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BORNO STATE OF NIGERIA

**Government White Paper on the report  
of the Commission of Inquiry into the  
Religious Disturbances in Bulum-Kuttu  
area of Maiduguri between the 26th-29th  
October, 1982**

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## GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE RELIGIOUS DISTURBANCES IN BULLUM-KUTTU AREA OF MAIDUGURI BETWEEN THE 26TH—29TH OCTOBER, 1982

### BACKGROUND:

Following the unprecedented religious disturbances in Bullum-Kuttu area Maiduguri between the 26th-29th October, 1982 in which several lives were lost, His Excellency, the Governor of Borno State, Alhaji Mohammed Goni instituted a Commission of Inquiry which was charged with the responsibility of determining the causes of the unfortunate incidence and ways and means of averting future similar religious disaster. Thus, the Governor appointed the Commission of Inquiry in accordance with Section 2 of the Commission of Inquiry Law Cap. 25 of Laws of the Northern Nigeria 1963. The warrant of appointment appeared in Borno State Gazette No. 45, Vol. 7 of 11th November, 1982. The Commission of Inquiry comprised the following five members:—

(i) Alhaji Hassan K. El-Badaway	<i>Chairman</i>
(ii) Alhaji Muhammadu Alkali	<i>Member</i>
(iii) Alhaji Shettima Ibrahim	<i>Member</i>
(iv) Alhaji Alhazai Bala	<i>Member</i>
(v) Alhaji Isa Othman	<i>Member</i>
(vi) Mallam Ibrahim M. Abba	<i>Secretary</i>

2. The terms of reference of the Commission as contained in the letter of appointment were as follows:—

- 2.1. Investigate and ascertain the direct, remote as well as the immediate causes of the disturbances;
- 2.2. Ascertain and determine the extent of loss of lives and destruction of properties;
- 2.3. Ascertain the extent of involvement and participation of persons or groups of persons in the disturbances;
- 2.4. Determine whether any person or persons aided, counselled or abetted, by act of Commission or Omission, all or any of the persons identified in 2.3. above, in causing or carrying out any act leading to the disturbances; and if so, identify such persons and assess the extent of such aid or abetement;

2.5. Apportion blame where such is established;

2.6. Recommend prevention of future occurrence of such up-rising.

### 3. APPROACH AND PROCEDURE:

The Commission made adequate publicity of its activities, particularly its place and times of sitting, its mode of operation, terms of reference and invitation to the general public to come forward and give evidence. All available media of communication were made use of in this regard. The Commission held public Sittings in Bullum-Kuttu and Alamduri village, being the main area of the disturbances. The Commission also sent delegations to all Emirate/Traditional Councils in Borno State, Justice Aniogolu in Lagos and the Kano State Government, to sound the opinions of these various bodies and individuals. In addition to the 12 written memoranda received by the Commission, 50 witnesses were first interviewed in-camera, and later several others in a mixture of in-camera sitting and open sitting; of the written testimonies, the most insightful were the ones submitted by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Maiduguri, Dr. Jibril Aminu, and his Deputy, Dr. Mohammed Nur Alkali. Special invitations were also sent for the following people to appear before the Commission:—

- (a) The Chairman and his Secretary, Maiduguri Metropolitan Council;
- (b) The Chairman and his Secretary, Jere Local Government;
- (c) The District Head, Yerwa and all his 15 Village Heads; in addition to the five Ward Heads of Bullum-Kuttu;
- (d) The District Head, Maiduguri and five (5) of his Village Heads;
- (e) The Permanent Secretary (Security), Governor's Office;
- (f) The Assistant Director (N.S.O.), Borno State;
- (g) The Commissioner of Police, Borno State Police Command, Maiduguri;
- (h) The Hospital Authorities, Specialist Hospital, Maiduguri.

4. In order to give the Government a clear perspective of its findings, the Commission took the terms of reference one by one and submitted its findings and recommendations as follows:—

