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ISBN 1-875047-01-8



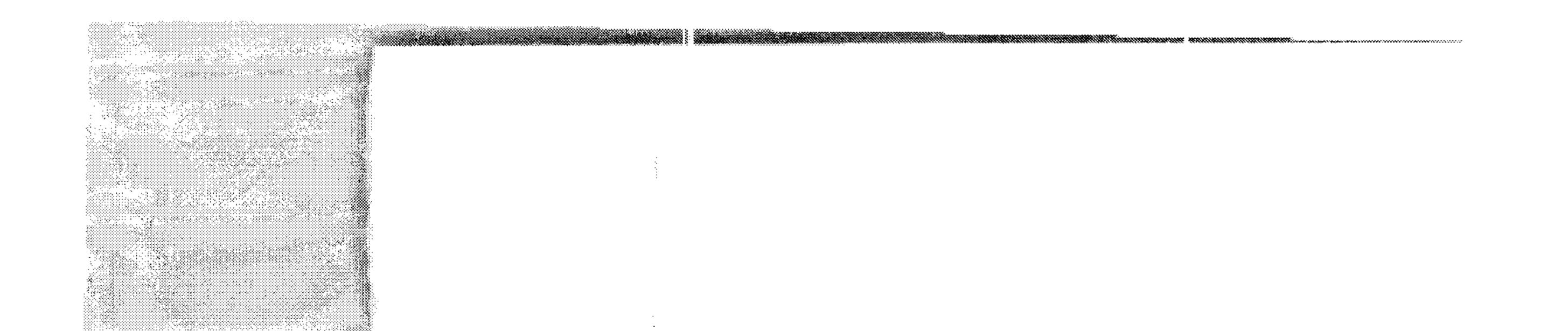
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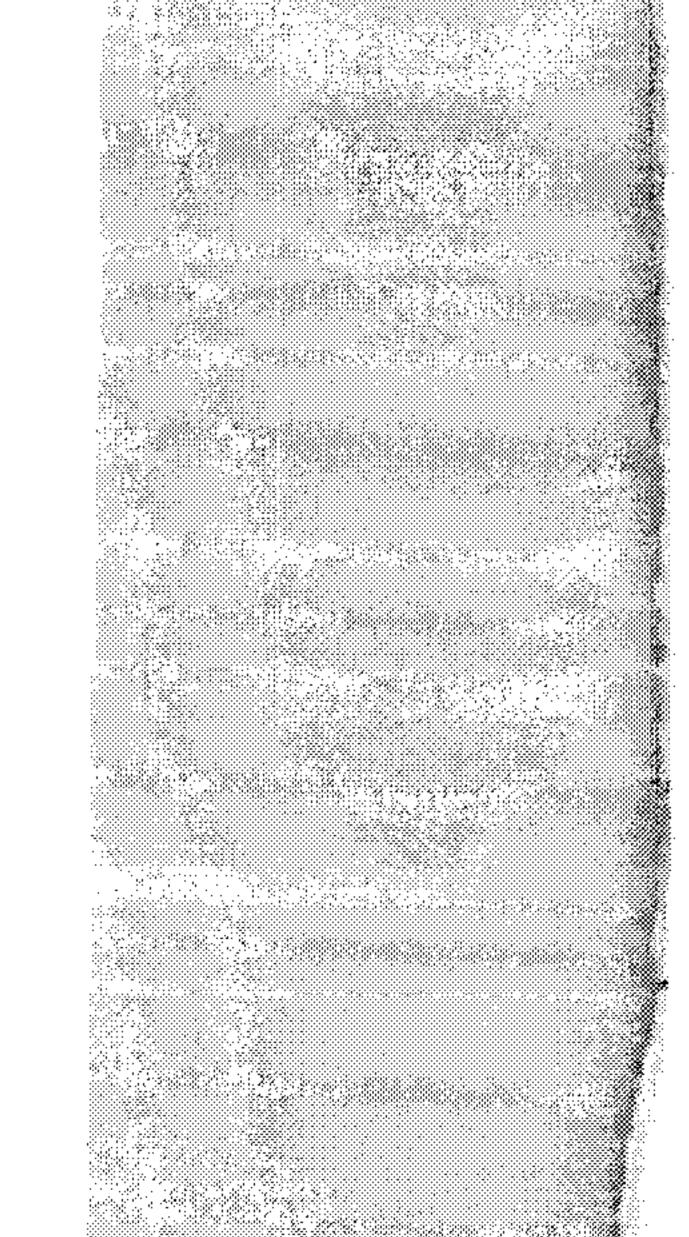
Silk Road International Publishers & Distributors P.O. Box 2281, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa Tel. (021) 24 3650 • Fax. (021) 24-5842

Cover Design by Yunis Casker.

