country — at Gaskiya Corporation as the first Editor of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo;* at the North Regional Literature Agency (NORLA) he was Suprintendent of Literature ; he was a member and then Chairman of the North Regional Public Service Commission (PSC); became Chairman Interim Common Services Agency (ICSA) Appointments Board; served as a member of the Statutory Corporation Service Commission (SCSC) and finally as an Ombudsman that is, Commissioner for Public Complaints, Kaduna State. Wherever he served as a top executive he treated his subordinates with justice and fair play. He was never known to be corrupt and he discharged his various responsibilities with diligence and without fear or favour. But human nature being what it is, he was reported to have said to a friend of his that he was surprised that many of those promoted during his tenure of office as Chairman Public Service Commission (PSC) never expressed a word of gratitude to him. His friend responded by saying that it was so because he based his decisions purely on merit, so that all those promoted felt that they earned and deserved the promotions. He went on to say that if there had been an element of favouritism or nepotism in the Chairman's judgement regarding their elevations, they would have had recourse to say "thank you". Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that man by nature, is an ungrateful being. I am sure that Alhaji Abubakar Imam made that statement to please his conscience. As an Islamic religious scholar of repute, he must after all, have found solace in the following Qur'anic verse:—

> "And they feed, for the love of God, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, — (saying), 'We feed you for the sake of God alone: No reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. We only fear a Day of distressful Wrath from the side of our Lord". (Qur'an 76:8—10).

If Alhaji Abubakar Imam intended to help a junior civil servant he would advise him to seek to attend an A.E.O.'s course that is Assistant Executive Officer's course and then an E.O.'s course (Executive Officer's course). The candidate would then smoothly sail into a senior service post. Few people understood such fatherly assistance.

Alhaji Imam's last public appointment was as Commissioner for Public Complaints (Ombdusman) for Kaduna State. That gave him an ample chance to demonstrate his inherent sense of justice and fair play for which he had been well known.

3. A MAN DEVOID OF CUPIDITY

Apart from Dr. R.A.B. Dikko, a U.K. trained Medical Doctor, Alhaji Abubakar Imam was the first Northerner to be elevated to a senior civil service post, and by virtue of his long service at the North Regional Public Service Commission, others who got so promoted did so with his blessing.

When politics was introduced into the North many got higher political appointments than his but he did not covet or envy the circumstances, although he retired on a paltry pension of £40:0:0 (₦80.00) a month which, through salary revision and conversion, increased up to a maximum of ₦160.00 a month by the time he died in June, 1981. What really happened is this; after having been identified as ideal for the post of Chairman of P.S.C. after the Colonial Administrators would have given Nigeria its Independence and gone, Alhaji Imam was advised to retire voluntarily at 45 years of age, so as to be groomed for the high position which lay ahead. He retired on a low salary scale at that time and nobody thought then of the desirability of giving him a special concession regarding retiring benefits. All the same to him, he neither blamed nor envied anyone. He was ever grateful for being so recognised and honoured by the former North Regional, the defunct North Central and Federal Governments and he passed away with a mind full of contentment.

4. LOYALTY

Alhaji Abubakar Imam's loyalty to constituted authority and his superior officers was never in doubt. He regarded his elder brother, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara the Wali of Katsina as his father. He gave him full respect and support to the end of his life. He treated his (Wali's) children and his own in the same way. With regard to traditional rulers and with particular reference to the Emirs of Zazzau ,Malam Ja'afaru and Alhaji Mohammed Aminu (May Allah rest their souls in perfect peace, Amen), he was a very familiar personality at their palace. Even we his friends, he enticed to the palace of Zazzau (Zaria), until we became almost equally familiar with that royal court. But his was only obedience and not courtiership. With the Emir of Katsina however, Alhaji Abubakar Imam's loyalty transcended anything imaginative. There he was regarded as a member of the royal family. His respect for, and understanding of, all the traditional rulers, Emirs and Chiefs of the North was always emulative. He extended his respect to all religious leaders of thought and learned men. He did not relegate them to the background for a moment. Moreover, he did not look down upon his subordinates or frineds.

5. IMAM IN HIS FAMILY

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was one of those who treat their wives and children well and kindly. He had one of the happiest families. There was love and full co-operation between the members of his family and himself. With his senior wife, Hajiya (Mrs) Aminatu Imam, there was complete understanding and confidence. You might think that they were brother and sister. Hajiya (Mrs.) Aminatu Imam was so modest and unassuming that she would prefer

other wives to have the upper hand over her in domestic affairs. She would not complain of anything let alone quarrel over anything. She was so peaceful that jealousy between her and the other wives did not seem to exist. Concerning her fine qualities she was second to none, and between her and her husband we have not known anyone who has excelled Alhaji Abubakar Imam in showing respect for his senior wife. As regards children God had blessed him with obedient and level-headed sons and daughters. He cherished them as they should be cherished by a father. He consulted his sons over matters and when they greeted him they shook hands. He even gave them the freedom to enter to his presence with their shoes on, but they failed to comply for fear of what people might say.

Owing to the good effective home training he gave his children and God's guidance, they all respect us, Alhaji Imam's friends as they respected their father.

6. ALHAJI MUSA JAM'IYYA

Alhaji Musa Jam'iyya is Alhaji Abubakar Imam's principal domestic servant, who looked after the domestic affairs of the house, from buying food ingredients to supervising building projects, taking care of rented houses keeping the frontage of the house neat and tidy, spreading mats for the visitors under the shady mango trees outside the house and also being his master's errand boy. He treated Alhaji Musa Jam'iyya like his younger brother. Alhaji Musa and his family lived in the same house as his master, who took the responsibility of feeding them and clothing them. When he retired from public service, he also retired Alhaji Musa from routine domestic duties and granted him a gratuity to help him establish a trade. Earlier, he presented him with a house into which Alhaji Musa and his family moved and started an independent life. Eventually, Alhaji Musa became one of his consultants. From his death bed at A.B.U. Teaching Hospital, Alhaji Imam made a will that if the inevitable occured on him, Alhaji Musa should be accommodated in an apartment of his personal residence to the end of his life. Alhaji Musa had earned all this benevolent treatment by dint of hard work, honesty, frankness and truthfulness. Indeed, goodness cannot fail to rebound. May Allah doubly reward Alhaji Abubakar Imam for his benevolent disposition. Amen.

7. HIS LUNCH

Alhaji Imam's lunch was always for several people particularly on work-free days. As I have mentioned above, his house became a meeting place for valuable discussions and exchange of views. Although most of the visitors turned up at the evening time, he seldom ate lunch alone. All those present at lunch time would eat their fill. It is understood that if for one reason or ano

ther the number of visitors had increased beyond expectation just before lunch he would enter the kitchen and instruct his wife to add more water to the soup. Then the dishes would be brought with liquified butter as nourishment and appetizer. The meal would then be washed down with *hura* (a local porridge) by those who were interested. Then the afternoon prayer (Azahar) would be said in congregation in the frontage of his house, with him leading the prayer or he would deputise somebody. After that some visitors would depart and others would stay on until the evening prayer (*La'asar*), after which more visitors would come for the routine exchange of views. People would come and go at their convenience. For a change, we would sometimes inspect his garden or a nearby farm.

8. IMAM WAS THRIFTY

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was thrifty and he saved against a rainy day. Owing to his foresight he bought farm lands at Tafoki near Funtua and settled a caretaker there for the production of food grains — guinea corn and millets. He also had a farm at Palladan on the outskirts of Zaria, and another at Kaduna off the Kaduna/Zaria high way called *Dubu Goma*. Those two are for the production of fruits-oranges, grape fruits, mangoes and eucalyptus trees. The Kaduna farm was named *Dubu Goma* because of the numerous trees on it. He also had a number of landed property to augment his meagre pension of. ₦160.00 per month.

9. HE DID NOT FORSAKE THEIR ORIGINAL HOME

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was an indigene of Katsina State but his father originated from Sokoto, who in later years travelled around in search of knowledge and finally settled at Kagara (Kogi Local Government Area) of Niger State. He became a leading teacher of Islamic studies at Kagara where he was also appointed Alkali (Jugde). He died at Kagara. A few years before Alhaji Imam's death, he renovated his father's house at Kagara, which accommodates his father's grave, by building a concrete wall round it. The blocks of cement for that work were transported from Zaria to Kagara. The house is a very big compound. Also whenever he visited Sokoto he would visit their compound there which was left by his father, Malam Shehu Usman when he migrated to join *Sarkin Sudan* at Kontagora.

10. HIS PERSONAL DRESS

Between 1940—1950, Alhaji Abubakar Imam fashioned for himself a very reasonable atire— a long flowing robe with a turban, the type of which Arabs wear. He did not pass a portion of the turban round his chin as it is in vogue

in the Hausaland. That dress introduced by him was religiously very appropriate and it was also very economical. It minimised waste in the amount of cloth used and the dress was quite dignified from Islamic point of view. Some borrowed a leaf from him but many failed to conform to the new fashion.

11. DOWRY (SADAKI)

Alhaji Abubakar Imam strived to emphasise the significance of Dowry (*Sadaki*), which is one of the four obligations in Islamic marriage. He did this by example and not by preaching alone. Dowry (*Sadaki*) was the only property which he asked any would-be husband of any of his daughters to give and nothing else. All other things which a woman takes to her husband at marriage-clothing, bedding, cutlery and crockery became the responsibility of the father of the bride (in this case, Alhaji Abubakar Imam). The dowry (*Sadaki*) varied from time to time since in Islamic law (Shariah) it has a fixed minimum but the maximum has no limit. During my association with Alhaji Abubakar Imam between 1940—1969, he charged a dowry (*sadaki*) of £20:0:0 (₦40.00) only for any of his daughters given in marriage. After that nothing else would be received from the bridegroom, not even a needle. The rest was his (Alhaji Abubakar Imam's) responsibility.

We very much appreciate this guidance which is in keeping with the Qur'anic injunction and prophetic tradition. Many people have wanted to follow this good example but have lacked the courage and benevolent disposition to ease things for fiances. However, a few persons like Alhaji Abubakar Tunau Mafara the Kayayen Sardauna, a nephew - in-law of Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam have followed suit. This type of consolidated dowry (*sadaki*) is called "*sadak Mutakaff*" in Arabic. I knew this system in the Sudan during my student days there in 1954. I married a woman there and her parents only asked me to give just the dowry (*sadaki*) and nothing else. Allah has blessed the marriage. Our daughter is at present a lecturer in one of the Universities in Nigeria, and she is at the same time studying for her doctorate degree.

So much for the digression. I attended two marriage ceremonies at Alhaji Abubakar Tunau's house in respect of a spinster and a woman for whom he charged a dowry (*sadaki*) of ₦1,000.00 and ₦500.00 respectively. These amounts were inclusive of everything. Alhaji Abubakar Imam's ₦40.00 (*sadaki*) in 1950 has snow-balled to ₦1,000.00 in about 1980. To my mind, this is not only appropriate and adequate but also a great relief to the bridegrooms. If we emulate Alhaji Imam's ways regarding marriage a lot of good will be derived. To quote Alhaji Imam's favourite prayer:—

> "May Allah show us what is right, and give us the courage to abide by it; and may He show us what is wrong, and give us the courage to avoid it".

12. ALHAJI AHMADU KAGARA

Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara was the younger brother of Alhaji Abubakar Imam. Right from the beginning after his secondary education course at Katsina Teachers' College (Barewa College) and a subsequent professional course, he took up an appointment with the North Regional Government. Owing to the exigencies of the service, he had the privilege to serve in a number of Northern Provinces; Kano, Bauchi, Adamawa, Niger and others. Finally he was transferred to Zaria where his elder brother Alhaji Abubakar Imam domiciled. Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara was belately blessed with children. He was therefore obliged to be a guardian to a number of Alhaji Imam's daughters. Alhaji Imam survived his younger brother, who died in 1976. After his death Alhaji Imam's daughter who was under his guardianship returned to her father. As soon as that girl completed her primary education her father, Alhaji Abubakar Imam gave her hand in marriage, as he used to do with his daughters. None of his daughters read above primary education before marriage. But this girl politely informed her father that her priority was in secondary education and further education. Marriage would then come later after education. She insisted and the marriage was dissolved. She went back to school, eventually attending two courses in England. This girl Miss Ummul Kulsum Imam, who had successfully completed a course at the Kaduna Polytechnic in June, 1980, obtaining a "Certificate in Catering Studies" before proceeding to the United Kingdom, has now returned to Nigeria with the following additional qualifications:—

a) "Certificate In Administrative Management" awarded on 4th February, 1983, by the Institute of Administrative Management (London).

b) "Higher National Certificate" awarded in 1985, in Southampton, England.

Miss Ummul Kulsum Imam has been earmarked for the 1986/87 National Youth Service (NYSC). Meanwhile, she has taken up an appointment with the Kaduna State Ministry of Establishment and Training.

Among Alhaji's daughters, another lost her husband in a motor accident, but she has taken up an option to remain a widow, perhaps to enable her to return to school. She was determined and registered at the W.T.C. Zaria. She is now teaching at a Primary School at Tudun Wada, Zaria. Mrs. Ummul Bishiri Idris who is still a widow has had four children — 2 males and 2 females with her late husband. Two other cases may be cited: Miss Ummul Falalu Imam and Miss Ummul Hani Imam, after their post-primary education, attended the College of Legal Studies, Katsina; and the Katsina College of Arts, Science and Technology (now Katsina Polytechnic) respectively. The former has obtained a Diploma in Law.

These four incidents which commenced during the lifetime of Alhaji Imam, are vivid illustrations that the time has come when one should not discourage one's daughters from reading further at school. Having regard to the above, we should always remember the statement attributed to Dr. Aggrey of the Gold Coast (Ghana) that if you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family. In compliance with this and also in consonance with the prophetic tradition that pursuance of knowledge is obligatory for every muslim man and woman, six of my own daughters have completed their university education. May God guide us to the right path in all our endeavours. Modern method of seeking knowledge by women is attractive but it is rife with dangers from Islamic religious point of view. For example, a half-naked dress by females is prohibited in Islam and so is the mixing of men and women unnecessarily. I am saying this not to criticise or praise, but as a warning to Muslim parents regarding their daughters in institutions of higher learning and universities. May God protect and guide us to the right path. Amen.

13. ALHAJI A. IMAM WAS COMPASSIONATE

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was highly compassionate. In matters which call for sympathy you would see him shedding tears. I witnessed a number of such incidents. A case in point: During Alhaji Imam's lifetime Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa Mora attended the ceremony of one of his friends, Alhaji Aliko Mohammed upon whom a traditional title of *Dan Iyan Missau* was conferred by His Royal Highness the Emir of Missau, Bauchi State. On his way back through Kano State in a chauffeur driven car, his driver accidentally and fatally hit a child at Mariri village in Dawakin Kudu Local Government Area. The child, unmindful of the oncoming traffic, had tried to cross the road. According to the description of the accident, it was a clear case of manslaughter, which in a court of law, would not earn the driver capital punishment. But the angry villagers who witnessed the accident became so irrational that they took the law into their own hands and almost lynched the driver and Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa Mora on the spot. On the point of danger Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa Mora invoked God and yelled saying:— "There is no king worthy of being worshipped but God, and Mohammed is the apostle of God". Hearing these words of total submission to the Creator, the attackers restrained themselves at once. In another moment the Chairman of that Local Government Area, Alhaji Umaru Gano who happened to be driving closely behind Inuwa, arrived on the scene. He testified that Inuwa's driver was not driving dangerously. His timely arrival brought sanity to the irate villagers. When Inuwa was narrating the incident to Alhaji Abubakar Imam, he burst into tears and Imam also burst into tears! This happened about January, 1979. To cite another incident: The wife of a friend of ours who had travelled abroad, suddenly fell seriously ill. Alhaji Abubakar Imam and I were invited to the house to help her. On seeing how the indisposed lady was suffering, Abubakar Imam burst into tears!

14. PRECAUTION AGAINST FORGERY

When Alhaji Abubakar Imam was appointed superintendent NORLA (North Regional Literature Agency), signing of vouchers was among his responsibilities. He therefore became wary of bad eggs who might forge his signature to defraud Government. As a safeguard, he kept to his normal style of writing his name, and did not devise any sophisticated signature which could, according to him, be easily forged. He claimed that a full name— "Abubakar Imam" in his normal handwriting, would not easily be forged. He also super-imposed the signature with a thumb print, to make sure that no loophole was left. Have you ever thought of such a precautionary measure? There you are.

15. HOSPITALITY

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was hospitable and generous within reasonable limits. He cherished family ties. He cared for relatives however distant. Even his wives from whom he was separated by divorce were not excluded from his generosity to the best of his ability.

16. A CANDID ADVISER

Alhaji Abubakar Imam always gave his candid opinion on matters however bitter, and one of his popular maxims is:—

> "Whenever you speak tell the truth, Whatever the consequences, you'll have proof".

He never betrayed any trust reposed in him. These three virtues:—

1. Giving honest advice
2. Telling the truth no matter whose ox was gored; and
3. Being trustworthy,

have proved benefitial to his close associates more than anything else. These three virtues were the common threads that ran through the seventy years he spent in the world. May God forgive his sins and rest his soul in perfect peace. Amen.

(Sgd.)
Haliru Binji [1]

FRIDAY,
18/4/1986.
(9 SHA'ABAN 1406 A.H.).

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1. He retired as Grand Qadi of Sokoto State on 31st December 1987 after forty one years of public Service.

I SERVED UNDER MALAM ABUBAKAR IMAM

BY

ABUBAKAR TUNAU[1]

On a memorable Thursday, 8th April, 1943, Ibrahim Gusau and I entrained from Gusau for Zaria, to take up appointments at the Literature Bureau, where the Hausa paper called *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* was published. We were the first Northerners from the Middle Schools to be recruited for training in journalism, as an experiment. The following year (1944) more Middle Four Certificate holders were employed, signifying that the experiment had been successful. The new intake were Ahmadu Ingawa and Abu Musawa from Katsina, Abdu Makarfi from Zaria, Mamman Kolo from Bida and Babatunde, Isa Agaka and Aransi from Ilorin. That recruitment drive was continued for sometime until Gaskiya Village was adequately populated with Gaskiya Corporation Junior and Intermediate staff.

All the above mentioned were initially for training in journalism. But as soon as everybody's propensity had been ascertained, we were assigned in accordance with our specialisation, to the following sections or departments or divisions:—(a) Journalism that is, newspaper production; (b) Authorship i.e. book production; (c) Mechanical, to operate the various intricate printing machines; and (d) Typing section. Before long, every trainee showed sufficient amount of proficiency in his special field to warrant his retention in the corporation, and there was hardly any wastage.

I remember also that on our arrival at Zaria Railway Station from Gusau it was Malam Abdulmalik Mani who met us and led us to the Literature Bureau Staff quarters at Kofar Tukur-Tukur in Zaria City. I gathered later that Malam Abdulmalik himself was a newcomer to the institution from Government College Kaduna, which is now called Barewa College Zaria. Malam

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Notes

Alhaji Abubakar Tunau was born on 11th March, 1924 at Talata Mafara in Sokoto Province. Educated at Talata Mafara Primary School (1934—36) and Sokoto Middle School (1937—43), he joined Gaskiya Corporation (then Translation Bureau) in 1943.