5.1.0. Investigate and Ascertain the *Direct*, *Remote* as well as the *Immediate* causes of the Disturbances.



### 5.1.1. BACKGROUND AND REMOTE CAUSES:—

- (a) History of Borno identifies it as a very ancient, Islamised Kingdom in which a strict Sunni (Othodox) Islam was in practice for centuries. Rulers of Borno were leaders of Islam who had enjoyed the title of *Amir Muminin* and were Scholars in their own right. They had respected Scholarship and had encouraged Scholarship in various ways especially in forming alliances with Islamic Scholars of repute who had always found Borno hospitable. Borno therefore became popular Centre of learning, and the well known "Tsangaya" system whereby avid students sought-out and learnt from teachers of great repute and diverse learning, developed. In recent times, all these seemed to have collapsed. The *Tsangaya* system had disappeared, and seemed to have given way to a *Gardi* system in which learning is reduced to merely the memorization of the Qur'an parrot-fashion, and through half-baked teachers who do not, themselves, seem to understand the true basis of Islam.
- (b) In addition and/or in the process two groups of Islamic Scholars (Mu'allimun/Mallams) with conflicting views and orientation emerged. These were the '*Ulama*' group who were well-learned in all aspects of the religion, and the *Hatiz* group, whose knowledge was restricted to only the rote-memory of the Holy Qur'an. It appears that in Borno the *Ulama* group have waned in both their number and influence over time while the *Hafiz* group have proliferated. The *Gardi* system, as could therefore be expected, inevitably also took root, developed, and expanded itself. Products of this system, also not surprisingly, tended to be half-baked, ignorant, unemployable youths who were ever ready and available for recruitment into religious revolts and mischiefs-making. Such young and able-bodied youths abound in all the nooks and corners of the State.
- (c) While the quality of Scholars was thus deteriorating, it was sad to note that the involvement and active participation of the traditional Rulers in the sphere of education and support of the educational system were also declining. Traditional Rulers, and the entire hierarchy of the traditional administrative system, at all its levels have increasingly come to be divorced from the sphere of educational activity in which they had formerly been leaders and champions. In particular and in consequence, they also came to lose the surveillance and monitoring capabilities which they used to enjoy when they were themselves the patrons of Scholarship.
- (d) In recent years Islam has witnessed the emergence of a number of sects and movements which tended to strongly question the mores of the traditionally accepted orthodox Muslim Communities. Some of these sects coached their preaching in usually provocative and acrimonious manner. Among such sects are the *Izala* and *Kala-Kato*, the latter also known as *Maitatsine*, named after Muhammed Marwa Maitatsine, an itinerant preacher of dubious background who finally came to settle in Kano.

(e) Muhammed Marwa founded the Tatsine Cult, and it easily found acceptance and continued to survive his death among the 'GARDI' as its simplistic approaches and interpretations of the Islamic religion readily appealed to the untutored and unwary in the society. As the monitoring and surveillance system formally in use by the traditional rulers had substantially broken down, it was easy for quack Mallams to move about and preach what they liked without being checked. The 'Gardi' community came to accept the worst aspects of the Tatsine cult such as its provocative preaching methods, and its deviant practices, both of which appear clearly un-Islamic.

(f) There have been series of acts of revolts by these militant groups of preachers as far back as 1977, including open combat with the Police. But serious attention was paid to the latent danger of the behaviour until the Kano up-rising of 1980.

(g) The internal security, as well as border controls, appear to be weak thereby allowing influx of aliens and undesirable elements.

#### 5.1.2. *THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES:*

(a) The location of Bullum-Kuttu is one factor. As a result of urbanization, the hitherto tiny and un-noticeable village of Bullum-Kuttu grew into one of the satellite shanty towns on the outskirts of Yerwa, growing to accommodate the spill-over population of Maiduguri Metropolis. Such settlements, usually with typical 'Sabon Gari' characteristics, offer comfortable abodes for religious deviants such as the Tatsine followers.

(b) As could be expected in 1979 after some clashes with the Police inside Maiduguri town, the Tatsine community moved out to Bullum-Kuttu. They seemed to have enjoyed the patronage of some persons. For instance, one Bukar Tela acquired the piece of land, they came to settle on; and another man, Haruna Mai Nama Gwange, built the house and a Mosque for the community on the piece of land.

(c) Soon after settling, the Tatsine group intensified their abusive preaching in Bullum-Kuttu which became a very serious cause for concern to the general public. Consequently several protestations were made to both the Police and the Metropolitan Council. The latter in turn pressed upon the Police for action, but the Police did not seem to have taken any decisive action, until after the Kano riots.

(d) Almost immediately after the Kano riots, (January 1981) the influx of Tatsine followers into Bullum-Kuttu was noticed by the neighbours of the Tatsine enclave. This was reported to the Police; but again no serious action was taken.

- (e) In July 1982, the State Intelligence and Security Committee drew the attention of Police Command to the presence of the Tatsine in Maiduguri and other towns such as Biu, Gujba, and Gashua. But the Police did not seem to have reached to forestall possible dangers.
- (f) After the President's State pardon of the Tatsine rioters of Kano in October, 1982 about fifty (50) of the detainees came straight to Bullum-Kuttu from Kano and joined their colleagues. This was also reported to the Police by the people of Bullum-Kuttu. Rather than abating, there followed a massive build-up of the Tatsine adherents towards the middle of October, 1982.
- (g) The most immediate cause of the disturbances was the attempt by the Police to make arrest at the fore-ground of the Shehu's Palace, where the Tatsine were preaching on the night of Monday, 25th October, 1982. The Police decided to make arrest that night because they received reliable information that the Tatsine had made full preparation to attack and capture the Shehu's Palace, the Central Mosque and the Police Headquarters, on Friday, 29th October, 1982. The Police continued their arrest the following day.

#### 5.1.3. *THE DIRECT CAUSES:*

- (a) The Police, obviously ill prepared to make further arrests in the afternoon of 26th October, 1982, and they in fact themselves fell victims of the ferocious Tatsine followers who fought the Police in the manner of a Suicide Squad. To the Tatsine, death meant instant deliverance to 'Al-janna'. There and then they killed DSP Akuya, his driver and some Policemen.
- (b) After the above encounter, all the remaining Policemen fled Bullum-Kuttu and left the whole village at the mercy of the 800 odd Tatsine followers, who were largely armed with clubs, cutlasses, swords, knives, and matchets. In the evening, the Mobile Unit made a half-hearted, abortive attack in which they lost the Officer-in-charge Mobile and some men. After they had succeeded in removing the bodies of Akuya and the rest of their colleagues on 27th October, 1982, no Policeman came back to Bullum-Kuttu until 29th October, 1982.
- (c) Instead of leading an attack on the Tatsine enclave, the Borno State Police Command mounted road blocks, far away on the outskirts of the Metropolis, and proceeded to engage in what most informants saw as the molestation of the innocent, fleeing ordinary people, and systematically robbing them of their personal properties. Meanwhile the Tatsine followers also went berserk and resorted to molesting and killing the same trapped people inside the village. It was a most pitiful predicament for the dwellers of Bullum-Kuttu that week: within, they had to contend with the ravaging Tatsine followers; when they ventured to escape they were mowed down by the Police bullets.



