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MAZRUI NEWSLETTER
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To Friends and Relatives:

The Morning After

In 1987 I covered greater distances east/west and north/south than I had ever done before! According to some stories about my experiences, I nearly crossed the border into the Hereafter! Rumour had it that I was shot! Literally! But more about that shortly.

First, let me extend to you on behalf of all in the family our very best wishes for the festive season and for the New Year. We wish you and your loved ones a truly enriching and rewarding 1988.

Yes, rumours did circulate in Nigeria that I had been shot and wounded. One version said that it had happened in London -- and I had been rushed to the hospital. The other version located the attempted assassination in the United States. I received letters of concern from Nigeria.

Don't ask me how the rumour started. One plausible theory connects the story with the right-wing reaction to my TV series, The Africans, especially in the U.S.A. Whole page advertisements appeared in some American newspapers saying "If you hate America, you will love The Africans". Right-wing activists fought the TV series not only in the media but also in Congress -- and by threatening the Public Broadcasting System of the U.S.A. "Had the lunatic fringe gone to the extent of taking a shot at Mazrui?" -- The rumour specialists asked! The relatively sympathetic treatment given to the Libyan Leader, Muammar Qaddafi, in my TV series could have fanned the flames of Rightwing fury!

Another version of the story blamed the "attempted assassination" on the politics of Black Islam in the United States. Like Malcolm X before me, I was supposed to have fallen victim to intra-Black Islamic sectarianism.

Well, I have glad tidings for all my friends! Like Mark Twain before me when confronted with his own untimely obituary, I wish to reassure all men and women of good will that the news about my demise is premature! There has been no attempted assassination on me either in Britain or the U.S.A. -- except perhaps the usual verbal assassinations to which I am routinely subjected by more extreme P.M.B.'s (Professional Mazrui Bashers) in any case!

Questions have been asked as to why we did not film in Uganda for my TV series. Was it out of fear of assassination? Actually, the decision not to film in Uganda was in the end made by the BBC to protect its own staff from what were regarded as "unnecessary risks". I spent considerable energy and time trying to persuade the BBC to change its mind, and the Corporation was about to relent when two expatriates were killed in Uganda under the second Obote Administration. It was then more definitively decided by the BBC that it would be asking for trouble to have ten white people running around the Ugandan countryside, equipped with cameras and accompanied by a greying middle-aged African! We would be an obvious target -- it was thought!

And so, inspite of my plea that Uganda had taught me more about politics than any other single country in the world -- and inspite of my ten happy and wonderful years in that country -- the television project finally over-ruled me about filming in Uganda.

Afterall, when we were filming in Southern Sudan, fifty Government troops accompanied us for protection! We were never sure whether the fifty troops would attract an attack from the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) -- or discourage it! The BBC did not regard it as necessary to film in "too many dangerous situations" for a documentary series like ours. (Of course BBC news crew are expected to take greater risks, but different rules apply to documentaries.)

Omari Kokole went to Uganda in September to present on both our behalf our joint paper entitled, "Uganda: The Dual Polity and the Plural Society" at a conference on "Internal Conflicts in Uganda". The conference had support from the Uganda Government and Makerere University and was sponsored by a London-based charitable organization called International Alert. I was sorry to have to miss the conference because of a clash with a meeting in Paris of the Bureau of the UNESCO General History of Africa. (At the UNESCO meeting we were at last able to approve 27 out of the 30 chapters of Volume VIII -- the volume of which I am editor.)

In August I managed to take my three sons -- Jamal, Al'Amin and Kim -- to their Kenyan ancestral home, Mombasa. Kisauni, Takaungu, and Malindi were also featured in the coastal itinerary. It was a superbly successful trip. The boys had not been to Mombasa in nine years. Everybody was excited to see them. Although much of our time in Mombasa was spent in the old city where our extended family is concentrated, my nephew Adil insisted on our spending a few days in rented chalets on the beach. We did some swimming in the sea -- and were later fed some exotic creatures from the ocean (including octopus and shark steak). I had no inhibitions about eating these sea creatures. It reminded me of the day in West Africa when I was unable to eat land creatures (monkey stew and bush rat soup) -- while my BBC producer (himself English) ordered rat soup with a cold beer. However, as a guest of my Kenyan publisher Henry Chakava in Nairobi this last August I did enjoy zebra steak.