He was the first editor of JAKADIYA and was later editor of *GASKIYA TA FI KWABO*. He also wrote a play *WASAN MARAFA* and translated James Morier's *'Hajji Baba of Isfahan* with the title *Yawon Duniyar Hajji Baba.*

He studied photography and journalism in the United Kingdom in 1951—52 and 1954-57. He also attended an eleven week Top Management and Industrial Leadership Course at R.O. Ferguson, Pittsburgh, U.S.A. in 1964. He became Secretary of Northern Regional Development Corporation (later NNDC) in 1959–66 and served the Interim Common Services Agency (ICSA) in 1966—70.

When he retired from Government Service in 1970 he was appointed Commissioner in the Government of North Western State in Sokoto (1970—75).

Since 1975 he has held several directorships in various Companies.

Abdulmalik then took us to the Editor of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo,* Malam Abubakar Imam, at his residence. The following morning we went to the office and were introduced to those who would guide us.

Thus the Northerners we found at the Literature Bureau at the time were Malam Abubakar Imam, the Editor, Malam Abdulkadir Makama, the Principal Assistant Editor, and Malam Abdulmalik Mani Assistant Editor. In another section of the office there was Malam Nuhu Bamalli (now the Magajin Garin Zazzau) incharge of authorship. In the Clerical Section there were Malam John Tafida Umaru (later Dangaladima of Zazzau), Malam Umaru Zaria, Malam Abdullahi Kure and Malam Aminu Salihu.

Before we were shown our desks, we were addressed at length by Malam Abubakar Imam, as a father addresses his beloved sons. He said that we were sent to him in trust to be taught journalism and also to know something of the world around us, based on truth. He therefore enjoined us to be obedient and discharge our responsibilities with diligence. He said that we had been appointed as Sub-Assistant Editors of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* on a salary of £3 (Three pounds Sterling) a month and on probation for three years.

I can remember as well that when we received our first salary of £3 each, Malam Abubakar Imam called us to his presence and advised us to open savings accounts at the Post Office without delay. We heard and obeyed. Every month, since that fatherly advice, I put my five shillings (equivalent of Fifty Kobo) in my Post Office Savings Account. I continued to do so regularly until I became used to saving against a rainy day. Before I completed the probation period of three years, I was able to buy a second-hand bicycle for three pounds ten shillings (seven Naira) from my savings.

Before very long my companion, Malam Ibrahim Gusau decided to return to Sokoto, but I continued to serve under Malam Abubakar Imam. Since that time until his death, I was regularly with him, even after both of us had left Gaskiya Corporation for other appointments, because he treated me like his own son and I respected him like my father. He was my adviser on any matter I wanted to do or abandon, and I always found his advice invaluable, because he told me nothing but the truth to the best of his ability. In fact, that was his attitude with everybody who worked under him. He treated all and sundry like his brothers, but following, I think, a policy of "Love all but trust a few". Unless one had an axe to grind or a disposition not to like Malam Imam's fatherly treatment of, or advice to his subordinate staff, one would always find him at one's disposal.

Malam Imam was very sociable but you would find him only participating in meaningful discussions. He did not backbite and did not allow anybody to slander anyone in his (Imam's) presence. He would always tell you the truth however bitter. This was in compliance with his maxim: "Whenever you speak

tell the truth, whatever the consequences you'll have proof". Whenever he saw anyone doing something unbecoming or uncalled for or morally wrong he would draw his attention to it and advice him to desist from doing it. That norm of behaviour inherent in Malam Imam was in keeping with a well known prophetic tradition.

From 1951 to 1952, I was sent to England to attend a course in journalism and photography (the production of pictures used for purposes of illustration in newspapers). I was attached to a reputable newspaper. We used to go out in search of news items or objects to snatch, with a news reporter and a photographer. That was part of the training. Sometimes we were lucky and at other times we went back empty handed. After a few months at the course, an interim report about me was sent to Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria, Nigeria. Malam Imam dealt with it and sent me a serious letter. When I received it I was anxious to open it to hear news from home, thinking that it was Malam Imam's usual private letter to me full of home news. On the contrary, it was an official letter worded in a stern official language, full of reproach! In it, Malam Imam said that they received an official report about me from those conducting my course in England that I was well and that I was progressing satisfactorilly in my studies, except that I was not a good mixer. He therefore demanded an explanation from me, though he knew me to be a very sociable person. He asked to know what was worrying me and preventing me from mixing with people. I sent a reply almost immediately explaining that I was not reported correctly, and that there were some social customs prevalent in the society at the time with which I could not compromise. I categorically stated that whenever we went out on duty with my working mates, our first place of call was a public bar, where they (my working mates) insisted that I should take the hot drinks they offered me and I should reciprocate in kind another day. I insisted not to take anything but softdrinks and I would reciprocate likewise if they would care for soft drinks. I asserted that that was the crux of the problem giving rise to a damaging report against me. I claimed that I know perfectly well that taking alcohol or serving it to anybody is not in accordance with the teaching of Islamic religion, which I profess. I could not therefore seek their worldly pleasure to the detriment of my faith.

Also at social evenings, dancing was a prominent feature, men and women in pairs. Again I could not indulge in this having known that it is illegal for Moslems to participate in such things. But since I must attend such parties or receptions, presumably as part of the training I was in England for, I did attend but as an onlooker. Being a spectator at such unavoidable circumstances, I consider is a lesser evil than the actual performance of the dance with a lady. I maintained that apart from those two uncalled for accusations levelled against me by my trainers or course conductors, I had had no quarrel with anybody officially or otherwise. Nevertheless, I asked Malam Imam's advice, as I usually did, as to what I should do under the circumstances. On his receipt

of my letter, Malam Abubakar Imam wrote back saying that since that was the case I should continue to paddle my own canoe, meaning that I must not allow myself to be led into doing things that are clearly repugnant to Islam as revealed by Allah and conveyed by His Messenger. Malam Imam then showered blessings on me and prayed for Allah's protection for me.

Indeed, Malam Abubakar Imam has left behind much of his good deeds for our emulation and guidance. May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace. Amen.

(Sgd.)

Abubakar Tunau Mafara.

Kayayen Sardauna.

MY FIFTY-FOUR YEARS' CORDIAL ACQUAINTANCE WITH MALAM ABUBAKAR IMAM

BY

IBRAHIM HALILU MUSA

Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem (In the name of God Most Gracious, Most Merciful).

I first met Malam Abubakar Imam in 1927, at the Katsina Teachers' Training College, where we lived together for good three years as students.

In 1930, I completed my secondary education at the College Medical Class and proceeded to Zaria School of Pharmacy for another three-year course to enable me qualify as a dispenser. I passed out as a Second Class Dispenser and was posted to the Kano City Hospital. In 1936, I was transferred to the General Hospital Jos. At Jos, I received a letter from Malam Abubakar Imam in 1939, that he had been seconded or that he had transferred his services to the Literature Bureau at Zaria and that he had therefore left Katsina for Zaria. Shortly after the first letter, I received another from him that he would be coming to Jos every month to supervise the printing of a monthly newspaper at the Niger Press.

Whenever he visited Jos on duty, Imam always spent most of his spare time with me. Thus the friendship that was formed at Katsina during our student days was renewed at Jos.

In 1940, I was one of the Dispensers from the Northern Region of Nigeria selected to attend a Chemist and Druggist Diploma Course at Yaba, Lagos. Before I left for Lagos I entrusted the affairs of my family at Zaria to Malam Abubakar Imam. So that my family including my aged mother became acquainted with him. Thus communication between us became more frequent and regular. We met physically only when I spent my holidays at Zaria.

In 1943, malam Abubakar Imam was among the eight West African journalists sponsored by the British Council to visit war-time Britain on the First West African Press Delegation. He spent some time in Lagos before the Delegation sailed for England. I was surprised how he was able to locate my residence in Lagos at that time. By 1943, I had qualified as Chemist and Druggist and had been serving in Lagos. Before the close of that year I was posted to the General Hospital at Maiduguri. All these ups and downs never interrupted our cammunication by letters or telegrams.

In 1948, our friendship with Malam Imam went a step further. He gave me his niece, Miss Aishatu Bello in marriage. The marriage has been blessed and we have had nine children, seven of whom are alive. Inspite of the marriage, Malam Imam had never regarded me as his nephew-in-law, but always as his very intimate friend. Whenever I was on vacation leave from Maiduguri or elsewhere. I spent most of it in Zaria and I was constantly with him, so that

I am one of those who knew him best. I greatly benefited from his useful counsels and suggestions. Infact, it was Malam Abubakar Imam who advised me to build my own seperate house away from our family house. At first, the advice appeared to me quite strange, but when it was implemented I was happier for it. I am grateful to God and to Malam Abubakar Imam that I now have two houses in Zaria City of my own besides our family compound. Moreover, Imam purchased a building plot of 100 feet by 50 feet for me at Tudun Wada Zaria at £100.00 (one hundred pounds sterling) without prior consultation with me. He then wrote me authoritatively with a request to remit the money as soon as possible in order to finalise the transaction. Infact, he said I should remit the amount within two weeks. For six months I did not send him the money, not because I was impoverished but because I did not then realise the value of land. By that time I had been transferred to Katsina. One day he visited Katsina from Zaria and when he was going back he suddenly called at my house and asked me to advance him £125.00 sterling to settle a pressing local need and that he would send me the amount back on reaching Zaria unfailingly. Without hesitation I gave him the amount. On his return to Zaria he paid the cost of the plot he had bought for me and obtained a receipt. He then sent the receipt for £100.00 and the balance of £25.00 to me. He thus induced me to pay for the piece of land and I did not regret it. When we met he explained the advantage of having a landed property, and we laughed over the unorthodox method of approach to get me pay for the plot without tears. He was really a man of tremendous foresight.

After I had retired from the public service and relinquished a contract appointment with the former North-Eastern state Government, Alhaji Abubakar Imam, many often, invited me to accompany him on his internal travels. In that way we visited Lagos, Ibadan, Sokoto, Katsina, Kano and many other Nigerian towns. I was almost always his travelling companion. I have gained valuable experiences through those journeys. Through him also I was privileged to know many distinguished personalities at Tudun Wada, Zaria, such as Alhaji Baba Ahmed, the late Alhaji Shafi'i, the late Alhaji Sahabi, and one of my best friends, Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam had a wonderful sense of humour. He however, always said what he meant. One day when he was seeing one of his friends off a few kilometres on the Zaria/Kaduna highway, they came via my house in Zaria City. Alhaji noticed that I was wearing only my long gown without trousers, but he asked me to go with them. I wanted to go and wear trousers but he refused. I pleaded with him but he urged and insisted that I should travel in the car like that because time was flying. I had to wrap my gown round me and travel with them feeling half-naked. He gave his peremtory order fully optimistic and trusting that we would neither have a car breakdown or any other mishap on the road; and the fact that that happened during the period I was his nephew-in-law, added a zest to the incident. Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora is a living witness of that episode.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam was one of the greatest Nigerians of our time but he regarded himself as a small fry. He was so simple, modest, kind and generous but firm in his behaviour and activities. In offering genuine advice he was second to none. It was an admitted fact by those who knew him well that the more you were close to him the more you liked him. One could not be conversant with his ways of thinking and his methods of approach to problems without him leaving an indelible impression on ones mind. In addition to the above, he was a devout Muslim. During my fifty-four years' acquaintance and friendship with him, I had never heard him saying anything unsavoury against anybody.

The foregoing is a true and honest biography of Alhaji Abubakar Imam, a man who was fearless in his dealings with mortals and one who was above all free of all temptations.

On Friday, 19th June, 1981, (a day never to be forgotten) Nigeria and Nigerians sustained an irreparable loss in Alhaji Abubakar Imam's demise. He is survived by his wife and fourteen children – seven males and seven females. May Allah bless his children and rest his soul in perfect peace. Amen.

(Sgd.)
Ibrahim H. Musa[1]

Notes

He was born in 1910 in Zaria City. He attended Zaria Provincial School (1920—26) Katsina Training College Special Science Class- (1927—1930). Zaria Pharmacy School (1930—1934). In 1939 after five years service as a dispenser in various Government hospitals he was selected to go to Yaba School of Pharmacy for the Training to obtain the Chemist and Druggist Diploma. He obtained the Diploma in 1941 and served n the Lagos General Hospital for two years as a Pharmacist. He transferred to Northern Region in 1943 and worked in various hospitals all over the Region.

In 1957, Malam Ibrahim H. Musa was assigned to serve on the Medical Team that accompanied the Nigerian Pilgrims to Saudi Arabia, and he was the first Pharmacist to enjoy that privilege. That assignment gave him a unique opportunity of killing two birds with one stone — to perform an official duty and perform the obligatory pilgrimage. In 1964, Alhaji Ibrahim H. Musa was appointed a Pharmaceutical Inspector by the Federal Government, a post in which he retired in 1968. Almost immediately after his retirement from the public service, he was appointed on contract basis for a period of three years, by the defunct North-Eastern State Government. After the expiration of the contract appointment he did not opt for a renewal, but he returned home to Zaria finally. He died on Wednesday 7th Sept. 1988.

MY ASSOCIATION WITH THE LATE ALHAJI ABUBAKAR IMAM C.O.N., O.B.E., L.L.D., N.N.M.C.

FROM

ALHAJI ABDU GUSAU (O.O.N.), GARKUWAN SOKOTO

I first came to know Alhaji Abubakar Imam when he was at Gaskiya Corporation as Editor of the *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* through Alhaji Armiya'u, one of his former students. He left a very good impression in my memory at the way and manner he received us when I first met him.

In 1961, I had the opportunity of working with him when he was appointed Chairman Public Service Commission of the then Northern Region, and I was a part- time Commissioner. Alhaji Abubakar Imam was a strong believer in the Northernisation policy which was upheld by the late Premier of Northern Region, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello the Sardauna of Sokoto.

Besides our drive to recruit and train every trainable Northerner in order to implement the Northernisation policy, we often went out of the country to recruit professional staff, especially in the field of Medicine, Law, Islamic Education and Irrigation. We had our longest recruitment programme in 1962, when we visited Sudan, Egypt, Lebanon, Pakistan and Persia (Iran).

The late Abubakar's common prayer which he said so frequently that it almost became an idiosyncrasy of him was:

> *"Allah Shi nuna mana gaskiya, gaskiya, kuma Shi ba mu ikon bin ta; Shi kuma nuna mana ƙarya, ƙarya, kuma Shi ba mu ikon ƙinta".*
>
> Translated as follows: "May Allah show us what is right, and give us the courage to abide by it; and may He show us what is wrong, and give us the courage to avoid it".

On the creation of States in 1967, the Northern Region Public Service Commission was dissolved and instead an Interim Common Services Agency (ICSA) was created. Alhaji Abubakar Imam was appointed Chairman of is Appointments Board in 1968, while I joined the Public Service Commission of the North-Western State. A year later in 1969, he was appointed Commissioner, Federal Statutory Corporation Service Commission (SCSC), on which he served until it was abolished in 1974. Finally, he was appointed an Ombudsman that is a Sole Commissioner of the North Central (later Kaduna) State Public Complaints, in April, 1974. He resigned that appointment in September, 1979, and less than two years later he passed away on 19th June, 1981.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam welcomed all and sundry to his house at No. 19/20 Imam Road, Tudun Wada, Zaria. He listened to every shade of opinion without being offended. His house became a forum where various topics were discussed, from politics to religious matters. He took everybody who visited him to be his equal and frowned at anybody who tried to show any sign of inferiority complex. He was frank and honest in all his dealings.

The last time I saw Alhaji Abubakar Imam was when he was at the hospital and I was on my way to Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory. It was a Sunday evening and he was looking seriously ill but he beckoned me to be closer to his bed. He then asked me where I was going. When I told him that I was on my way to Abuja, he jokingly said, "Don't forget to get me a plot there". I replied, "I hope you will recover from this illness to be able to go to Abuja yourself". He smiled and said, "I don't know". I then left him and before I came back the following Friday, I received the sad news that he was no more! May God Almighty reward him for the good work he had done in the service of the nation. Amen.

(Sgd.)
ABDU GUSAU
Garkuwan Sokoto.

ALHAJI MUHAMMADU WULE

I, the undersigned Muhammadu Wule was born in Zaria City about 1920, and educated at the Zaria Rural School (1928—1930); Zaria Middle School (Alhudahuda College: 1930—1936); and the Katsina Higher College (Barewa College: 1936—1940). I then joined Veterinary Department as a 3rd Class Veterinary Assistant (April, 1940—May, 1943). I resigned the appointment on personal grounds. Almost immediately after my resignation, I joined the Zaria Native Administration Works Department as a Technical Assistant. I attended Civil Engineering course at the P.W.D. School Kaduna (1944—1947).

Under the auspices of the late Magajin Garin Argungu Alhaji Ibrahim and the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam, I transferred my services from the Zaria Native Authority to the Northern Nigeria Government Ministry of Works as a Technical Officer in 1962. In 1970, I was promoted to Higher Technical Officer and in 1972, to Senior Technical Officer. On the eve of my retirement on 31st December, 1975, on my attaining 55 years of age, I acted in the post of Principal Technical Officer.

On 14th March, 1977, I was offered a contract appointment as an Investigation Officer Grade II in the Public Complaints Commission of Kaduna State. Alhaji Abubakar Imam was then the Commissioner of that Department. When he left towards the end of 1979, I continued to serve the Commission until 31st December, 1983, when I resigned due to a sudden transfer notice moving me from Zaria to Kaduna.

I came into contact with the late Alhaji Abubakar Imam on my return from Vom in 1943. I was so impressed at the way and manner he received me, that I visited him from time to time, particularly on Sundays and Public Holidays at Kofar Tukur-Tukur and when he moved to Gaskiya Village and finally at his Tudun Wada Residence at No. 19/20, Imam Road. The relationship between us became so cordial that FIVE TIMES I tried to negotiate marriage between myself and certain girls in his family in vain. However, having regard to the fact that contracting of marriage is through mutual agreement of both parties concerned, and that arbitrary marriage, is illegal in Islamic Law

(Shariah), I never, for a moment, held Alhaji Abubakar Imam responsible for my failure in each case. Infact, he co-operated with me, but what has not been decreed by Allah cannot be. Therefore the disappointments I sustained had never disrupted the close relationship that had existed between us over the years.

I would like to take this opportunity to recall that Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam initiated the founding of a society in Zaria called the "Take-Care-Of The Pence Society" round about 1945, with a view to teaching its members and Northerners in general thrift and frugality. The members of the organisation contributed one shilling in the pound sterling monthly from their salary. With the amount collected, a sort of co-operative shop was operated where members could buy commodities at reasonable prices. The Association lasted for about four years before it was liquidated and the capital shared out among the members, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the organisation. It is believed that the introduction of politics into the Northern Region was partly responsible for its dissolution.

Finally, I must mention Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam's invaluable contribution towards the establishment of the first Islamiyya School in this part of the country in 1950, which eventually, was named Nurul Huda. This school has been taken over by the Kaduna State Government as the Nurul Huda Primary School, Tudun Wada, Zaria. May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace Amen.

(Sgd.)
MUHAMMADU WULE

A GENTLEMAN TO THE CORE: TRIBUTE TO ALHAJI ABUBAKAR IMAM

BY

MUHAMMADU JIBO

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful,

My initial contact with Alhaji Abubakar Imam was through an incident in 1941. It concerned a classmate at Tudun Wada Elementary School. We were in class 3 and were able and encouraged by the Headmaster to write letters and maintain diaries in Hausa. It was also during the war and British Information Service was distributing a journal, "War in Pictures", with a Hausa version, "Hoto Na Yaki". The boy wrote to the Editor, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* asking why teachers were keeping to themselves and not distributing these journals to the school children. He did it only to exercise his handwriting but childishly thought that writing to the Editor was the same as maintaining the school diary.