(d) The Commission also found out that by the night of the 26th October, 1982, over 200 people had been arrested and detained in a very small cell. One of the victims, a driver, informed the Commission that because of the congestion and the intermittent throwing of tear-gas into the cell, (32) thirty-two people died after two days of confinement in the cell.

(e) Apparently, the Borno State Police Command could not confront the Tatsine fighters alone, so they had to wait for some re-inforcement from Bauchi and Yola, before the combined forces made the all-out assault on Friday, 29th October, 1982. This was followed by what the Police referred to as 'flush out and mopping up operation', during which some stray bullets went far beyond the confines of the area of Bullum-Kuffu, endangering and apparently even causing loss of lives.

#### **8.2.0. Ascertain and Determine the Extent of Loss of Lives and Destruction of Properties.**

##### **8.2.1. Loss of Lives:**

(a) The total number of recorded deaths, according to Hospital Authorities was initially given as one-hundred and sixty (160), out of which sixteen (16) were Policemen. Later, fifteen (15) other bodies were exhumed and examined, bringing the final Official total to one hundred and seventy-five (175).

(b) The Commission, however, found out that there were apparently more deaths in the Police cell than four (4) officially reported. One of the witnesses for example, had revealed that as a result of congestion and gassing, 32 people died in the Police cell. He was one of those who removed the the corpses from the cell. Secondly, one of the Tatsines, now in Hospital with fractured arm, revealed to the Commission that well over 100 of his comrades were killed during the attack on their enclave. He himself only narrowly escaped death when he was captured.

(c) The above revelations gave the Commission the impression that a lot of corpses might not have been seen by the Hospital Authorities, for one reason or the other. Other less reliable sources seem to indicate that upwards of 500 people have died, although the Police put the figure of the dead at 132.

##### **8.2.2. Destruction of Property:**

Well over, 1,000 people were affected through losses of personal property, or destruction of goods or houses. The total estimated cost of losses was put at three-million, five-hundred and sixty-four thousand Naira (N3,564,000.00).

5.3.0. Ascertain the extent of involvement and participation by persons or groups of persons in the disturbances.

5.3.1. Investigation revealed that there were several people and groups of people who had actively taken part in the disturbances, as listed below:—

(a) **Haruna Mai Nama** of Gwange Ward.

He was clearly identified by almost all the witnesses as the principal benefactor and leader of the sect in Borno. He organised, and dispatched eight bus-loads of volunteers to fight in the Kano up-rising. He built the Tatsine enclave in Bullum-Kuttu and continuously assisted the rebels with foodstuff. His deviant and Islamically unacceptable practices were reported to the Police early in 1981, but the D.P.O. Gwange assured the public that Haruna had given up his new faith. He was reputed to be selling best 'Suya' in Custom area, and was therefore heavily patronised by a lot of people. Haruna is now in Police Custody, but the Police Command refused the Commission to even see Haruna, let alone interview him.

(b) **Bukar Tela**, of Lamisula Ward. Bukar Tela is second to Haruna Mai Nama, as the helper of Maitatsine. He purchased pieces of land, in Bullum-kuttu, on which the enclave was erected. He organised the illegal 'opening' of Jumma'at prayers in the mosque which they built in the enclave. When interrogated by the Maiduguri Metropolitan Council why they started facing north, or west for the Kibla at prayers, he reported that his was an organization which had a different religion. He is now at large.

(c) **Alhaji Ibrahim Potiskum**, of Zajiri Village. Alhaji Ibrahim's house in Zajiri Village of Bolori Ward had been another hide-out for Tatsine followers since the Kano riot. Ibrahim actively aided the Kano rioters by sending some of the Tatsine followers to go and fight. He did the same during the Bullum-Kuttu incident, but he managed to disappear at the wake of the violence.

(d) **Muhammadu Dan Hausari**

He lived in Gwange, Ibrari Ward. He was one of the sectional leaders in Gwange who was fully involved even in the 1979 clashes with the Police, resulting in the death of a Police Inspector. Dan Hausari is now at large, and his prosecutor D.S.P. Akuya is dead.

(e) **Alhaji Hassan Hausari**

His house is No. 98, Sarkin Hausawa Street, Hausari Ward, Maiduguri. He was identified as a very early advocate of the Kala-Kato cult, as far back as 1970. He fled his house during the Bullum-Kuttu violence.



(f) Other sectional Heads from Gwange III, Ibrahim Ward are as follows:—

- (1) M. Dahiru.
- (2) M. Muhammadu Dan Fulani
- (3) S. Sa'adu Mai Yara
- (4) M. Muhammadu Mahauchi
- (5) Usman Badamagare
- (6) Sani Badamagare

The previous activities of all these people were reported to the Police, but no serious action was taken.

