

Appendix 33:

NOTE: This file contains two documents by Boer separated by <xxxx> :--

1. BZMuslims on Secularism
2. BZ Muslims on Unity

DOCUMENT 1

BZ Muslims on Secularism

Jan H. Boer, 2008

The natural consequence of the revival of sharia should be to efface the secular spirit that colonialism has planted in the Muslim community. The revival can be described as a reaction to secularism.¹ Many articles have been published during both the BZ and AZ periods that express a deep longing for the restoration of the full sharia, an important step for which is usually seen to be the erasure of this secularism. As is now becoming a tradition in this book, the BZ and AZ developments are divided over this appendix and its section in the book respectively. An anonymous *Radiance* writer strongly urged a serious campaign to stop “the spread of un-Islamic social and moral values. We have reached a stage when we should say ‘No’ to secular values,” these being described as “luxury, materialism, prostitution, alcoholism, profiteering and all kinds of evils” that “have dehumanised our people, and turned them into a helpless and defenceless lot, incapable even of doing things necessary for their survival.”²

Tawfiq Ladan, in common with so many Muslim authors, traced the immorality and lawlessness that currently plague Nigeria to the secularism bequeathed by the colonial regime. Over against that, he wrote, “The minimum demand of Muslims is that the Islamic social morality, must be restored so that Muslim cities can regain their sanctity and integrity.” The secular value system “must be contained.” Since he wrote a decade before the Zamfara Declaration, the term “sharia” was not yet on everyone’s lips. He did not use the term, but he surely demanded its re-instatement by his emphasis on the restoration of morality. And whose duty would it be to accomplish all these laudable goals of the BZ version of the revival? It is the

¹J. Boer, 2005, vol. 4, pp. 40-41.

²*Radiance*, No. 4/83, p. 40.

government's function to promote the "morally right" and to eliminate evil. And thus his "minimum demand" was directed first of all to the governments in the country.³

Hamzah Dawood quoted Qur'an 3:109, which says, "You are the best nation raised up for men." The Muslim community is to "serve as shining example to others in all human endeavours." In fact, "Allah established a model state of Islam in order that the administration of the Islamic state, under the leadership of the Prophet, will serve as a precedent." Allah's model was a success. Unfortunately, shortly after the initial period, an "animalistic tendency in man was let loose, the door was opened for godlessness, which was becoming innate in some Muslims of that time."⁴ However, "it is the promise of Allah that, if Muslims practise the real Islam, that is, a system that does not separate the spiritual from the mundane, they will regain their past glory; they will be free from economic and political shackles and the rest of the world will be taken to the promised land. The only solution is permanent adherence to the reality [of Allah]."⁵ Be sure you recognize the lingo: Dawood was advocating the replacement of secular dualism with sharia.

The same Ibrahim Bello we met earlier, put it in global terms but definitely had the Nigerian situation in mind as well when he wrote:

*The Western world has succeeded in secularising the world through planting secular philosophy via colonialism. The world is today visually secular in outlook and orientation. This is the root of the weakness of the rest of the world. Until the Third World realises the role secularism is playing in perpetuating their exploitation by the West, they will continue to be subjected, humiliated and perpetually exploited. Their only way out of this deadly trap is to come to terms with Allah, the Creator of the world, to recognise and align themselves with His plan for this world. They will be doing this through embracing Islam as a faith and a way of life. It is only this path that will save the Third World, for it will cause the hitherto exploitative relationship between the West and the rest of the world to come to an abrupt end. Bilateral and mutual relationship will then be the order of the day.*⁶

In a series of articles on secularism, Hamid Bobboyi, a Nigerian at North Western University in Chicago, USA, discussed the mental and spiritual bifurcation of the Muslim mind that the

³T. Ladan, 13-27 Jan/89, p. 12.

⁴Does this amount to an affirmation of a fall into sin? That is not generally accepted in Islam.

⁵H. Dawood, 2 Nov/90.

