

Ali A. Mazrui
2104 Pauline Blvd., No. 307
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103
U.S.A.

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MAZRUI NEWSLETTER

To Friends and Relatives:

Dear all:

The Glory and the Sadness

Here is the Mazrui Newsletter again! My friends have been known to debate whether my newsletters will help or hinder my future biographer! Some people write a daily diary; I write an annual newsletter. Which is the more revealing of the author? A daily recording of experiences or an annual distillation of impressions? Of course both are forms of conceit and both are rooted in the sin of pride - what John Milton called "that last infirmity of the noble mind."

In some ways 1988 was the most painful year since two of my children lost their eyesight and their parents broke-up. But 1988 was also a year of new professional recognition and a widening intellectual constituency in the world. The anguish was personal and familial; the recognition was in the public domain. The glory and the sadness intertwined.

Since the festive season is upon us, let me begin with some items of family joy. My eldest son, Jamal, graduated handsomely from Harvard with a master's degree in public policy. Brenda Kiberu graduated with a master's degree in business administration from Wayne State University, Detroit. My middle son, Al'Amin, bought and drove his own car at last (albeit a used car). Kim, my youngest boy, ceased to be a teenager - hitting Big-Twenty in November 1988! Al'Amin became a full adult - hitting twenty-one in March. And Maureen Kiberu succeeded her sister as the boss in my humble abode in Ann Arbor. (Brenda Kiberu has now taken a job in Detroit and lives there, but she visits us from time to time.)

My own happy news includes my receiving the University of Michigan's highest academic recognition - the Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award. The award was made by President Duderstadt of the University at a major official ceremony which included the President's own Inaugural Address about "The State of the University." It was a proud moment for me. By coincidence 1988 was the 25th anniversary of the start of my academic career as a lecturer at Makerere University in Uganda way back in 1963. Therefore the Michigan Award was in a sense a Silver Jubilee celebration of the launching of my academic career. I am greatly indebted to all those who wrote strongly to The University of Michigan in support of my being given the award. I am also grateful to my Michigan students for their support, especially Dale Tatum for leading the student initiative in support of my nomination. Mary Breijak and Lili Kivisto were martyrs in putting together the massive documentation needed. It was indeed a moment of glory for me.

But 1988 was also the year when my sister Biasha (Aisha) died. She was the only one of my siblings close enough to have been my playmate when we were little.

All my other siblings were either too old or too young to have been my playmates. I was the youngest of my mother's children but not the youngest of my father's. We all had only one father; but we had different mothers. My father was polygamous, but my mother knew only one man.

My last conversation with Aisha was on the telephone. I was in Ann Arbor and she was dying in Mombasa. She passed away two days later. All our games together as children came back to me in a flood of nostalgia. I broke down several times and wept. She was not the first of my parents' children to die. But she was the first to die in my lifetime. Who will be next? I have wept in response to that hypothetical question also! May her soul celebrate in peace as she joins our parents. Amen.

A very different agony for me in 1988 was Brenda Kiberu's departure from our home in Ann Arbor. She completed her education. That was a happy conclusion. But she was also about to begin her career in the job market. That was a mixed blessing. It meant her leaving our home. There were also other reasons why she had to leave home. I understood the necessity for the rupture. Indeed, I encouraged her departure. But it was very painful all the same.

Fortunately, her sister, Maureen, decided to stay and look after me. And since the two sisters are close friends, the links between Brenda's home in Detroit and our home in Ann Arbor have remained strong. The two sisters speak on the phone every day of the week, and visit each other at least once a week. And whenever I am out of town or out of the country, Maureen spends some of the nights at her sister's apartment.

In addition to Aisha's death and Brenda's departure, I experienced a political agony in 1988. This concerned the uncertainty about my political status in my own country, Kenya. Periodically there are rumours that I am in disfavour with my government. In 1987 there were even rumours that I would be detained if I arrived in Kenya. But President Daniel arap Moi himself gave a categorical assurance in 1987 that there was no substance to the rumours. I went to Kenya twice in 1987, and nothing untoward happened.