(g) *ALLIENS FROM NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES*

Evidence in the investigations undisputably show the active participation of aliens from the neighbouring states of Niger, Tchad, and the Cameroun Republics. Even the last two names in (f) above are the people of Niger Republic. The only Tatsine follower the Commission was able to interview also confirmed that there were aliens from the three neighbouring states among the Tatsine group.

5.4.0. **Determine whether any persons aided, counselled or abetted, by act of commission or omission, all or any of the persons identified in (c) above (in the terms of reference) in causing or carrying out any act leading to the disturbances; and if so, identify such persons and assess the extent of such aid or abetement.**

(a) All the people listed in section 8.3.0. above have intensively helped, and encouraged the Tatsine group and its abominable practices. They have therefore both by design and actions, aided the Tatsine up-rising and abetted this hideous crime against humanity. The most outstanding figures in abetting this act of vandalism are Haruna Mai Nama of Gwange and Bukar Tela of Lamisula Ward. The extent of involvement of all these people is total.

(b) The Police have to be commended for their action of 29th October, 1982 to dislodge the Tatsine in Bullum-Kuttu, even though this action was rather belated. Had they acted fast on the reports they had consistently been receiving on the activities of these spritual bigots, a lot of lives could have been spared including the lives of the Officers and men of the Police Force who had died in the carnage. The Police therefore, have, by default allowed the Tatsine to organize and build up in Bullum-Kuttu area of Maiduguri. The same thing can be said of the N. S. O. because the latter did not, from what we found out seem to have made any serious efforts to properly inform the appropriate authorities about the impending danger. Our investigations revealed that there is a rift between the Police and the N. S. O. which hindered the desired co-operation between the two.

- (c) From its investigations, the Commission is satisfied that the Borno State Government had taken all the necessary legislative and administrative measures aimed at curbing the required committees under such laws. It was, however, the responsibility of the Police Command to enforce such laws, which was not done.

#### 5.5.0. Apportion blame where such is established.

- (a) The Commission is convinced that Haruna Mai Nama of Gwange and Bukar Tela of Lamisula and their agents were the Principal benefactors of Tatsine group in Borno. They are therefore guilty of aiding and encouraging, the uprising in general, and especially in and around Maiduguri Metropolitan area.
- (b) The Commissioner of Police, Borno State Command, is to be blamed for neglect of duty in allowing the Tatsine to build up in Bullum-Kuttu, a stone throw from his Head-quarters, despite having been continuously fed with the necessary information by both the State Government and the Metropolitan Council,
- (c) The N.S.O. is to be equally blamed for being rather casual about their primary responsibility of monitoring matters affecting State Security. They did not bother to press as much as they ought to have pressed for Police action. This brings to the fore the deteriorated N.S.O. Police relationship in the state, which requires urgent and serious attention of the Federal Authorities.

#### 6.0.0. Recommendations Aimed at the Prevention of Future occurrence of such up-rising.

##### 6.1.0. Effective Roles for Traditional Rulers.

From time immemorial there has been a happy alliance between Traditional Rulers and Mallams, quite a part from the general subject-ruler relationship. A lot of witnesses expressed the belief that some aspects of the Local Government Reforms have brought so sudden changes that traditional societies such as the ones in Northern Nigeria find such sudden changes difficult to accomodate. Realising the need to make the maximum use of the influence of traditional rulers in the maintenance of law and order in the Nation in general, and in Borno State in particular, the Commission recommends that:

- (a) District Heads be made ex-officio members of the Local Government Councils of their areas of Jurisdiction. Where Emirate/Traditional Council exists the District Heads within the immediate localities should be made ex-officio members of such Councils e.g. the District Head, Yerwa, be made an ex-officio member of the Borno Emirate Council.

(b) All District Heads, Lawans, Bulamas, and the 'Senior Councillors' in each of the Emirate/Traditional Councils be appointed Justices of the Peace, to enable them and their agents complement the efforts of the Police in the maintenance of law and order in the State.

(c) A committee should be set-up, under the Ministry of Justice, to review the Local Government Edict with a view to finding clearly defined and practical roles for Emirs and Chiefs; provided that such changes would not be repugnant to Justice and good Government. The committee should consist of members from the Emirate/Traditional Councils.

#### *GOVERNMENT COMMENTS:*

(a) Government believes that the relationship between traditional rulers and their respective communities at any given point in time is very complex, being the product of the total historical experience of these respective communities and the events and circumstances to which they responded and developed. The present problem as instanced by the Bullum-kuttu crises, and ably documented by the Commission of inquiry cannot be traced solely even mainly to the democratizing measures infused into our system of Government by the Local Government Reforms of 1976 or whatever democratization exercises that might come in the future. Government therefore notes with pleasure that the Commission itself agrees that these changes painful though they are to some people, should not be reversed, but should rather be strengthened.

