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DER - 17
Kenya Coast Arabs

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P. O. Ngong
Kenya

Mr. Walter S. Rogers
Institute of Current World Affairs
522 Fifth Avenue
New York 36, New York

Dear Mr. Rogers:

The window of the old stone house at Malindi looked out over the Indian Ocean. It had been uncomfortable during the day because this was the dusty hot season in Kenya, the time of "March Madness," when everyone was waiting impatient and irritable for the rains to come. But now it was night and Malindi had cooled off and the kaskazi, the north-north-east monsoon, was coming in through the window.

We were drinking orangeade and waiting for the African servant to call dinner. Our host, Mohamed Hamed Timami, the Liwali or Arab administrative officer of Malindi, was nervous. He switched on the radio once, fiddled around for a while trying to get "London Calling" and the evening's news, then, when all he got was screeches and walls of static, he switched it off abruptly. The room was quiet again except for the pounding of the surf and the hissing of the pressure lamp.

Mohamed Hamed sat down in one of the old rattan chairs in the room. He was wearing the traditional Arab garment, the kanzu, a long, white cotton smock that reaches to the ankles. He was barefooted. By custom, Arabs leave their sandals at the door of their homes. We took advantage of this fine local custom to kick off our shoes.

Our host was short, but heavily-built and he wore a mustache and had glasses. He was nearing middle-age and he was not a happy man. He took off the glasses, a frown crossed his dark-colored face and he said:

"I worry about my people all the time. The Arabs are unable to work. They have never worked at anything all their lives as a matter of prestige. Now they know no way of making a living. We are selling our land. We have no education. What will we do? If we are not careful, we will be doomed."

The black servant, dressed like his master in the kanzu, poked his head in the door and said dinner was ready. We went into the dining room, lighted by a smaller kerosene lamp and Mohamed Hamed bustled around seating us. His wife observes purdah only when other Arabs are in the house, he said, and ordinarily she would have joined us. But she was not feeling well that evening. The youngest of their ten children---they range in age from infants to adults---wailed from a nearby room. "We want two more children," Mohamed Hamed said. "You know, as you say, 'Cheaper by the dozen.'"

We started to eat. "We don't use silverware usually," Mohamed Hamed said. "We use the bread to scoop up the food." But silverware had been laid out this time for his guests. The silverware was strange to the servant and he had put it in the wrong places and at all angles to the plates. Mohamed Hamed watched us apprehensively.

"You like it?" he asked. "It is not spiced too much? You would perhaps like something else? You would like a little more of this? Please do not hesitate to tell me if you do not care for our simple Arab food." We assured him it was fine and we meant it. The dinner consisted of fish, beans, rice and cooked bananas, all well spiced and well flavored. "I am sorry I have no wine or whisky to offer you," Mohamed Hamed said. "It is not our custom to drink alcohol. I have never touched alcohol nor tobacco all my life."

Earlier in the day, our host had put on his full dress Arab robes. He had a turban, a jeweled dagger, a jeweled sword and robes embroidered in gold. The robes had originally been very expensive and had been handed down through his family. Now they were frayed with age and some of the gold was peeling off. It is not often that Mohamed Hamed wears them. The fortunes of the Arabs on the Kenya coast and elsewhere in East Africa have changed greatly since the old days.

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The old days of the East African Arabs go back many long centuries. It is not known when the Arab coastal settlements were founded, but the Periplus of the Erythraen Sea, written in the first century of the Christian Era, shows that settlements of at least a temporary nature existed even then. The coastal Arabs, the Periplus relates, had established suzerainty over the local African tribes and some intermarriage was going on. The Arabs had already started exporting black slaves, and other exports included ivory, rhino horn, tortoise shell and palm oil.