But something unusual happened in March 1988. It took place in Harare, Zimbabwe. I was giving a keynote address at a conference on the children of Southern Africa. The meeting was sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Mrs. Robert Mugabe, the First Lady of Zimbabwe. Also at the meeting was Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the Kenyan novelist and dissident. Ngugi and I had attended other international conferences together before, and had even been photographed together. Indeed, when Ngugi was detained in Kenyatta's era, I took part in a demonstration outside the Kenyan High Commission (i.e., the Kenyan Embassy) in London. And yet until March 1988 the Kenyan authorities had distinguished my style of public criticism of the Kenyan government (which focusses on policies and actions) from Ngugi's method of public dissent (which focusses on the entire system). The Kenyan authorities until March 1988 also distinguished between criticism by an individual citizen (like myself) and the opposition of an organized political movement (like Ngugi's).

But in March 1988 the Kenyan High Commission in Harare protested to UNICEF against both Ngugi's and my own participation at the meeting. The High Commission also instructed other Kenyans at the meeting to withdraw from the conference - thus ordering the withdrawal of the "Kenyan delegation" except Ngugi and myself. Never before had the authorities taken such an overt and officially negative position against me.

If this was March 1988, and I had been in Kenya less than five months before that (October 1987), what had happened between the two dates? In March 1988 I had

given a keynote address in Harare following President Mugabe's own speech to a conference. In October 1987 I had given a keynote address in Nairobi before President Moi's own speech to a similar international conference. My roles in the two conferences were almost identical. And yet my role in Harare provoked an official protest from the Kenyan authorities; while my role in Nairobi received full official legitimacy. What had happened in those five months to strip me of official acceptability?

I subsequently wrote to the Kenyan authorities seeking clarification. I never got an official explanation for what happened in Harare. But I have now got an unofficial reassurance through the informal network that the Harare incident was a "mistake." I am relieved by this news. While I am indeed a critic of many of my government's actions and policies, and have written to the President himself in protest from time to time, I do not see myself as an enemy of my own government. My commitment is to moral reform rather than to political overthrow.

In October I went to Uganda only for the second time since I resigned from Makerere. You will never guess the topic of my public lecture in Kampala - "Banking and Money"! My host was the Central Bank of Uganda. The governor of the Bank is my old friend and former student, Suleiman Kiggundu. I was invited to give the first Joseph Mubiru Annual Memorial Lecture, named after the first governor of the Bank. Joseph Mubiru was murdered, apparently on Idi Amin's orders, in the 1970s. In the early 1960s I did know Joseph Mubiru when we were both students in New York City. We got to know each other at International House on Riverside Drive. His subsequent tragic fate (disappearance, probably torture and then murder) wounded us all spiritually.

My lecture in Mubiru's honour in 1988 was attended by one of the largest audiences I have ever had. The lecture took place at the International Conference Center in Kampala, the largest such hall in the country. The conference hall was filled to capacity - with crowds outside still struggling to come in. I was deeply moved by the interest I still aroused in Uganda. I was a prodigal son coming back home. I was humbled by this expression of enthusiasm. Am I a legend in Uganda? I certainly felt as if I were on that eve of independence day in Kampala in 1988. God bless Uganda. Amen.

President Yoweri Museveni was most gracious the previous night when I went to State House in Entebbe to have supper with him and the First Lady. I had a very stimulating conversation with the Musevenis on a wide range of issues, from agriculture in Uganda to my theory of the "winter gap" as a partial explanation for technological underdevelopment in tropical Africa (see chapter eleven in my book The Africans: A Triple Heritage). On the basis of my television series, President Museveni observed I had "moved to the left" ideologically since my old Makerere days. I countered by jokingly suggesting that he had himself "moved to the right" as a result of holding state responsibilities! We teased each other on ideology.

The next night I had dinner with Nalongo Edith Kiberu, Brenda's and Maureen's mother. That was indeed one of the highlights of my visit to Uganda. Nalongo (the title means "mother of twins") cooked a wide range of terrific dishes for me. I fully indulged myself. I loved that special family evening. The conversation was in Kiswahili, Luganda and English.

My third major dinner in Uganda was Makerere-related. It was hosted by Governor Kiggundu and his wife Remi at their home. Makerere friends present at the dinner included Vice-Chancellor George Kirya and Head of the Political Science department Apolo Nsibambi. An even older friend of mine, Abu Mayanja who is now Deputy Prime Minister, also graced the occasion, accompanied by his charming new wife. Issa Lukwago, a former student of mine from my old Makerere days, had taken

charge as my guide and local planner since I arrived in the country. As my guide he was assisted by Rweyemamu Rweikiza. Issa and his wife were also at the dinner hosted by Suleiman and Remi that night. It was wonderful to catch up with Makerere gossip before my visit to the campus the following morning.