(b) For the above reason Government believes that the Commission's recommendations in paras 6.1. a-c above is contradictory to, and would if implemented go against the spirit of the Constitution. In the circumstance, Government would rather re-emphasize the appointment of Secretaries, to the Local Governments as Justices of the peace where they are qualified. Government feels that given sincerity of purpose and good-will from all concerned our young and slowly developing democracy stands better chance of self-sustenance and fulfilment, if the democratically elected institutions and their related administrative organs are consciously supported, encouraged and utilized. Government believes that it is best that such un-elected functionaries like District Heads, Lawans and Bulamas, be integrated into and form membership of such administrative and consultative Committees as the Peace Committees and Police Committees which the State Government has already given authority to be established at every appropriate level of Government throughout the State. The state intelligence gathering and monitoring facilities as are now existing could also be strengthened by formally integrating into them the services and contributions of such grass-root personalities and functionaries as District Heads, Village Heads, Bulamas, and local Mallams.



Already, relevant structures exist for these purposes and what seems to be lacking is a liaisoning and co-ordinating authority which could both energize and pull together the functions and resources of such structures as the Peace Committees, the Police Committees and the more recently established Religious Preaching and Admonition Committees, for more effective coverage, monitoring and surveillance of all Security and related issues. Government therefore directs that:—

- (i) In every local Government Area a Peace Committee and a Police Committee must exist, in addition to the Religious Preaching and Admonition Committees which are already existing and operating by law, throughout the State.
- (ii) The Secretaries of Local Government Management Committees must co-ordinate and service the functioning of all these Committees, and their Monthly Intelligence Report to the Government must reflect the views and opinions of all these Committees, in addition to whatever other sources they have traditionally in use.
- (iii) Both the Peace Committees and Police Committees must include the highest ranking traditional ruler of the area concerned or his representative, and must in any case be fully liaised with when deliberating on issues of peace, law and order, by these respective Committees.
- (c) To give the membership and functioning of these Committees firm basis of operation, Government intends to propose appropriate legislation immediately, which will clearly spell out the functions, composition and operation of these Committees within the framework and the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

#### 6.2.0. The 'Gardi' and Almajiri system of Education

As has been mentioned elsewhere in the report, the Quranic system of Education has been chaotic, unplanned and without syllabus to follow. A boy starts as an 'Almajiri' at a tender age, passes through the 'Gardi' period (under graduate) and finally qualifies as a Mallam, after finishing the Quran. It usually takes a very long time, that by the time the chap reaches the graduation stage, he is fully grown adult. But that is not the end, because the "Mallam" may not even know the meaning of what he has been reciting all these years. The 'Gardi' therefore seeks permission from his master to go to another Mallam who would teach him the other Books as well as the meaning of the Quran. The process is so long and so time-wasting that the 'Gardi' sometimes revolts and abandons the pursuit of learning and probably falls into hands of such people as Marwa Mai-Tatsine. The Commission therefore recommends as follows:—

- (a) The 'Almajiri' and the 'Gardi' system should be thoroughly re-examined with a view to streamlining it with the modern Education system we are

now operating in this country. A Committee should therefore be immediately set up to tour the Sudan, Middle-East and Morocco, to find out how to go about such integration. The Committee should aim at the producing of a document which would assist in thoroughly planning and effectively organising the Qur'anic education system to produce employable youths.

- (b) As an interim measure, the registration of Mallams should continue throughout the state in earnest with the view to financially assisting them in running such schools as well as maintaining the Mallams. After experiencing such nasty events, it hoped that the non-muslim members of the community would appreciate the pressing need for Government intervention and support of the Qur'anic education system.
- (c) Government should take immediate steps to discourage the itinerant nature of the Qur'anic system by ensuring that parents only send their children to approved registered Qur'anic schools. Begging by 'Almajiri' should be banned. Any 'Gardi' coming to Borno State or going out must carry a 'transfer certificate' for purposes of identification.
- (d) Government should therefore make available a piece of Land and build an *Islamic Centre* to which all students wanting privacy for reading can converge. The 'Kiskadi' tradition should not be discarded, but alternative reading places should be provided, thereby discouraging the 'Gardawa' from erecting temporary structures almost everywhere. Funds should therefore be immediately made available for such purposes, preferably under a special committee.
- (e) Government should immediately build an Islamiyya primary school on the site of the Tatsine enclave, for use by the people of Bullum-Kuttu. This should be seen as the first practical step by Government to start Qur'anic School Integration Policy (Q.S.I.P.).
- (f) The State Government and the University should make concerted efforts to encourage indepth research in the Qur'anic system at graduate, post-graduate and Ph. D. Levels, with the view to widening the horizon of the average Nigerian about the wealth of knowledge that is buried by language barriers, which is Arabic. The programmes should be planned and started as from October, 1983.

#### 7.0.0. GOVERNMENT VIEWS AND COMMENTS

- 7.0.1. Government commends the deep sense of anguish and patriotism with which the Commission has viewed the deep malaise into which our whole Qur'anic educational system has fallen. Government accepts the Commission's view that the whole system must be re-examined with a view to making the entire Qur'anic educational system stream-lined, re-organized and sufficiently energized so as to make it fit into, and fulfil the needs of the fast-moving ever-changing contemporary developmental process in Nigeria.