In the 7th and 8th centuries, these settlements were reinforced by fresh arrivals of Arabs and Persians fleeing persecution or the vengeance of victorious enemies at home. The Persian immigrants brought a higher sort of civilization, but most of this was lost as they were assimilated by the Arabs. Subsequently the Arabs were converted to the then new religion, Islam, and for centuries to come they themselves continued to convert some of the Africans to that faith.

The Arabs lived as a land-owning aristocracy, with slave labor running their plantations. But their real source of wealth was the export trade---which always included slaves. As Historian R. Coupland says:

"Nor did the Arabs attempt through all those centuries to exploit the agricultural resources of the country. They introduced oranges and other fruits from the East, they cultivated plantations of palms and grew sorghum, millet, beans and rice along the rivers near their towns, but mainly for local consumption.

"No crops, no cereals or cotton, were grown on a commercial

scale. It was the same with live stock. Cattle, goats, sheep and poultry were bred for their own use and comfort, not for sale abroad.

"The old familiar indigenous commodities of Africa---ivory and slaves and Sofala gold, coconuts and coconut oil and ambergis---sufficed for their export trade and sufficed to make them prosperous."*

And prosperous they were. Coupland quotes a Portuguese traveler who visited Malindi around 1500 as saying that he was received in a palace strewn with carpets and rugs and furnished with stools inlaid with ivory and gold. The coastal towns, both Portuguese and earlier Arab visitors noted, had well-planned streets, stone and mortar houses, finely-carved doors and other luxuries of that age. Many of the Arabs wore expensive jewelry on the streets and the harbors were always filled with ships. But it was a material civilization only. As Coupland says:

"In other countries the Arabs not only preserved and passed on to their Christian enemies the legacies of Hellenism; they made their own contribution to the literature, art and science of the world. In the 10th and 11th centuries, the centers of Arab learning at Cordova, Toledo and Seville illuminated the darkness of medieval Europe.

"As late as the 13th century, the academic schools of Baghdad were still superior to those of Oxford and there was more education and enlightenment to be found at Cairo or Tunis or Fez than in any Christian city.

"But in East Africa, no trace of this higher life appears. The Arab travelers say nothing of these things. Fragments of architecture, some fine carving, some bits of pottery have survived, but nothing else---no other works of art nor any writing that deserves the name of literature or science. It is difficult, indeed, to understand how the great age of the Arabs in East Africa could have been so rich in wealth and comfort and yet so poor in culture."**

The great age of these Arabs ended with more than 200 years of Portuguese domination. When the Portuguese were finally expelled from most of East Africa by the Omani Arabs, the golden age was over, but prosperity of a sort nevertheless existed. The Arab still had his land and slaves and the slave trade was to continue till the end of the 19th century.

The Arabs liked to live in stone town houses and direct their plantations from a distance. They were not educated, but they did have strong Islamic cultural traditions. Even if an Arab could not read, he still was well versed in the teachings of the Koran.

In earlier times, the Arab coastal towns existed as weak, independent and quarreling "city-states." When Seyyid Said of Oman established his court at Zanzibar in 1832, the Kenya coast

* "East Africa And Its Invaders," Oxford, 1938.

** Ibid.

came under his suzerainty and he appointed Liwalis or governors to represent him. But a great deal of local autonomy continued and often Seyyid Said's influence amounted to little more than being able to extract customs dues from his dominions.

The Arabs' greatest mark on East Africa was the horrors they inflicted on the inland tribes in connection with the slave trade. But all reports have it that their dealings with their own, personal slaves were almost always far from harsh. While the Koran does not disapprove of slavery, it insists on kindness "to those whom you hold in bondage."

The slaves were usually considered to be inferior members of the Arab family and they often dined at the same table with their master. Frequently the master was only a few shades, if any, lighter than his slaves. Intermarriage and concubinage had been going on at least since the days of the Periplus.

This was the situation that existed at the end of the last century when the British, motivated in large measure by a desire to stamp out the Arab slave trade, stepped in and remade the face of East Africa.