To the surprise of all of us, the school children, at about 8.30 a.m. on a bright Monday morning, we saw Alhaji Abubakar Imam cycling towards the school. He was met outside the classroom by the Headmaster. Soon after, all the school children in the only two classrooms were summoned outside. We

trooped out gladly for we were at least free from the lesson and hoping that Alhaji Abubakar Imam would announce a holiday for us. Without wasting any time he asked that the boy who wrote a letter to *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* should step out. The boy obeyed relunctantly and was asked a series of questions which revealed that though there was no ulterior motive, the writing did not display any discipline.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam lectured us on discipline as well as truthfulness. He warned us against the consequencies of lying. He ended with his famous saying "*In zaka fadi, fadi gaskiya kome taka ja maka ka biya*". Being the teacher he was, he allowed all of us except the boy to return to our classrooms and the boy was punished. The incident affected all of us in that we avoided Alhaji thereafter. With me particularly it had two effects; instilling self-discipline and the fear to write to newspapers. The incident remains indellible in my mind and is the foundation for my respect for him as a model and later as a guide.

Whilst working in the Institute of Administration, I became acquainted with Alhaji Sani Imam which relationship gradually developed into something more than friendship. This development had nothing to do with our families but our acceptance of each other. Infact it was years later that the families came in to strengthen the relationship to the extent that Sani dared not go to Katsina without me, knowing the questions he would face from Wali (*Rahimahullahu Ta'ala*), who was very concerned about the strengthening of cordial relationships. As was usual, we called on Alhaji Abubakar Imam on our way to and from Katsina. Initially, despite his insistence, I would excuse myself whilst Sani discussed family issues with him for I still had my reservations based on the Elementary School experience. On his persistance later I had to, not only sit but also participate in the discussions.

Following the death of Wali, our visits to Alhaji Imam's house became more frequent especially for me being resident in Zaria. I found a lot of value in spending my evenings with him for no idle talks were allowed and only important social, economic, and religious matters were continually discussed. I learnt a lot and improved myself whilst attending these regular evening and Sunday discussions. It was from such discussions that I learnt the qualities of interacting with human beings generally irrespective of their positions or family relationship. I was accepted as a member of the family without consideration of my background or family connections. The first time Alhaji Abubakar Imam enquired about my family was when I fell seriously ill, and he detailed Sani Imam to ensure that my relations were informed in case I died. *Allahu akbar!*.

Having now given this background, it remains only to account for the qualities I found in him which made him exceptional for I believe that if I have to write fully on our relationship I may have to write an additional volume to the biography.

While working in the Institute of Administration, my acquaintance with him misled me to believe that I had an edge over every other candidate for

the recruitment of potential administrative officers since he was the Chairman of the Public Service Commission of Northern Nigeria. I applied during the first intake, was interviewed but turned down. Undaunted I applied for the second intake. I was called and the interview took a new turn as I found myself being offered a place on the judicial course leading to the Certificate of Barrister at Law of the Inns of Court in London. Two of us only and both from the Institute attended the interview, the late Alhaji Garba Alfa, who accepted and later rose to become the Solicitor-General and then Attorney General and Commissioner of Justice in Gongola State and myself. When I was told that I was being considered for the course, I flatly turned it down and stated that I was not interested in becoming a Lawyer. I was asked to wait outside for the Commission to further discuss the issue. In those days standing up to the full Commission, would be regarded by many as the height of indiscipline. When I was recalled, I was told that being a Civil Servant, I was going to be duty posted on the course. I stood my ground by stating that I would comply and go on the posting but I would not show any interest in the studies. I did not receive the letter of posting. To many people this would have terminated or at least tarnished our relationship. To him the relationship was enhanced, as the incident was never discussed either in private or in public. I was amazed in later years that he relied and acted on many occassions on my advice.

There was an occasion, on a Sunday when I came in to find the hall full of people and most of whom were elderly. He asked me to relate how I would react to a situation. Without any hesitation I answered as best as I could, and sat down. Turning to the gathering he said that what I said was how he would react to the situation. I sat down and felt so confused that I could not utter a word for the remainder of the afternoon. During the course of discussion later, I not only learnt that every one had expressed personal views and he kept silent until I arrived.

He had constantly instructed Alhaji Musa, his principal domestic servant, to accept and comply with every advice and directive I might give regarding, his affairs as if they were given by him personally.

These instances are highlighted to show the qualities that could not be found in many people holding similar exhalted positions.

In his terminal illness he relied so much on me that I had to be the one to ask him to go for admission in the Hospital. His words then would ever remain ringing in my ears. "Have you completed the arrangement for my admission? If so let us go. May Allah be our guide". He died on 19th June, 1981 whilst I was on a national assignment which he made me to accept.

May Allah reward him for all the good he did to those of us who were so close to him and particularly to this country. *Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatul Lahi Wa Barakatuh.*

(Sgd.)
Muhammadu Jibo.

ALHAJI ABUBAKAR IMAM — Pillar of the North

BY

ALHAJI USMAN MANI FUNTUA

A truthful, just and faithful person who never assumed any airs of superiority — that is the man Imam! I, Usman Mani gained tremendously from my friendship with him even though I may say that the North in particular and Nigeria in general gained a lot from his contributions. May God grant him pardon. Amen.

WAR AGAINST SUPERSTITIOUS PRACTICES

The first thing I gained from him was his accommodating nature and the lack of feeling of superiority over others. One day during the early days of his editorship of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* his wife gave birth to a baby. As I was related to her I invited some friends and relatives and five of us went to his house early on the day of the naming ceremony. However to my greatest surprise I found only a few people there. Most of his own staff from Gaskiya Corporation were not even aware of the birth. Realising the position he held in the North at the time, as editior of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* such extreme show of modesty was highly examplary. Infact only nine people were present at the naming ceremony.

WELFARE OF NIGERIAN PILGRIMS AT MECCA

In 1952, as a member of the House of Representatives he tabled a motion requiring the Nigerian Government to provide for the welfare of Nigerian Pilgrims in Mecca. At that time Nigeria was a British Protectorate. So this requirement was passed on to Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. The British Government instructed its Consular Staff at Jidda to investigate the possibility of such assistance being rendered by Britain. The Saudi Arabian Government accepted on condition that people be Muslims as only Muslims would be admitted into Mecca.

When the Government of Nigeria received the reply from Britain Imam was asked to make a proposal on how the welfare scheme could be organised. Before he submitted the recommendation he decided to perform the pilgrimage himself. He arranged to personally finance his pilgrimage during which time he would study the problems of other Nigerian pilgrims. He was told that even though he was Member of the House of Representatives he was not being sponsored to go on an official mission. However his report would be highly appreciated on his return. He took the letter and went with it to Mecca.

JOURNEY TO MECCA

I made the journey to Mecca in the Company of Abubakar Imam. We departed Kano on 27th July, 1953 and landed in Jedda after sunset the following day. The plane at that time used to stop at Khartoum for the night. We were checked by customs and immigration and as we were coming out of the airport, we met Alhaji Baba Danbazariye and Madawakin Zazzau Shehu on their way to Medina. They told Abubakar Imam that he had arrived at the right time as there were people from Nigeria who were having some difficulty in the payment of unjustified *Mudauwaf* fees. The amount of money was £19:10s. (Nineteen pounds ten shillings) to pay for the bus from Jedda to Medina and Medina to Mecca and also to cover the *Mudauwaf* fees. It was these fees that the people called unjustified, and refused to pay. The Arabs however, said to them, "Then you better go back where you came from as you cannot perform Hajj without these fees". What then can be done?

HOW THE PROBLEM OF UNJUSTIFIED FEES WAS RESOLVED

We spent the first night in Jedda at the Medinatul Hujjaj (Residence for pilgrims). In the morning Abubakar Imam said we should go and pay transport and *Mudauwaf* fees. Then I asked him, "How can we pay the fees which are regarded as unjustified after we have been told that many people have refused to pay?" Abubakar Imam said, "If you do not pay, what evidence would you show to say that you have been charged unjustly?" At last, we went to the bank and changed our drafts. Abubakar Imam changed his drafts at £100.0.0 sterling and mine was £50.0.0 sterling. However my fifty pounds was almost the same value as ₦1,000.00 at present.

After we changed our money we went and paid the fees complained about. We collected the receipts for the bus journey and were told to get ready for Medina.

When we went back to our lodgings, we saw few people among the group that refused to pay. Two of them, Alhaji Sanda Na Ibrahim Gashash and Alhaji Giwa came to Abubakar Imam and asked for his assistance since many of them did not have more than £30.0.0 each. They said if they agreed to pay the £19.10s they would be in financial difficulties before the end of the pilgrimage. He therefore, ordered a taxi for the six of us to go to the British Consulate to seek for assistance there.

BRITISH CONSULATE EXPLANATION

We reached the British Consulate and after the preliminary greetings, Abubakar Imam said to the Consul, "I am a member of the Nigerian Legislative Council in Lagos. I tabled a motion seeking for assistance to be given to Nigerian pilgrims while in Saudi Arabia. When I was asked to make detailed recommendations I decided to perform the pilgrimage first to know the problem at first hand. Government had agreed for me to do that and submit my report on my return home".

He continued to say, "Yesterday I arrived from Nigeria and these people who came from Nigeria complained to me this morning (pointing to Alhaji Sanda and others) about their being prevented from travelling to Mecca and Medina for their failure to pay some unjustified fees. However, my brother here (pointing to me) and myself have each paid the £19:10s fees for transport and *Mudauwaf* charges. We got receipts. He showed the receipts and the letter from the Nigerian Government which authorised him to investigate the problems of pilgrimage.

CONSUL'S EXPLANATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Consul took the letter from the Nigerian Government and read it. He asked for the file on Nigeria relating to the pilgrimage and showed a copy which they received. Then he said, "I advise you to be careful on the conduct of your investigation. Because as you know very few among the Nigerian pilgrims understand international regulations". He further said, "The amount of money people from Nigeria are complaining about as unjustified fee had been charged for a long time on all pilgrims including Arabs. Previously, the Government exempted the black people from paying, recognising them as poor people. However, since Nigerian pilgrims started to come by air they have now been declared as rich enough to pay like all other pilgrims". Then he asked one of his staff called Auwal Afandi to take us to the office of the *Mudauwaf* to Nigeria where we could get more detailed explanations. Before we left, he asked Imam if he would like to go and meet the King of Saudi Arabia during the Hajj. He could arrange for him to see the King. But Imam said no.

We went together with the Consul's Secretary to the office of the *Mudauwaf*. He told the *Mudauwaf*, Malam Mahmud Abu Zaid, that Abubakar Imam was a Member of Nigerian Legislative Council in Lagos. He had come to perform the Hajj and wanted to know about the charges being made on the pilgrims. Consul's Secretary asked for such detailed explanations to be made.

Mahmud Abu Zaid said he was pleased to see people from Nigeria wanting to know more about the fees being charged and hoped that they would understand his explanation. He said, "The *Mudauwaf* has the responsibility to provide accommodation for all pilgrims under his care at Jedda, Medina and Mecca. It is also his responsibility to make sure that pilgrims visit Medina and perform all the duties plus Umra in Mecca and other Hajji obligations. For all these duties, *Mudauwaf* provides officials as guides to the pilgrims".

After these explanations were made, the *Mudauwaf* invited Imam to come with about ten people among the Nigerian pilgrims and have lunch with the Minister for Hajj. Imam then looked for another four people and ten of us went for lunch with the Minister which turned out to be a very large gathering with pilgrims from various parts of the world. In the evening of that day we left Jedda for Medina.

JOURNEY TO MEDINA

We left Jedda on our way to Medina after the Al'asar prayer and it took two days, travelling only at night for the journey to Medina. At that time the roads in Saudi Arabia were not tarred and people did not travel during the day because of the extreme heat and dust. We reached Medina early in the morning on the second day. The distance between Jedda and Medina is about 300 miles (480km).

As soon as we arrived, we visited the Mosque of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). Afterwards, we went to our lodging. All our prayers while in Medina were said in congregation at the Mosque of the Prophet.

PAKISTANI MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO NIGERIAN PILGRIMS

While we were in Medina I visited the Pakistani hospital to obtain treatment for a blister in my mouth. The doctor whose name was Dr. Muhammad Akatar asked me from what country I came and I told him Nigeria. He said in his view, Nigerians are like Pakistanis having come through the same British colonial heritage and asked me to bring any Nigerian patient to the Pakistani hospital for treatment. He also said that they operated a hospital in Mecca and Jedda as well as Medina throughout the Hajj period.

IMAM SAID "NOW WE HAVE GOT A JOB TO DO"

When I reached our lodging, I told Imam what Dr. Muhammad Akatar had said and Imam replied that he was very pleased to know that our people will be given medical assistance. So we kept checking up all Nigerian pilgrims morning and evening. Wherever someone was found to be ill I would take him to the hospital for treatment. We conducted ourselves that way throughout our stay in Medina. We really enjoyed our short stay in Medina.

JOURNEY TO MECCA FROM MEDINA

On our arrival at Jedda, before we travelled to Medina we met Alhaji Haruna Kassim, a leading merchant from Kano and a Pilgrim's Agent. He told Abubakar Imam that he had arranged for accommodation for him in Mecca at Masfala quarters. So when we arrived at Mecca from Medina we performed the Umra at the Ka'aba before seeking the stated accommodation. Alhaji Haruna Kassim started sending food for us but Imam said no, we were grateful for the accommodation but we would pay for our food.

In Mecca, only a few people among the Nigerian pilgrims required medical treatment. The most serious concern of the Nigerian pilgrims in Mecca was the lack of food to which they were accustomed. Some old people nearly starved themselves. This further aggravated any illness that could have been diagonised. However, most of the illnesses were minor in nature.

JOURNEY TO ARAFAT

We went to Minna a day before Arafat Day. We performed all the pilgrimage rites in Arafat, Minna and Ka'aba and completed our stay in Minna without any hardship. We then returned to our lodgings in Mecca to await our departure to Jedda and return home. While we were in Medina and Mecca several personalities at those places invited Imam to have a meal or take tea with them in their houses. He was able to honour some of the invitations but many were disappointed because he couldn't. Among those he honoured was one from 'Dan Maiwurno who went to Mecca from Shehu Talha in Sudan. Shehu 'Dan Maiwurno was among the great grand children of Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio. His father had travelled to Sudan on foot and established a settlement of Shehu Talha. The Sudanese Government recognised him and appointed him as leader of Nigerians in the Sudan.

"TO TELL THE TRUTH, I DID NOT COME BY ROAD"

We were quite happy in Mecca during the time we stayed after the pilgrimage. However, most of the pilgrims had exhausted their money by making purchases of all sorts of gifts to bring home. Abubakar Imam did not buy anything with his money. He only bought the eight volume of Muhtassar translation by Hadab. He said this was a gift to his elder brother Alhaji Muhammad Bello, Walin Katsina. His problem was mainly the load of books he carried while for most of us feeding was the major problem.

Some of our friends among the pilgrims suggested that we should travel to Jedda to await departure from there. They said most of the other pilgrims had gone leaving only a few of us there. They hired a bus to take us to Jedda. However there was official transport for all pilgrims who came by air and such pilgrims were not allowed to go to Jedda before their departure date. Even if they tried to go they would be returned by the authority. This regulation did not affect pilgrims coming by road and they were free to travel at anytime they desired.

When the bus arrived Imam did not want to go on it since he did not come by road. He told me to wait until our official transport was sent to take us. However, all the others pleaded with him to join their group to Jedda. He finally agreed and sat in the front with the driver. The driver said to him, "Alhaji, if we are stopped on the road and you are asked by what mode of transport you came to this country tell them by road". Imam said "No, to tell the truth I did not come by road and I will not say I came by road". One of the other pilgrims said, "You just keep quiet, we shall tell them. We are already on our way to Jedda and we are sure the will of Almighty God will guide us there safely".

"NO LIES ABOUT ME, I HAVE SOME MONEY"

As soon as we arrived in Jedda we went to the Airport to get information about departure. We were told that we should have a couple of days waiting

before our departure. We were further informed that we had to pay four Saudi Riyals to the authority before we obtained the exit certificate.

When I heard of the demand for payment I went to the Visa Office and told them that we did not have any money. They asked how many of us were there and I said two. I was told to bring the two passports in the evening for stamping. When I told Abubakar Imam about it, he said, "I cannot agree with you telling a lie about me. I have some money". He therefore paid for our exit Visa. We returned home quite safely and full of satisfaction.

(Sgd.)
USMAN MANI

ALHAJI DR. ABUBAKAR IMAM WAS MY TEACHER

My acquaintance with Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam dates back to 1931, when I was admitted into the then Katsina Middle School. He did his teaching practice at the school in the same year. In 1932, Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam took up an appointment with the defunct Katsina Native Authority and was posted to teach at the Middle School, where he taught me for five years (1931—1936). We were officially close again between 1977 and 1979, until his death in June, 1981.

I retired from Public Service in 1975, and during my retirement, I took up an appointment with the Kaduna State Public Complaints Commission as an Investigator (1977—1980). Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam was then the State's Commissioner for Public Complaints.

Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam was a man of tremendous foresight whose fatherly advice was worthwhile abiding by. When I retired, he advised me to dispose of my car, to facilitate my planning a viable future for myself and family. He maintained that I would soon find the vehicle too expensive to keep. In short, he said that it would ruin me. I followed his advice and I have never regretted. May Allah rest his soul in perfect peace. Amen.

(Sgd.)
HUSAINI MASHI (1)
(Sarkin Daji).

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1) Alhaji Husaini Mashi otherwise known as Sarkin Daji was born in Katsina on 31st December, 1920 into a Fulani family. He was educated at Katsina Primary School (1929 — 1931); Katsina Middle School (1931 — 1936) and Naraguta Forestry School, Jos (1946 — 1947). He then attended several courses which included a refresher course at the Naraguta Forestry School in 1958, and a course in wild Life at the Yankari Games Reserve, Bauchi in 1963. Alhaji Husaini Mashi served in various capacities: first with the then Katsina Authority Treasury (1936 — 1939), and then with the Adamawa Native Authority Forestry Department (1945 — 1963). That was the time he was turbanned as "Sarkin Daji" (the Supervisor of the Forest).
In 1963, Sarkin Daji transferred his service to the North Regional Government (defunct) and was posted to the Borgu Games Reserve (Borgu National Park). The five months' intensive course at Yankari preceded his posting to Borgu. He was stationed at Wawa near New Bussa. Following the creation of States in Nigeria in 1968, Alhaji Husaini Mashi was deployed to the North Central State (Kaduna State). He was posted to Zaria, from where he supervised the Birnin Gwari Games Reserve. He retired from Public Service in 1975.

TRIBUTE BY ALHAJI ALIYU 'DANYARI: 19/7/86

I first knew Alhaji Muhammad Bello Kagara when he was a teacher in Zaria and living in a house at the school compound. When I went to Katsina College Malam Bello's house became my second home and I was in the same compound with Abubakar Imam. We used to have evening lessons in Islamic Studies in M. Bello's house together with Imam and several other students.

I realised from the beginning that Imam was very intelligent and also hard working. He was also as a youngman, always showing others how to do things but always upright and truthful. He was more academically bent though he had interest in fives and cricket. He did not show much interest in sports.