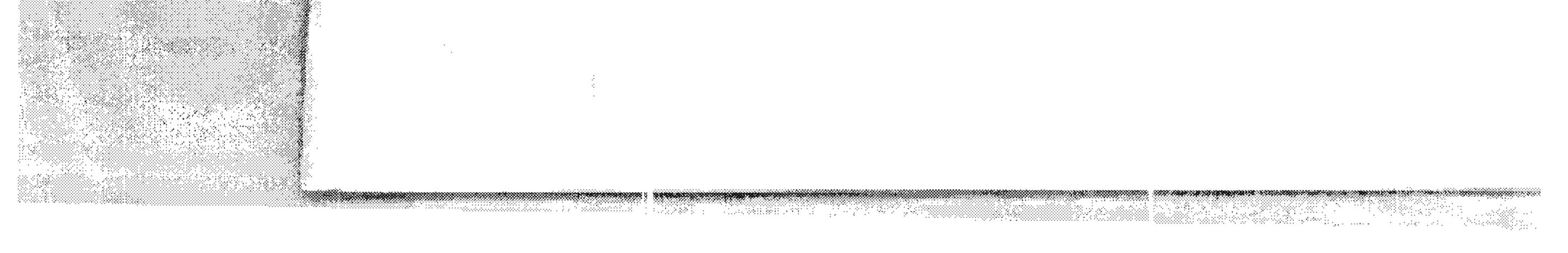


REMEMBRANCE OF A MARTYR -

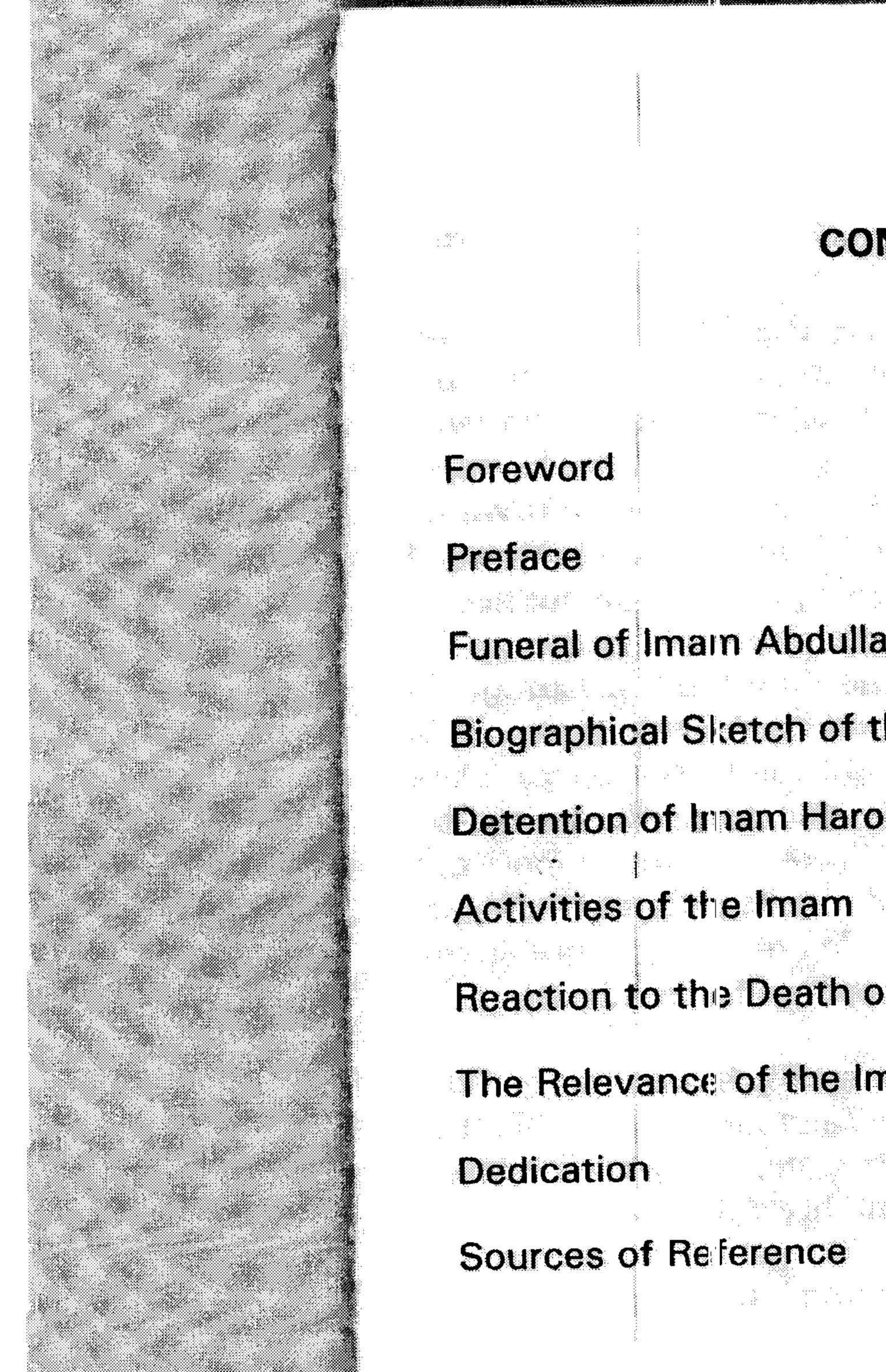
IMAM ABDULLA HARON



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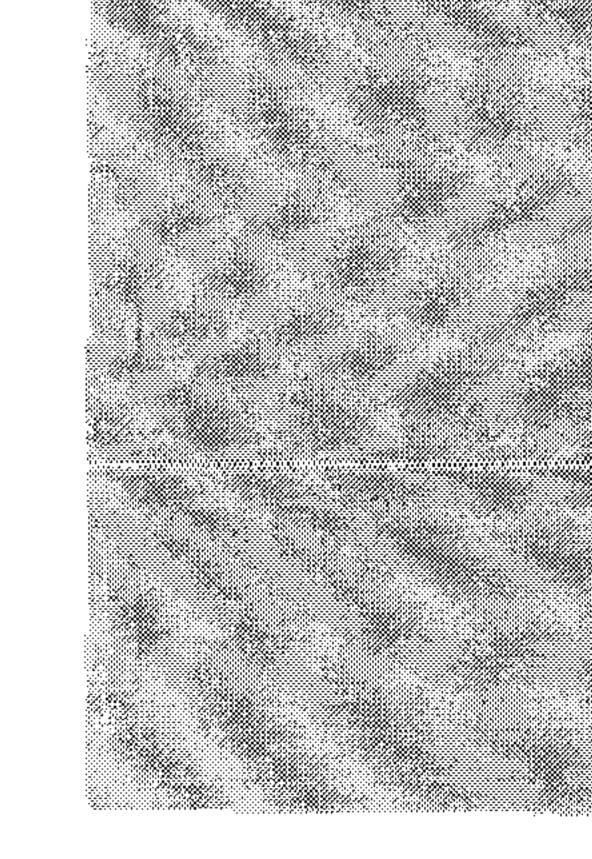
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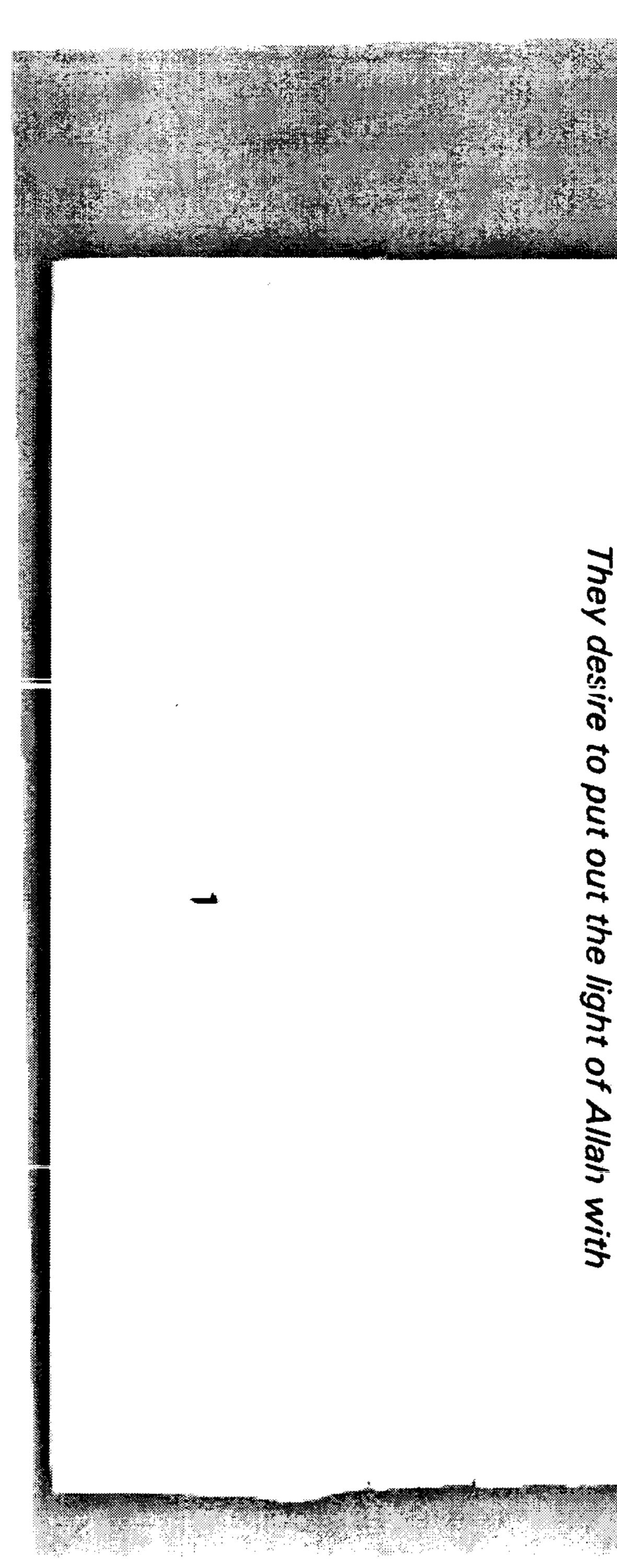
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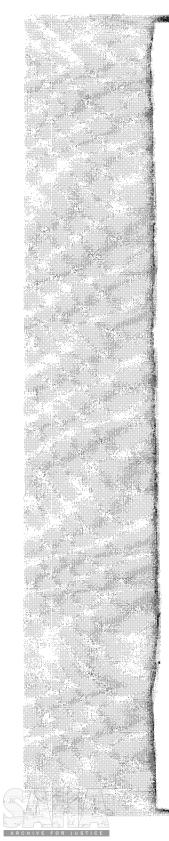


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ight but instead made it but is satanic forces have provent the promise of the pr anic forces prevalent e it burn more stead proved anything, t nise of Almighty All at the time failed Almighty Ð Y? 9 -+ ne 0

FOREWORD



their mouths, but Allah will perfect his light, though the disbelievers may be averse. (Qur'an 61:8)

His mind was cullmated with truth and therefore his actions were truthful. He had an enriched mind and enriched other minds. Imam Haron was a seeker of truth, a disseminator of truth, an example and an agent for social change in the community.

The youth were looking for a role model: an Islamic challenge. It was at this stage that Imam raised his head. He lit two candles: one illuminated our rich Islamic Culture and Heritage and the other lit the path leading to the future.

Let us keep his memory alive by not bowing to the onslaught of the Western media on Islam. Let us not be used as puppets or pawns.

Let us tell our children about Imam Abdullah Haron and how he sacrificed his life so that we can today be proud of our Identity, Mentality and Personality as Muslims.