Slavery and the slave trade were wiped out. The British took over the Sultan's dominions in Kenya and the Liwalis became administrative assistants and magistrates to the bright young graduates of Oxford and Cambridge sent out to be District Officers and District Commissioners. The Uganda railway was completed and the vast, primitive interior was opened up. Nairobi, one-time railway camp situated in a swamp, grew to city size in a matter of decades and soon found itself bedeviled with traffic jams. Upcountry African tribes began their rapid advance toward civilization. Fifty years ago, half-naked savages had stared in awe at the strange, always-hurried, always-angry white men and their railroad. Today the sons and grandsons of these savages have become locomotive engineers, office clerks, truck drivers and, in some cases, doctors, lawyers and members of the colony's Legislative Council. The process is by no means over.

But for the Arabs, there has been nothing. The excitement, turmoil and progress elsewhere in Kenya has swirled around them. Slavery, the prop of their whole society, had been kicked out and neither the government nor the Arabs replaced it with something else. There began for the Arabs a period of withering decline.

His slaves free, the Arab either had to work the land himself, hire African laborers or lease it to tenants. For reasons that will be seen, the Arab chose the latter courses. The land, though, was not very good and it provided little more than subsistence for most Arab owners and their wage-earning labor or tenants.

In Malindi today, many Arabs lease their land to Africans of the Giriama tribe. The Giriama are allowed to take all the land they can handle. But with their primitive methods of cultivation, this usually amounts to only two or three acres. The Arab owners get only 10 shillings (\$1.40) a year in rent from such plots. As Arab

holdings rarely total more than 100 acres, total annual rents rarely are significant. Where labor is employed directly, profits are also meager. "If the Arabs would do the work themselves, instead of employing two or three Africans, they would have a much better life," said one educated Arab. But this is the crux of the whole problem.

The Arab does not want to work. For him, as Mohamed Hamed remarked, it is a matter of pride and prestige. His aristocratic pride has been drilled into him since birth. He is the aristocrat; the Africans are the laborers.

It is easy to shrug your shoulders and say, "Well, if he wants to starve, let him." But today's Arab is but the unfortunate heir of a rigid economic and social system dating back many centuries. Western history is one long series of changes to meet new situations; Arab history here is one long situation with no changes---until the British abolished its foundation.

And on a personal level, one cannot help liking the Arabs and consequently feeling sorry for them. Along with their pride goes a measure of politeness, charm and painstaking hospitality that one seldom encounters elsewhere. Almost without exception, they are open-handed, generous and easy-going---quite the opposite of the Arab villain of the American movies or the Egyptian Arab one encounters on the streets of Cairo.

Unfitted for work and faced with only meager incomes after the abolition of slavery, many Arabs here then made a choice that only hastened their decline: they began selling their land bit by bit to Europeans and Indians. With the money so realized, these Arabs went blithely off to enjoy the unproductive and much-desired town life. The process continues. That it can end only in disaster for the Arab community is evident. But the fatalistic and improvident Arab pays but little heed to the future.

This fatalistic attitude, coupled with an almost universal passivism and lethargy, is another factor that mitigates against Arab adjustment to the changed conditions of their environment. Misfortune is always shauri Mungu, "An affair of God." It is never an affair of the Arabs. "The Arabs have never attempted to improve their way of life," one Arab said. "They've remained in the same category. They havn't the ambition to uplift their lot." Then he shrugged and said, "But, they seem to be happy."

Lethargy has been carried to the point where some Arabs lost their lands because they never bothered to put in their claims when the government began surveying the coast. The unclaimed land was taken over by the government as Crown land. No one can get too energetic along the coast, particularly in the hot season, but other immigrant races---European and Indian---nevertheless manage a degree of industry. But not the Arab.

Educated Arabs do not take the shauri Mungu approach, but they are fond of blaming Arab troubles on that great, universal whipping boy in Kenya---the government. "When slavery was abolished," they say, "nothing was done by the government to train us to help ourselves. If the government had taught us to earn a living, if it had educated us, we would not be in this state today." What the government should have done is beside the point in this discussion. It is significant that the idea that God helps those who help themselves is absent even among these Arabs.