My second trip to Kenya in 1987 was in connection with an interesting professional association called Organization of Young Presidents (meaning corporate presidents of business firms). This organization is mainly Western and heavily American. Membership is open to people who become presidents in their thirties. Membership ceases for those who reach the age of fifty. Every year the organization holds something like summer or spring courses which they call "University of Presidents". This year the summer course was being held in Africa for the first time. I gave the Keynote Address for the Academic opening of the "University for Presidents". His Excellency President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya gave the Opening Speech at the State Opening of the University the next day. Moi had just arrived back from the Commonwealth Conference of Heads of State and Government in Vancouver. Rumour has it that when he emerged from his jet at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, the Kenya Head of State said at a Press Conference: "I hear that a thousand young Presidents have descended on Nairobi! Don't let that confuse you. You all know there is only one real president!" Other celebrities who later addressed the young presidents in Nairobi included the glamorous socially-committed actress Stefanie Powers. I was delighted to meet her and to chat with her.

But while it was stimulating to be exposed to a new concept of "university", I did miss the University of Jos a lot in 1987. My next visit to Jos was originally intended to coincide with an audience to be arranged with the Head of State, President Ibrahim Babangida. I was then to see the President in Lagos and then proceed to Jos -- or the other way round. But for a number of reasons, both events have been postponed. Meanwhile, I do wish all Nigerians and my friends in Jos success and happiness in 1988.

I am not sure how much of my TV series President Babangida has seen. However, when we first met in 1985 he did say he was familiar with some of my written works. The TV series had indeed been debated by others in Nigeria -- as it has also been debated in neighbouring Cameroon. Over twenty countries have so far bought The Africans: A Triple

Heritage from BBC television. What has hurt me the most is that my own country (Kenya) is not among those countries that have sought it. I am told that the Kenyan television authorities have decided that The Africans is "politically too hot" (whatever that may mean). I hope the authorities find it possible to reconsider that decision. Afterall, the series has been shown in neighbouring Uganda. I understand it has also been shown in neighbouring Zanzibar. Zimbabwe was the first African country to show The Africans. Let us hope Kenya will soon join those ranks.

The former Princess Elizabeth of Toro is now Uganda's Ambassador to Washington, D.C.. We are in touch once again. We were all saddened by her husband's tragic death in an aircrash. So youthful and dynamic. A sad and abrupt end. I knew him also, but more briefly than I have known the Princess.

The Kiberus were also plunged into grief towards the end of this year. Maureen Kiberu had travelled with me when I went to Kenya for the "University for Presidents". But her real purpose was to cross the border into Uganda and go home. Her grandmother (on her father's side) was very ill. Maureen managed to see Grandma before the old lady died. Maureen represented Brenda, as well as herself, in these poignant farewells. We are all greatly saddened by Grandma's death.

In her studies in the United States Maureen has transferred from Cleary College to Marygrove College. From Marygrove it will be easier for her to transfer to the University of Michigan subsequently. Meanwhile, her sister, Brenda, had entered her second year of her programme in Master of Business Administration at Wayne State University. Brenda sounds so sophisticated these days in computer-lingo! I feel positively "innumerate"!

My second son, Al'Amin, did have the temerity to register for my course on Current Problems in World Politics! We were not sure what university rule against such a teacher-student relationship was violated! We did not ask! We just made sure I did not have to grade his examination. Fortunately the course had nearly 250 students -- and Al'Amin was almost lost in the crowd! I let my teaching assistant do the grading. Al'Amin was successful in the course -- I am pleased to report from a detached distance! Kim, my youngest son who is also at the University of Michigan, decided to leave Dad's courses well and truly alone!

Al'Amin and Kim have shared courses taught by another professor -- a favourite teacher in philosophy and logic. The boys are getting exposed to the rich inheritance of the world of ideas. It is reassuring to hear them debate philosophical issues.

Maureen, Al'Amin and Kim helped me entertain Munir and Huda Mazrui when the couple visited us from Mombasa. It was the couple's first trip to the Western world. Jamal and Brenda joined us later before the visiting couple departed for Washington D.C. (and from there for New Jersey). Munir (my nephew) and Huda (my cousin) had looked after us so often in Mombasa it was delightful to entertain them for a change here in Michigan.