Imam Ebrahim "Sep" Davids Kromboom Road Mosque, Rondebosch East September 1994

Preface

PREFACE

The introduction of Islam to South Africa coincides with the arrival of Muslim slaves at the Cape of Good Hope in 1653. A strengthening of the Muslim community of the Cape, was caused by the arrival of a number of exiles in particular political leaders. Amongst them was Shaikh Yusuf who is regarded as the most influential Muslim leader of all times.

Muslims in South Africa make up just over 2.5% of the total population of 40 million. This justifies the Muslims as a minority group, but as a minority group, they are indeed a force to be reckoned with in the political, social and economic developments in this country. Muslims managed to establish themselves as traders, professionals, businessmen, artists and craftsman during the building up era. Today they are playing an important and an integral part in all the spheres of society.

Imam Abdullah Haron was a religious leader of the Muslim minority. Imam Haron's life and role is very important because it symbolizes the Muslim struggle within the South African context. The Imam was an ordinary man who was concerned with the plight of the oppressed, the needy and the poor people. He stood firmly in his belief against the unjust regime of South





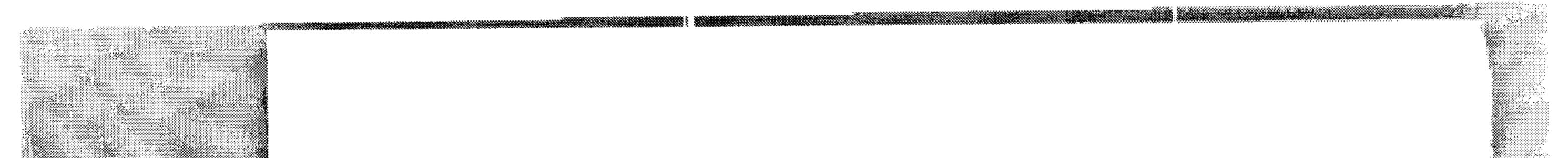
Africa and he lost his life in this process.

The death of the Imam marked a turning point in the sociopolitical history of the Muslim community. This led to many organisations emerging, to voice their opposition to the regime of that time. His cleath, which can be called a sacrifice, made him into a Muslim martyr in the liberation struggle according to Muslim activists. The Imam was not a revolutionary. His martyrdom came about because of the sacrifices he made and because of his great concern with spiritual matters.

The CDA researchers are very much indebted to Muhammed Haron and Rashid Omar who kindly made their research material available for this special publication. To Imarn "Sep" Davids who wrote the foreword also a special word of gratitude. We also want to thank everyone who contributed, in whatever way, to making this publication possible.

This publication is an attempt to give a perspective on the life of Imam Abdullah Haron. The information used was gathered from various research material and sources. It is hoped that the book will inspire Muslin's and non-Muslims, to look into the history of the Imam who stood as a symbol of liberation and to relate what he stood for, in the present situation in South Africa.

> CDA, Cape Town September 1994



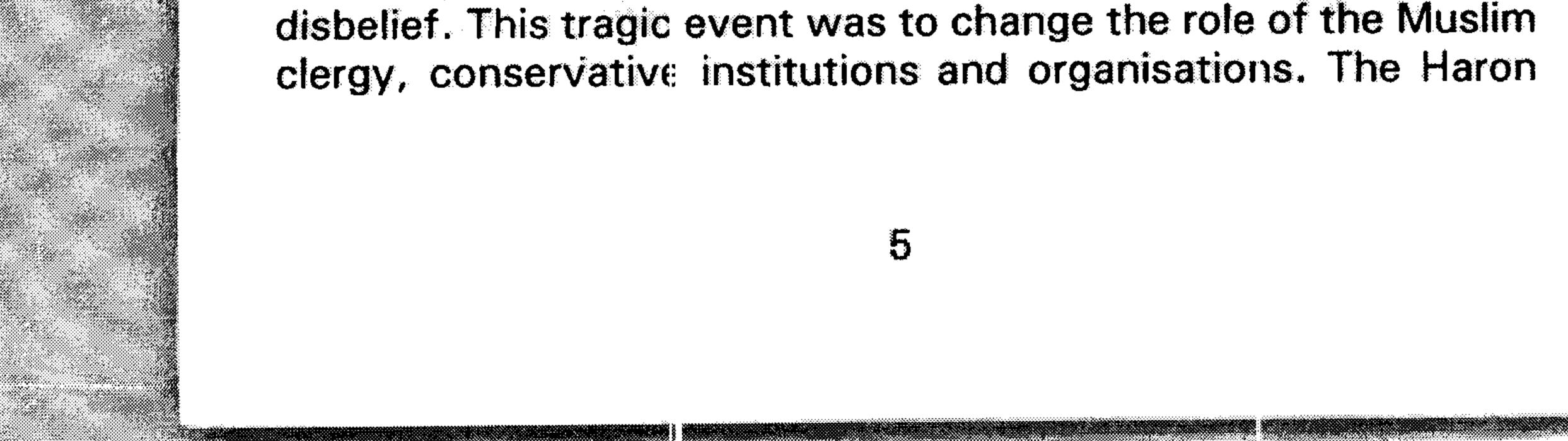
Funeral of Imam Abdulla Haron

FUNERAL OF IMAM ABDULLAH HARON

"The earth in which the Imam is buried would not be satisfied with what the unjust regime had done to the Imam" one of the thousands of mourners recited this verse in Urdu at the graveside of martyr Imam Abdullah Haron on September 29, 1969, two days after the Imam's death in detention.

Little did the thousar ds of mourners realise that the earth would indeed respond to the brutal killing of the Imam. On that very same evening, an earth tremor shook the Western Cape. The earth tremors occurred again three days after the Imam's burial and on the seventh day, fortieth day and hundredth day. These days are significant for Muslims who practise intense Qur'anic recital after someone's death. On the Imam's 20th Commemoration, September 27, 1991, a mild earth tremor shook Cape Town again.

On the evening of Saturday, September 27, 1969, two security policemen broke the news of the Imam's death to his wife, Mrs Galiema Haron at their Athlone home. The news of the Imam's death spread rapidly with a mixed reaction of horror and





family requested a post mortem to establish the true cause of his death. They succeeded in getting the state to allow a private pathologist at the post mortem examination which took place on Sunday, September 28. On Sunday, thousands of mourners crowded outside the Imam's house and students and mourners recited from the Holy Qur'an throughout the night. A very close friend of the Imam after seeing the body, said: "He had a very pleasant face ... but this was really a face of agony. It was pathetic to look at him. It broke a person. The agony in his cheeks and in his body - the red flecks and broken ribs. They really gave him hell."

On Monday, the day of the funeral, the Imam's house was filled with mourners, mainly relatives and friends while thousands of people (Muslims and non-Muslims) made their way to pay homage to a martyr. Members of the Juclicial Council were requested to leave the room in which the Imam's body was being washed according to Islamic rites. This was an angry reaction from the Imam's close friends and congregations to the Muslim Juducial Council (MJC) who had disassociated themselves from the Imam during his detention. As poet, Mr James Matthews, who also worked with the Imam at the MUSLIM NEWS newspaper, said, "As a person who was close to the Imam, I was very upset and disgusted by some of the members of the MJC who had shunned the Imam while he was in detention, and yet crowded the platform upon which the Imam's bier was on the day of the funeral."

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At 1pm shops and businesses in the Athlone area closed as a mark of respect to the to the funeral. After one of the Imam's young pupils gave a heart-rendering and sobbing call of the Azaan, the Imam's bier was taken to the City Park Rugby Stadium in Belgravia as the numbers of mourners continued to swell to more than 7 000 and the crowd could not be accommodated inside the St Athans Road Mosque or the Habibiyah Mosque. The janazah salaah (prayer for the dead) was led by Imam Salem Davids, one of the Imam's students who later succeeded the Imam at Al Jami'a Mosque. Many speakers followed after the janazah-tul salaah which included a speech by Victor Wessels of the Teachers League of South Africa and Shabir Seria of the Muslim Assembly. In his speech, Wessels said, "Imam Haron's mission was the mission of the people. He died not only for the Muslims. He died for his cause - the cause of the oppressed people - and for that he will be remembered."