Government in this connection observes that even the so-called modern, Western-type educational system the country is operating today is itself facing considerable problem of its own, both in terms of its organizations and its direction, and the problems attending the Quranic schooling system today will not be solved by simply streamlining it and dovetailing it to the "western" schooling system as it operates in this country today. What however need be done immediately is to establish a capability within Government that could identify, assess, and register all types, units and levels of the Quranic schooling system now operating within the state, with a view to giving them recognition and assistance, so that they could be made to fulfil not only the needs of those participating within it, but also that of the society in general. Condidly stated, it is for instance, not concrete to say that the Qur'anic education system has no syllabus. It has been carrying the pupil from its very beginnings of the alphabets to the most complex levels in Exigis; Fiqh, Tauhid etc. At these higher levels, however, the system becomes more complicated and as if today, slightly in-operational, as it appears that the element of the choice of the individual pupil; and also to the reputation of available teachers seem to play leading part in the structural organization of system. After a pupil has gone through the first important steps of learning the alphabet (learning how to read and write) and memorizing the Qur'an (in part or in whole), he chooses or is allowed to choose both the subject of study he wishes to pursue, and also the teacher with whom he wants to study. These he does, by reference to both his personal interest, projected pursuits, and the reputation of the teachers that he believes could teach him not to mention the opportunity of seeking out his livelihood, which no doubt vary from place to place.

7.0.2. In view of above, there is little wonder that the Qur'anic school system, at levels that could be termed as above primary, seems a bit "chaotic" and unmanageable, basing itself upon such factors as interests of pupils and reputation of operating Scholars. The "Gardi" and the "Al-majiri" system which the Commission has observed so much in depth, is but the concrete expression of these inner principle on which the Qur'anic educational system is operating. While these inner principles seemed to have functioned well in earlier days, it is today quite clear that the much transformed socio-economic basis in which both the teachers and pupils of today are operating is quite different, and is indeed putting much shattering pressures on all involved. The much-publicized anti-modernity postures and slogans of the "Maitatsine" adherants, no doubt, state as much. Ways of combatting these anti-social bye-products of the decaying Qur'anic school system is therefore not banning those of its well-known practices and *modus-operandi* such as begging, outright, but by seeking for, and providing alternative facilities whereby the basic needs of those participating within this sphere of our socio-economic and cultural life is satisfied.

7.0.3. Government therefore accepts all the observations and recommendations in paras 6.2.0. (a-f) above subject to the provisions of the Constitution but wishes to stress upon a more positive attitude and approach to the problems of our Qur'anic school system as it operates today. In this regard therefore, Government



directs that Emirate Councils, Local Government Management Committees and related Religious and Admonition Committees in each respective Emirate Council Area to immediately embark upon the registration of all Qur'anic school classes and Qur'anic school teachers in their respective areas, under the co-ordination and guidance of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Local Government. Government also directs that the Permanent Secretaries in the Ministries for Education, Rural and Community Development and Local Government, under the Chairmanship of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Local Government, to meet and devise ways and means by which participants within the Qur'anic school system could be intergrated into the main-stream of both the present-day western-type educational system already in operation, and also the evolving Mass Education system in the state. Government directs the Ministry for Rural and Community Development, Mass Education section, to consider those now participating in the Qur'anic School system as their key target groups in all their operations. And finally Government directs that all Local Governments under the guidance and direction of the Ministry of Local Government, to facilitate the establishment of "education" centres in their respective areas where intenerant scholars could meet and mingle with their students and fellow scholars easily and fruitfully with regard to building a Qur'anic School at the Maitatsine enclave, Government has already directed that a maternity clinic be built at the site for the Bullum-Kuttu people.

#### 8.0.0. The roles of Tarikas or Religious Sects.

There has been, in recent times a large-scale proliferation of religious sects in this country. The message of the Qur'an is quite specific on this issue:

**"Be not of those who split up their religion have become divided into Sects.....  
"Rum. V. 32**

The Tijjaniyya and Quadiriyya Sects have, for quite some time, been peacefully co-existing until recently when the *Izala* movement emerged. Later the hideous Tatsine sect also emerged. Apart from these sects, there are today, countless religious movements which when, even though under the cover of some religious tags, are either nothing more than dangerous cults, or puppets in the hands of some religious zealots who are manipulating them for selfish ends. Although we cannot recommend the banning of Tijjaniyya in Borno State (because of entrenched, harmless followers) we certainly recommend that:

(a) *Izala* should not be allowed to take root in Borno State, because, it is from the wild slanderous preaching habits of the *Izala* that Tatsineism anchor. *Izala* should therefore be banned, at least in Borno State. Tatsineism of course, has already been proscribed.

(b) The Government should set-up a state Committee of Ulamas, the main purpose of which is to endeavour to bring unity and understanding among leaders of Tijjaniyya, Quadiriyya and Jama'atu Nasril Islam. For, in the words of Aniagolu

Tribunal, "One common feature in evidence of each of these witnesses (Tariqa-Leaders) was the commendably very candid, but disagreeably very strong, mode of expressing his views and opinions on sects other than his own, "(para. 305, page 821). They should try to en-lighten their followers on the need for tolerance and adopting only the authentic practices of Islam. There should also be such a Committee at National level as the case during the Military Regime.

(c) Jama'atu Nasril Islam could provide a forum for Ulamas and Traditional Rulers to meet and resolve religious issues, provided the Jama'atu Nasril Islam is headed by leaders with sincerity of purpose and dedication to the way of Allah. As we see now the Jama'atu Nasril Islam has to be effectively re-organised at the state level, if it is to assume this all important role of being the focus for Islamic rejuvenation.