⁶I. I. Bello, 13-27 Jan/89, p. 13.

colonial virus of secularism has instilled.⁷ After independence, “many notable leaders in the North attempted to develop bridges between the two compartments of their bifurcated minds.” He upheld the Sardauna as a prominent example of this attempt. He expressed the hope that “this bridge-building will ultimately shatter this heinous barrier and usher in minds that are thoroughly perfused with the spirit of Islam and ready and willing to put the dictates of Allah first in both their private and public lives.”⁸

=====XXXX

DOCUMENT 2
BZ Muslims on Unity
Jan H. Boer, 2008

One of the common Muslim complaints is that secular colonialism has broken up the unity of the global Muslim *ummah*. It is a cry that is echoed throughout Nigerian Muslim writings as well as throughout Volumes 2, 4 and 6 of this series. It holds for the global as well as the local Nigerian situation.⁹ This Appendix contains the BZ data on the subject of unity, while the AZ part of the story is found in Volume 8, Chapter 2.

Joseph Kenny, an American Dominican and scholar of Islam based in Ibadan for some decades, claimed that “there are hundreds of Muslim associations and societies in Nigeria” of which he briefly described a few.¹⁰ Kenny saw this development as an indication of increasing disunity, a fragmentation of the *ummah*.¹¹ Volume 6 demonstrates the terrible rancour with which Nigerian Muslims berate and even curse each other, let alone berate Christians.¹² There is no doubt that a weakening of the sense of *ummah* is occurring. It has led to a weakening of Islam itself that can be overcome only by restoring unity.

⁷See J. Boer, 2004, Vol. 2, pp. 33-34; 2005, vol. 4, Appendix 19 on *Companion CD*.

⁸H. Bobboyi, 13 Jan/89, p. 5. This is the major subject of vol. 4 of this series..

⁹M. bin Mohamad, 25 May/2007. Appendix 8.

¹⁰J. Kenny, 1984.

¹¹ It may also be possible to regard this development positively as a normal process of cultural differentiation of a formerly closed society now in the process of opening up.

¹²For example: J. Boer, 2007, vol. 6, pp. 220-223. Vilification of each other by Nigerians is not restricted to Muslims. Chudi Ikwueze, a Nigerian professor of accountancy in New York, tells how a fellow Ibo Christian, Eddy Oparaoji, totally vilified him on www.Kwenu.com as “a jihadist apologist, whose only aim is to serve his jihadist masters.” It is hard to imagine worse vilification than that among Ibos [C. Ikwueze, “Whoever is Pro-Oba-Na-Eze’s 2006 Declaration Speaks for Ndigbo: It is that Simple,” (<www.Gamji.com> and www.Kwenu.com)].

An early call for unity came from the pen of that anonymous *Radiance* author we met under the heading “Revival” above.

The unity of Muslims, and especially of Muslim scholars, has become absolutely necessary. It is the lack of unity among them that creates the opportunity for false principles to gain ground. It is the same disunity that is responsible for the loss of spirit and courage among Muslims, making it impossible for them to fight moral vices and curb dangerous social values. The present squabbles on issues that are frivolous, futile and unrelated to the fundamentals of Islam are signs of more troubles—and a warning that they have to stop.

The author recalled that it were frivolous issues that divided Muslim scholars during the haydays of Andalusia in Spain that weakened the Muslim community and led to their being wiped out by Christian armies. These scholars

should understand that their role is not to divide the Muslims, but, rather, to be the guardians of the Islamic message, the educators of the society, the champions of the people’s welfare and promoters of justice and human dignity. But now they have diverted the attention of Muslims from their own welfare, from justice, from genuine education to issues which have never been resolved in Muslim history. One would only hope that they realise their folly and start doing something constructive.¹³

“Today,” Justice Mustapha Akanbi lamented, “the wider Muslim world has been torn apart. Everywhere there is visible lack of unity and fragmentation. Muslims killing brother Muslims in senseless wars of attrition—all in defiance of Allah’s injunction.” At home, in Nigeria, there is no single voice, either individual or group, that can speak for the entire Muslim *ummah*: None is “really acceptable all over the country,” whether North or South. The national organizations JNI and the SCIA are about as national as they come, but they do not enjoy nationwide support due to tribal factors. Akanbi suggested the vacuum should be filled by “one single Council of the Ulama that is capable of speaking for all religious rights and obligations.”