The funeral service lasted for two hours after which an emotional crowd of mourners walked to the Mowbray cemetry about five miles away to bury the Imam. The mourners, displaying the Oneness in Allah and equality, linked arms, walked shoulder to shoulder and chanted all the way to the cemetry, *"There is no God except Allah, and Prophet Muhammad is his last messenger."* There were also cries of *"Shahid! Shahid!"* (Martyr! Martyr!). The mourners, who had now numbered to 30,000, armed with their grief and intense anger, were

emotionally charged and it was feared that any provocation would have sparked off a riot. People of all political and social



persuasions followed the funeral procession which took about three hours to reach the cemetry. This was during peak traffic time and the procession brought traffic to a standstill along the Victoria Main Road in Woodstock.

James Matthews from the then, *Muslim News* (October 3, 1969), reported about the funeral of Imam Haron as follows:

"The young boy breaking into sobs as he performed Athaan prayers epitomized the sorrow of all those who attended the funeral of Al-Haj Imaam Abdullah Haron who died in prison while being detained under the Terrorism Act."

"The large crowd made it impossible for a service to be held in the nearest Mosque and the bier was taken to a sports ground opposite the house where prayers were performed. The stand was packed with women. Hundreds stood six-foot deep around the fence bordering the field. Mid-field, in front of the stand, the bier was placed on the turf. Standing in the serried rows, shoes removed from their feet the male mourners performed prayers. Eulogies were read and relayed to the crowd over the loudspeaker system."

"The dead man would most probably not have approved of a homage paid to him. Imam Abdullah Haron was a SIMPLE MAN, a man very much of the people. Although he was at ease with all sections of the community; white, black and brown, his sympathies were always with the under-privileged. IMAM HARON WAS A HUMBLE MAN, FREE OF THOUGHTS OF SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT, BUT HE WAS ACCORDED A ROYAL FUNERAL."

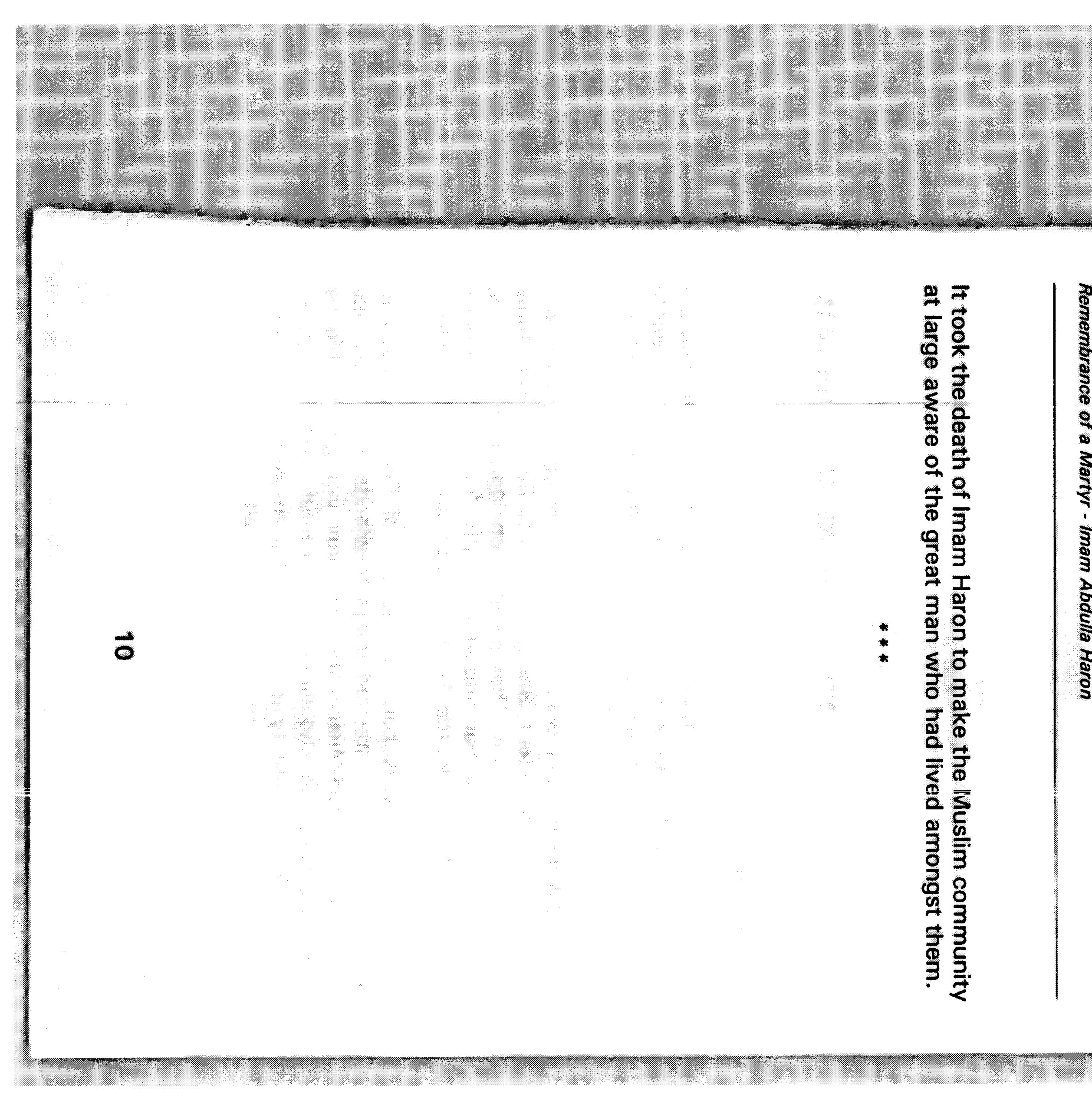
read. The Haron family received several letters, telegrams and messages of support and sympathy from local and international organisations. For days after the funeral, janazah salaah were performed in other parts of the country, in Mecca, Pakistan and London.

cemetry, more speeches were delivered of the Black Sash and Shaikh Nazeem Mo esident of the MJC. The anti-apartheid spee funeral service and graveside, were fee t the racist regime built up over a long pe cent community. The then Labour Party le cent community. The then Labour Party le is remarked after the funeral, "...more that sion. It was a political demonstration." on. delivere azeem N Ð ust. 9 σ **Nrs D** \mathbf{O} Û 0 eral ည C ed Ce lie O **e**r $\overline{\mathbf{o}}$