His uprightness and great interest in writing must have led him towards the editorship of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. Whoever stayed with him for any length of time was bound to learn something good from him. I am happy to say that my association with him enabled me to gain quite a lot from him.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam never cared very much about money. I think he personally did not desire to become rich. All his interest was in further Islamic education and his farms apart from his major occupation of writing. In all the places he lived he developed orchards, planting fruit trees of various kinds which he presented to people — his friends and neighbours — sometimes delivering them personally. I was recipient of this generosity on several occassions.

He was a strict disciplinarian. All his children and associates will testify to that fact. He hated indolence and general carefree attitudes especially in children and young people.

He was also a man of his words. He never broke a promise and was always punctual when he made appointments with people.

When I went to see him in hospital a few days before he died I was in tears seeing him in great pain. The following day I went back and saw him in a better condition. He chided me for crying for him saying all his children had grown into responsible adults and he would not expect that any of them should cry at his death. Rather all should pray for the repose of his soul.

May Almighty Allah grant him eternal rest in Paradise. Amen.

(Sgd.)
ALHAJI ALIYU 'DANYARI.
19th July, 1986.

MY THIRTY-FIVE YEARS (1946—1981) STAY WITH MALAM ABU-BAKAR IMAM:

BY

ALHAJI MUSA ADAMU (JAM'IYYA)

May Allah forgive the sins of Malam Imam and have mercy on him-Amen. Before I say what I know about Malam Imam, I should like to introduce myself that I am from Dawakin Tofa District of Kano Emirate and our Village Head is called Barguma. By tribe, I am a Fulani and grazing cattle and farming were my principal occupations. It will be recalled that grazing is an occupation which involves much shifting from place to place in search of pasture and water for the cattle. When I was a boy (old enough to tend cattle) my aunt took me away from my parents to Dutsi in Katsina Emirate for purposes of grazing cattle. When I stayed with her for about two years, I was returned to our district in Kano for a reunion with my parents and relatives. I stayed with them for about fifteen years before I was sent again to her at Dutsi. When I reached there, I found that she had moved to a village called Shiriya in Mashi District of Katsina Emirate. After staying with her for some time, I developed an interest in adventure. Thus on foot, I went to Minna and Jebba. From Jebba I came to Kaduna and Zaria. At Zaria, I put up with somebody at Wusasa called Malam Nuhu Ikara.

Although I was a cattle Fulani, farming was my second important occupation and I depended on it to earn a living during my adventurous life. I was a trained farmer and could farm very well. Malam Nuhu Ikara introduced me to the then Sarkin Fulani of Tukur-Tukur, Malam Mohammed Lawal. From him there have been three holders of the post including the incumbent Sarkin Fulani, Alhaji Suleiman.

One day Sarkin Fulani Mohammed Lawal employed me as a farm labourer and assigned me to work on the farm of somebody. While negotiating the amount he would pay me for the work, he said that the owner of the farm was a Senior Officer (*Bature*) who did not feed his labourers in addition to the money he paid them. When I heard this, I lifted up my hoe and asked whether Europeans (*Turawa*) do not eat food. He answered that they do. Then I said, "Why should I work for him on an empty stomach? Without feeding I would not work for him".

Sarkin Fulani thereupon asked me whether I really meant what I said, that I would not work without being fed. I answered in the affirmative. He then persuaded me to commence work and that the question of feeding would be sorted out in my favour. He said that he would ask the *Bature* to provide food in addition to the money to be paid for the work. I agreed. He then asked to know what type of food I would prefer. I said I had no choice and that I would eat any type of food, stressing however, that without it I would not work, since Europeans also eat.

With the foregoing assurance given regarding feeding during the duration of the work, I started to work on the farm. Sometimes Sarkin Fulani would bring me *hura* and sometimes *tuwo*. The work was allotted to me piecemeal four times and I was paid at the completion of each. Concerning feeding and payment for work done I had no complaint whatsoever, except that I had never seen the European, the owner of the farm. However, I got acquainted with somebody called Mudi who said he was a servant of the European concerned. Mudi was also allotted his own portion of the work on the same farm. He was therefore my next door neighbour on the farm.

One day sarkin Fulani Tukur-Tukur came with the owner of the farm and an Arab called Alhaji Baba Ahmed to inspect my work. Sarkin Fulani said, "Here is the owner of the farm". I thought Alhaji Baba Ahmed was the owner because he is a white as a European. I looked at him and said, "Is this the owner of the farm, the European who does not eat?" He said, "I did not say that he did not eat, surely he eats". When the visitors overheard our conversation they asked me what the matter was. I narrated the story to them from A to Z adding that, "From what I have seen (referring to Alhaji Baba Ahmed) you are not a European". The owner of the farm who turned out to be Malam Imam, asked whether I was being fed during working hours. I answered yes, adding that I was fully paid as well. Malam Imam was not aware that Sarkin Fulani was giving me something to eat. I too did not know that Sarkin Fulani was the one feeding me through his own generosity. He only asked the owner of the farm for my wages but he had never raised the question of feeding with him.

Now Mudi, Malam Imam's house boy, suggested that I should join him at Malam Imam's house, with a view to becoming another house boy of his. As if he knew that I had an axe to grind regarding children, Mudi said, "But he has children". I replied that since he had children I would not stay with him. Because should any of his children remind me of the favours being done to me by their father, I would beat him up even in the presence of the father. Nevertheless, Mudi continued to persuade me so that I might join him at Malam Imam's house, until his effort was crowned with success. By that time Malam Imam was conversant with my affairs. One day he asked to know my name. I replied that "Murnai" was my name. He inquired whether I had another name. I said I was called "Rabo". He said that "Rabo" was not a name. He further inquired whether I did not have an Islamic name. I said I was called "Yamusa". He said "Yamusa" is a Fulani terminology the Hausa equivalent of which is "Musa". Therefore I should thence be answering "Musa" as my name and not Rabo or Yamusa. He reiterated that instruction and said, "Do you understand?" I replied in the affirmative. Since that date I have discarded "Rabo" and "Yamusa" have changed to *"Musa"*.

We were at Tukur-Tukur with Malam Imam and later at the Gaskiya Village, but when that house collapsed, he moved to his own personal house at Tudun Wada. At that juncture, I came to know that Malam Sani Kontagora

(may his soul rest in perfect peace) was Malam Imam's very close and reliable friend. Because it appeared to me that all the houses belonging to Malam Imam as well as his farms, were under the care of Malam Sani Kontagora, who appeared to have been given free hand over them. Mudi spoke to Malam Sani Kontagora about me regarding accommodation, and the latter offered me a room at one of Malam Imam's houses, to stay in it free of charge, if I would care to move into it. I said I would but on the proviso that I would pay rent, because if any of Malam Imam's children annoyed me concerning the hospitality I was enjoying I would deal with him drastically. Therefore Malam Sani Kontagora agreed that I should pay one shilling(10k) rent monthly. I paid the rent consecutively for four months. When I saw that nobody bothered to ask me for it, I voluntarily discontinued payment.

Having regard to Malam Imam's generosity concerning accommodation, feeding, etc to me, I felt that he had confidence in me, and I therefore confided my affairs to him. I went to him one day and said, "I have noticed that you have been treating me like your son or brother, because you have entrusted me with labour money without asking me to give an account of how I spend it. Whenever I report that the deposit is exhauted, you simply add more money in my hands. It will be about a month before you check how the money has been spent, yet you know that I am an illiterate. I should therefore like you to tell me the things you do not like, so that I may avoid them while I am in your service". He replied by saying, "If I tell you the things I do not like, will you also let me know your objections?" I answered in the affirmative. Then he said, what he did not like was *dishonesty,* and that if I cherished *reliability* I should have nothing to fear. I asked him to define *dishonesty*, because to my mind, the word has many meanings. He gave me an example by saying that if I was sent to buy something and I pilfered with the money, that would be *dishonesty,* or if I was sent to somebody with money and I tampered with it, that would be *dishonesty.* Then he said, "The ball is now in your court, what are our dislikes?' I said: "The only thing I hate is to be reminded of favours done to me (*gori* in Hausa). He said, "Is that all?" I answered, "Yes, it is the only thing I detest".

Taking care of his "Don'ts" and he taking care of mine, we lived together in peace and harmony for about 35 years without failing each other. During my marriage, he shouldered the expenses a hundred per cent. He paid my return passage and gave me provision to Mecca on pilgrimage. He presented me with a house. Although he placed me on a salary yet he fed and clothed me and my family. Whenever my wife gave birth to a child, Malam Imam took the responsibility for the naming ceremony. All these things he did for me as if I were his dependent son or brother. His family did not ask for anything from him direct, they had been trained to channel their requests through me and if I approved, I would get it for them from Malam Imam. He showed no discrimination in the least against my children. He treated them alike with his own children without distinction. He sent them all to the same Islamiyya School for religious studies and to the European school to pursue western

education. An outsider could not differentiate between my children and his in so far as treatment was concerned.

God is Supreme! May God forgive his sins and may He have mercy on him. Amen. My only wish for him is God's Paradise in the Heaven. He has done everything humanly possible forme.

Finally, may God bless his children who survive him. Amen. Peace be upon you.

(Sgd.)
MUSA JAM'IYYA.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

MODESTY AND SIMPLICITY: THE HALLMARK OF IMAM'S LIFE STYLE

BY

ALHAJI ABDURRAHMAN MORA

"TRUE MODESTY IS THE SOURCE OF ALL VIRTUES" (ALHADITH)

Alhaji Abubakar Imam, like his senior brother, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello, the Wali of Katsina, and his junior brother, Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara with their two sisters who have been married in Katsina, received very good home training from their illustrious father, Malam Shehu Usman, who was concurrently a leading scholar and teacher of Islamic Studies, an Imam, an *Alkali* (Judge) and a *Ma'aji* (Local Treasurer) of Kagara. By virtue of those four important posts which he held, it is sufficient evidence that Malam Shehu Usman commanded the respect and confidence of the people of Kagara; the town he helped to establish and of the entire people of Kamuku Division of Kontagora Emirate. He could have therefore craved to be recognised as a traditional ruler by the British administrators who thought highly of him. The following extract of a letter dated, 27th February, 1955, written by a one time Colonial District Officer Mr. L. Monk (popularly known and called *Mai Saje*) to Alhaji Imam signifies the high regard the British authorities had for Malam Shehu;

> "I am always glad to get news of you and your brothers and sisters, the children of my friend Malam Shaihu, Alkalin Kagara, whom I always remember as one of the best men I have known".

But Malam Shehu Usman was content with those four Godsend posts in his favour, while the Madaki of Kagara functioned as the District Head of His Highness, the Emir of Kontagora.

Notwithstanding the high esteem with which Alkalin Kagara, Malam Shehu, was held by almost everybody all over Kamuku Division, yet none of his sons or daughters was overbearing or self-centred. This must be attributed to the excellent home training they got from their father.

Indeed, the knowledge acquired in childhood or the inculcation of habit upon children, like engraving on the stone, is indelible forever. Alhaji Imam, like his brothers, erected a magnificient edifice of Western education upon the solid home foundation to become one of the greatest Nigerians of our time. Alhaji Imam made the best of both worlds during the seventy years of his life. President Shehu Shagari observed this when he said in his letter of condolence to the bereaved family:

"The late Dr. Abubakar Imam was not only versed in western education; but also he was well learned in the Qur'anic and Islamic judicial system of Shariah. So wide was his experience and dedication to justice that his last public office was as Commissioner for Public Complaints in Kaduna State".

Much has been said in this book about Imam's association with Barewa College, which was established in Katsina in 1921, and transferred to Kaduna in 1938. During the seventeen years of its stay in Katsina, the College registered only a total of 319 students from the former 12 provinces of the Northern Region of Nigeria. That is, about 19 candidates every year on the average enrolment or one or two students from each province a year. That enrolment figure appears very negligible, but at that stage of the North's development, the emphasis was more on quality rather than quantity. Character moulding of the students was No. 1 priority, followed by teaching ability and then record of work (almost in line with the present continuous assessment system in our post-primary schools). So that any student who failed in character failed in all. This was in keeping with the College opening address delivered on 5th March, 1922, by Sir Hugh Clifford the Governor-General of Nigeria. Extracts from the speech are as under:

"It is very necessary that the young men who will receive their training at this college, and who will thereafter carry the torch of learning and knowledge to all parts of the Muhammadan Emirates, should concentrate all their energies upon the task that is set them during their period of training. They should treasure no other desire than that of fitting themselves for the great work of teaching others.

"They should not be careless about the observances of their religious duties, nor forgetful of the traditions of their fellow countrymen, nor lacking in the respect and courtesy which they owe to their parents, to all in positions of authority and to all old people.

"It will fall to them to teach not only the lessons learned from the books, but the good manners the good behaviour, the courteous deportment, without which mere book-learning is of little worth.

"Every youth who is trained here will later be called upon himself to teach and train many others. Let each of them remember that:

"No man securely commands save he who hath learned well to obey".

The pioneer students who listened to the speech on the day the College was officially opened by His Excellency the Governor-General, Sir Hugh Clifford, and all others admitted to the College during that period of seventeen years, cherished the fatherly advice embodied in the address; and the College authorities implemented the provision of the speech in the letter and spirit. So that it was a "must" for students to be of good behaviour or the consequences would be severe.

Students were given adult treatment. Those from affluent homes, for example sons of Emirs and other title holders, were allowed to have their wives with them (but limited to a wife each), and keep horses and servants, provided of course, they maintained them well. Every student was given subsistance money every month ranging from £1.5.0 (One pound five shillings) to £1.10.0 (One pound ten shillings), to cater for himself. These amounts were curtailed to £1.2.6. (One pound two shillings and six pence) and £1.7.0 (One pound seven shillings) respectively during the economic depression of the thirties. The aim, among other things, was to teach frugality and thriftness right from the beginning. That training became effective and conducive to self-sufficiency and self-reliance towards readiness to take responsibility. It discouraged ostentatious living and eliminated complaints regarding meals.

Imam was brought up under that college atmosphere, as one of its students, where discipline reigned supreme and examplary character was the first priority. His inherent qualities which developed from good home training was refined by good sound western education and Islamic studies. Moreover, his elder brother, Malam Muhammadu Bello was nearby keeping a watch over him. Thus Imam became one of the most level-headed and most modest of students the college had ever produced. It will be recalled that his senior brother, who was twenty-one years older than him, was at the material time an Arabic teacher, at both the Katsina College and the Elementary Training Centre (E.T.C.) next door.

Among the early Arabic books which Alhaji Abubakar Imam must have studied from his brother, is one called "Zuhdu", which is a poem expressing extreme renunciation of wordly pleasures and encouraging self-denial. It will be recalled that Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe the Owelle of Onitsha, in his telegram of condolence to the bereaved family of the late Dr. Imam refers to him as a poet. Examples of his poetry are available in several of his published works.

A story is told that the author of "Zuhdu" and his brother were sons of a mighty king. While the would-be author took to scholarsticism as if he were an adherent of a "Sufi" order, the other inclined towards monarchism with the pleasures of the palace and the glitters of the world. His passionate love for the world and caring less for the promised paradise in the Hereafter might remind the reader about a rhyme in "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam", viz:

> "Some for the Glories of This World, and some Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come; Ah, take the Cash, and let credit go, Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!".

In their disposition, the two princes were said to be poles apart, although their brotherhood was never shaken. The Holy Quran makes reference to both categories in verses 200 and 201 of Sura 2, viz:

> "There are men who say: 'Our Lord! Give us (Thy bounties) in this world!' But they will have no portion in the Hereafter".

"And there are men who say: 'Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire!' To these will be allotted what they have earned; and God is quick in account".

Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali, in his Translation of the Holy Quran and commentary said:

"If you hasten to get all the good things of the world, and only think of them and pray for them, you would lose the higher things of the future. The proper Muslim attitude is neither to renounce this world nor to be so engrossed in it as to forget the spiritual future", and this is in consonance with verse 201 quoted above.

A Prophetic Hadith which is relevant to this topic states that:

"A man came to the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, direct me to an act which, if I do it, (will cause) Allah to love me and people to love me'. He said: 'Renounce the world and Allah will love you, and renounce what people possess and people will love you".

According to the story of the princes, the father of the two brothers, the king, died leaving his children behind, among others. The would-be author of "Zuhdu" did not vie for the vacant throne, but his brother left no stone unturned until he succeeded their father. The scholarly brother having regard to the Prophetic tradition that, "None of you (truly) believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself", became disappointed and malancholy, but with a determination to do everything humanly possible to make his brother renounce the throne. At last he was inspired to write a poem entitled "Zuhdu", renouncing the world. It is written in 28 stanzas in Arabic alphabetical order and each stanza contains five rhymes.

At length, he read the poem to the king with a miraculous effect - the king abdicated his throne! Thus "Zuhdu" is not a popular book with the generality of princes. Of the Katsina College Old Brigade a few are known to have been conversant with the poem, including the late Malam Sa'adu Zungur, who was an authority on "Zuhdu". Alhaji Jimada the Nakordi of Pategi was his disciple in that study. It is a popular belief that anybody who has comprehensively studied "Zuhdu" seldom indulges in amassing ill-gotten wealth or yearning for power — monarchical, political or otherwise.

A sample of the poem comprising sixteen ryhmes taken at random and translated into English is given below:

"1) And our world, oh! my brother, if we incline to its glitters and fall passionately in love with its wealth and honour, will lead many to destruction.

2) And the fear of the Hereafter is the greatest of all fears, when mankind is called to account.

3) And whatever we have amassed legally or ill-gotten, will soon be apportioned among inheritors — sons and daughters.

4) And our well-wishers (parents, children, kith and kin) will forget us in a period of ten (days, months or years), while our remains have decayed to rotten bones.

5) You will depart to the Great Beyond alone and the husband of your wife will enjoy the portion of her inheritance from your bequest.

6) Make provision oh! my brother for death whenever you wake up in the morning, as if you will not tarry until the evening.

7) Many a time a person among us had gone to bed healthy, whose death knell was rung before the approach of the dawn.

8) Oh! my brother you have stayed long in corruption and sin, while your provision for the Heareafter is null and void.

9) The grey hair of your head is sufficient warning to you, when its changing colour is progressively exceeding the black.

10) Is the world with all that is in it, not like darkness that disappears with the emergence of day?

11) And where are the great ones in benevolence and valour, and where are the forecomers who were given to pageantry and pride?

12) And where is generation after generation of them from those who came before and the swollen headed?

13) They are as if they have not been created or have not been. Is there anything which has been protected against destruction?

14) He watches tambourines and musical instruments for amusement unmindful that they will be the cause of his failure in crossing the aweful Eliminating Bridge which leads to the Great Bliss.

15) And renunciation of wordly pleasures or self-denial of one who fears God is neither by clean shaving of the head nor by wearing of heavy costly clothes.

16) But it is only through being guided aright in speech and in action and by giving of charity voluntarily, privately and in public, in fear of the unseen".

As a theologian, Alhaji Imam must have delved into the prophetic traditions and must have come across the following sayings of the prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

1) "He dieth not who giveth life to learning". Alhaji Abubakar Imam pursued Islamic studies from the cradle to the grave.

2) "Those who earn an honest living are the beloved of God". Initially, the Honourable Members of the House of Assembly and House of Representatives were entitled to receive their full salaries from their employers in addition to £60 (Sixty pounds) per month as allowances for being members of the House or Houses. Some Honourable members served in both Houses concurrently. Dr. Imam served in both Houses, but he opted to accept only half of his salary from his employer, the Gaskiya Corporation, on the ground that he was away from his desk very often, either to Kaduna or Lagos to attend the functions of the Houses, or to attend the meetings of the numerous committees and Boards of which he was also a member. He therefore did not see the justification of his drawing full salary from his employer, when by virtue of his being an Honourable member of the two Houses and of so many committees and Boards, he had virtually become a part-time member with the Corporation. His employer acceded to the request.