Jamal, my eldest son, continued his graduate work at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University -- and once again won a Kennedy scholarship. He remained active in a number of students' activities at Harvard. He met a number of public figures who made presentations at Cambridge, Mass., including the Reverend Jesse Jackson.

I was rather upset to hear of the sudden death of the Mayor of Chicago, Harold Washington. In 1986 he held a special reception in my honour and in tribute to The Africans. He declared October 6, 1986 "The Day of The Africans". And he gave me a police escort to O'Hare Airport when I was leaving Chicago. Hanging proudly in my office is his signed tribute to me and to The Africans. We shall miss him.

Curiously enough, many people thought Harold Washington and I looked alike. Once on a plane in the USA, a white American passenger left his own seat to come and ask me if I was related to the Mayor of Chicago. The passenger held a newspaper with Harold Washington's photograph! Some of my BBC colleagues who filmed in Chicago also thought the mayor could — if need be — substitute for the presenter and narrator of The Africans: A Triple Heritage!

In the spring of 1987 I was honoured by Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts with a doctorate in political science (honoris causa). The honorary doctorate was again a tribute to both my television work and my university career. I was flattered by the gesture. Professor Vernon Domingo from South Africa had a lot to do with the nomination. I am grateful to him and to the college authorities for this positive response.

My association with Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, has begun. Different parts of the University have regarded me as a resource person. I was delighted to give the Keynote address at the annual meeting of the African Literature Association of the United States held at Cornell. My theme was on "The African Writer and the AIDS Epidemic". I also had dinner with Carl Sagan and Ann Druyan at their elegant home — and compared notes about the state of the world and of film-making with them. A great evening!

Another part of Cornell invited me separately to a conference on Islam in World Affairs. I gave a lecture on "Islam: Between Theology and Technology". Actually, it is amazing how quickly I have been identified as a specialist on Islam, as well as on Africa. The BBC flew me into London from the USA specifically to take part in a television programme on "Politics, Nationalism and Religion: The Case of Islam". I was the only Muslim on the programme. It was part of a series of intellectual programmes under the general heading of "THINKING ALOUD".

A separate invitation came from Third World Quarterly (London) asking for an article on Islam in sub-Saharan Africa. It will appear in April 1988. I have also been invited by the Third World Foundation for Social and Economic Studies to give the 1988 Manzur Qadir Memorial Lecture in Lahore, Pakistan, in November 1988.

A separate invitation from the University of Jordan in Amman has also arrived. (The Africans has indeed been televised in Jordan).

On the other hand, my visit to Beijing in China in 1987 had nothing to do with the television series. I was taking part in a massive international conference in the Great Hall of the People. The theme was "Advertising in the Third World". There were about a thousand participants. The conference was co-sponsored by the Government of the People's Republic of China (foreign trade departments) and South Magazine in London. I was among those chosen to be introduced to the Head of State of China — a war hero in the struggle against the Japanese. In addition to these academic and ceremonial events, I did manage to sample the tourist attractions — the Great Wall, Forbidden City, etc..

But the most unexpected thing that happened to me in China was running into a childhood friend of mine. No, he was not Chinese! In Beijing he was the Ambassador of His Majesty the Sultan of Oman! But when we were children we were Swahili boys swimming in the Indian Ocean along the coast of Kenya. Much later Farid Hinawy migrated to Oman where he joined the foreign service. In Beijing in 1987 he took me to his house for a good meal. No, not Chinese cuisine, but authentic Swahili cuisine in the middle of China! Can you imagine? We enjoyed the excitement of incongruity. Also at lunch was another East African. This one had lived in China for over twenty years — partly involved in China's Swahili Broadcasting service. Ndugu Said's children spoke Chinese more fluently than Kiswahili!

I had gone to China almost directly from Oxford, where I had the privilege of giving four lectures on "Islam in African Society" under the sponsorship of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. The Center and St. Cross College were superb hosts. Farhan Nizami, the Center's Director, along with his family and staff, were simply tireless in looking after me.

Oxford being what it is, I was not allowed to get away with only four lectures in two weeks! The Oxford Africa Society wanted its share of me -- so we had a showing of something from The Africans and I answered questions. The Alastair Buchan Club of World Affairs invited me to give an evening performance -- and I spoke on "Superpower Ethics: A Third World Perspective". There was also a Pan-African conference in the Oxford Union which I addressed. Seven public performances in two weeks (apart from Press interviews) were Oxford's pound of flesh from one of its own sons! A cruel but lovable place!