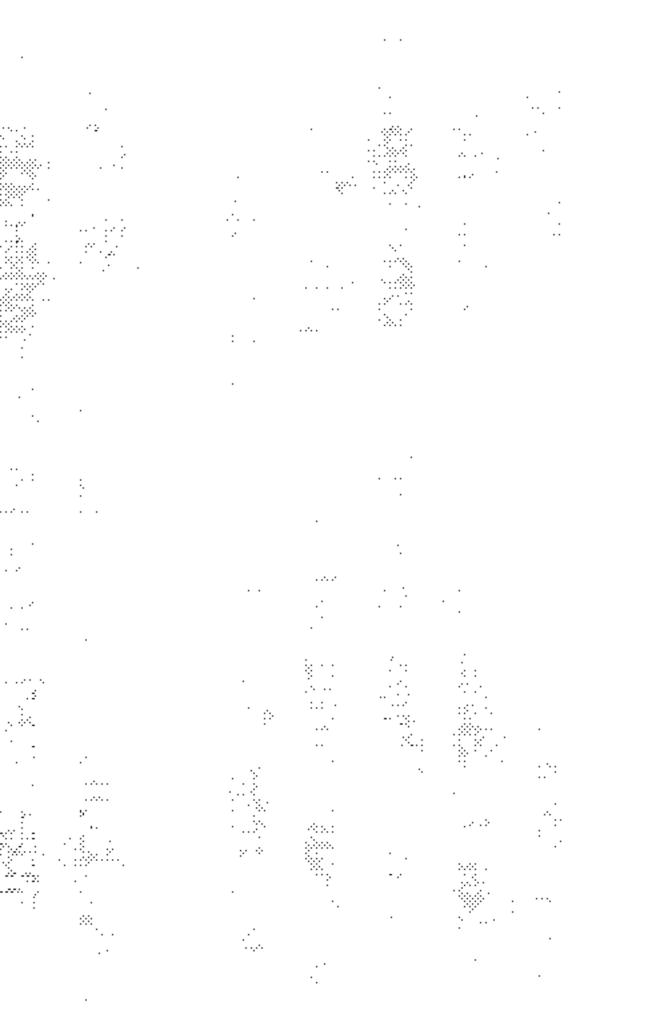
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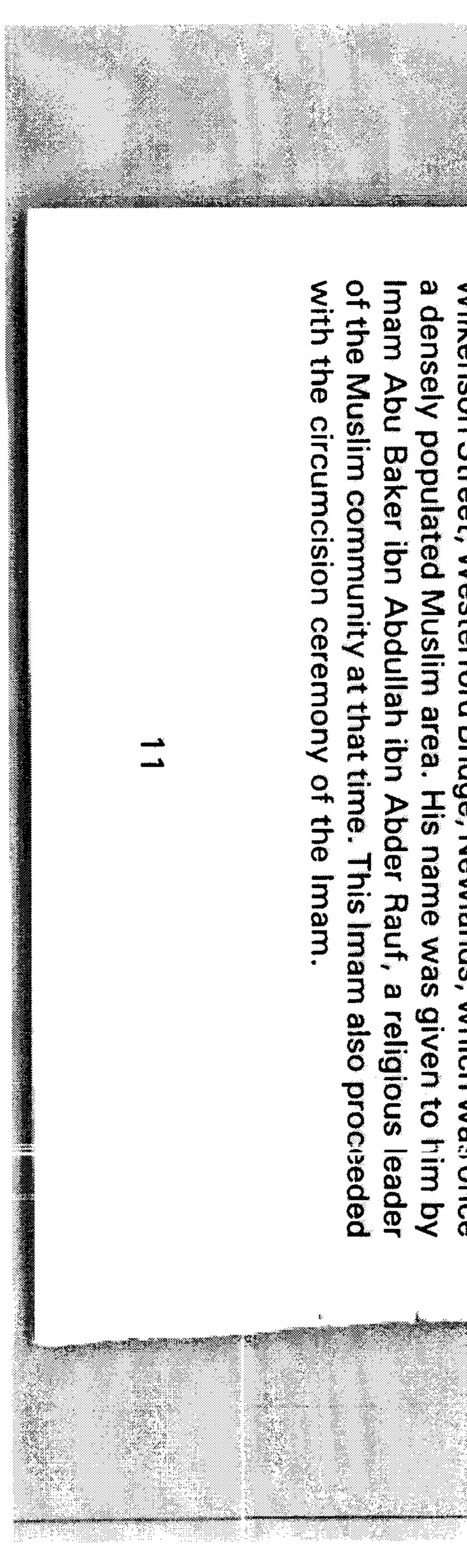


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Abdulla Haron



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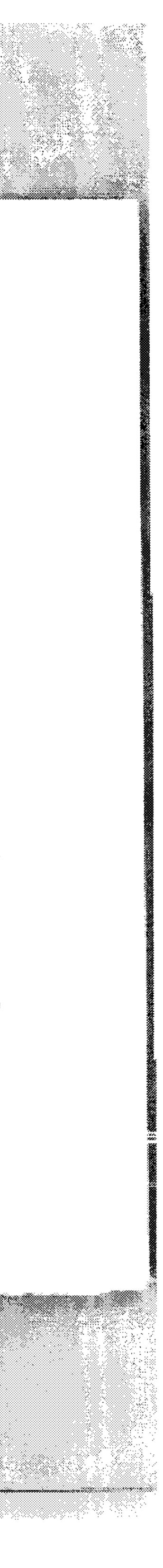
ildren was Amrien who married Asa Martin decent. She gave birth to five children, th o sons. They are in chronological order Am Vaybah and Abdullah (the Imam). His fath to Asmar Abder Rauf, produced eight child Φ ee D 0 Q S .

as born on the 8th of February 19 /esterford Bridge, Newlands, which was Muslim area. His name was given to h Abdullah ibn Abder Rauf, a religious | unity at that time. This lmann ceremony of the Imam. ler Rauf, a religious This Imam also proc `**⊆** Φ 0 ded der Ce <u>v</u> 5

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Biographical Sketch of the





Abdullah Haron's mother died when he was very small and because the Imam's father and his children could not look after him, he was adopted by his father's sister Maryam. Auntie Maryam had a great influence in his Islamic outlook and cared for him until his marriage in 1950. Maryam nurtured the Imam's basic Islamic religious education, which played a major role in his life later on.

Education

The Imam accompanied Maryam to Mecca in 1931 when he was seven years of age. Upon his return almost a year later, he attended the Talfalah Muslim Primary school. This school, presently known as Sherwood Park Primary, was a Muslim Missionary school run by Muslim and non-Muslim teachers. The Imam attended the school until he reached standard four in 1937.

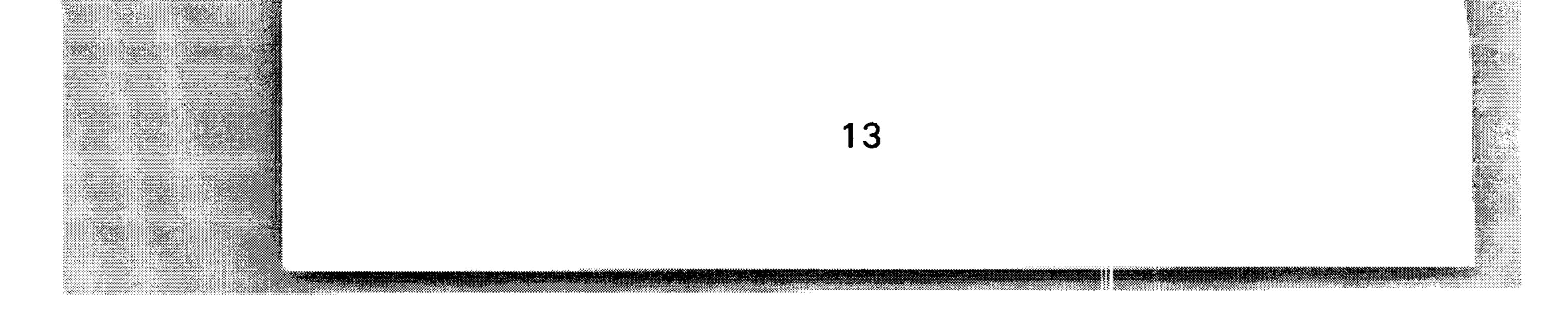
He was considered a bright student at school with above average performance. Before he completed standard four he left school, but no satisfactory reason could be established for his sudden departure. This did not mean the termination of his studies. In the beginning of 1939 he went on his second trip to Mecca. He went there especially to pursue his Islamic studies under the guidance by a well known Muslim scholar Shaikh Abdurahman Alawi. There he spent a period of two years in which he gained and strengthened his knowledge of Arabic.



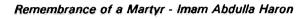
Upon his return, he undertook voluntary fasts every Monday and Thursday, a highly recommended practise by Prophet Muhammad, with the objective to attain Allah-consciousness. By the age of sixteen, Abdullah Haron was prepared to make material sacrifices and abstain from the basic human needs like food and drink. This helped him tremendously in his spiritual growth. The Imam continued to carry out his intentions until he passed away.

He carried on with his studies in Cape Town under the guidance of Shaikh Ismail Ganief and Shaikh Abdullah Gamieldien. Both these teachers gave him in-depth knowledge into the Islamic-Science. He wanted to share his aquired knowledge with others and decided to embark on giving Islamic Study classes. He followed this teaching career for the rest of his life.

The Imam was also a sportsman who participated in rugby and cricket in his community, which were their main sporting activities. In 1957 he played in the finals for the Muslims Cricket Club against the Roslyns Cricket Club which was Cape Town based. It is said that his keen interest in sporting activities, brought him closer to the community in general and taught him much about the their mentality and behaviour. He saw sport as a sort of entertainment and most importantly it created a harmonious relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, which was one of the major problems the oppressed communities faced amongst themselves at that time.