#### **8.1.0. Government's Comments**

8.1.1. Government again notes that deep feeling of anguish which acts of religious deviancy like those perpetrated by the Maitatsine group, and may be perpetrated by other similar groups, has envoked in the Commission. Government however observes that freedom of worship, Freedom of Association, Freedom of Expression are fundamental aspects of Human Rights already entrenched in our dear Constitution. To ban any group other than by evidence of infraction upon established laws of the land will in fact amount to retraction from the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and therefore a sure way of dealing a death-blow to our nascent democracy. Government therefore does not accept the recommendation that any group be banned out-right, without first proving some culpability in acts of illegality or lawlessness, likely to lead to the breach of public peace, law and order.

Rather than to attempt banning the *Izala* in-to, for instance, therefore, Government would rather insist that the security and law enforcement agencies in the State and the Country as a whole to intensify their surveillance efforts on the movement of all such groups, and undertake to prosecute all cases leading to or likely to lead to the break down of Law and Order.

#### **9.0.0. Muhammed Marwa and His Introduction of Deviant Practices into Islam**

Reading through the Aniagolu Report, we observed that the tribunal seemed to have held the view that it was dogmatic for people like Professor Galadanci and Gummi to have held the view that there is no room for innovation in Islam.

"This tribunal found it difficult to get this category of Religious leaders to concede that under our Constitution" a man may practice any religion of his own choice in whole or modified or even an entirely new creation of his own so long as in doing so he does not profane or condemn or ridicule other people's doctrine by means of public speeches or the use of cassettes "(para. 338 p. 89 of the Report)".

If the above quoted paragraph is the correct legal interpretation of what is contained in the Constitution regarding freedom of religious practices, then that section is clearly offensive to Islam, and the provision contributes to the religious disturbances, of today. Islamic religious practices are precise and exact, and clearly guided by the unchangeable tenets of the faith. Islam is therefore not amendable to change through the whims and caprices of individual self-seekers. We therefore recommend the following:

(a) Government should encourage the University of Maiduguri to search for in-depth knowledge about Muhammed Marwa, to enable the general public know more about him. As of now, we only see him as a man without doctrine but a mere deviant, who tried to manipulate religion for personal, self-ends. In so doing Marwa effectively used the prevalent socio-economic weaknesses of the society.

(b) The Holy Qur'an emphatically cautions:

**And be aware of an affliction which will not smite exclusively those among you who have done wrong. (Anfal, V. 25).**

It was therefore not surprising that at the resurgence of the proteges of Mai-Tatsine, subsequently to a presidential pardon, the masses had to pay with their dear lives. The President should therefore be informed that the presidential pardon of October, 1982, has contributed, in no small measure to the Bullum-Kuttu up-rising.

(c) Mai-Tatsine's mode of preaching has been the most objectionable characteristic of the cult. It is usually abusive and slanderous, usually aimed at those in Authority, great Mallams and the well-to-do members of the muslim community. The correct method of preaching is clearly laid down in the Qur'an thus:

**Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious.....(Nahl, v.125)**

The Qur'an enjoins the preacher to ensure that his preaching is not dogmatic, self-regarding or offensive but gentle, considerate, and such as would attract the attention of the listener. The manner of argument of the preacher should not be acrimonious, but modelled on the most courteous and the most gracious example. Therefore, Mai-Tatsine's preaching method of slander, profanation of the Holy Prophet's name and public harassment, is far from being Islamic. For this reason, all abusive and provocative cassettes should not be allowed in Borno State. They should all be banned. Anybody found preaching without permission should be jailed.



**GOVERNMENT'S COMMENT**

Given the Constitutional position cited above, the point at stake could only be resolved by a constitutional amendment. Government has no objection if the protagonists against these Constitutional provisions will sponsor amendments through the appropriate legislative bodies. Government will however, need to point out that the issues of religious freedom and religious tolerance are very sensitive issues in Nigeria, and learning from the "Sharia" controversy at the Constituent Assembly, Government will canvass for extreme caution.

**10.0.0. Need for Intensive Public Enlightenment**

10.0.1. The victims of the Tatsine cult are victims of societal exploitation through religion. Such young, ignorant, gullible, poverty-stricken youths, had been mentally drilled into believing that if they died during the struggle, they were going straight to 'Al-Janna', where they would be eternally happy. To redeem these 'lost youths' the Commission recommends that:—

- (a) Massive public enlightenment be mounted, using the Traditional authorities and great Mallams to inform the public of the dangers of listening to quack Mallams. The Ministry for Rural and Community Development should be directed to get into action, in liaison with the Ministry for Local Government, to reverse all conditions that encourage the emergence of such groups as Tatsinewa.
- (b) The State Admonition and Preaching Board and Its Committees at the Local Government levels should ensure proper screening of preachers, to ensure that Tatsine are not allowed to preach anywhere in the State.
- (c) On no account should any preacher carry weapons of any sort around, while preaching.

**10.0.2. Government's Comment**

While Government accepts the recommendation that there must be adequate and intensive enlightenment of the Public, it is still of the opinion that such deviancy and violent behaviours as are perpetrated by Mai-tatsine and his followers are the products of the socio-economic situation now pre-valent in the country. No amount of strong-arm tactics could solve the problem. Government therefore hopes to assail this very serious problem mainly by adopting policies that will generally raise the living conditions of our masses, and would in particular, intensify its efforts to combat illiteracy and ignorance through the activities of its Mass Education Agency.