3) "Humility and courtesy are acts of piety".

4) "The Faithful (i.e. Muslims) are those who perform their trust and fail not in their word, and keep their pledge". Alhaji Imam had reason to resign his membership of both Houses of Assembly and Representatives in 1954 and he was the first Honourable member to do so. Details of his action have been given elsewhere in this Biography. After his resignation however, the North Regional Government appointed him Superintendent, North Regional Literature Agency (NORLA). In addition, in 1955, he was appointed a part-time Commissioner of the Northern Nigeria Public Service Commission. He attended the functions of the Commission once or twice a week in Kaduna from Zaria (80 kilometres away) until he attended one hundred meetings consecutively without missing a single one. By all standards, that was a record for which his Chairman awarded him a certificate of appreciation. The sense of dedication was really superb.

5) "All kinds of modesty are best".

6) "Be in the world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer. At evening do not expect (to live till) morning, and at morning do not except (to live till) evening. Take from your health for your illness and from your life for your death".

Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam was an authority on the Qur'an, and in his spending he was guided by these Qur'anic verses (17:26 and 27) and (17:29) respectively, among others:

"And render to the kindred their due rights, as (also) to those in want, and to the wayfarer: But squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift.

"Verily spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil Ones; and the Evil One is to his Lord (Himself) ungrateful". "Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard's) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that thou become blameworthy and destitute".

Imbued with these studies, he grew up as a devout, simple, modest and level-headed Moslem, like his brothers, sisters and father. He was however, firm.

DR. IMAM'S MODE OF LIFE

Dr. Imam was never known to have been ostentatious in anything be it his meals, his dress, his dwelling place, or his personal vehicles. Moderation was his order of the day, and he believed in simplicity as the best policy. He used to say: "Do not be all sugar or the world will suck you up, and do not be all vinegar or the world will spit you out". He was also constantly guided by the under-mentioned prophetic sayings:

a) "True modesty is the source of all virtues".
b) "Modesty and chastity are parts of the Faith".
c) 'Meekness and modesty are two branches of *Iman* (piety) and vain talking and embellishing are two branches of hyprocrisy".

Alhaji Imam was never known to have smoked a cigarette or cigar, but he was a great chewer of kolanuts. He was never known to have tasted alcoholic drinks, but he was fond of soft drinks, and he was never known to have been unchaste, but nobody could prevent him from marrying a woman of his desire, provided doing so would not violate Islamic Law (Shariah). "We bear witness only to what we know, and we could not well guard against the unseen!" (Qur'an 12:81). Regarding taking a wife or taking up an appointment he used to say that either of the two was an individual prerogative or a personal reservation with which nobody should unduly interfere.

Dr. Imam satisfactorily kept family ties and his public relations were good. He visited the sick, attended funerals, offered condolences and attended marriage ceremonies locally and abroad. For the purposes listed in the preceeding sentence, he travelled many times to Kano, Dawakin Tofa, Kazaure, Azare, Katsina, Malumfashi, Safana, Funtua, Sokoto, Kagara, Minna, Kaiama, and other places. As a testimony of his good public relations, a mammoth gathering of mourners and sympathisers attended his funeral when he passed away on 19th June, 1981. He was a gallant fighter against the traditional form of greeting elders or those in authority by squatting on the ground. To replace it with something decent and something in keeping with the doctrine of Islam, he became a strong advocate of hand shaking or clenched fist *'jinjina'* salute, which has already been explained elsewhere in this Biography. He even went as far as to be shaking hands with his own sons, as did his intimate friend, Alhaji Baba Ahmed He permitted his sons to enter his house with their shoes on, but they respectfully declined.

IMAM'S MEALS

Alhaji Imam ate anything that was the staple food of the community within which he lived, such as meals prepared of guinea corn, maize, millets, rice, yams, cassava, sweet potatoes and fruits. He produced some of these himself as a farmer. But he had some specialities in food items from time to time or on special occasions. On the whole, for breakfast, he normally took a kind of gruel made of millets, guinea corn or maize called *koko* in Hausa. He took it with a nutritious local cake called *kosai*, prepared from beans. He took it with or without milk and sugar. For lunch and supper, he ate the common *tuwo* made of guinea corn, maize or rice with soup or stew. He would then, as a second course, wash it down with *hura*, before having fruit as dessert — oranges, mangoes, pawpaws, guavas, bananas or pomegranates, according to theseason of their production in his farms or orchards. *Hura* is another liquid food made from millets and mixed in milk, taken with or without sugar. Sometimes he took *hura* as the main course. In that case the preparation was more elaborate, as it included an appetizer, like roast fowl or beef or lamb. Except for liquid and rice for which a ladle or spoon is used respectively, he normally used his fingers in eating, sitting on the floor and never on a dining table, which was never kept in his house. He seldom ate alone, but everybody would have his own soup bowl. Of all the food grains enumerated above, it is rice he least cared for. When he toured Niger province in 1949, the Emir of Kontagora, His Highness, Sarkin Sudan gave him a free hand regarding the meals he would like to have. He replied that he would prefer fresh milk to anything else, but he was being modest, and Sarkin Sudan was able to read between the lines. He ordered that *hura* be sent in addition and probably some fried chicken and meat as well.

IMAM'S COMMON DRESS

Alhaji Imam used the traditional flowing garments, but of a simple design and usually white. His trousers which were tightly fitting, are called *tsala* in Hausa. He never wore a voluminous pair of trousers, and even when he visited England in 1943, he did not wear European dress. As a head-gear, he was fond of a short red fez called *dara gurus* or a Pakistani cap made of fur. The popular *Zanna* cap which was later called *Shagari* cap did not appeal to him. He occasionally used turbans especially one with a distinctive style introduced by him in the early 1940s. When he was a teacher at Katsina, however, he put on a cap with ear flaps called *haßarkada*. It is a cap that can be pulled to cover both ears against dust or cold weather. *Haßarkada* was in vogue in Katsina at the time perhaps because of the semi-desert nature of the area. The Katsina College authorities gave *haßarkada* to House Captains, Games Captains and those awarded colours for brilliant performance at games, as a symbol of seniority or prowess in games — football, cricket, hockey, fives and athletics. Differen-

colours — blue, red, yellow, green, black etc. were used for the lining of the triangular-shaped ear flaps of the cap to indicate the different awards. Perhaps, Dr. Imam borrowed a leaf from the college, because he was among the college cricket First Eleven in 1931. For foot-wear, he was often in slippers, except in the office, at dinner parties, or meeting Europeans away from home, or any other personalities who valued shoes as a complement of a full dress. Finally, over the flowing robes — or simply jumpers, he wore an Arabic cloak called *abaya*.

IMAM'S PERSONAL RESIDENCE

Alhaji Imam was wealthy enough to put up a first class modern house for himself and his family but he preferred to live in an adobe built house, a mud building not commensurate with his high status. As burglar proof for the windows of the house, an idea obsessed his mind that a locally produced hardwood timber called *azara*, which cannot be destroyed by white ants, was more secure than an iron rod: Through persistent pleading by his friends he removed some of the *azara*. Others remained until his death.

If anybody asked his advice regarding a residential building for himself and his family, he used to say: *Ka gina gidanka irin na Bahaushe*. That is, build a simple house with ordinary sun burnt bricks, the type of which an average Hausaman lives in. The furniture in his sitting room was of a very simple type, relatively inexpensive. The chairs were for his visitors, because he himself preferred to recline on cushions and mattresses. The few chairs were augmented by many pillows for visitors to recline on. However, Dr. Imam had several first class modern houses at Zaria and Kaduna but for renting purposes to augment his very meagre pension of ₦160.00 a month. All his houses were financed by personal savings and bank loans. The houses were built through direct labour which he supervised.

IMAM WAS GENEROUS

Alhaji Imam was hospitable and generous, but always within the limitation of his means. This was necessary since he was not corrupt and was never known to have accumulated ill-gotten wealth. He therefore lived within his means, not being extravagant or niggardly in accordance with Qur'anic verses 17:26 and 27 and 29 quoted above.

Whenever Dr. Imam had very important guests he called luncheon parties or dinner parties in their honour. All the guests and invitees sat on the floor. At such occasions knives, forks and spoons were provided, though anybody was at liberty to use his fingers, particular when chicken was served. Such parties were not very common among the local communities. He frowned at anybody invited to such a party but who failed to turn up without reasonable excuse.

He gave towards charity. He would have coins of kobo in a money bag, to be given out as alms to any begger passing by. During his time kobo was still acceptable by beggers when it was offered to any of them. Later beggers unanimously decided not to accept it, because it had lost its purchasing power through inflation, so much so that it could not buy anything worthwhile.

If Dr. Imam saw a pedler in whose wares he was interested, he would call him and would strike a bargain to its logical conclusion not minding the time being wasted. He would say, "Tell me the truth and nothing but the whole truth regarding the exact cost price of this commodity". If he was convinced that what he vendor said was true, he would pay more than the price quoted and take possession of the commodity. But if the transaction failed, Imam would give the pedlar a dash of at least ten kobo and say, *Allah ya ba da kasuwa"*, meaning "I wish you a better offer than mine elsewhere."

IMAM A STRICT FOLLOWER AND ADVOCATE OF ORTHODOX VIEWS REGARDING ISLAMIC RELIGION

Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam was so devout a Moslem that he embraced the Tijjaniyya Doctrine and way of life, in addition to the five obligatory daily prayers. This happened in the early thirties or late twenties when he was not knowledgeable regarding the implications involved. The *Jawahir al Ma'ani*, one of the books of the Tijjaniyya Doctrine and way of life had either not been published or it was not available for his perusal and study. So, like many others, he followed that way of life in good faith for many years, not knowing that it contradicts certain aspects of Islam as practised by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) and the orthodox caliphs immediately following him (may be God pleased with them).

For sometime Alhaji Imam developed suspicion for the Tijjaniyya doctrine, so that when he toured Sokoto Province early in the fifties, he took the opportunity to investigate three matters which had been food for thought for him for many years. These matters are:—

a) The Tijjaniyya and their way of life.

b) National Honours and medals.

c) Publication of the books written by:—

   i) Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio.

   ii) Sultan Muhammadu Bello.

   iii) Malam Abdullahi Fodio.

He discussed these matters with His Royal Highness, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III the Sultan of Sokoto, but the results of the investigations have not been made public. However, *Ma'amare* by Shehu 'Dan Fodio, *Infakul Maisur* by Sultan Bello,

Hali Zanen Dutsen by Sultan Abubakar III and *Tarihin Fulani* by Waziri Sokoto Junaidu were published with his encouragement. In the early 1960s, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto financed the publication of several of Shehu Dan Fodio's and Abdullahi's works. Imam soon became convinced that he was religiously backing a wrong horse, so he renounced his membership of Tijjaniyya doctrine as a way of life, long before he died. This book is not a place to give details of those things which made him change his mind against the doctrine. "May Allah show us what is right, and give us the courage to abide by it; and may He show us what is wrong, and give us the courage to avoid it". This maxim has been his major prayer in print since the early days of his editorship of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo.*

MARRIAGE OF HIS DAUGHTERS

With regard to the expenses incurred in marriage by many people in this country, Alhaji Imam recognised only the giving of a dowry which is indispensable. He expected nothing more from the bridegroom. As for bridal clothing, he took it upon himself that it was his responsibility to provide, as well as bedding, cooking utensils, crockery and cutlery etc. He maintained that such things are the responsibility of the parents of the bride. He adopted this practice with effect from 1st May 1941 as a result of a letter written to Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo on the subject by his elder brother.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

Alhaji Imam accepted genuine gifts undisguised for ulterior motives. Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa Mora once brought him a present of a towel from England. He appreciated the present and jokingly stated, "The one I have is anything but a towel".

An example of a gift which he rejected was given to him in the presence of Alhaji Bashir Ibrahim a nephew of his and a contributor to this biography, in Kaduna. A newly employed civil servant came with some money at the end of his first month of employment to seek what he called Alhaji Imam's blessing. Imam became very furious and said, "Why do you think I should desire any present from you? You have just started to earn your living while money is no problem with me". He drove him out immediately and maintained a reputation of never having received gifts from anybody in consideration of any favour.

IMAM THE FARMER

For forty-eight years (1932—1980), Malam Abubakar Imam faithfully served this country in various capacities as a teacher, a journalist, a poet, an author, a politician, a proprietor of an Islamic Primary School (Nurul Hudah), an administrator, an Ombudsman and a farmer.

Although he was always very busy with official duties and private business like authorship, he was able to find time to attend to farming as a hobby. At his death in 1981, he left behind eleven small farmlands — 2 in Kaduna, one in Zaria and 8 at Tafoki in Funtua Local Government Area of Katsina State. Among them is the one popularly called DUBU GOMA on the outskirts of Kaduna between Kawo and Rigachikun on the road to Zaria. Ten thousand seedlings of eucalyptus trees, mangoes, oranges, grapefruits and guavas were actually planted on the farm. Another well known farm is the one on the outskirts of Zaria known as PALLADAN FARM at the foot of the rock on the Samaru/Basawa junction. At Tafoki where he had the majority of his farms, all of them in small holdings, he posted a permanent farm Care-taker and planted mostly grains. DUBU GOMA also had a permanent Care-taker.

DUBU GOMA produces various fruits all the year round and poles for roofing purposes or scaffolding, providing builders with platforms to facilitate building projects. The numerous eucalyptus trees provide electricity and telephone poles for overhead wiring. They also supply firewood. The PALLADAN FARM does not have so many eucalyptus trees, they were planted only to demarcate the farm area. There, emphasis is on fruit trees, — mangoes oranges, grape fruits, and guavas — a repetition of DUBU GOMA. Therefore the two farms produce fruits all the year round in commercial quantities. The Tafoki farms, however, are mainly for food grain production, guinea corn and maize for domestic consumption, gifts and charity. But they are so productive that Alhaji Imam did not have to buy additional food grains, except rice and yams from the market.

M. Imam experimented in poultry keeping on several occassions without success. Moreover, in one of his Tudun Wada houses he used to produce grapes, pomegranates, pawpaws, bananas, and guavas. Eventually, those gave way to housing extension.

As a farmer, Imam was source of inspiration to those close to him, for example, Alhaji Abubakar Tunau the Kayaye of Sardauna, Alhaji Tijjani Malumfashi, Alhaji Haliru Binji, the late Alhaji Baba Ahmed, Alhaji Gambo Sawaba, the late Alhaji Mohammed Sanusi the Waziri of Zazzau, Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora and others. All of them followed the footsteps of M. Imam and have become farmers, albeit the holdings are small, except Alhaji Abubakar Tunau the Kayaye of Sardauna who has become a fairly big scale farmer, employing tractors and other agricultural machines.

Alhaji Abubakar Tunau who has surpassed M. Imam in farming technique and production, is better able to tell much more on "Imam as a Farmer" than anyone else. He speaks as under:—

"Whenever one was in the company of Malam Imam, one of his usual advises to one would be to go back to the land that is, to be engaged in farming, unless one was known by him to be a farmer already".

With regard to his devotion to farming as a hobby he it was who at the conclusion of his last story in *Magana Jari Ce* in 1937, penned the following poem:

"Gida ya zaunu ko da ba fatauci
Amma ba ya zauno sai da noma
Idan aka addabe ka gari da da ƙauye
Ka sari dawa, ka sa dawa da gero
Idan ka rabuka ga bara, ka tabe
Ka sai garma ka je gona ka nemo
Tabaraka ya halicci ƙasa da yalwa
Ya ɗau kurɗi ya binne don a tono
Dada mu babu damar yin butulci
Idan raggo ya tabe babu kaito." [1]

It is appropriate that this last story titled *"Sai Bango Ya Tsage Kadangare Ke Samun Wurin Shiga"* emphasised the spirit of discipline, co-operative undertakings and farming.

It was typical of M. Imam that what he wished for himself he would wish it for his brothers, friends, colleagues and acquintances. It will be recalled that it has been mentioned elsewhere in this exposition, that Malam Imam finance-aided some of his servants to go on pilgrimage to Mecca. It would appear that he also encouraged some of his colleagues at Gaskiya Corporation — Captain Makama (Alhaji Abdulƙadir Makama), Alhaji Abubakar Tunau, and some of his friends and in-laws:- Alhaji Haliru Binji, Alhaji Ibrahim H. Musa, Alhaji Tijjani Malumfashi, Alhaji Abdurrahman Mora, etc. to apply for building plots at the Zaria Tudun Wada new layout and build houses. Such benevolent disposition is in line with the following Prophetic tradition reported on the authority of Abu Hamza (Anas) Ibn Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim:—

"None of you (truly) believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself"[2].

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1 *Meaning of Hausa poem.*
A family can be sustained even without trading,
However that can not be so without farming.
If you feel bothered by the town and the village,
Take to the countryside and plant guinea corn and millet.
Should you resort to begging you will be forsaken,
Buy a plough and go to the farm to seek a fortune.
The Almighty has created a vast land mass,
Underneath He reserved wealth to be exploited.
We have no right to be ungrateful to our Lord,
Any idler who is forsaken needs no sympathy.

2. Anas Ibn Malik, when still a youth, was employed by the Prophet as a servant and is the authority for many Hadith. He is often referred to as 'the servant and friend of the Messenger of Allan'.

The above mentioned Hdaith is Hadith No. 13 of the An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith.

IMAM'S FAMILY AND FRIENDS

A man's family comprises his parents, children, servants and all descendants of common ancestor. The name of Abubakar Imam's father, Malam Shehu Usman the Alkali, the Ma'aji and the Chief Imam of Kagara and that of Imam's senior brother, Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara the Wali of Katsina are like common threads running through the pages or chapters of this book. Imam's junior brother, Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara has also been mentioned on several occasions and so has the name of their grandfather, Malam Muhammadu Badamasi and their great grandfather Malam Muhammadu Gajibo the immigrant from Borno to Bida and then to Sokoto. The three brothers who have passed away were survived by two sisters, viz-:

a) Hajiya Hauwa Habibu, a widow of Alhaji Habibu, an Islamic teacher of Gambarawa Ward, Katsina, with whom she had four surviving children of whom the eldest son is called Alhaji Mansur Habibu.

b) Hajiya Fatima Ta'annabi Ibrahim a spouse of Alhaji Ibrahim Mashi, the Talba of Katsina with whom she has nine children, having lost one (Malam Abdu Ibrahim). The eldest son is Alhaji Mamun Ibrahim, Village Head of Garu, in Mashi District, Mani Local Government Area of Katsina State.

The mother of the five children, three male and two female, daughter of the Imam of Bobi otherwise known as 'Mama' or 'Yaya Wushishi' lived to a great age. She died at Katsina at the age of 102 years in 1969. Alhaji Muhammadu Bello, M.B.E., the Wali of Katsina also died at Katsina on 21st November, 1971. Alhaji Abubakar Imam, C.O.N., O.B.E., LL.D. died at Zaria on 19th June, 1981, and his younger brother Alhaji Ahmadu Kagara also died at Zaria on 25th April, 1976. May their souls rest in perfect peace, Amen.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam and his brothers and sisters inherited the greatness of their father and forefathers. The examplary character and intellect have been passed down to their children and grand-children.