Even at my age one still comes across one's own old teachers! It was particularly pleasant to see Kenneth Kirkwood (now Professor Emeritus) and Kenneth Robinson (back at Nuffield College). Robinson was a less direct mentor. Each took me to his college for dinner. (Nuffield was my own college also). As for former students of mine, Abisi Sharakiya (once at Michigan) provided an especially memorable reunion. He and his Israeli wife gave me a splendid dinner at their home -- and lots of food for thought as well! They are probably in Israel by now -- at least for a while. But they had aspirations to settle in the United States eventually.

Apart from Britain and France my European ventures during the year included a lecture at the University of Amsterdam, Holland, sponsored by their Centre for Race and Ethnic Studies. I spoke on "Racism, Resistance and Underdevelopment". I had earlier attended a meeting in Lisbon, Portugal, of the International African Institute (IAI). I was elected Vice-President of the Council of the Institute -- a great honour indeed. Our next meeting of the IAI may be in Zambia in 1988.

In the course of the year I started my work as an expert advisor to the United Nations' Commission on Transnational Corporations. We had a valuable meeting at the United Nations' Centre on Transnational Corporations in New York City. I have been busy trying to catch up with the documentation.

Nike and Kunle Adebisi, Ron Scott and myself spent a lot of time in 1987 discussing forming an Agency called Legacy Productions, Inc. The idea is to try and market African cultural and artistic talent to the World Media. In our small way this could be the cultural side of the New International Information Order.

I have accepted an invitation to serve on the Council of Advisors on Africa newly created by the World Bank. The Council's first meeting will take place in Washington in January 1988. It is an interesting opportunity, hopefully effective. Wish us luck.

I had two trips to Canada in the course of the year. The first one was to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Canadian African Studies Association at their convention in Edmonton, Alberta. The organizers originally intended by bringing Basil Davidson and myself together to engage in a dialogue on Africa in relation to our two television series. Considering that many people regarded the two TV series as rivals, the dialogue could have become quite exciting. Unfortunately Basil could not make it for some reason. So the Canadians cast me in the role of closing the conference after all -- along with two other speakers. Of course, I met many Canadians at the conference. But I was impressed by how many East Africans were also there -- some of them either former students at Makerere in Uganda or former colleagues. Ahmed Mohiddin was an important presence in Edmonton.

My second visit to Canada in 1987 was for a one-day Conference on "Peace, Food Security and Development" held in — of all places — the House of Commons in Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. The conference was sponsored mainly by non-governmental organizations such as the Canadian World Food Day Association but also by the Canadian International Development Agency. In a sense, it was liberal democracy at its best. A demonstration was going on outside the House of Commons against Canada's policy towards Haiti. Within the House was our conference, full of denunciations of Canadian sale of arms to Third World countries and Canadian policies on food to poorer countries. And yet we were doing all this as guests of the Canadian legislature within their own buildings. The impressive situation struck Ahmed Mohiddin also, who once again was a major presence at a Canadian event. He seemed to have made many friends among Canadians.

We were all shocked by the tragedy which hit his former wife and mother of his children, Lisa. Lisa had brain hemorrhage and brain damage while she slept — and went into a terminal coma. At the time that I was with Mohiddin at the House of Commons early in December, Lisa had not recovered consciousness and was hooked up to a machine for breathing in an Edinburgh hospital. When I went to Scotland the previous summer (of 1986) to address a meeting at the University of Edinburgh, Lisa had taken the initiative to take me home to see the Mohiddin children and to meet her new husband, Frank. I shall remember her on that farewell afternoon with her children. It now seems more poignant than ever.

Although all my children are products of three civilizations (Africa, Islam and the West), they had been Kenyan in nationality. However, one of them has now decided to become an American. We have had African Mazruis and Arab Mazruis across the centuries, but now we are just beginning to have American Mazruis! Needless to say, this change in citizenship will not make any difference in family relationships. It will simply mean that one of us, Jamal, will now be able to participate in choosing the next president of the United States in 1988 — for better or for worse! We extend our prayers and best wishes on this special occasion of naturalization.