But what is a former British colony without some afternoon tea? I had tea with Ugandan royalty - my old mzee, Prince Badru Kakungulu, uncle of the late Kabaka. There were other people in the Prince's Court. Prince Badru and I indulged in a lot of nostalgia about the old days. He knew a lot of my relatives (some of them now dead) in the old part of Mombasa.

In November 1988 I gave the fourth Manzur Qadir Memorial Lecture in Lahore, Pakistan. Manzur Qadir was a distinguished jurist, internationalist, and advocate of civil rights. My own lecture was on "The Nuclear Option in the Third World: Some African and Islamic Perspectives." Previous lecturers in the series included Michael Manley, the former Prime Minister of Jamaica, and Nadia Hijab, the distinguished Palestinian intellectual.

I also gave a lecture in Islamabad on the subject of "Africa, Islam and the West: A Confluence of Cultures." The lecture in the capital city was sponsored by the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad and by the Third World Foundation. Both lectures included a discussion of women as political leaders - which was very topical in Pakistan so soon after Benazir Bhutto's party emerged as the largest party after the first multiparty elections in the country in eleven years. Ms. Bhutto became the first woman prime minister of a Muslim country.

Before going to Pakistan I had considered the possibility of seeking an interview with Benazir Bhutto - perhaps even arranging to have the interview filmed for one of the networks in the United States. But do you know who my primary host for the Manzur Qadir Lecture in Lahore was? Ijaz Husain Batalvi, the man who prosecuted Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on a murder charge in 1977/8. The case for the prosecution was successful. The former Prime Minister was sentenced to death by the courts. General Zia, the military ruler who had overthrown Bhutto, refused to commute the sentence. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed. Then in 1988 his daughter was elected to lead the government of the country. I could hardly ask the prosecutor of her late father to help me get an interview with Ms. Bhutto.

Mind you, Ijaz Batalvi is an impeccable professional jurist. His role in the prosecution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto before the High Court of Lahore was strictly in the line of legal duty, not political vendetta. Afterall, Bhutto was charged with the crime of murdering a particular individual. He was not tried for such vague political offenses as "endangering national security" or "conspiracy". Ijaz Batalvi presented the prosecution's case of homicide - and won. Whether the judges' verdict was justified or not is another matter.

When I was in Islamabad I did see Zulfikar Bhutto's widow, Begum Nusrat Bhutto (Benazir's mother). But that was a casual encounter at the hotel where we were both staying. There was no interview of Begum Nusrat Bhutto by Mazrui, alas! (Incidentally the Begum and her daughter are joint Chairpersons of the Pakistan People's Party).

Have you ever been in a section of an aeroplane when you were the only passenger? That is what happened to me on my way back from Pakistan. The portions of the journey from Karachi to London were straightforward. It was the final segment from London to Detroit which really elevated me to a splendid isolation. I was the only passenger in first class. This was the first time it had happened to me on an international flight.

I was assigned a stewardess exclusively to myself. It was up to me to say when I was ready for dinner. Theoretically, I could even decide whether the film in

first class should be shown or not. (Logistically it was less easy, and so I had to put up with an aging Burt Lancaster on the screen). Again theoretically I had two first class lavatories entirely to myself - but a few intruders from the business class kept on spoiling my monopoly - a kind of unofficial anti-Trust law (or did I mean anti-Trust "Loo"?).

Although my airline was Pan-American, my flight attendant was German. What is more, she knew much about Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu, all of which she had visited. My sense of isolation in flight was mitigated by her readiness to combine formal service with informative conversation. Bless her.

My membership of Pan-American frequent travellers scheme has benefited me handsomely. By 1987 I had accumulated so much mileage that my three sons and myself received free roundtrip air tickets from Michigan to Mombasa and back. This year we flew to Jamal Mazrui's graduation at Harvard mainly on the free tickets I had earned from Northwest Airlines. The system works on the basis of number of miles accumulated. I travel so many thousands of miles every year that these free family tickets are among my well-earned fringe benefits!