## 11.0.0. Persons involved in Mai-Tastine Disturbances

11.0.1. Whenever such upheavals occur, large scale indiscriminate killings of human beings form a major part of the operation. For this reason, the matter should assume the nature of major concern to all Governments of the Federation. We, therefore, recommend without any hesitation that any body found directly involved (as those listed in 5.3.0.), should pay the supreme price.

## 11.0.2. GOVERNMENT'S COMMENT

Apart from the fact that this is a Federal matter, it is also a legal matter. Government, however, with equally strong conviction, condemns all those who would throw our country into such violent up-heaval on grounds of their own religious bigotry. Government therefore accepts the view that all those involved in causing the Bullum-Kuttu disturbances must be thoroughly investigated and brought to book.

## 12.0.0. The Roles of the Law Enforcement Agencies and the need for Law Reforms

12.0.1.(a) From the ample evidence before us, we came to the conclusion that the existence of Tatsine in Bullum-Kuttu was very well known to the Borno State Police Command. But no drastic action was taken until the harm was done. We recommend an investigation into this serious act of commission by the State Commissioner of Police.

- (b) Even when the police decided to take action, the initial attempt was half-hearted, with fatal results. Thus despatching of ill-equipped police constables who just fell victims to the ferocious, and determined anger of the Tatsine vandals, is very serious act of Commission on the part of the Commissioner of Police. It was also clear display of glaring insensitivity to the very costly lesson we have learnt in the Kano incident. We recommend that the Commissioner of Police be queried for neglect of duty.
- (c) Worse still, the Commissioner of Police decided to arrest one of our key witnesses for appearing before the Commission to give very useful information. The case in mind is that of Alhaji Haladu Daura who was in Police custody up to the time of submitting this report. For the safety and freedom of the rest of our witnesses whose names appear in this report, we recommend that the Government takes up the issue with the Inspector-General of Police. A copy of this Report should be sent to him.
- (d) The Commissioner of Police has committed an offence by refusing to appear before the Commission. This is tantamount to contempt of the Commission, for which he could be prosecuted. We recommend that this issue should also be brought to the notice of the Inspector-General.
- (e) The Inspector-General should endeavour to give this country a disciplined Police Force, willing to serve the Nation.

#### 12.2.0. GOVERNMENT'S COMMENT

- (a) Government notes all the above observations and wishes to state that its views about the conduct of the Commissioner of Police in Borno State, Alhaji Tahiru Jidda, had been well-known and properly and adequately been placed both before Mr. President, and the Inspector-General of Police. Government at this stage only wishes to place this further evidence of inefficiency, duplicity and illegality in the conduct of Commissioner Tahiru Jidda before the court of public opinion and posterity. Government however commends the gallantry, patriotism and Community-spiritedness of citizen, Haladu Daura, and notes with satisfaction that posterity will give judgement on his behalf.

#### 12.3.0 THE NIGERIA POLICE

From the brief experience of the Commission on this general attitudes of the State Police Command it is clear that the necessary co-operation from the Police Commissioner to the Government does not exist. A clear example is the refusal of the Commissioner to appear before a legally constituted body, whose main objective was to find a lasting solution to the periodic religious disturbances facing this Nation. Therefore, in view of the apparent insensitivity of the Law Enforcement Agencies to serious issues, we recommend that the Honourable Attorney-General be requested to suggest the relevant sections of the Law which, if amended, will ensure:

- (a) The Supremacy of the State Governor over the Commissioner of Police in matters of State Security by enabling States to have their own Police.
- (b) The freedom of the Nigerian citizen from arbitrary Police arrests and molestation. There should be a constituted body which has powers to correct the short-comings and curb the excesses of the Police.

#### 12.4.0 GOVERNMENT'S COMMENT

Noted. Government however does not believe that the solution is to be found through establishing state-owned Police Forces, but in placing the control of the Federal Police in the hands of more neutral authority, than it is today.

#### 13.0.0. The National Security Organisation.

It is unbelievable to imagine that the N.S.O. could not detect this massive build-up in Bullum-Kuttu, mainly of aliens. One would only conclude that the Security network is either porous and casual, or they have diverted their energies to other peripheral issues, instead of paying attention to their main job. We are convinced that the N.S.O. themselves were fully aware of the looming danger. Since both the N.S.O. and the Police failed to turn up and give evidence, they should be queried, as they may have useful information.





and safely  
• Use a trolley to move multiple or heavy items

### 13.0.1. GOVERNMENT'S COMMENT

Government notes this, but copies of security reports consistently being recieved from the N.S.O. has made Government to be satisfied that the N.S.O. has done its Part. For not appearing before the Commission, Government notes the security nature of their operations and hoped that the issue would be clarified by the appropriate authority.

### 14.0.0 Laws Reforms

- (a) The Commission is satisfied that the Borno State Government has taken all the necessary legislative precautions to ensure peace and tolerance among the Communities of Borno State. It is however the responsibility of the law enforcement Agencies to enforce such laws.

### 15.0.0. GOVERNMENT'S COMMENT

Government notes this bill but would like to emphasize that the law Enforcement Agencies should be more alert to their responsibilities.