The government at any rate is making an effort now to educate the Arab masses. But this has met with no howling success. "The Arabs talk a lot about modern education, but they're still chiefly interested in the Koran and Arabic," a European school official said.

An educated Arab put it another way: "The Arabs are nervous about European culture. They think once a boy receives an education, he goes astray." In isolated Lamu, the old Arab town least touched by western influences, the Arab elders vetoed construction of a cinema on grounds that it would corrupt the morals of the young. So the young, eager for excitement and a look at the world, go off to the slums of Mombasa and Nairobi where they are exposed to more corruption than Hollywood could ever dream up.

With this ambivalent attitude toward education existing, the Arabs have to be coaxed financially to send their children to school. Primary fees in Arab schools outside Mombasa are six shillings (\$0.84) a year---lower than the fees paid, and paid willingly, by education-hungry Africans. Arab fees may be raised in the future, but the fear has been that this would drive many Arab children back home. An estimated 50 per cent of all school-age Arab boys are attending classes now, but this figure is brought up by the high attendance in Mombasa, which is more modern-minded. Attendance elsewhere is low and all along the coast only a few Arab girls are sent to school.

The two facets of Arab character discussed so far---pride and an easy-going attitude toward life---show up strongly in their relations with the Africans.

First, pride---and the man who typifies this is Sheikh Azan bin Rashid, the white-bearded Liwali of Lamu. Sheikh Azan speaks but little English. He is deeply steeped in the culture of the East and he has made three pilgrimages to Mecca in his 50-odd years. He has a remarkable degree of composure and charm and is every bit the Arab gentleman.

"All these ex-slaves are very well mannered," Sheikh Azan said with an ingenuous smile on his stark Semitic features and a gesture with the open palm. "They respect me as they would respect their old masters. But the upcountry Africans don't respect anyone." (Here a frown crossed the tan forehead, as if Sheikh Azan were bothered by a particularly pesty fly.) "They think they are equal to everybody. But they are wrong. They are very wrong." (The frown deepened, then there came another ingenuous smile and Sheikh Azan made

another open-palmed gesture.) "In the Islamic culture, all people of high office and rank should be respected. It is a fact of life that there will always be classes. There will be a higher class and a lower class and respect must be forthcoming by the lower class." (A pause.) "The African is of the lower class."

But there is the other side to the Arab character as well. While he insists that the African is "inferior", he erects no color bars. He has no hesitation about inviting Africans to his home; he has no hesitation about marrying African women; he has no hesitation about worshipping shoulder-to-shoulder with his "inferior" brother-in-Mohamed.

The Arabs here have undergone a considerable degree of "Africanization." Sheikh Azan's views on African "inferiority" were delivered in Kiswahili, which is basically a Bantu language although it does contain many Arabic words. Sheikh Azan does speak Arabic, but a large part of the Arab community here have long since forgotten their original tongue. They speak only Kiswahili. Some educated Arabs use English among themselves these days.

The Africanization of the Arab is most apparent in his skin color---Arabs here range from light tan to black. Under Arab custom, a man is an Arab as long as his father was considered to be an Arab; it makes no difference what his mother was. Thus if Fulani, a pure Arab, marries a pure African girl and if succeeding generations of his male descendants do likewise, Fulani's great-great-grandson will be 15/16ths African. But he still will be considered to be an Arab. Inevitably, some of Fulani's heirs will marry part- or pure-Arab girls, but this will only slow down the process, not halt it.

A good many predominantly-African types, particularly those living at the economic level of the Africans, undoubtedly get lost in the African stream. Yet one always finds black Arabs along the coast. The Arabs---partly from pride, but probably more so from the fact that women are unimportant in their society---see nothing unusual in this.