Jamal's Harvard degree was a Master's in Public Policy studies. We were all so proud of him. After graduation Jamal took a job involving computers in a telephone company in Massachusetts. His salary as a beginner was almost half my present salary at The University of Michigan and more than his mother's salary as a language teacher with more than 25 years experience. Molly and I should have gone into the computer business - and averted this humiliation by our son in his first job ever! Can you imagine? Anyhow, I know where to go now when I cannot make ends meet (a constant crisis in my life!).

Does this mean that Jamal has finished his education? He has not made up his mind about that yet. He may go back to Harvard or some other university for a doctorate. Or he may decide he has had enough as a student - and just continue as a well-paid computer expert!

Kim is getting to be more deeply interested in philosophy as preparation for legal studies. His ambition is to go to law school after his bachelor's degree here at Michigan. I have reminded him often enough that law is part of his family's tradition. But Kim will be the first Mazrui to practice Western law instead of Islamic law. Kim's grandfather (i.e., my father) was, after all, the Chief Kadhi or Chief Judge of Appeal under Islamic Law for the whole of Kenya during the colonial period.

Al'Amin, my middle son, does not seem to have made up his mind yet about his future career. His latest interest is business; but before that it was psychology. At his age there is still room for trial and error, for thinking out different possibilities in one's life. At the age of 21 Al'Amin is now a full adult. But at the age of 21 his father had not even gone to college yet. I was 22 when I left Mombasa for Britain at last. So Al'Amin still has time to make up his mind! Psychology remains one of his favourites.

In the spring of 1988 Ohio State University honoured me again with an appointment as Distinguished Visiting Professor. I was more impressed than ever by how active on Africa the campus in Columbus was. There was a conference on Africa during my stay there, another conference on Black women, a poetry-recital by Wole Soyinka, the Nigerian Nobel Laureate, and a debate between myself and Chester Crocker, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs under the Reagan Administration. In addition I gave a public lecture on a separate day on "The AIDS Epidemic and World Order: An African Perspective." During my stay I lived with Isaac and Bobbie Mowoe. They were wonderful and committed friends. Isaac's young sister, Rita, joined us from school before I left Columbus.

The Commonwealth Caribbean celebrated the 150th anniversary of effective emancipation from slavery. The Republic of Guyana in South America invited me to give the keynote address in the presence of the Head of State, President Desmond Hoyte. Also in attendance was General Yakubu Gowon, former Head of State of Nigeria. The theme of my address was "Collective Martyrdom in Modern History: From the Mandingo to the Mandelas." I took advantage of the opportunity to request President Hoyte to restore to national legitimacy the name of the late distinguished Guyanese historian and political activist, Walter Rodney. (Rodney's most popular book internationally is How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, though that is not necessarily his most important work as a historian.)

Walter Rodney (whom I knew when he was a lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam) was killed in 1980 by a bomb. Members of the ruling party of Guyana were suspected of this apparent assassination. My decision to raise the issue in 1988 in the presence of the leader of the party and Head of State was therefore tricky - not least because my keynote address was being broadcast live on the radio nation-wide. My appeal for Rodney's restoration to national legitimacy was greeted by a thunderous applause from a large proportion of the immense audience at the meeting. Fortunately the President did not show any displeasure or embarrassment, but embraced me warmly when I completed my presentation. I was most impressed - and relieved - by the President's graciousness. But the main thing is reconciliation and national consensus in Guyana itself. I do hope President Hoyte continues to give consideration to my presumptuous but sincere advice about restoring Rodney to national legitimacy.

General Gowon's participation in the celebrations in Guyana was given a high profile. He was treated virtually like a Head of State. He came to Guyana, leading a Nigerian delegation which was 50-strong (scholars, artists, dancers, actors, officials, etc.). I believe this was the General's first international official mission on behalf of Nigeria since he was overthrown as the Head of State way back in 1975. I was delighted to see the General again, although we had in any case been keeping in touch over the years.