At the same time, Akanbi warned that the unity he called for was “not that which seeks to divide or compartmentalise our society. It is not that kind of unity which teaches ‘we’ on one side and ‘they’ on the ‘other.’ It is not a call on the faithful to gang up.” Muslim unity should make it “possible for Muslims to be able to play a more effective and meaningful role in our

¹³*Radiance*, no. 4/83, pp. 39-40.

society, to be their brothers' keeper, to give each according to his due deserve to be able to actualise what Allah said in Qur'an 3:110....” The end result should be that others will gladly join us.¹⁴

And why this strong emphasis on unity? According to Akanbi above, to make Islam attractive to others. According to Ibrahim Alfazazi Adamu, the world's imperialists know that if Islam becomes a united front, they would lose and disappear with their imperialism. Though Muslims make mountains of their differences, they are considered mere molehills by imperialists. Nevertheless, these differences are fueled by imperialists.¹⁵ The Muslim “inability to sink our differences has been greatly instrumental to our being unable to voice serious support for the establishment of the sharia despite our majority.” Adamu concluded his article with the truism, “And most indisputably—United we stand (against all forms of oppression); divided we fall.”¹⁶

The twin papers, *The Pen* and *Alkalami*, contain article upon article that call for unity. *The Pen* of 27 October, 1989, published Magaji Galadima's article, “Only Islam Can Unite Nigeria” and a full-page feature by Ibrahim Alfazazia Adamu, “Muslim Ummah and the Question of Unity.” *Alkalami* ended its editorial about the tenth anniversary of the Iranian revolution with a note of regret for the war waged between Iran and Iraq. It strongly advocated that rifts between Muslim countries be reconciled: “*A wannan matsanancin hali da ake ciki bai kyautu a ce kawunan Musulmi a rarrabe yake ba. Musulmi duk 'yan 'uwan juna ne ko a wace kasa suke. Don haka hadin kai da zaman lafiya da juna shi ne kawai zai kai mu ga cin nasara.*”

17

Bashir Tofa explained various reasons for the establishment of his BIP, publishers of the above twin weeklies, one of which was the “promotion of unity.” This was to be achieved by “the protection, preservation and promotion of the religious, cultural and political life of Muslims” as well as “the development of better understanding of Islam and Islamic culture so as to be able to obliterate the divisions among Muslims”—and note well: “as well as among non-Muslims in Nigeria.”

¹⁴M. Akanbi, 1 July/88, p. 15; 15 July/88, pp. 10, 11.

¹⁵For a good example, see T. E. Lawrence of Arabia in J. Boer, 2007, vol. 6, p. 5.

¹⁶I. A. Adamu, 27 Oct/89, p. 7.

¹⁷*Alkalami*, “*Sharhin...*,” 17 Feb/89, p. 1. English translation: “Under our present circumstances, it is not good to observe that Muslims are divided. Muslims from all countries are brothers. Therefore, in order to gain the victory, they must unite and live in peace with each other.”

Bashir Sambo, at the time the Grand Khadi of Abuja, addressed the same need. There have always been differences among Muslim leaders in the past, according to him, but that did not bring disunity among them. So why should such differences divide us today?¹⁸ Dahiru Bauchi, a well-known Muslim scholar and preacher, ditto: “He appealed to the Muslims to stop being at each other’s throats simply because they understand issues from different angles. He argued that difference in understanding has been in Islam since before now and wondered how people should now lose sleep over it.”¹⁹

¹⁸M. Sirajo, 14 Apr/89, p. 1. M. Zubairu, 7 Apr/89, p. 1.

¹⁹*The Pen*, “Dahiru Bauchi....” 5 May/89, p. 16.