Marriage

The Imam's foster-mother wanted him to marry a girl she thought was best suited for him. Although he was not keen on the idea, he was eventually forced to become engaged to the girl who was a friend of the families daughter, Gawa Solomons. This engagement only lasted from 1947-1948. His foster-mother was very disappointed when he told her he intended breaking the engagement. That eventually caused him to move to Johannesburg where he stayed with a friend, Imam "Piesang" (Banana), for a few months. His foster-mother emigrated to Mecca where she died in 1969.

From his school days, the Imam knew and was interested in a woman Galiema Sadan. The Imam decided to conclude the marriage to Galiema in March 1950, which took place at home in Hansbury Avenue, Landsdowne. In December 1950 he fathered a daughter who was named Shamiela. At their new home on the corner of Jefferson and Laurier Roads, he fathered a son, Muhammad in October 1955 and another daughter Fatima in September 1963.

The year that his son was born, coincided with the time that he was officially appointed Imam at AI Jami'a Mosque, Stegman Road, Cleremont. Before that, he was called "Hadjie" by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. A title given to him because he used to fulfill the necessary rites of pilgrimage. At that time he was considered as the youngest "Hadjie" in the Muslim community.

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Biographical Sketch of the Imam

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Community Involvement

The Imam's activities were numerous and varied. After he became Imam, he started editing the *Islamic Mirror*, a Muslim magazine, as well as the *Muslim News*. He also managed his father's business, became a part-time travel agent, Da'wah worker (propagationist for Islam) and a sales representative.

Some of his activities during the period 1955-1956 involved the following. He started retyping and cyclostyled books and relevant articles in English, when he became aware that various aspects of Islam were not readily available. This caused Islamic ideas amongst students to become widespread.

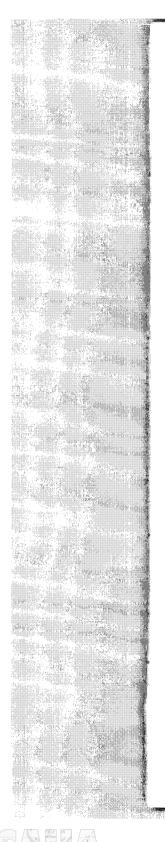
He also introduced a five minute lecture after the Tarawih Salah (rest prayer). These lectures dealt with the sections of the Qu'ran read on that particular night, or covered a theme related to one of the verses that were read.

Another activity of his was the giving in kind of assistance to the poor and the needy. Parcels were made up, filled with essential groceries and given. This is referred to as zakatul fitra (obligatory donations). During this time period, the Imam carried on with his ideas of uplifting and assisting the community. He was continuously criticized for the new ideas, but he continued unaffected and undeterred.

During 1958 the Imam started teaching the ladies of the

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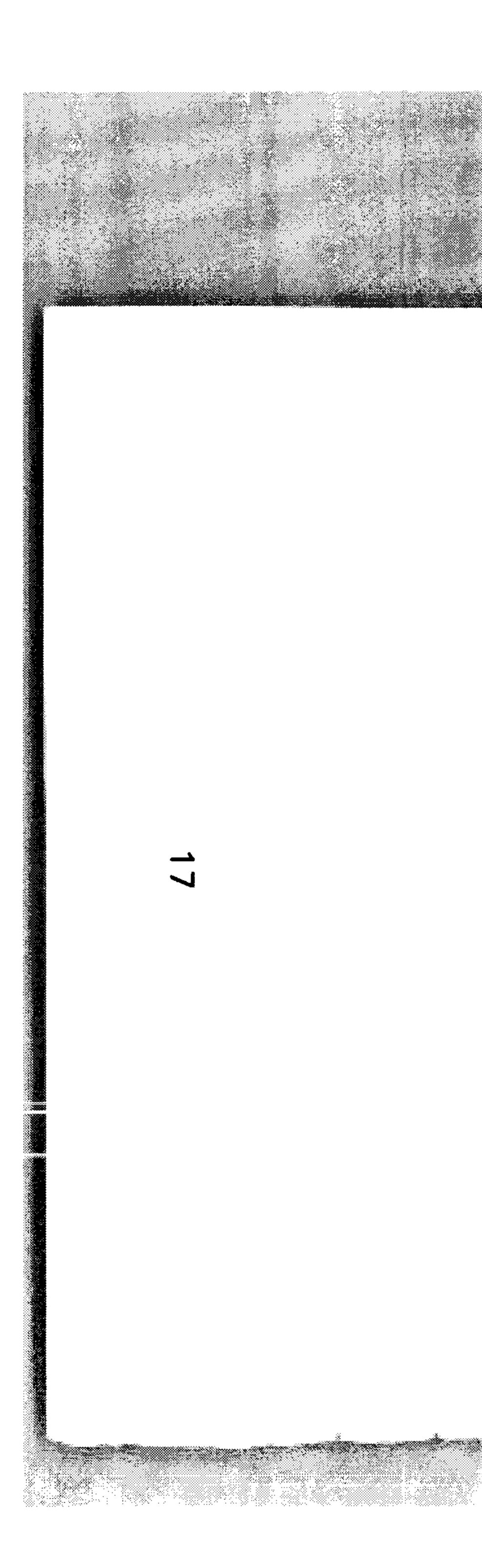




community every Wednesday night. This was of course unheard of or even an unwelcome practice. He received a lot of criticism for his new "venture". The general attitude of the Imams or Shaikhs was not to let women grow intellectually and to participate more fully in the growth of the society. The Imam continued with these classes until his death.

Imam Haron introduced a long-forgotten principle to the Muslim community: The Imam is accountable to the people. This principle of the Qur'an as followed by Imam Haron, set him apart from the MJC. Imam Haron believed that interaction with the community was of great importance and contributed to its development. This meant that the teachings of Allah's was not restricted to Mosques alone, but that the Earth is Allah's mosaue. He believed that the streets were as much a place to learn and to teach as was the mosque. Many Muslims saw him as the Imam. He was expected to do what most Imams did: lead the prayers and deliver sermons, officiate at weddings and bury the dead. But, an Imam was not expected to involve himself in politics, it was not part of his job. Imam Abdullah Haron did just that. He spoke out against the social injustices that prevailed at that time. When Imam Haron entered the political arena, he pioneered the revival of the early Muslims in South Africa's resistance against colonialism an imperialism.

The Imam became involved in the black communities when he was puzzled why black people did not embrace Islam on a larger scale. He wanted to help the blacks in their suffering and knew