ALHAJI MUHAMMADU BELLO, M.B.E. THE WALI OF KATSINA

Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kagara, M.B.E. who was born in 1890 and died at the age of 81, served this nation for 57 years from 1914—1971. He served Zaria Native Authority from 1914—1921 (seven years) as a teacher; the Northern Provinces of Nigeria at Katsina College from 1921 to 1945 (24 years); and Katsina Native Authority from 1945 to 1971 (26 years). He had the honour of being one of the first students of the Pioneer School which was started in Kano in 1908 by Sir Hans Vischer otherwise known as *Dan Hausa,* and the school was called *Makarantar Dan Hausa* that is, Dan Hausa School.

For his long and meritorious service His Majesty's Government decorated him with the Honour of Member of the British Empire (M.B.E.) in 1938. Following his retirement in 1945, he was appointed a Junior Judge (*Karamin Alkali*) by the Katsina Native Authority. Four Years later (1949) he was appointed the Chief Alkali of Katsina. On 10th September, 1954, he was appointed the Wali of Katsina that is, Legal Adviser to the Katsina Native Authority, a post which he creditably held until his death on 21st November, 1971. He was survived by two wives, 15 children, 9 males and 6 females and many grand children. The sons he left behind are:—

1) Alhaji Usman Malami, Court Registrar at Katsina (died 16th March 1979).
2) Alhaji Sani Imam, General Manager, Nigeria Diary Company Kaduna.
3) Alhaji Muhtar Bello, Chartered Accountant and Managing Director, Allied Bank Nigeria Limited, Lagos.
4) Alhaji Munir Bello, former Accountant, Farmers' Supply Company Kaduna.
5) Alhaji Aminu Bello, Ministry of Agric. & Animal Resources, Katsina
6) Alhaji Kabir Bello, Katsina State Hotels Board, Ministry of Information Katsina. (Died on 2nd May, 1988 in a motor car accident)
7) Alhaji Ahmed Bello, Bursar, Polytechnic, Katsina.
8) Malam Zainul-abidina Bello (died in a motor car accident in 1983).
9) Malam Habibu Bello, New Nigerian Newspapers Limited, Kaduna.

ALHAJI AHMADU KAGARA
(*BABA NA KANO*)

He served the Northern Regional Government and later North-Central State (Kaduna State) as a Senior Technical Officer, Ministry of Animal and Forest Resources. He served in a number of Provinces including Kano, Adamawa, Niger (at Kontagora) and North-Central State (Kaduna State) based in Kaduna. However, it is with Kano that he was mostly identified, hence his nickname *Baba Na Kano!* He died in Zaria on 25th April, 1976, leaving behind three wives and four children among whom the eldest and only son, is Muhammadu Bello otherwise known and addressed as *WALI.*

IMAM'S CHILDREN

When Alhaji Abubakar Imam died on 19th June, 1981, he was survived by a wife, 14 children:[1] 7 males and 7 females and 42 grand-children.

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1. Three children did not survive Imam but died in infancy. Umar, the first born and another died in Katsina. Mohamed Kabir died in Zaria at Kofar Tukur Tukur. Nuruddin Imam died in a car accident in July 1978 leaving four children.

The sons are:

1. Alhaji Mustafa Imam, Chief Pharmacist Katsina State Health Management Board.
2. Alhaji Shamsuddeen Imam, Businessman, resident in Katsina.
3. Malam Kamaruddeen Imam, Editor Hudahuda Publishing Co. Ltd., Zaria.
4. Malam Najamuddeen Imam, Head of Department, Media Resources National Teachers Institute, Kaduna.
5. Malam Sirajuddeen Imam, Admin. Secretary, Institute of Administration, A.B.U., Zaria.
6. Malam Nizamuddeen Imam, Former Lecturer, University of Sokoto, (tragically died in a car accident on 2nd March, 1983.)
7. Malam Jalaluddeen Imam, Lecturer, Advanced Teacher's College, A.B.U. Zaria.

IMAM'S DOMESTIC SERVANTS

In 49 years of independent life, living in exuberant health and modest style, the number of domestic servants engaged by Alhaji Abubakar Imam were considerable. Among them some deserve mention and commendation in this treatise.

Alhaji Bala Babba, Alhaji Bala Karami, Alhaji Shehu Driver, Alhaji Mudi Tafoki and Alhaji Musa Adamu (Jamiyya) will long be remembered with appreciation in the family. They all survived him except Alhaji Bala Babba. In actual fact, Bala Babba and Bala Karami were not in reality servants to Alhaji Abubakar Imam. While Bala Babba was a distant relative of his from Sokoto, Bala Karami is his brother-in-law. They might therefore appropriately be called members of his extended family. But all the same, he treated them all alike without distinction or discrimination.

Owing to Imam's foresight and benevolent disposition, he wished everyone of these five men to have a good trade to enable him lead an independent life in due course. He thought of teaching them how to drive a car, and he engaged a licensed driver to teach them. They had all passed school going age at the time they came into contact with him. Only Bala Babba and Shehu benefited and became licensed drivers. After they had qualified, Dr. Imam assigned Shehu Driver to be a private driver to the Wali of Katsina, his elder brother and Bala Babba took up an option to be in commercial transport business. He settled in Kano and prospered for many years until his death.

Bala Karami by virtue of his having been with Alhaji Imam in his youth had that broadened outlook of a town dweller. He would appear to have shown a propensity for public service. He was therefore engaged as a Messenger at the Public Service Commission, Kaduna. Later he was transferred to Government Health Office Birnin Gwari as a Messenger, where he is still serving.

Mudi who hailed from the rural areas had a flair for farming. He was therefore assigned as a farm care-taker to supervise Imam's farms at Tafoki in Funtua Local Government Area, Katsina State. He has assimilated himself with the local people so thoroughly that he enjoys their respect and confidence. He was elected as a Council Member to represent that community. He is well established at Tafoki with productive farms of his own.

Musa Adamu (Jam'iyya) who was originally a cow Fulani herdsman became fed up with bush life, tending the family cattle, and decided to see the world. He thus would appear to have foresaken cattle grazing to become an adventurer. Initially like Mudi, Musa was one of Alhaji Imam's farm labourers.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam assisted them all to get wives and when they had children he encouraged them to send the children to school to pursue western education and Islamic studies. Presently, a son of Shehu Driver has graduated with LLB degree from the University of Sokoto and has become a lawyer. Musa Adamu has one son at the Bayero University, Kano; while Bala Karami has a daughter attending the Women Teachers' College (W.T.C.), Zaria. Dr. Imam also helped all of them to go to Mecca on pilgrimage. Alhaji Imam's very singular generosity to his servants under reference culminated in his presenting each one of them with a residential house: Alhaji Shehu Driver in Katsina; Alhaji Mudi at Tafoki; Alhaji Musa Jam'iyya in Zaria and Alhaji Bala Karami at Birnin Gwari.

After the death of Alhaji Muhammadu Bello the Wali of Katsina in 1971, Alhaji Abubakar Imam assisted Alhaji Shehu (Wali's personal driver) to get employment with the Katsina Local Government Council, from which he retired on pension serveral years ago. With regard to Alhaji Musa Jam'iyya who had served Dr. Imam for 35 years, the late Alhaji Imam, before he died, made a *Wasiyya* that is, a will that his faithful principal servant, Alhaji Musa who is popularly known and addressed as Alhaji Musa Jam'iyya, be accommodated in a compartment of his (Imam's) resident at No. 19/20 Imam Road, Tudun Wada, Zaria to the rest of his life. This *Wasiyya* however, is understood to mean that Alhaji Musa Jam'iyya should be so accommodated as long as he lives, but obviously it is not extended to his own family after his death.

Alhaji Imam was so open-hearted and open-minded that he was seldom lopsided in his dealings or activities. Although Katsina had become his home town and Zaria his place of residence, yet he did not sever his connection with Kagara, the town of his father and his own birth place. He considerably developed Malam Shehu Usman's compound by building a concrete wall round it. He also replaced the temporary mosque attached to the compound with a permanent one. The tomb of his father is in the compound. Alhaji Ibrahim

Namaska the Wali of Kagara is a worthy custodian of the house. He is maintaining the house very well. Recently, he build a guest wing in the house which is provided with modern facilities. The Wali of Kagara, Alhaji Ibrahim Namaska is a relative of the late Imam. The Wali of Kagara is a highly respected personality in Kagara town and in Kogi Local Government Area. He was elected as a Local Government Council Member and later as an Honourable Member of the Niger State House of Assembly. He has a paying trade as a tailor.

Finally, Dr. Imam's last personal driver Muhammadu was not forgotten, although he had not been with him for so long. Before he vacated his post as the Commissioner (Ombudsman) of the Kaduna Public Complaints Commission in 1979, Dr. Imam got Muhammadu appointed to a pensionable post in the Commission, as a government driver. He is still serving there and seems to be quite happy.

IMAM HAS BEEN IMMORTALIZED

It has been stated elsewhere in this book that Imam was awarded a National Honour: Commander Order of Niger (C.O.N.) and a foreign honour; Officer Order of British Empire (O.B.E.) and an Honourary Doctorate Degree in Literature of the University of Ibadan. He was also among the first four Nigerians ever to receive the National Merit Award. A street at Tudun Wada, Zaria Local Government Area bears his name as IMAM ROAD. His residence is situated along that Road. The New Nigerian Newspapers Limited have named a building in Kaduna after him as IMAM HOUSE. Also at Kagara a street had been named after him as IMAM STREET.

Moreover, the *Hausa Language Committee* of the students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, is in the process of collecting funds for a *Reading Room* to be named after Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam. This was disclosed at a Hausa Week organised by the A.B.U., Hausa Language Committee which was inaugurated on 25th March, 1985 and lasted until 29th March, 1985. Many important personalities graced the inauguration ceremony of the Hausa Week at which I presented a paper in Hausa on the biography of the late Dr. Imam. Professor Abdullahi Mohammed the Head of Department of Library Science represented the Vice-Chancellor, then Professor Ango Abdullahi, at the ceremony. The Emirs of Zazzau, Alhaji Dr. Shehu Idris, C.F.R., and Daura Alhaji Muhammadu Bashar were also represented at the meeting by some of their leading Counsellors.

To facilitate the building of the proposed *Abubakar Imam Reading Room* a fund raising was launched and the target figure was ₦50,000.00. About ₦5,500.00 was collected on the spot and A.B.U. matched Naira with Naira and generously contributed ₦5,500.00, making a total of about ₦11,000.00.

Those individuals and organisations who voluntarily donated include:—

1.	Alhaji Umaru Dembo (the Guest of Honour)	₦1,000.00
2.	The Northern Nigerian Publishing Company Ltd., Zaria	1,000.00
3.	Alh. Ahmed Commassie	500.00
4.	Alh. Tijjani Malumfashi	200.00
5.	Professor Abdulahi Mohammed	100.00
6.	Alh. Abdurrahman Mora	100.00
7.	Alh. Mohammed Jibo, M.F.R.	100.00
8.	Alh. Ibrahim H. Musa	50.00
9.	Alh. Baba Ahmed	50.00
10.	The Imam family	₦2,000.00
11.	Alh. Husaini Mashi	100.00
12.	Others	300.00
		₦5,500.00

Many others including Alhaji Gambo Sawaba, Alhaji Muhammadu Wule, Alhaji Inuwa Mai Gidan Sauro, Dr. Mohammed Saifuddin Mora, Alhaji Musa Jam'iyya and many University under graduates donated generously. The donations were preceded by speeches paying tributes to Alhaji Abubakar Imam, and refreshment was also served. As a highlight of the opening ceremony, some of the late Imam's works were displayed.

In conclusion, in Alhaji Abubakar Imam's demise, "Nigeria has lost a great journalist and poet", a genius and one of its greatest sons of our time. Because of his dedication and selfless services rendered to fellow Nigerians, his simplicity, modesty, honesty and integrity, his sincerity of purpose, level-headedness, firmness and benevolent disposition, Imam's name will be written on the pages of history in letters of gold, so that it will never tarnish. His good deeds remain behind for our emulation and guidance. If it is the will of God Alhaji Abubakar Imam will long be remembered.

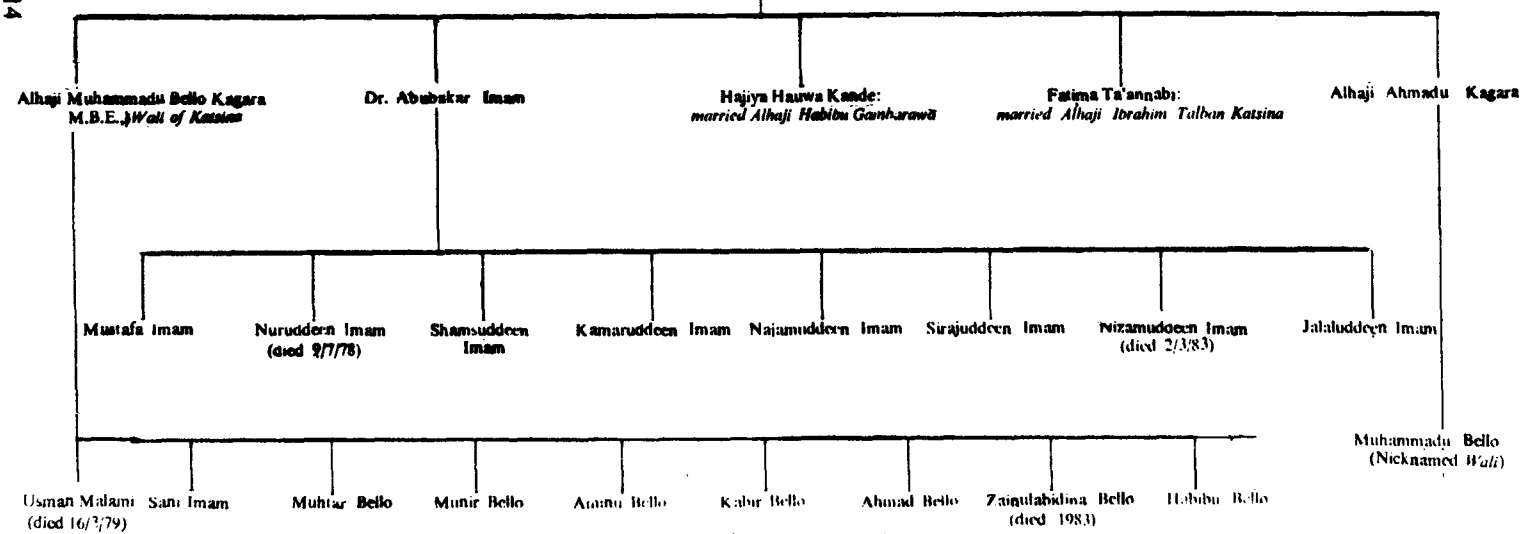
> "Praise be to God, Who hath guided us to this; never could we have found guidance, had it not been for the guidance of God". (Qur'an-7:43).
>
> "And Peace on the apostles! And Praise to God, the Lord And Cherisher of the Worlds".
>
> (Qur'an 37:181 and 182).

GENEALOGY

MALLAM MUHAMMADU GAJIBO
Wakilin Nufawa in Sakoto

MALLAM MUHAMMADU BADAMASI
Wakilin Nufawa Sakoto

MALLAM SHEHU USMANU
Imam, Alkali and Ma'aji of Kagara
(Died: 1923)



APPENDIX I

A.D. AND A.H.: CONVERSION SYSTEM

The significance of a calender in the performance of our daily secular and religious duties cannot be over stressed. There are several calendars in use in the world to fix civil years with their attendant details, but we are generally familiar with only two types in this country and these are:—

a) *Anno Domini* (*abbreviated to A.D.*)

b) *Anno Hijira* (*shortened to A.H.*)

While *Anno Domini* (A.D.) is the Latin form for "In the Year of Our Lord," *Hijira* (*A.H.*) refers to the flight of Prophet Mohammed (SAW) from Mecca to Medina, which occurred on 4th Rabi'u Awwal, corresponding to 20th June, 622.

Two different yard-sticks are used to measure the two years. For the one, the sun is the determining factor and for the other, the moon. The sun year is popularly called the Solar year and the moon year, the Lunar year. The Solar Calendar is referred to as the Gregorian Calendar or Christian Calendar, while the Lunar Calendar is the Islamic Calendar. A normal solar year has 365 days. A day is added to it in every fourth year, making a total of 366 days. This slightly longer solar year is known as *Leap Year*. As regards the Lunar year, it has 354 days (6 months each having 30 days and 6 months of 29 days duration each). So that a solar year is normally longer than a lunar year by eleven days. In 33 solar years, eleven days will accumulate to 363 days a period long enough to be reckoned as a Lunar year. Thus 33 solar years correspond to 34 lunar years. A period of 33 or 34 years is known as *Juyi Daya* in Hausa which means a generation. (A generation is about 30 years). "*Juyi Uku mai wuyan gani*" is a popular Hausa expression denoting a period of one hundred years (one century). The genreal meaning of the expression is that few people live up to that great age of one hundred years. Thereafore "*Juyi Uku*" is either 100 solar years or 103 lunar years (in round figures)

The foregoing has proved the convertibility of A.D. into A.H. and Vice-Versa beyond any reasonable doubt. Moreover, the conversion system has been confirmed by Verse 25 in Sura 18 of the Holy Quran, viz:—

> "So they stayed in their Cave Three hundred Years, and (some Add nine more)".

The verse clearly shows that 300 years correspond to 309 years, the former being solar years and the latter, lunar years.

By virtue of the Qur'anic verse, it may be presumed that the Gregorian and Islamic Calendars are meant to be used side by side, as they are used in Islamic countries. Sir William Muir, the author of "Life of Mohammed"

and "The Caliphate: Rise, Decline and Fall" adopted the dual usage in those publications; and so did Dr. Heinrich Barth in his Borno King — List of the Sefuwa (Saifawa) Dynasty, published as Appendix I, in "*Travels and Discoveries In North And Central Africa*". Also some Nigerian National Papers carry the two dates in their Mastheads. These Newspapers include, *New Nigerian, Triumph, National Concord, Reporter, Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo and Amana.*

Anno Domini (*A.D.*) or the Gregorian Calendar is reckoned from the birth of Jesus Christ (Prophet Isa, *Alaihis Salam*). However the era of the Hijra was instituted seventeen years after 20th June, 622, by Caliph Omar (R.A.), who made the counting of it retrospective to fall in line with 1st Muharram, the first month of the lunar year.

Since both the Gregorian and Islamic Calendars have been recognised in the Holy Qur'an, prudence dictates that the knowledge of their conversion should be acquired, more especially as both are used in our daily life. Having regard to this, it is considered appropriate to give a few examples of how this is done, for the benefit of those readers who might not have been conversant with the conversion system. The calculation is simple by applying the conversion formula which is:—

$$A.D. = A.H. - \frac{3A.H.+621}{100}$$

In the formula, 621 stands for 20th June, 622, with the fraction thrown away, while 3 and 100 indicate that there is a difference of *three years* in one hundred years between the Solar Calendar (A.D.) and the Lunar Calendar (A.H.).

Example One:

a) **Convert 1911 A.D. into A.H.**

$$1911 = A.H. - \frac{3A.H. + 621}{100}$$

$$191100 = 100A.H. - 3A.H. + 62100$$
$$191100 = 97A.H. + 62100$$
$$-97A.H. = -191100 + 62100$$
$$-97A.H. = -129000$$
$$A.H. = 1329.9$$
$$A.H. = 1330.$$

***1911A.D.** Corresponds to **1330 A.H.**

N.B. Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam was born in 1911 at Kagara, Niger State.

b) **Convert 1330 A.H. into A.D'**

$$A.D. = 1330 - \frac{3(1330) + 621}{100}$$

$$100\ A.D. = 133000 - 3990 + 62100.$$

100A.D. = 12910 + 62100

100A.D. = 191110

* A.D. = 1911.10

* A.D. = 1911

* **1330 A.H.** Corresponds to **1911 A.D.**

Example Two.