Did you know that when young Kwame Nkrumah was applying for admission to Lincoln University in Pennsylvania in the 1930s he quoted the following words from Tennyson in his letter to the Dean?

"So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be."

Well, the first woman president of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania is Niara Sudarkasa, a former colleague at the University of Michigan and a distinguished anthropologist. Her installation as president was a truly grand affair — which included a star-studded colloquium on the theme of relations between Black America and Africa. The ghost of Nkrumah must have nodded in approval. I was delighted to participate in the colloquium. Godfrey Uzoigwe came from Calabar University in Nigeria — but in order to represent his alma mater, Oxford University, in the presidential procession! Anyhow, it was all a great celebration!

Earlier in the year I was briefly a Scholar-in-Residence at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia where I was enthusiastically received. There too I was in Kwame Nkrumah's shadow — for he was educated there, as well as at Lincoln. Professor Jacqueline Wade was the driving force behind my visit.

In November I gave the Keynote Address at the annual meeting of the National Council on the Social Studies in Houston, Texas. My theme was "Teaching and Learning for the 21st Century: A Third World Perspective". The audience included a very wide range of teachers.

Brenda Kiberu had a chance to accompany me to New Zealand in October -- but she blew it! I had been given a choice by the University of Otaga in New Zealand between one first-class ticket and two economy (or coach) tickets. I let Brenda decide. At first she was tempted -- but then her midterm examinations at Wayne State University assumed greater priority! I went to New Zealand on my own.

The trip had its mishaps. The airplane pilot at the San Francisco stop discovered a fault in the aircraft after she had started accelerating on the runway. She aborted the take off in a thunderous crescendo. (Yes, the pilot was a woman, as I later discovered from another member of the crew.) She was right to have aborted the takeoff -- for 24 hours later they had still not managed to repair the fault. I had to take another flight to New Zealand -- rather late for our meeting. But at the meeting it was particularly pleasant to catch up with old friends -- such as Rajni Kothari from India, Carl Freiherr von Weizsacker (distinguished physicist and philosopher and brother to the President of the Federal Republic of Germany) and Inga Thorsson (former Swedish Ambassador to the United Nations). I had seen Rajni earlier in the 1980s, but I had not seen either Carl or Inga in more than fifteen years. Although Carl is more than 70 years old, he is still capable of going for a six-mile walk. He did just that while we were in New Zealand. I bowed my head in both shame and admiration! Ashamed of myself and dazzled by Carl!

I was told in New Zealand that The Africans was going to be televised early in the new year. In anticipation of the showing I agreed to give advance interviews to both radio and television. The TV series will also be shown in Australia.

At the African Studies Association meetings in Denver this year, there were two panels explicitly and exclusively devoted to my TV series. Isaac Mowoe of Ohio State University and his colleagues were at the centre of this initiative. I am only sorry I was not able to go to Denver for the annual ASA meetings, but I do look forward very much to reading those papers on The Africans. One was on religion and how I had treated it in the series; another seems to have been about my concept of "rhythm" and my literary style, a third was on the impact of the series in the U.S.A., etc.

My children's maternal grandmother, Ethel Vickerman, celebrated her eightieth birthday in Yorkshire. Jamal, Al'Amin and Kim managed to join her for the event on our way back from Mombasa. It seems to have been a grand Yorkshire occasion involving three generations -- Ethel, the young Mazruis, and Ethel's other daughter, Rita, with her husband, Gerry, and their children. Molly Mazrui had seen her mother earlier in the year.

The Southwark Black Workers Group entertained me to dinner in London. I followed it with a lecture at Southwark Town Hall on "The AIDS Epidemic and Africa's Triple Heritage: Some Cultural Implications". My talk was co-sponsored by the International Association of African Lawyers. The Southwark Town Hall was packed to capacity -- mainly (but not exclusively) by Black Londoners. After my lecture the debate was intense -- with more than one conspiratorial theory about AIDS and the racial question. I learnt a lot at the meeting. Errol Reid was my conscientious and committed host for the Southwark occasion.

Earlier on the same day I had addressed the Royal Africa Society. The event could not have been more different. The Society's luncheon at the centre of London (with George Bennett as my gracious host) was very middle class, sedate, somewhat academic, and held in an elegant room. I was impressed by the very different kind of social and intellectual interaction.