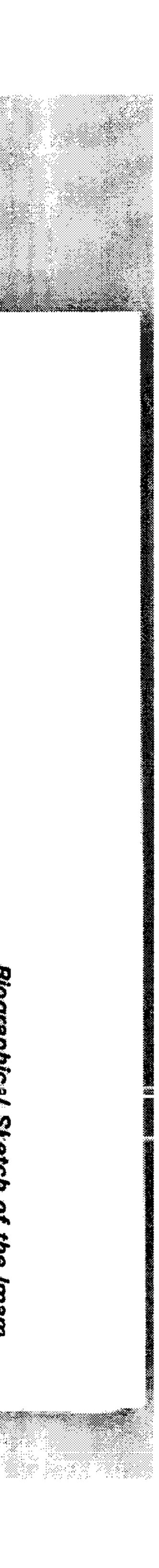


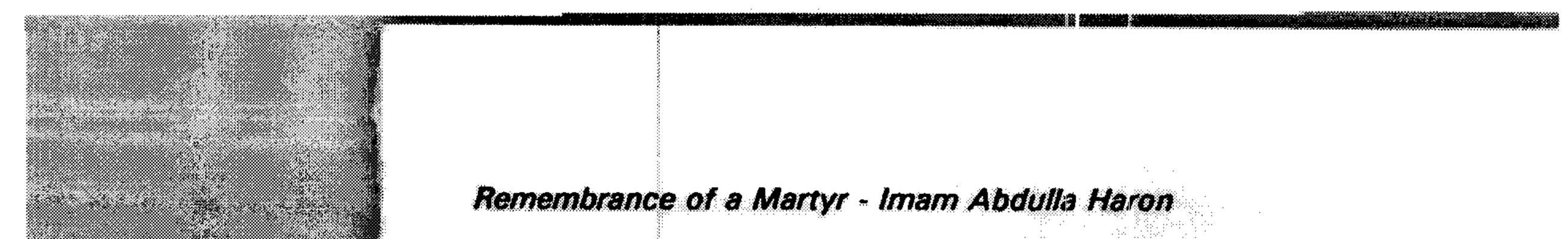
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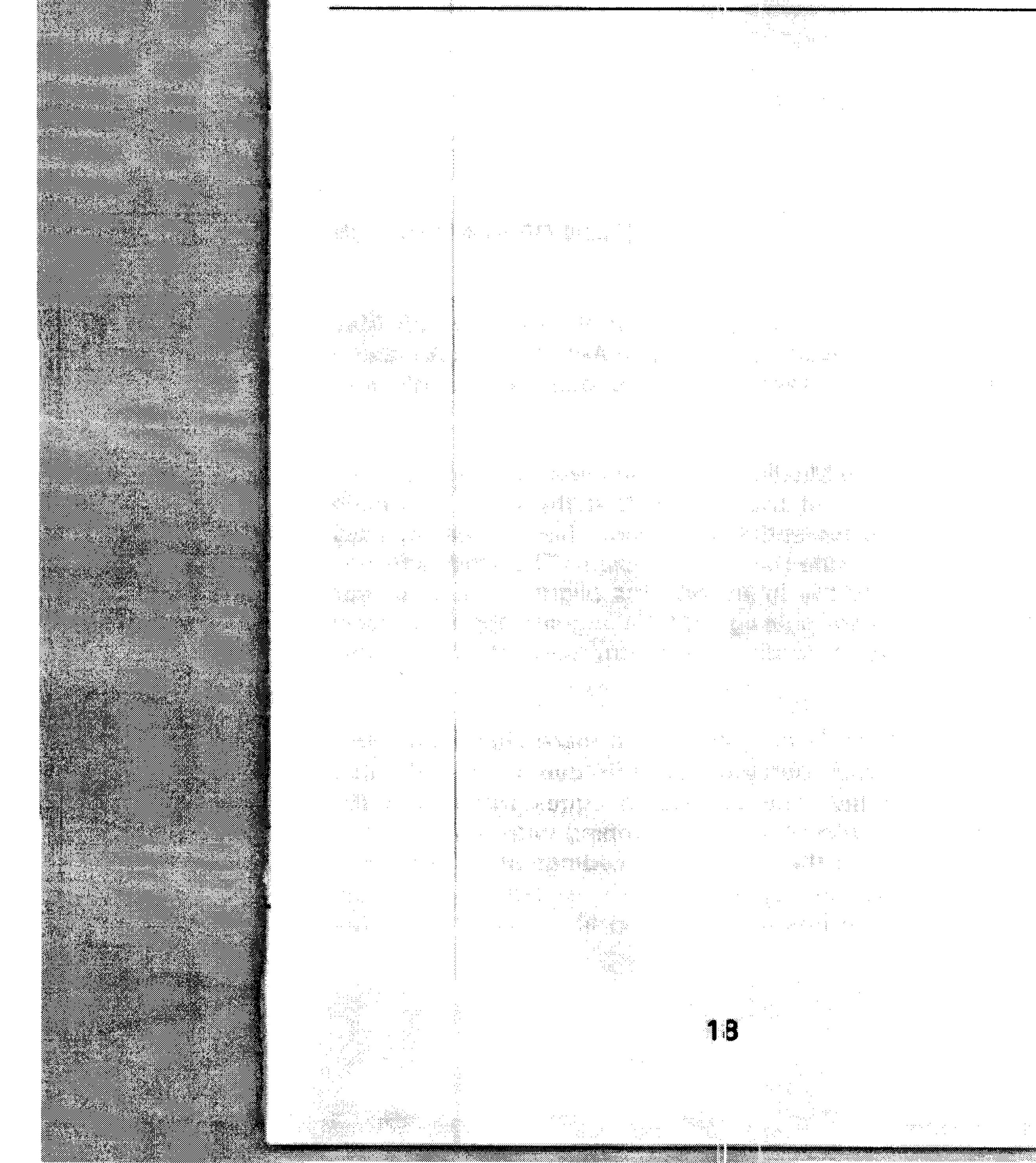
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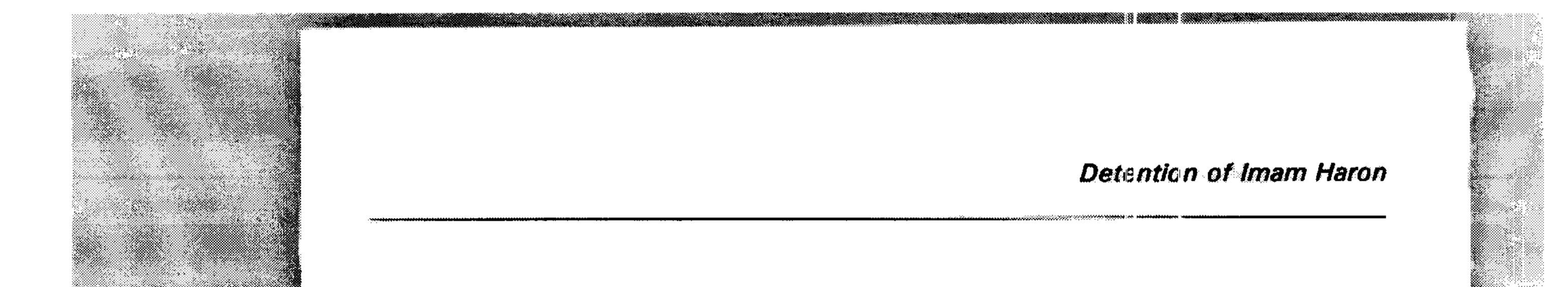
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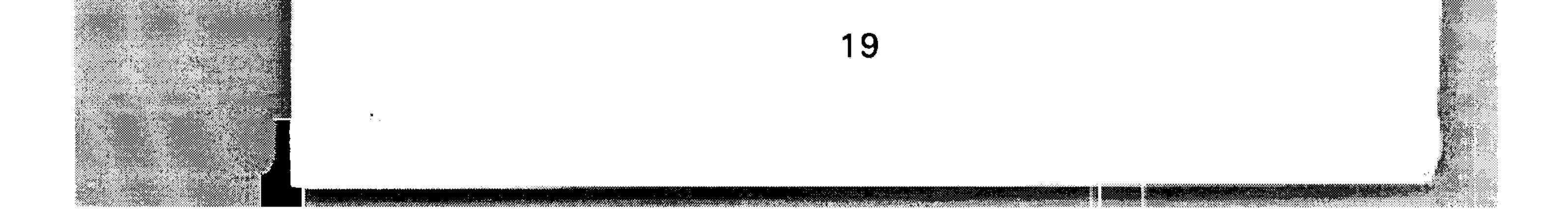


DETENTION OF IMAM HARON

Imam Abdullah Haron was detained on Wednesday, 28 May 1969, under Section Six of the Terrorism Act of 1967. A general police swoop on that same day took over 40 people into custody.

The response from the Muslim community was two-sided. There were those who were of the opinion that the Imam had been detained because of his activities outside those of Islam. They viewed politics as outside the realm of Islam. The other side was sympathetic towards the Imam and his plight because it was viewed as a political struggle against the ongoing oppression and injustice. This was according to them, part of the Islamic consciousness.