Convert 1922 A.D. into A.H.

$$1922 = \text{A.H.} - \frac{3\text{A.H.}}{100} + 621$$

192200 = 100 A.H. — 3A.H. + 62100

192200 = 97A.H. + 62100

—97 A.H. = —192200 + 62100

97 A.H. = 130100

*A.H. = 1341.

* **1922 A.D.** Corresponds to **1341 A.H.**

N.B: Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam went to School in 1922 at Katsina.

Example Three:

Convert 1402 A.H. into A.D.

$$\text{A.D.} = 1402 - \frac{3(1402)}{100} + 621$$

100 A.D. = 140200 — 4206 + 62100

100 A.D. = 135994 + 62100.

100 A.D. = 198094

* A.D. = 1980.94

* A.D. = 1981

* **1981 A.D.** Corresponds to **1402 A.H.**

N.B: Alhaji Dr. Abubakar Imam passed away at Zaria in Kaduna State in 1981.

APPENDIX II

ALHAJI SIR ABUBUKAR III SULTAN OF SOKOTO (SARKIN MUSULMI): 1938 — 1989 (1358 — 1410 A.H.)

Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, the 17th Sultan of Sokoto was born at Dange into the Sokoto Royal Family on 15th March, 1903, the day the British Expeditionary Force led by Sir Frederick Lugard took Sokoto. His father, Malam Shehu Usman was the son of Sultan Mu'azu, the 9th Sultan of Sokoto, who ruled from 1877 to 1881. Sultan Mu'azu was also the father of Sultan Hassan, the 16th Sultan of Sokoto, whose reign extended from 1931 to 1938. Sultan Abubakar III succeeded his uncle as Sultan on 17th June 1938 and reigned until 1st Nov. 1989 when he died.

Therefore Malam Shehu Usman and Sultan Hassan were brothers. In ascending order, Sultan Mu'azu was the son of Sultan Muhammadu Bello, the 2nd Sultan of Sokoto, who ruled from 1817 to 1837; and Sultan Muhammadu Bello was the son of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, the 1st Sultan of Sokoto and Islamic reformer of the 19th century in this part of the world, who lived between 1754 and 1817 (inclusive) and ruled from 1804 to 1817. May God forgive their sins and rest their souls in perfect peace. Amen.

BEFORE ABUBAKAR III BECAME SULTAN

Sultan Hassan took the guardianship of his nephew, Abubakar, when the latter was seven years old. He was brought up under his personal care. When he reached school age, he did not send him to any school, but taught him himself at home, because he was learned in Islamic studies and was a theologian. Sultan Hassan restricted his movement with the other boys in the locality to forestall the possibility of his being in a bad company, and in order to inculcate moral values in his mind so that he might grow up as a learned, disciplined, trustworthy and patriotic citizen. In short, he was trained as a potential leader. With regard to western education, Abubakar was a self-made man. He was the author of a Hausa book entitled *HALI ZANEN DUTSE,* meaning an established habit is like an engravement on a stone.

When Sultan Hassan was appointed a Secretary to the District Head of Dange, his nephew, Abubakar assisted him in his official functions, as soon as he was old enough and adequately conversant with secretarial duties. On 31st March, 1929, his uncle was promoted to District Head status as Sarkin Baura. The vacancy that was created by that promotion was automatically filled by Abubakar who had already acquired proficiency and experience in secretariat duties.

In 1931, Sultan Hassan Dan Mu'azu achieved his greatest life ambition, when he was appointed Sultan of Sokoto in succession to Sultan Muhammadu Tambari who abdicated. Shortly after his accession to the throne of Sokoto, he brought his nephew from Dange and appointed him Sardauna of

Sokoto on 17th February 1931, and charged him with the responsibility of looking after the Native Authority Police ('*Yan doka*) and the N.A. Prison (*Gidan Yari*).

In 1934, Abubakar the Sardauna of Sokoto, was appointed a Councillor on the Sultan's Council (Emirate Council) and given the responsibility for community tax (*Haraji*) and cattle tax (*Jangali*). In that year he accompanied Sultan Hassan Dan Mu'azu together with the Emir of Gwandu Shehu Usman (1918 — 1938) and the Emir of Kano Abdullahi Bayero (1927 — 1953) on a visit to England.

In his capacity as Councillor in charge of the N.A. Police Affairs, the Sardauna of Sokoto, Abubakar, attended a course at the Northern Police College Kaduna to acquire the necessary knowledge and broaden his outlook regarding police duties. Since community Tax and Cattle Tax were also within the purview of his portfolio, the Sardauna of Sokoto, Abubakar, toured Sokoto Emirate extensively. Sometimes he would be away on tour for five to six months. The diligence and dedication with which he discharged his exacting responsibilities were soon recognised by the Authority and in January, 1938, he was appointed a District Head and posted to Talata Mafara. He retained his traditional title of Sardauna. Six months after attaining that position, his uncle, His Royal Highness Sultan Hassan Dan Mu'azu passed away in June, 1938. May God pardon him. Amen. He was immediately suceeded on the throne of Sokoto by his nephew Abubakar, the Sardauna of Sokoto and District Head of Talata Mafara, on Friday, 17th June, 1938. On assumption of the Sultanship he adopted the title Abubakar III.

Throughout the duration of the British administration in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria (1900 — 1960), the Northern traditional rulers followed and strictly adhered to an order of precedence, which ranked the Sultan of Sokoto as the Number One Chief.

Prior to the introduction of partisan politics into Nigeria, a House of Chiefs existed in the Northern Provinces, which met periodically in Kaduna, the Headquarters of the region. The meetings were attended by all the recognised First Class and Second Class Emirs and Chiefs of the North. The Sultan of Sokoto was the President of that House of Chiefs.

His Royal Highness, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, who was the longest served Sultan of Sokoto since the establishment of the Caliphate in 1804 by his great grand father, Shehu Usman Dan Fodio (May God rest his soul in perfect peace, Amen), has been a pioneer several times, viz:

a) None of his predecessors on the throne of Sokoto had attained 40 years of Sultan. He reigned for 51 years.

b) He was the only Sultan who was able to appoint all his serving Chiefs, district heads and other traditional title holders.

c) He was the first Sultan of Sokoto to perform the holy pilgrimage to Mecca.

d) He was the only Sultan of Sokoto who was knighted by a British Monarch.

In virtue of the record reign, His Royal Highness had the experience of the colonial era for 22 years (1938 — 1960); he survived the First Republic of the Civilian Regime (1960 — 1966); he passed through the various military administrations (1966 — 1979); he saw the coming and going of the second Republic (1979 — 1983) and witnessed the subsequent military rule including the current one of which General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida is President and Head of State[1].

THE ROLE OF ALHAJI SIR ABUBAKAR III IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, the Sultan of Sokoto played significant roles in the Islamic Religious Affairs of this country by virtue of his high office as *Sarkin Musulmi* that is, the Commander of the Muslims. These roles included the prerogative he had of announcing the sighting of the new moon of Ramadan and Shawwal for the Muslims to commence the obligatory Fasting and observe the Eid-el-Fitr respectively. He also announced when Eid-el-Kabir was to be celebrated during the month of Zulhaj. Whenever these announcements were made by His Royal Highness, the Sultan, it became a duty for the Muslims concerned to comply, having regard to verse 59 of sura 4 of the Holy Qur'an, viz:—

> "O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you".

Moreover, since the foundation of the Islamic Organisation, *Jama'atu Nasril Islam* in Nigeria, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III was appointed its life president. During his tenure of office as Sultan, the number of pilgrims to Mecca greatly increased from a few hundreds who went by land and sea at the beginning of his reign in 1938, to over 100,000 airborne pilgrims annually in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They were so many that the Federal Military Government had to peg down their number to 20,000, in order to conserve the dwindling foreign exchange of the country. With regard to places of prayers (Salat), large modern mosques with tall minarets sprang up all over the country. Principal Muslim towns which used to have only one central mosque for the Friday congregational prayers, now have several.

FOOTNOTE: 1. According to available records the longest served Emir in the Northern States of Nigeria, since 1804 was His Royal Highness, Alhaji Abdurrahman, the late Emir of Daura, who lived for 86 years (1880-1966) and ruled for 54 years (1912-1966). To the best of our knowledge that memorable record is yet to be broken. It was in the year 1804 that the Fulani Jihad wars were waged by Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio, the Islamic Reformer of the last century in this part of the world, and also the year in which the first Fulani Flagbearers were appointed by the Reformer and assigned to several important Northern emirates.

OUTSTANDING EVENTS SINCE BECOMING SULTAN IN 1938

During his reign as the Sultan, there were many important events, global continental, regional, national and local, some of which deserve mentioning because they either affected him directly or he had played significant roles in them.

A. GLOBAL EVENTS:

1) **The Second World War** broke out in 1939, between Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan on the one hand and Britian and France with their Allies on the other. The six year second world war ended in favour of Britain, France and their Allies U.S.S.R., U.S.A. and others. Nigeria was then a protectorate under Britain; its soldiers therefore fully participated in the war. They were sent to Burma where they confronted the Japanese who were desperately making efforts to advance westwards to join hands with the Germans and Italians who were moving fron Benghazi in North Africa eastwards towards Egypt and the Suez Canal. The war years were very difficult years indeed, therefore the Nigerian Government sought the inavaluable co-operation of the traditional rulers regarding recruitment of able-bodied young men for the army. They were also requested to provide labour force to intensify the production of tin in Plateau Province. Tin is an important alloy for making war-heads and/or war equipment. The Emirs and Chiefs were also urged to see to the intensification of the production on food grains — groundnuts, guinea corn, millets, maize, beans and others. These were produced in abundance. The Sultan of Sokoto led the Emirs and Chiefs in responding to government's call during that time of emergency.

2) In 1941, Sultan Abubakar III was awarded the British honour of C.M.G. in recognition of his contribution to the war efforts.

3) In 1944, the Sultan visited Ibadan to bless a Division of the Nigerian soldiers about to leave for Burma, the Far Eastern War Zone, in order to boost the morale of the soldiers and to pray for their success in the war and their safety. He was also requested by Government to nominate someone among the Northern Chiefs to represent him at the War Zone to deliver a similar mission to Nigeria's fighting men there. The Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Usman Nagogo gladly volunteered to go as the Sultan's representative. He left for India and Burma almost immediately. He penetrated the jungles of Burma to where the Nigerian solders camped. He thanked them, eulogised their courage and valour and impressed upon them that their failure in the war operation would be disastrous, not only to the British Empire but also to Nigeria, their motherland, which was an integral part of the British Empire. He told them that if they failed

their parents, wives, children, brothers, sisters, friends, emirs and chiefs and everybody in Nigeria would be in bondage. As a Muslim leader in a War zone, the Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Usman Nagogo might have reminded the soldiers who were Muslims of the following Quar'anic verses pertaining to fighting in a war. These relevant verses are 15 and 16 in sura 8, viz:-

"O ye who believe! when ye meet the unbelievers in hostile array, never turn your backs to them.

If any do turn his back to them on such a day —

Unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own) — he draws on himself the wrath of God, and his abode is Hell — An Evil refuge (indeed)!".

He might have also reminded them that death, which is a necessary evil, only comes when it will, and that it strikes many on their soft beds at home. He therefore urged them to do everyhing humanly possible to defend Nigeria's glory and honour. Alhaji Usman Nagogo, the Emir of Katsina conveyed to the soldiers the greetings and blessings from the Sultan of Sokoto Alhaji Abubakar III, from his brother Emirs and Chiefs of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria and from all the people of the North. He assured them that everybody was praying for their success in the war and their safety. He then prayed for them and blessed them. Shortly after the Emir of Katsina's return to Nigeria, the Nigerian soldiers in the jungles of Burma started to be on the offensive and the Japanese started to retreat, until they were cleared out of Burma. As soon as the Emir returned to Nigeria he reported to the Sultan of Sokoto Alhaji Abubakar III that his assignment had been successfully completed.

4) The Nigerian Ex-Servicemen Welfare Association (NEWA)

By the grace of God the Second World War (Hitler's War) ended in 1945, in favour of the Allies — England, France and their supporters — America, Russia and others. The Nigerian soldiers returned home from Burma and were demobilised and granted their war gratuity. Some were crippled. Their return created a major problem for government pertaining to their resettlement in the urban and rural areas. Some of them became a burden on their relatives and authorities. Again the government appealed to the Sultan of Sokoto Sir Abubakar III and other traditional rulers — emirs and chiefs to co-operate as usual, to devise a workable settlement scheme for the welfare of the ex-servicemen. An association called "*The Nigerian Ex-Servicemen Welfare Association* (*NEWA*)" was formed. Sultan Abubakar III and the other traditional rulers became patrons of the organisation in their respective emirates/domains. Branches of NEWA were established everywhere in Nigeria and donations flowed in for the Welfare of the ex-servicemen, until with God's guidance, the disabled among them were resettled, and jobs were made available for those who returned healthy, as Nigeria Police, N.A. Police, Prison Warders, Emirs body guards (*dogarai*), messengers in government and N.A. offices and commercial houses.

B: NATIONAL EVENTS

5) The Constitution of Nigeria and Constitutional Revisions

Since 1945, there have been constitutional changes based on Richards Constitution of 1945. The Constitution has been revised:

a) The Macpherson Constitution (1951).
b) The Lyttelton Constitution (1954).
c) The 1957 Federal Constitution.
d) The 1960 Independence Constitution.
e) The 1963 Republican Constitution.
f) The 1979 2nd Republic Constitution.

Before the first constitution that is, *Richard's Constitution* was promulgated, the Governor, Sir Arthur Richards invited His Royal Highness, Sultan Abubakar III to Lagos for consultation.

6) The Queen's Visit to Nigeria (1956)

In February, 1956, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited Nigeria and she was the first British monarch to do so. In Kaduna, the Headquarters of the Northern Region, a grand Durbar was mounted in her honour. His Royal Highness the Sultan of Sokoto, Abubakar III led the Durbar on horse back in a most colourful and spectacular procession.

7) The Military Take-Over

On the 15th January, 1966, the first military coup gripped the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In it a number of political leaders, soldiers and others lost their lives in Kaduna, Ibadan and Lagos. The coup ushered in General Johnson Thomas Umunakwe Aguyi-Ironsi as the new Head of State. He invited the Sultan, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III to Lagos for consultation on certain state matters. His Royal Highness was warmly received by the Supreme Commander as General Ironsi was then officially called. The Sultan maintained a very warm and cordial relationship with General Yakubu Gowon during Gowon's nine year rule as Head of State.

8) Murtala Mohammed's Regime

Another military coup took place on 29th July, 1975. As a result of this bloodless coup, General Murtala Muhammed emerged as Head of State. He had a very short but eventful reign. He was assassinated in an abortive coup on 13th February, 1976, in Lagos. During his seven months' tenure of office, his government created seven more states in 1976, making a total of nineteen states. By that exercise, Sokoto State came into being, comprising Argungu, Gwandu, Sokoto, Yauri and Zuru Emirates.

C. LOCAL EVENTS

9) Local Government Reforms

In 1971, the former Native Authorities were superseded by Local Governments all over the Federation. At present, Sokoto Emirate has 12 Local Government Areas as follows:

1) Anka
2) Bodinga
3) Gummi
4) Gusau
5) Gwadabawa
6) Isa
7) Kauran Namoda
8) Silame
9) Talata Mafara
10) Sokoto
11) Wurno
12) Yabo

10) Sokoto Emirate Council

In 1977, the Sokoto Emirate Council was established comprising:

1) The Sultan (Chairman)
2) Waziri of Sokoto
3) Magajin Gari of Sokoto
4) Magajin Rafi of Sokoto
5) Sarkin Yaki n Binji
6) Galadiman Gari
7) Sarkin Adar 'Dundaye
8) Sarkin Kabin Yabo
9) Sa'in Kilgori
10) Baraden Wamakko
11) Ardon Shuni
12) Ardon Dingyadi
13) Ubandoman Hamma'ali
14) Sarkin Gobir Sabon Birni
15) Sarkin Zamfara Zurmi
16) Sarkin Zamfara Anka
17) 'Yandoton Chafe
18) Chairmen of the 12 Local Government Councils.

11) Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio's Flag was Retrieved

When the British Expenditionary Force took Sokoto on 15th March, 1903, it took away to England, the flag of Shehu Usman 'Dan Fodio, which was a banner taken out to the Jihad wars. On 6th September, 1960,at a grand and colourful ceremony, which was attended by the late Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of the Northern Region, Mr. Johston, the Acting Governor of the Northern Region, handed back the flag to Alhaji Sir Abubakar III, Sultan of Sokoto, who in turn handed it over to Sa'in Kilgori, whose grandfather, according to history, used to bear it during the Jihad wars. The flag is now securely kept in the room of the Sultan among His Royal Highness's other *paraphernalia.*

12) Inner Council

A Council was established in 1986 called "Inner Council" to assist the Sultan, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III in running the affairs of the Emirate which,

in normal circumstances, would be discharged by him personally. The creation of this council was not unconnected with the great age attained by the Sultan. The "Inner Council" was composed of:

1. The Waziri of Sokoto, Alhaji Dr. Junaidu (Chairman)
2. The Magajin Gari of Sokoto, Alhaji Aliyu — Member
3. The Magajin Rafi of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu B. Mai-Wurno — Member
4. The Sarkin Kudu, Alhaji Muhammadu Maciddo — Member
5. The Galadiman Gari, Alhaji Buhari — Member.