Arab pride, lethargy and fatalism have been given as reasons retarding Arab adjustment to their new environment. To these must be added another: the lack of cohesion in the community. "In the old days we used to have feuds," said Sheikh Mbarak Ali Hinaway, the Liwali for the Coast, or chief Liwali, at Mombasa. "These days we don't fight any more, but we still don't like each other." The old feuds were so bitter that until the Omani Arabs came to the rescue, the East African Arabs could never cooperate enough to make a concerted effort to throw the Portuguese out.

The feud that raged for generations between Malindi and Mombasa was classic. Whenever Mombasa rose in revolt against its Portuguese garrison, the Arab brothers at Malindi quickly informed the main Portuguese forces, who in turn would come and level Mombasa for its impudence. "The Indians have many sects, but they get together and build magnificent schools," said an educated Arab. "What do we do? We do nothing but quarrel."

What will happen to the Arabs? Will there be a renaissance? Or will they become just another vanished civilization?

The educated Arabs worry about this a great deal. Some think that education will come to the rescue. But others feel that not even education is powerful enough to break through the crust of Arab conservatism and indifference. Few others in Kenya worry about this problem. The Arabs have become a forgotten race.

History will supply the answer to the question---I certainly wouldn't try. For the moment, though, some of the factors that may influence the outcome can be reviewed.

One of the chief factors is the Islamic religion and culture. It plays an important role in shaping the Arab's outlook on life. And it is this outlook that makes it difficult to cope with the times.

Islam teaches the individual to live in harmony with his environment and the converse of this is not to seek any radical changes in it. A Muslim scholar recently wrote in the East African Standard:

"The plants grow true to their seeds; the animals are guided by their instinct. In the whole of this universe, therefore, there is only one discordant element---the human will---which has to be trained into submission to the divine will so that there may be peace and harmony on the earth, and man also may fall in line with the religion of the universe, which is complete surrender to the will of the Creator. This is Islam."

Later on in the same article, the writer said: "The material inequalities of our worldly life will be found to be of no moment in the hereafter... Charity lies within the reach of the poorest."

The coastal Arabs here are deeply religious and most of the ones I have met have impressed me by their tremendous inner peace. There are exceptions, of course, men nervous about European culture and educated men standing half way between two worlds, but most Arabs epitomize all that is meant by self-mastery.

Western ideas of work for its own sake and continual improvement of one's environment leave the Arab cold. For him, contentment, religious devotion, contemplation and the subtle charms of carefully-woven social relationships are important. In an age when Europeans are rushing about, collecting ulcers and headaches and building up frantically for global wars, the Arab attitude can be admired and even envied. But it has its limitations. And these limitations become apparent when a society is threatened with extinction at least partly because of its attitude toward life.

The influence of Islam as opposed to Christianity can be seen among the African converts to these two creeds. African Muhammadans almost always remain cultivators of the soil. The Christians, with much haste and often much heartbreak, become clerks and

professional men.

Little has been borrowed by the Arab masses from the Europeans here. By contrast, when the Europeans established contact with inland African tribes, most of these tribes quickly shed their old ways for a culture they found to be vastly superior. But the Arabs had a strong culture already and they had no desire to abandon it. As Professor Ralph Linton said: "However in the matter of culture transfer the old adage that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink is very much to the point."*

Even "modernized" Arabs are determined to retain the Islamic culture, though they are eager to incorporate western technology and material advantages into their society. But whether God and a foreign Caesar can be served at once, without either suffering, remains to be seen. It would not be easy. The devout Arab, "nervous" about schools and cinemas, is only too well aware of the difficulties that would ensue.**

The Arab situation here from a material point of view is not very promising. Though their holdings are dwindling, they still are a land-owning class on the coast. At least for a while, their future will be linked with the land. There are no prospects of large-scale industrialization in Kenya in the near future. As far as is known, the colony is poor in natural resources and will remain primarily an agricultural country. But neither a continuation of agriculture or industrialization holds out much hope for the Arabs at this time.