In Rio de Janeiro the following month I gave a lecture on "A Triple Heritage of Education in Africa: Indigenous, Islamic and Western Approaches". I was addressing a plenary session of the 6th World Congress of Comparative Education. It was good to be back in Brazil, but I was alarmed when I discovered that I had not brought my high blood

pressure medication! I phoned Michigan. An alliance between Brenda and my Secretary, Mary Breijak, ensured that the Brazilian Airline brought the medication urgently from the USA to Rio! All was well for the rest of the conference!

My lecture at the State Department, Washington, D.C., in September unfortunately coincided with the visit to Washington of the Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard A. Shevardnadze. My lecture was in the Open Forum Series of the Secretary of State, but the Soviet visit was too much competition for me! There were only a handful of people to listen to me — as I complained bitterly about "Superpower Ethics: A Third World Perspective"!! My complaint assumed additional poignancy in the large almost empty lecture hall at the State Department.

And yet the meeting which left me even more bewildered was held at the Eleanor Roosevelt Center in Hyde Park in New York. It was sponsored by the New York State Martin Luther King Jr. Commission. But although the conference was on the central issue of "The Roots of Racism", I was not quite sure what I was doing there. Somehow the format and chemistry of the conference did not suit me in the least. My only compensation was meeting Harry Belafonte and chatting with him over lunch. Otherwise I was like a proverbial fish out of water — with no identifiable role to play. All very surprising considering the theme of the conference.

Old friends who visited me in Michigan during the year included John Chick, who was with us at Makerere nearly twenty years earlier. John has since spent years in the South Pacific and is now based in Australia. It was wonderful to see him again — and to listen to his account of events and trends in the South Pacific, especially Fiji. Another visitor was Nuruddin Farah, the Somali novelist and former colleague at the University of Jos. He came to Michigan with his Canadian friend, Monique. Needless to say, Nuruddin had probably written two novels and one play since we were last together in 1985! (It is just conceivable that Nuruddin is the one East African writer who is more prolific than me!)

Old friends I stayed with during the year included Maurice East and his wife. It was lovely to stay with them at their home when I lectured at George Washington University and George Mason University in Washington in April. Kim Baalawy in Mombasa, was, as usual, a tower of strength when I and my children were in Kenya in August. I saw Babu Naaman for what turned out to be the last time when he said goodbye to me at Moi International Airport (Mombasa) also in August. In our late teens Babu was my closest friend in Mombasa, and remained a dear friend all his life. He died in November of a heart attack. I was deeply shaken when I got the news in Michigan. May his soul rest in peace. Amen.

Last — but decidedly not least — I must acknowledge my basic debts of the year. My work during the year relied on a strong supportive team. Mary Breijak, my new secretary, has had her ordeal by fire — and emerged triumphant!! She has been coping with my endless output — surprising even herself by what she could get through! Judy Baughn has continued to assist me with aspects of my travels and complicated itinerary. I cannot take a step without checking with Judy first! Research help has come, as always, from my indefatigable friend, Omari Kokole. This last year help has also come from Nike Adebisi, especially in relation to the UNESCO General History of Africa. With my teaching obligations at Michigan I have been helped by Scott Anglemeyer, Dale Tatum, as well as by Omari and Nike. Leonard Suransky was also gracious enough to give some guest lectures to my classes. The Department of Political Science and the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies have provided the financial support. The secretarial staff of the two units — especially Shalane Shelley and Vanessa Sims — also often came to my rescue. Bless them all.

Walter Allen, Nesha Haniff and (a little earlier) Shirley Clarkson were invaluable advisors about proposals for research grants. Nesha has been especially active in the latest proposal. As the Christian saying goes, we have our fingers crossed!

At home Brenda Kiberu and her sister Maureen did much more than keep the house ticking. They helped to send cables abroad, reassure irate creditors, deal with varied phone calls, drove me around in the car — as well as do their own work as students! Why did Maureen and Brenda have to drive me around? Because, after all these years, I still can't drive a car! Can you imagine? What is more, it is not out of fear of assassination!!

Are you still reading this letter? If so, you must have read many postgraduate theses and dissertations in the past! (Also undergraduate theses?). Bless you for your patience!

With all good wishes for the festive season and for the new year to you and your loved ones.

Yours warmly,



Ali A. Mazrui