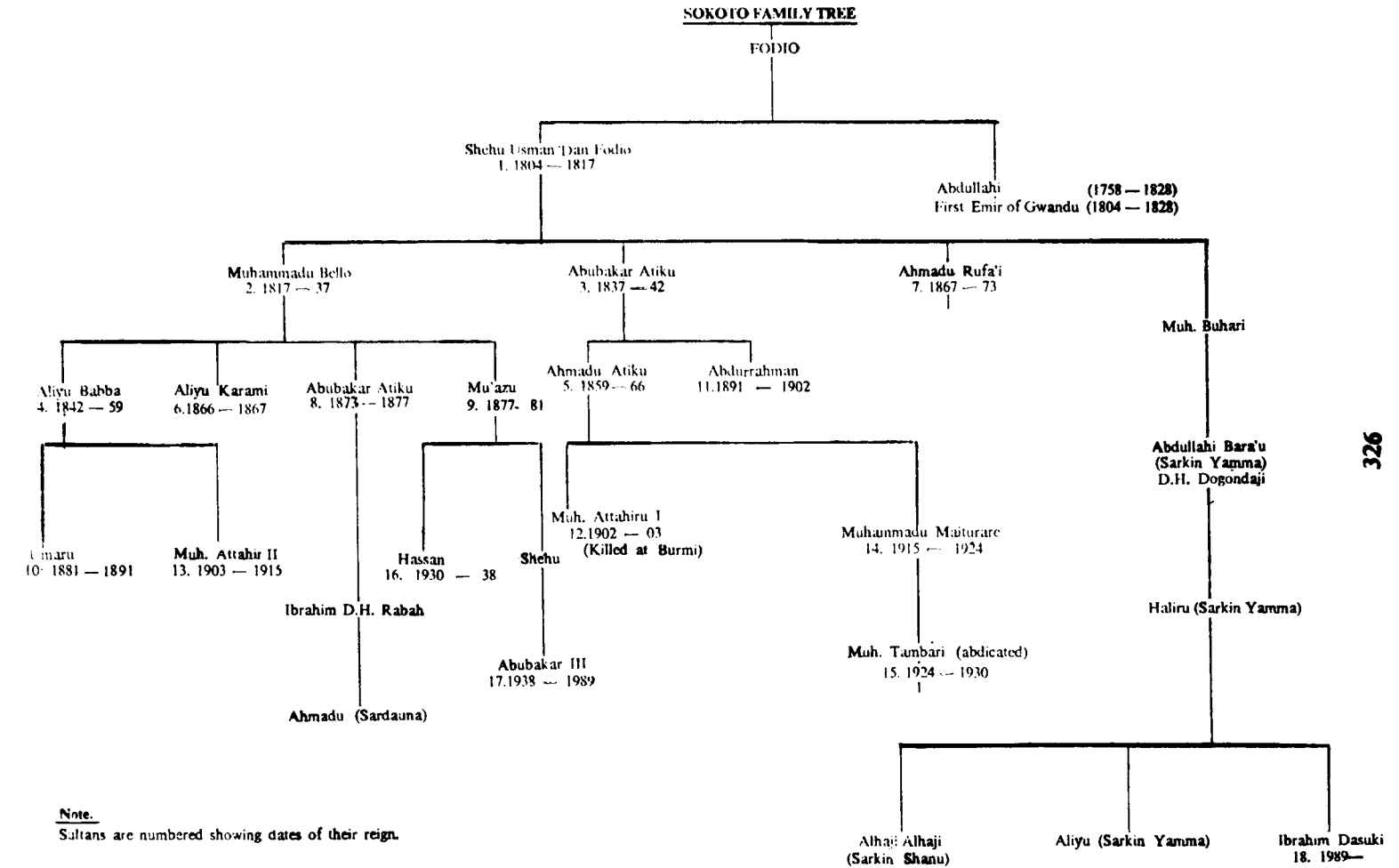
13. Some Attributes of Sultan Abubakar III

This short biography of His Royal Highness the Sultan, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III will be incomplete, without mentioning some of his attributes, which include the following:

> He was a devout Muslim, who followed the Maliki doctrine and the Kadiriyya way of life and meticulously followed the teaching of the Prophet (S.A.W.) to the best of his ability, as did his ancestors. He kept his words and whatever he said was the truth and nothing but the truth. He had been identified as one who was endowed with tolerance and patience. Under all circumstances, he was calm, collected and unruffled.

Alhaji Sir Abubakar III was a man of courage. He always inspired confidence. He put his trust in God under any disturbing circumstnace. He was an advocate of good cordial relations between kith and kin and among Muslims in general. Whatever he did he gave thought to it before he did it. He did nothing in haste to repent at leisure and he was quick in perceiving things. That was why he succeeded in all his undertakings. He was never ostentatious in anything, be it religious or worldly affairs and he was neither extravagant nor niggardly.

The Sultan, Alhaji Sir Abubakar III had an excellent memory. He seldom forgot whatever he had heard, and anything he was told in confidence he treated as such. He was not conceited, but level-headed, modest and approachable. He used to shake hands with everybody who visited him. He was quite energetic and enterprising. He used to tour his Emirate annually and regularly. He received his visitors with honour and everybody felt at home before him, because he had a wonderful sense of humour, for which he was loved by all. May Allah grant him pardon, Amen.



Note.
Sultans are numbered showing dates of their reign.

APPENDIX III

HIS HIGHNESS ALHAJI DR. MUHAMMADU KABIR USMAN, OON, EMIR OF KATSINA

Alhaji Dr. Muhammadu Kabir Usman who was born into the royal family of Katsina in 1928 was educated at the Katsina Middle School (1941 — 1947) and at the Northern Police College, Kaduna for a year in 1947. He was promoted Lance Corporal in 1951, and Makaman Doka that is, Katsina Native Authority Chief of Police in 1953. The following year, he attended C.I.D. course in Lagos and in 1957, he travelled to England to attend a Local Government course at Midhurst. While in the United Kingdom, he visited the London C.I.D. at Scotland Yard.

Alhaji Dr. Muhammadu Kabir Usman was appointed Katsina Native Authority Councillor in charge of Police, Prison and Urban Water Supply (U.W.S.) in 1959, and in the same year, acted for the Magajin Gari (District Head), and was also appointed Chairman of the Urban Water Supply Board, as well as Chairman of the Katsina Scout Movement. In 1961, he became a member of the Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria, in addition to serving on the following Advisory Boards:

a) Provincial Secondary School (Government College Katsina).
b) Katsina Teachers' College, Katsina.
c) Women Teachers' College, Katsina.
d) Arabic Teachers' College, Katsina.

In 1961, he also added another responsibility as Chairman of Katsina Hockey Club. A number of these appointments were held concurrently.

Alhaji Dr. Muhammadu Kabir Usman saw 1963, as a year of great achievements, with the following events featuring prominently:

a) He was appointed Magajin Gari and District Head of Katsina.
b) He visited Middle East with the late Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo and the late Premier of Northern Region of Nigeria, Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello the Sardauna of Sokoto.
c) He was appointed Chairman of the Katsina Football Association.
d) Was elected Honourable Member to the Kaduna House of Assembly in the Ingawa Bye-election.
e) He was awarded "Star Polo Player" of the Year.
f) In recognition of the numerous achievements in the service of the nation, he was awarded the Nigerian Medal of O.O.N. (Officer of the Order of the Niger).

These appointments continued into 1964 and 1965, becoming a Member of the Katsina Local Education Authority and Parliamentary Secretary (Premier's Office) Kaduna, before being appointed National Chairman of the Aid Group of Nigeria in the same year (1965).

Alhaji Dr. Muhammadu Kabir Usman, then Magajin Gari of Katsina, travelled to the Netherlands in 1972, to attend I.U.L.A. course. Four years later (1976) he was appointed a member of the Federal Government Grains Board, and in 1978, a member of the Sokoto Rima Development Authority, a post which he occupied until 1981. In the same year of 1978, he concurrently Chairmanned a parent-teacher association (P.T.A.). Coupled with the above, he served on the following Advisory Boards in 1978:

a) Day Secondary School, Katsina.

b) Member of the Blind Welfare Association.

c) Member of Red Cross Committee.

The year 1981 was a "mile stone" in the history of the Magajin Gari of Katsina, Alhaji Dr. Muhammadu Kabir Usman, O.O.N. In this year he achieved his life ambition. He was given the highest traditional post, that of the Emir of Katsina, in succession to his late father Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo who reigned for 37 years (1944 — 1981) also in succession to his own father, Alhaji Muhammadu Dikko, who ruled from 1906 to 1944 (38 years). His Highness the Emir of Katsina was appointed Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Yola; and National Vice President of Turf Club. He was also made the Grand Patron of the Federal Advanced Teachers' College, Students' Union, Katsina; and member of the Kaduna State Council of Chiefs, (later Katsina state council of Chiefs.) In 1984, His Highness was appointed Chancellor of the University of Benin, which conferred on him a Doctorate Degree of Law.

Since 1948, the numerous meritorious services rendered by the Emir of Katsina, His Highness, Alhaji Dr. Muhammadu Kabir Usman, have been cross-sectional: at local level, regional level, state level and Federal level. May his reign be long and prosperous, Amen.

THE FULANI EMIRS OF KATSINA

1.	Umaru Dallaje	—	1807 — 1835 (1223 — 1252 A.H.)
2.	Saddiko	—	1835 — 1844 (1252 — 1261 A.H.)
3.	Muhammadu Bello	—	1844 — 1869 (1261 — 1287 A.H.)
4.	Ahmadu Rufa'i	—	1869 (1287 A.H.)
5.	Ibrahim	—	1870 — 1882 (1288 — 1300 A.H.)
6.	Musa	—	1882 — 1887 (1300 — 1305 A.H.)
7.	Abubakar	—	1887 — 1904 (1305 — 1323 A.H.)
8.	Yaro	—	1904 — 1906 (1323 — 1325 A.H.)
9.	Muhammadu Dikko	—	1906 — 1944 (1325 — 1364 A.H.)
10.	Usman Nagogo	—	1944 — 1981 (1364 — 1402 A.H.)
11.	Muhammadu Kabir	—	1981 — (1402 — A.H.)

APPENDIX IV

ALHAJI DR. SHEHU IDRIS C.F.R. EMIR OF ZAZZAU (1975 —)

On 20th February, 1936, a son was born into the royal family of Zaria, blessed to become the eighteenth Fulani Emir of Zazzau in 1975, since the inception of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio's Islamic Reformation in 1804. He was Shehu Idris who, in later years, was observed at School by one of his Middle School teachers as being capable of becoming a leader. As a student, according to the observer, who is a living witness, Shehu Idris was always neat and reserved, calm and collected, polite and obedient — qualities of one who commands respect and one who is a leader or potential leader.

The inherent qualities existing in Shehu Idris were further developed and refined by education which he received at a Zaria City Koranic School from the age of five years, Zaria City Elementary and Middle Schools (1947 — 1955), Katsina Training College (1955 — 1958), Institute of Administration, Zaria, (First Course; 1961 — 1962), Institute of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (Second Course: 1963 — 1965), Staff Development Centre, Kaduna (1967 — 1968), and Public Administration in Australia (1968).

As a qualified teacher, Shehu Idris taught at a primary School in Zaria City, eventually becoming its Headmaster (1958 — 1961), before being posted to Zaria Native Authority Treasury (1961 — 1962), after which he was assigned as a Private Secretary to the late Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Muhammadu Aminu (1962 — 1963). He then served in the Ministry of Local Government North Regional Government (1963 — 1964), before concurrently becoming Secretary to Zaria Local Authority Council and reverting to being Private Secretary to the late Emir, coupled with serving as a Liason Officer between the Local Authority and North Regional Government. Eventually he was promoted to the district head status as District Head in charge of Zaria, *Birni da Kewaye* that is, Zaria City and Environs in 1973 and turbanned Dan Madamin Zazzau. This high post was a forerunner of the much higher appointment to come in his favour.

Meanwhile, he was selected as a member of the Zaria Local Athuority Council and Ex-Officio member of the Zaria Area Council culminating in his appointment to the highest traditional post, that of Emir of Zazzau in Febuary, 1975 in succession to Alhaji Muhammadu Aminu who died in England.

Inspite of his exalted position, His Royal Highness, Alhaji Shehu Idris Emir of Zazzau finds time to grace a number of meetings of commitees, Companies Boards, Commissions and Associations in the following capacities:- Member National University Commission (1978 — 1983), Chairman Kaduna State Broadcasting Corporation (1978), Director of Board of U.A.C. of Nigeria Limited (1980), Pro-Chancellor University of Technology Minna, Niger

State (1982), President Northern Turf Club Association and Director of the Board of N.T.C. Limited (1983).

The Emir of Zazzau Alhaji Shehu Idris is among the most widely travelled Traditional Rulers of the Northern States of Nigeria. Setting his foot in all the five continents of the world, His Royal Highness visited Saudi Arabia in 1965 : (Asia); United Kingdom (Several times beginning from 1967) and West Germany (1969): Europe; Australia (1968) and United States of America (1978); America.

In recognition of his meritorious services and numerous achievements, His Royal Highness, Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Shehu Idris was decorated with the national insignia of C.F.R. (Commander of the Federal Republic) in 1979 and awarded a Doctorate Degree by the University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria in 1982.

In addition to his attributes mentioned above, His Royal Highness, Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Dr. Shehu Idris, C.F.R. is second to none with regard to benevolence. May he have a long and prosperonus reign. Amen.

THE FULANI EMIRS OF ZAZZAU

1.	Malam Musa		1804 — 1821 (1220 — 1237 A.H.)
2.	Malam Yamusa		1821 — 1834 (1237 — 1251 A.H.)
3.	Malam Abdulkarim		1834 — 1846 (1251 — 1263 A.H.)
4.	Hammada		1846 (1263 A.H.)
5.	Mamman Sani		1846 — 1853 (1263 — 1270) A.H.)
6.	Sidi Abdulkadiri		1853 (1270 A.H.)
7.	Abdussalami		1853 — 1857 (1270 — 1274 A.H.)
8.	Abdullahi	(i)	1857 — 1871 (1274 — 1289 A.H.)
		(ii)	1874 — 1879 (1292 — 1297 A.H.)
9.	Abubakar		1871 — 1874 (1289 — 1292 A.H.)
10.	Sambo		1879 — 1888 (1297 — 1306 A.H.)
11.	Yero		1888 — 1897 (1306 — 1315 A.H.)
12.	Kwasau		1897 — 1902 (1315 — 1321 A.H.)
13.	Aliyu Dan Sidi		1903 — 1920 (1322 — 1339 A.H.)
14.	Dalhatu		1920 — 1924 (1339 — 1343 A.H.)
15.	Ibrahim		1924 — 1936 (1343 — 1356 A.H.)
16.	Ja'afaru		1937 — 1959 (1357 — 1379 A.H.)
17.	Alhaji Muhammadu Aminu		1959 — 1975 (1379 — 1396 A.H.)
18.	Alhaji Dr. Shehu Idris		1975 — (1396 — A.H.)

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INDEX

Abdulkadir, Alh. Abubakar.....191
Abdulkadir, Alh. Garba Ja.....222
Abdurrahman (Emir of Daura) 202, 244, 320
Abubakar III, Sir Siddiq (Sultan) 116, 156, 174. 318
Aderemi, (Oni of Ife) 36, 51
Africanisation of Administrative Service 35,
Aguiyi-Ironsi, J.T.U.....215
Ahmed, Alhaji Baba. 189, 243, 256
Ali, Alh. Tatari. 235
Aliyu, Makaman Bida. 156
Aminu, Alhaji (Emir of Zaria). 190
Aminu, Prof. Jibril. 239
Atlantic Charter by Zik 54
Awolowo, Chief Obafemi. 171, 215
Azikiwe, Dr. Nnamdi. 36, 52, 65, 232

Babangida, Gen. I. B. 320
Balewa, Alhaji (Sir) Abubakar Tafawa. 12, 62, 102, 116, 131, 165, 178
Bamalli, Alhaji Nuhu. xiii, 47, 226
Bashar, Alhaji Muh. (Emir of Daura) 226, 243, 249
Bayero, Alhaji Abdullahi (Emir of Kano) 156, 175, 319
B.B.C. 104, 108
Bello, Alhaji (Sir) Ahmadu. 11, 40, 164, 178, 204
Binji, Alhaji Haliru, 189, 243, 262, 271
B.O.B.A. (Barewa Old Boys Association origins. 162
Brisibe, F.H.E. 238
British Council. 53

Ciroma, Alhaji Adamu. 233
Clifford, Sir Hugh. 296
Coomassie, Alhaji Ahmadu. 29, 243

Dandago, Alhaji Bello. 12
Danfodio, Shehu Usman, 2, 174, 320
Dantata, Alhaji Alhassan. 157
Danyari, Alhaji Aliyu. 243, 290
Dasuki Alh. Ibrahim (Sultan) 326
Dikko, Adamu B. 46, 116, 131, 167
Dikko, Alhaji Muh. (Emir of Katsina). 16, 22, 29, 156
Dikko, Dr. R.A.B. 66, 92, 167
East, Dr. R.M., 23, 34, 91, 113, 122, 142
Ellison, R. E. 184, 241

Fika, Allhaji Adamu. 217
F.U.N.A.S. (Federated Union of Native Administration Staff) 179, 181

Gajibo, Muhammadu. xii, 1
Gaskiya Corporation. 101, 113, 148
Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo. 29, 33, 113, 140
G.A.S.U. (Gaskiya African Staff Union) 115
Giles, L.C. 32, 34
Gowon, General Yakubu. 316, 222
Gusau, Alhaji Abdu. 185 188, 243, 279
Gusau, Alh. Yahaya. xii, 93, 152, 168
Gwarje, Usman Manin. 198, 200, 203, 243, 284

Haruna Rasheed, (Emir of Gwandu) 221, 260
Hausa Journal 29, 140
Hibbert, F. D. 183

Ibrahim, Alh. Awwal. 235
Ibrahim, Sir Kashim. 155, 209
Idris, Shehu (Emir of Zazzau). 226, 242, 329
Ilorin, Yahaya. 38, 41 155
Imam, Abubakar. 14, 20, 25, 27, 32, 39, 52, 55, 56, 62, 64, 67, 72, 90,
Imam, Abubakar. 94, 101, 104, 110, 117, 123, 128, 131, 134, 147, 161, 168 174, 182, 188, 225

INDEX

Ja'afaru, Malam (Emir of Zazzau). 36, 52, 70, 158. 261
Jada, A. Danburam. 185, 188.
Jama'atu Nasril Islam. 237
Jamiyya, Alhaji Musa Adamu. 243, 291, 310
Jam'iyyar, Mutanen Arewa (N.P.C.) 167
Jibo, Alhaji Muhammadu. 243, 281

Kagara, Alhaji Ahmadu. 7, 47, 269, 309
Kagara, Alhaji Bello. 3, 9, 47, 308
Kaita, Alhaji Isa. 12, 29, 243, 252
Kano, M. Aminu. 71, 16, 95, 162, 165, 231
Kano, Alhaji Bello. 152, 185
Karamin Sani Kukumi. 27, 138
Kyari, Brigadier Abba. 222

Literature Bureau. 26
Lugard, Lord. 77, 90, 102

Mafara, Alh. A. Tunau. 219, 243, 872
Magana Jari Ce. 26, 138, 307
Makama, M. Abdulkadir, 52, 129, 162
Mashi, Alhaji Husaini. 243, 289
Mashi, Alhaji Iro. 29, 39, 243, 249
Milverton, Lord. 110
Mohammed, General Murtala. 216, 222
Mora, Alh. Abdurrahman, viii-xi, 104, 152 225, 295
Mort, E.L. 91, 152, 162
Musa, Alh. Ibrahim H. 243, 276

Nagogo, Alh. (Sir) Usman (Emir of Katsina), 15, 17, 22, 148, 226
Nagwamatse, Umaru (Emir of Kontagora) 2, Ibrahim 9
N.E.P.U. (Northern Elements Progressive Union). 170
NORLA (North Regional Literature Agency). 184
N.P.C. (Northern Peoples Congress) 167
N.T.A. (Northern Teachers Association). 169
Nurul Huda 189

Obasanjo, General O. 223
Okene, Alh. Abdurrahman, 217
Olajide, O. 185, 188, 217

Pilgrimage. 191, 284
Public Complaints Commission 222, 238
Public Service Commission, (P.S.C.) 187

Ribadu, Alh. Muhammadu 155
Richards Constitutional Revision 104
Ruwan Bagaja 23, 138

Sanusi, Alh. Muh. (Emir of Kano) 38
Shafi'i, Alhaji 189
Shagari, Alh. Shehu, 234
Sule, Alh. Yusuf Maitama. 222

Tafiya Mabudin Ilmi, 53, 141

Usman, Alh. Dr. Kabir (Emir of Katsina) 231, 327
Usman, Shehu xii, 2, 9
Usman, Alh. Shuaibu. 189
Uthman, Alh. T. 240
Visher, Sir, Hans, 6, 77, 90

Wali, Alh. Na'ibi S. 190
Walwyn, A.E.V. 35, 50
West Africa Magazine. 111
West African Pilot 36, 52
W.A.S.U. (West African Students Union) 57
Wule, Alh. Muhammadu. 190, 243, 280

Zuhdu. 297
Zungur, M. Sa'adu. 47, 143, 158, 168.

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