Agriculture along the coast is generally backward and in many places it operates on not much more than a subsistence scale. Four factors figure into this: lack of transport, labor, water and capital.

The transport situation will improve. Already the Lamu to Malindi road is being rebuilt to make it an all-weather route. Hitherto, road transport north of the Tana River was cut off eight or nine months of the year because of floods. Marketing of produce and other products from the Lamu area will be easier now and should pep up that languid area.

The labor problem is a more difficult one. Upcountry populations have increased by leaps and bounds, but coastal populations have never followed suit. The land is not particularly good, nor is the climate, and certain diseases like malaria and worms are endemic. Upcountry tribes have never moved into this void. They prefer their cool and fertile, though crowded, highlands.

* "The Processes of Culture Transfer," chapter 9 of "Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes," New York, 1940.

** The Pakistani Muslims have made this adjustment, but, aside from all of the other differences in their background and culture, theirs is a different brand of Islam. Many are Ismaili Muslims or followers of the modern-minded Aga Khan. The orthodox Arabs do not consider them to be Muslims at all.

Water is so scarce along the coast that desert-like bush extends almost to the sea in many places. Irrigation has been tried successfully at the Tana delta, but is limited by the fact that the water-course is unstable. However there is no abundance of rivers along the coast and, equally important, no abundance of government funds. Rainfall, too, is highly erratic and cannot be depended upon. "Where there is water," one District Commissioner said, "you can't stop citrus from growing. Give us water and this would be another California."

Capital is badly needed for irrigation and other development work, but the Arabs haven't got it and the Indians so far have shown no considerable interest in the coast. Some large-scale sisal development---sisal will thrive where nothing else will---is being undertaken near Mombasa by European corporations. But, still, huge expanses of land lay idle and empty, covered with bush and suitable only for lonely elephants. Coastal land is open for sale to anyone with the money, in contrast to upcountry where most of the land is either reserved for Europeans---the white highlands---or Africans---the native reserves.

If, as is likely, more large-scale development by big corporations takes place along the coast, the Arab will not fare too well. As has been seen, he is only too willing to sell his land. Company ownership would replace Arab land ownership along the coast and the Arab would have lost his only asset. Even if he didn't sell, he probably would find it difficult to compete in price with the mass-produced products of huge plantations.

Despite the obstacles, education, with the Arabs prepared to mingle into society at all levels---as professional men, businessmen, planters, artisans and laborers---would seem to offer hope. There are a number of educated Arabs who realize this---men like Sheikh Ali Muhsin Barwani of Zanzibar*, the young intelligensia of Mombasa and older men like Mohamed Hamed and the Liwali for the Coast. But it will be no easy thing for them to lead the other Arabs.

The educated Arabs are handicapped by a problem that hampers constructive African activity as well. The educated young men usually go into government jobs. Too few good positions are available elsewhere in this undeveloped part of the world.

But the local equivalent of the Hatch Act forbids them from engaging in political activity and the definition of political activity is rather all-inclusive. Hence the best possible leaders are voiceless.

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The task of the educated Arabs, and of their British rulers, will be easier in cohesive Zanzibar than on the Kenya coast. Zanzibar has its rich clove industry and it has strong and recent traditions of greatness. Ever since the time when the Portuguese were expelled from this part of Africa, Zanzibar has taken the lead in Arab affairs. But the coast is poor and disorganized. Its only traditions of historical greatness are in the remote past.

Education is one hope, and there are two others as well for the Arabs. One is the fact that the Africans have made such astonishing progress. The spectacle of the once-despised African rising in some fields to posts that no Arab has yet attained has set many Arabs to thinking uneasily about their own future. It has jolted some out of their lethargy and it may jolt others.