Trinidad and Tobago also marked the 150th anniversary of emancipation from slavery. General Gowon and I also participated in the Trinidadian festivities. But the event as celebrated in Trinidad "paled" when compared with its national visibility in Guyana. The Trinidadian authorities seemed so anxious to avoid offending Indo-Trinidadians that they handled emancipation from slavery as an "Afro-Trinidadian" event, instead of treating it as a national occasion. I believe the Nigerian delegation was offended by the casual way in which their former Head of State was treated. Of course, Gowon is not Head of State now. But neither is Prince Charles or the Duke of Edinburgh. There is a suspicion that the Trinidadian authorities would have treated the Prince and the Duke with something closer to the dignity of a Head of State than they apparently did with the former Head of State of Nigeria.

But all these reservations concern the authorities of Trinidad rather than the people there. Privately individual Trinidadians showed great courtesy and hospitality. I was delighted to catch up with Selwyn Ryan professionally and to meet his new wife. They have a beautiful, wonderful home, on a hill overlooking the ocean. My lunch with them was against a spectacular setting.

Justice Monica Barnes was also most gracious in inviting me to dinner and assembling some distinguished Trinidadians to meet me. Also in town was my old friend, Sir Fred Phillips, former Governor of St. Kitts. I knew him first in the 1960s when he was a roving diplomat, who helped us in our own diplomatic training at Makerere University in Uganda with the dawning of the era of independence. Fred and

the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace were pillars of strength in the diplomatic training.

In Trinidad I met another old West Indian friend who previously worked for the Carnegie Endowment - Reggie Dumas. It was good to catch up with Reggie. I did meet him briefly at Jamal's graduation from Princeton in 1986. One of Reggie's own kids was also graduating then. I believe Reggie is now Trinidad's Ambassador to the United States. Our best wishes to him in his new role.

A curious thing about my visit to the Caribbean in 1988 was the degree of security protection I was provided in Guyana. Locksley Edmondson and I were accommodated in a special presidential guest house. That was closely guarded. But in addition I was assigned a kind of guide to accompany me whenever I left the safety of the guest house. Before long it began to appear that the guide was more like a security officer to protect me than just a companion. Fortunately he was pleasant, sociable and intelligent. If he carried a weapon, it was very discreetly done.

Why did my Guyanese hosts feel that I needed special protection? I discussed the issue with some friends in Guyana. One theory was that my views about Walter Rodney were vulnerable from both the right and the left in Guyana. Another theory was that my lecture about "Islam in Africa" was sponsored by one group of Muslims in Guyana who had adversaries elsewhere in the Guyanese Muslim community. (My lecture about Islam was entirely different from my main national assignment as keynote speaker.) According to this theory, the authorities in Guyana did not want me to be caught up in some sectarian feud. The third theory to explain the protection I was getting was that it was merely an extension of the security Guyana was giving to General Gowon. Until Miriam Makeba arrived, General Gowon and I were the two most visible African guests to the national event in Guyana. Fortunately for us, Miriam Makeba came late - otherwise she could have overshadowed in popular image both Gowon and me! It would be helpful to know how much security and protection Miriam Makeba received. Perhaps that would help to explain Guyana's security policy towards me as well.

When I was in Guyana the Leader of the Opposition, Cheddi Jagan came to see me at the Presidential Guesthouse where I was staying. Later on one of the newspapers in Guyana speculated that Cheddi had come to persuade me on behalf of his party to intercede with the Head of State, President Desmond Hoyte, on specific matters of policy which the opposition was concerned about. The newspaper's speculation was entirely without foundation.

When he came to see me, Cheddi was simply but graciously visiting an African visitor to his country. We had in fact first met in Canada way back in 1966 when we were both speakers at a huge Toronto meeting on the theme of "Revolution and Response." Cheddi Jagan was already a world figure by then; I was only just beginning to attract international attention. It was great to see Cheddi again in 1988 - so spritely, alert and very well!

I visited Moscow in October 1988 under the auspices of the Soviet Institute of Political Economy and the World Order Models Project (WOMP). The agenda focussed on the concept of sovereignty in the emerging global civilization. It was fascinating to enter into such deliberations with Soviet scholars in the era of perestroika and glasnost. It was also gratifying to be with former colleagues of the World Order Models Project.

Gennadi Gerasimov, who is now the foreign affairs spokesman of the Soviet Union, used to be one such colleague in WOMP in the 1970s. Now he is constantly on the television screens of the world, explaining this or that aspect of Soviet foreign policy to the world press. We used to call him "Gene" in our old WOMP days

- thus Americanizing his more interesting Russian name. It was good to see him again in Moscow this last October. It was particularly impressive to watch him perform at a press conference, answering questions from journalists of the world.