The other hope is the infusion of new "blood." The Arabs who are here now are mostly from Oman. Immigration from there has slowed up now and today's Arab immigrants are chiefly from the Hadhramaut. Life there is harsh and difficult and the newcomers are quick and energetic people. They are from the lower classes (the upper classes emigrate to the East) and they are anxious to get ahead. They could be compared to the poor Europeans who poured into the United States through Ellis Island in the last century and helped to build America to what it is now.

In all the Arab schools I visited, I asked the teachers who the brightest pupils were. The teachers would point them out and then I would ask if they were Hadhramauti. With only a few exceptions, they always were.

The Hadhramauti are not burdened with traditions of aristocratic pride. Many have become shopkeepers. Others have even taken on the lowly tasks of peddling coffee on the streets. With education, and the Hadhramauti are availing themselves of it, they would spread out through all levels of society much easier than their aristocratic brethren from Oman. And within religio-cultural limits, they would be more amenable to the adjustments that the Arab community must make if it is to survive.

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We talked about many of these things with Mohamed Hamed over dinner that night. Finally he said, "What's the use?" We returned to the living room for coffee, black and bitter and served in tiny cups.

Dhows, Arab sailing craft of the type that had brought Mohamed Hamed's ancestors to Africa, were riding at anchor in the harbor, waiting for the kaskazi to change to the kusi, the south-south-east monsoon, so that they could go back to Arabia. The dhows had not changed a bit in all the centuries. Neither had the old part of Malindi, where the Liwali's house stands.

Old Malindi was dark and quiet now, and all good people were in bed. But to the north of town, the European resort hotels would just be getting into full swing, with dance bands playing American tunes and black waiters uncorking bottles of champagne.

Mohamed Hamed told us about himself. He had been born into a land-owning family at Mombasa. They have fared better than most Arabs and his income from rents is more than his salary as Liwali. His father was one of the first Arabs in Mombasa to learn English---at a Christian mission. "Everyone told him, 'Don't go to that place. They will only try to take your religion away from you.' But my father said, 'No, education is a good thing. I will learn this English language. My religion is another matter.'"

Mohamed Hamed himself worked as a court interpreter in Mombasa for 20-odd years. Then, six years ago, he was appointed Liwali of Malindi. He dislikes the town. "There is no one to talk with here," he said. He is friendly with only one European couple. He is bitter about the British. Discussing the fact that no Arab will be included in Kenya's new Council of Ministers*, Mohamed Hamed said: "What do they want from the Arabs? If they wanted something from us still, they would give us something. But they have gotten everything from us. When they came here, we were the rulers and we welcomed them. Now they have gotten what they wanted and they have forgotten us."

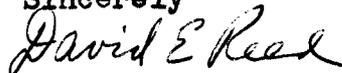
Then he brightened up and said he is resigning as Liwali and is going to London to read law at the Inner Temple. If all goes well, he will sit for a law examination. Otherwise, he will return to his family home at Mombasa to continue his studies by mail.

"It has been my ambition for 20 years to study law," he said. "Now I am going to do it at last." His wife will accompany him to England, leaving the children with relatives. "Is it very cold there?" Mohamed Hamed asked us. "How much woolen clothing must I buy?" Mohamed Hamed seemed almost cheery. "There are no Arab lawyers here now," he said. "I would be the first one. I probably would have a very good practice."

It was very late when we said goodbye to the Liwali. We asked him to have coffee with us at the European hotel before we left for Mombasa in the morning. He said, "No, thank you very much, but no. Whenever you come to Malindi, you come to my house. I do not want to go to that hotel." He said he wished we were staying longer. "It is not often that I find people to talk with." We wished him luck with his law studies. We said he probably would be very successful as Mombasa's first Arab lawyer.

"Oh, I don't think so," the Liwali said with a shrug. "We are not a litigious people. Even if an Arab does have a case, he wouldn't come to me. We don't stick together. He'd go to an Indian."

Sincerely



David E. Reed

* To be reported in a later newsletter.