But perhaps my most interesting experience in Moscow in 1988 concerned an encounter which sent me back in time. It was in 1971 that I attended a doctoral defence in Moscow. The candidate was a young woman who had written about Nigeria. The defence was open to the public, and I was taken there with an interpreter of my own. I was impressed by the nature of the proceedings. Questions could be addressed to the candidate from the floor by any of the spectators. And the dissertation itself had been made available at a library prior to the defence so that the public could consult it in advance. The young scholar seemed to be answering the questions confidently - though I remember wondering why she was quoting Lenin so often when the thesis was about Nigeria.

What has all this anecdote about an event in 1971 got to do with my visit to Moscow in 1988? Well, at our conference on sovereignty in 1988 I got a message. The messenger asked me: "Do you remember attending a doctoral defence in the Soviet Union seventeen years ago?" When I confirmed, the messenger told me that the 1971 Ph.D. candidate would like to meet me. I had no idea that the candidate at that time even knew my name. Admittedly, I might have been the only African in the audience at the doctoral defence. But it never occurred to me that the candidate would know my identity, let alone remember it for seventeen years afterwards. Anyhow, we finally arranged in 1988 to have lunch together. It was delightful. Of course both the candidate and myself were now more mature scholars. I was delighted that she too was still involved in African studies (including Nigeria). She told me that the community of Africanists had expanded in the USSR. Her Institute of African Studies now consisted of three hundred scholars.

The Head of the Institute of African Studies is Professor Anatoly Gromyko, the son of the Soviet President who retired in 1988. The younger Gromyko and I have met at international conferences in both Europe and Africa. A colleague at the University of Michigan who is a specialist on the Soviet Union told me a year ago that Anatoly Gromyko had criticized me in Pravda, apparently because I seemed to treat the Soviet Union and the United States with equal suspicion as superpowers, and have accused both countries of insincerity in the politics of disarmament.

The last time I met Professor Anatoly Gromyko was at the Fifth International Congress of African Studies held at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria in 1985. Talking of Nigeria, I have missed it a lot lately. My appointment with the University of Jos has come to an end. It was with great reluctance that I bowed out of the arrangement, partly for family reasons here. But I hope to work out a looser linkage with the University of Jos on some future date if the University would still be interested.

I am delighted to meet some Jos colleagues at conferences from time to time. And my old departmental boss at Jos, Jonah Isawa Elaigwu, manages to telephone me occasionally, especially when he comes to the United States on one official business or another. I saw A. T. Gana and other friends at the World Congress of the International Political Science Association in Washington, D.C..

In August I was in Lusaka, Zambia, to give the keynote address at the Sixth Southern Africa Islamic Youth Conference on the theme of "Africa - Our Responsibility." President Kenneth Kaunda officiated at the opening ceremony and was the Guest of Honour. Later on at State House the President paid me the supreme compliment of my life - he thanked God for "giving Africa Ali Mazrui." The tribute was televised.

In addition to my keynote address the conference organizers asked me to give two other lectures at the immense Mulungushi Conference Hall. The two other lectures were similarly attended on a big scale. My final lecture on conflicting ideologies in Africa provoked a lively debate in Zambian newspapers long after I had left the country.

I enjoyed a lot of Zambian hospitality during my few days there, and was particularly well looked after by Yusuf Limbada and his family. It was also great to see my old educational ward, Obi Jackson Njovu. He is now a soldier in the Zambian army, and was recently promoted. My best wishes to all my Zambian friends, and to all the participants at the Islamic Youth Conference. I was delighted that my TV series, The Africans, had been seen by so many people in Southern Africa. Zambia, Zimbabwe and at least one of the South African so-called "homelands" had shown the series.

The Africans was also televised in Libya in 1988. What is more, the commentary in Libya was in Arabic. The TV series made enough of an impact on Libya that I was specially invited officially to visit Tripoli. I went there in June, and was impressed by the Libyan version of perestroika and glasnost. Many political prisoners were released in March. And Qaddafi declared an open door policy for Libyans to come and go. Many Libyans actually packed their bags and left. On the other hand, many other Arabs decided to come to Libya and take over some of the jobs vacated. There has been a genuine relaxation in Libya - including readiness to resume diplomatic relations with neighbouring Chad.

While I was in Libya I also participated in a workshop on "The African Social Situation", sponsored by the African Centre for Applied Research and Training. The Centre is under the leadership of Dr. Duri Mohammed, the former President of the University of Addis Ababa. It was so good to see Duri again. His Centre in Libya is under the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, whose Head, Professor Adebayo Adedeji, also joined us at the workshop in Tripoli. I had not seen Adebayo for a while either. So Tripoli became a major reunion centre this June for a few old friends. In addition to the events directly connected with the workshop, we were entertained to a feast by the Nigerian Ambassador to Libya.

Do you remember the minute-and-a-half of Qaddafi that I included in programme 9 of The Africans? That brief sequence caused a lot of controversy in the United States when the TV series was shown here. Indeed, that minute-and-a-half in nine hours of television was enough to have the TV series denounced as "pro-Qaddafi" by the Head of U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities. Well, believe it or not, the brief sequence about Qaddafi was not, repeat not shown in Libya! It had been deleted. On the other hand, the United States had attempted to distort my message about Libya by inserting a negative picture on terrorism into my Qaddafi sequence. What conclusion are we to draw from this? That neither the United States nor Libya have gone far enough yet in either glasnost or perestroika!

On the other hand, the TV series was honoured in 1988 by an American charitable organization dedicated to Africa. The organization is called Africare. The award was in recognition of my TV series' role in enhancing American awareness and understanding of Africa. The ceremony took place in Washington, D.C.. A number of African ambassadors to Washington attended the event, including the new Kenyan ambassador, Hon. Denis D. Afande, and the Ugandan ambassador at the time, Princess Elizabeth Bagaya (Nyabongo). Later on the Princess invited me to her official residence for a private lunch. I appreciated the opportunity to catch up with her news, including fuller details about how her husband was tragically killed in a plane crash in North Africa. I was later sorry to learn about Elizabeth's

disagreements with her colleagues in government in Kampala. She ceased to be Uganda's ambassador.

In addition to the Africare Award, The Africans won a number of other prizes in the course of 1988. Although the TV series has done very well in North America, Africa, the Caribbean, the Arab world and other places, it has not done so well in continental Europe. The primary reason could be that European television had decided that one TV series on Africa was quite enough - and they had already bought the TV series called Africa, narrated by the distinguished British Africanist historian, Basil Davidson. The two series are entirely different from each other (partly because Basil and I, though friends, are two very different observers of Africa). This is quite apart from the distinction between a sympathetic outsider like Basil and a native of the continent like myself. Nevertheless, many continental European TV stations seem to have decided that one series about Africa was quite enough!!

One result is that although my TV series has probably been shown in more countries of the world than has Basil Davidson's series, mine has been televised in fewer European countries than Basil's. (Africa was available in the market earlier than The Africans, and seems to have therefore been bought sooner in Europe).

My work for the World Bank has got more diverse. In addition to my membership of the World Bank's Council of African Advisors, I have had a number of invitations to address separate departments of the bank on varied aspects of the African condition. I see my role with the World Bank in terms of my own concept of counterpenetration - Africa's reverse influence on those whose decisions affect Africa's own destiny.

I went to Canada twice in 1988. First, was to Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia where I gave one of the three prestigious annual Killam Lectures. My theme was futuristic - "Independent Africa: Does It Have a Future?". I also gave a short talk at the University's annual Africa Night festivity. In addition to my host Tim Shaw, I met a lot of other old friends and made a few new ones. I also gave a lecture on human rights off campus - at a conference of young Black Canadians. One topic of conversation at Dalhousie was Omari Kokole, my young colleague at the University of Michigan. In 1988 he had at last defended his Ph.D. thesis at Dalhousie University. Everybody at Dalhousie was discussing what a superb defence it had been - a memorable occasion for all who were there. Felicitations, dear Doctor Kokole!

My second visit to Canada was made under the auspices of the African Experience, Resource and Communications Centre in Toronto. Apart from making new Canadian and West Indian friends, I met a wide variety of Africans, including former colleagues of the University of Jos. Particularly exciting was seeing Goretti Mugambwa, who had just arrived in Canada from Jos. Vianney Bukyana - who had arrived in Canada much earlier and who was also formerly of Jos - seemed to have truly settled down in Ontario at last. While in Toronto I was also entertained by the African Women's Association of the city.

You will have noticed that almost all the lectures I have referred to have been outside the United States. In fact, I gave a very wide range of public lectures all over the USA. But precisely because of that they are too many to enumerate. The lecture which provoked the most debate was given right here at The University of Michigan, sponsored by the Palestine Solidarity Group. My topic was "Israel and South Africa: Strange Bedfellows or Natural Allies?". My lecture was debated on this campus for weeks after that. A militant pro-Israeli rightwing students' group even printed and distributed leaflets denouncing me as anti-Semitic. For an "anti-Semite" I certainly make strange choices! My private doctor is a Jew; my private

lawyer is also a Jew. Of course I did not choose them because of their ethnic origins - but the point is, I did not have to choose them at all! They have been my highly valued doctor and lawyer for years. I wonder how many pro-Israeli Jews have an Arab doctor or an Arab lawyer by choice?

I have avoided invoking the statement "Some of my best friends are Jews", but that also happens to be true! I get disgusted with people who cannot take criticism of Israel without resorting to the charge of "anti-Semitism."

Friends from Africa who visited the USA in 1988, and spent many hours with me, included my nephew Al-Amin Mazrui, Negussay Ayele from Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, and Nuruddin Farah, Somalia's distinguished novelist. It was wonderful to see them again and to catch up with their news. At the annual meeting of the African Studies Association of the United States I met a lot of other friends from Africa as well - including Abdulrahman Babu and Issa Shivji of Tanzania. Elsewhere in 1988 I also met Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere - but on a plane rather than on land! We were on the same flight from Entebbe to Addis Ababa. It was our first meeting since he retired from the Presidency of Tanzania. Mwalimu was very gracious on the flight. I am sure he would have been equally gracious had he known that I had just described his entire socialist experiment as a "heroic failure" in my lecture to thousands of people at the International Conference Centre in Kampala the day before. But in my lecture I did emphasize the heroism even more than the failure. I stressed Mwalimu's honest effort and integrity.

Legacy Productions, Ltd., the ambitious enterprise we have set up to promote African talent in the United States, has only just started to be active. We had serious discussions about projects with such African artists as Nuruddin Farah and such leading African businessmen as Chief Abiola. Under Legacy auspices I was also interviewed on television by the Colombia Broadcasting System (CBS) in the USA. I also participated in a Philadelphia television project entitled "From Slaveship to Spaceship: The Black Experience." In Detroit I took part in a television debate about a spectacular but flawed TV series, Shaka Zulu.

With regard to this tradition of writing seasonal letters, Yash Tandon once theorized (half in jest) that my biographer would face the challenge of cut-and-paste!! The biographer could cut and paste together paragraphs of my Newsletters, juxtaposing them from year to year. Unfortunately my Newsletters belong to the post-Makerere phase of my life. I wonder what I would have said about Yash Tandon when we were both at Makerere in the 1960s? In 1988 I was delighted to see him and Mary, and Hasu Patel and his wife, Diana, when I visited Zimbabwe for the UNICEF meeting. It is worth noting that I am now a member of the Pan-African Council of Advisors of the United Nations' Children's Fund. The Council was scheduled to meet again in Zimbabwe in December 1988, but unfortunately I could not go this second time.

I have a lot more to report about my experiences in 1988. But I must bring this missive to an end! How was I able to do so many things in a single year? Because I had a very strong team at my home base. Professionally, The Department of Political Science and the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies at Michigan were very supportive. Mary Breijak and Judy Baughn often went well beyond the call of duty in their own spare time to help me secretarially. Omari H. Kokole is still a major presence in both my professional and my family life, Allah be praised. My research and teaching assistants this year included Dale Tatum, Nike Adebiyi, Scott Anglemeyer, and Michael Coyne. And my domestic life continued to depend overwhelmingly on the two Kiberu women. This year it was Maureen first and Brenda second, with their mother in Kampala giving me strong moral support. My deepest

gratitude to all members of my team - both near and far, including the temporary but enthusiastic assistants that Ohio State gave me in the spring.

We wish them, and you all, a very prosperous and happy new year!

Yours warmly,

Ali A. Mazrui