What makes the Imam's detention even more significant, was the fact that he was detained on the eve of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. The various mosques throughout the Western Cape were filled that same evening with Muslims. The Imam was to have led the night's proceedings at the Stegman Road mosque. The deputy Imam was forced to make an announcement of the Imam's detention after enquiries of the

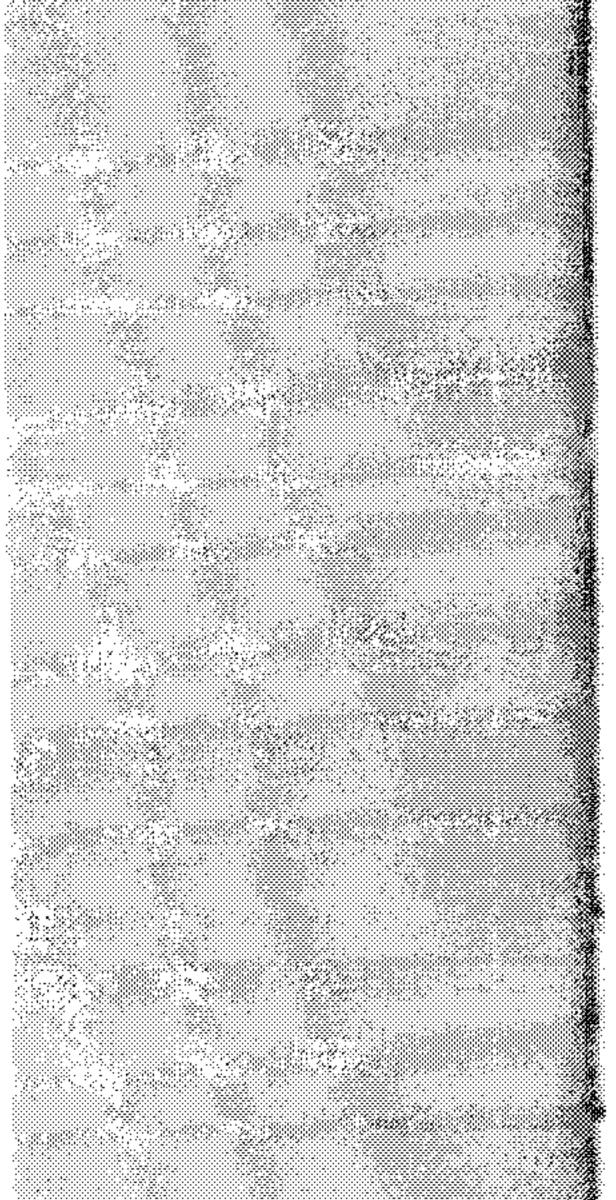






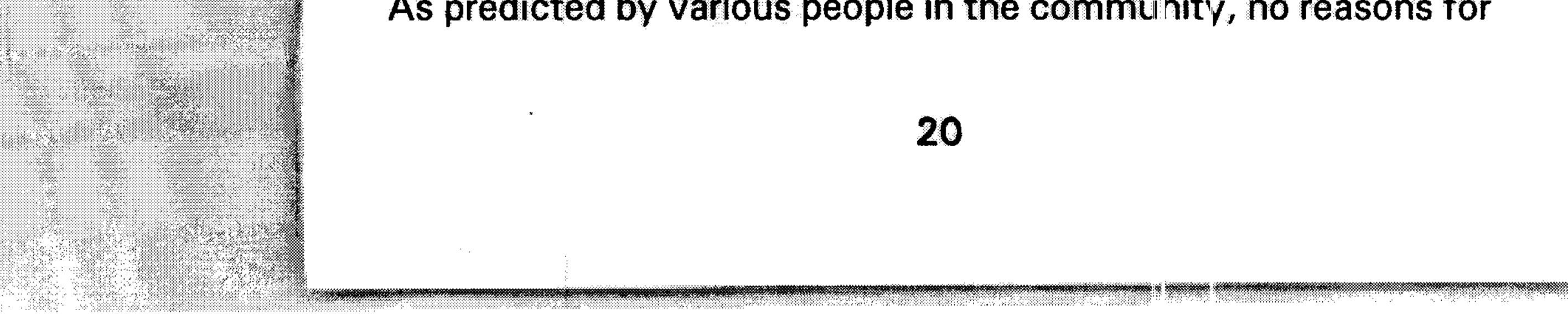
Imam's whereabouts. This caused an outcry which led the more than 1000 members of the congregation to immediately started contacting Sheikhs and Imams all over the country and other Muslim bodies in Cape Town, in support of their protest against the Imam's detention.

It need to be noted that throughout the period of the Imam's detention, no protest letter was published from a Muslim religious leader or any other Muslim. There might be a number of reasons for this besides political complacency which certainly accounts for this channel of protest not being utilised to its full potential by the Muslims.

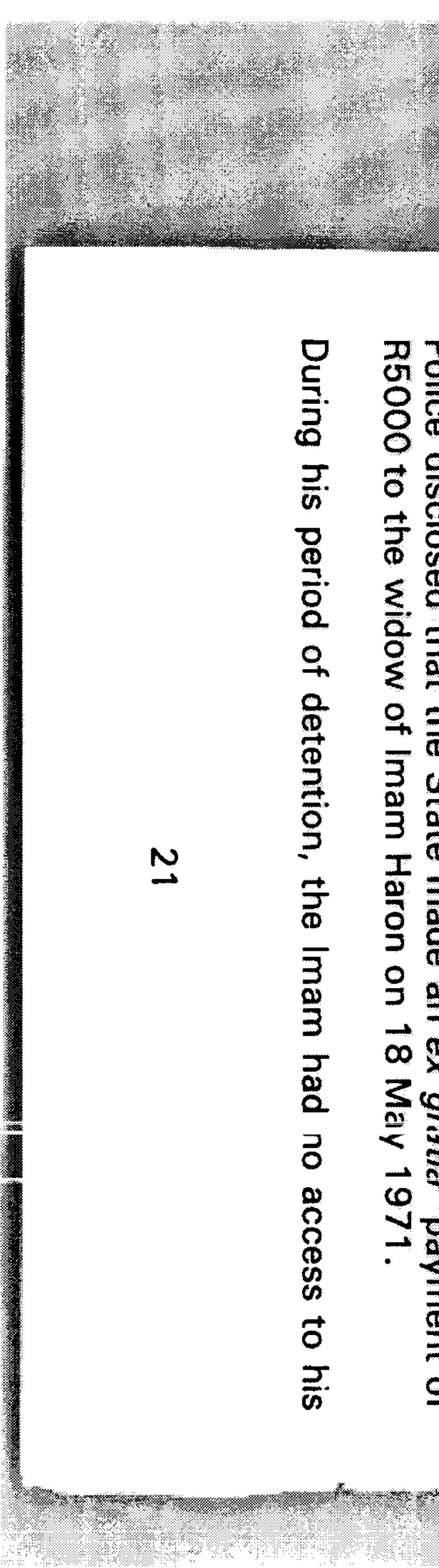


An article which appeared in the June 6th issue of the Muslim News read as follows:

"Imam Abdullah Haron, editor of "Muslim News", had been taken into custody by the authorities and detained under the 180 Days Law; the reason for his detention is not known to "Muslim News". But it is safe to assume that Imam Haron is not being detained for his religious views and that he is not being detained for spreading the doctrine of Islam. If Imam Haron is being held because of his political views, then there is nothing "Muslim News" can do about the situation, as Imam Haron's position as editor was to express the religious aspects of the community. "Muslim News" would not hesitate for one moment to register the protest of all Muslims if our Deen (religious) were imperilled."







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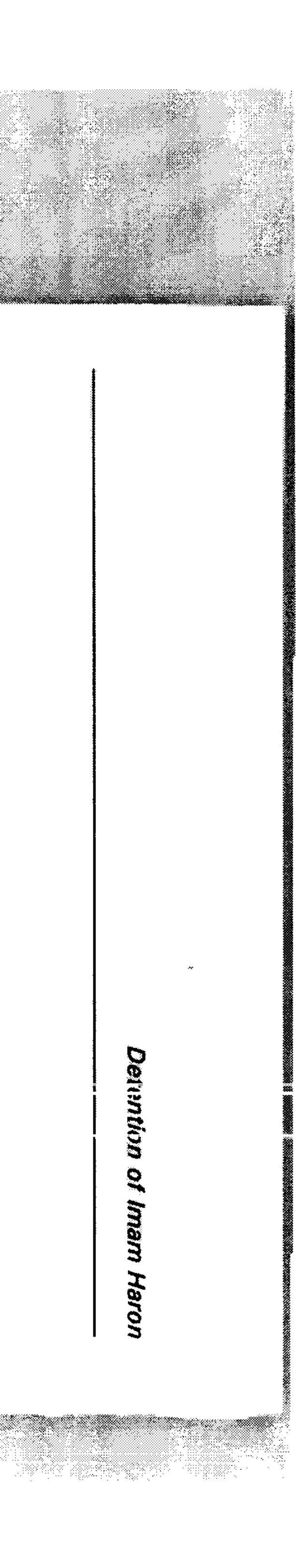
reported in the Cape Times of 6 April 197 widow of Imam Haron, claimed dan 25 from the Minister of Justice and the 25 hat she and her children lost the support Is that she and her children lost the support m was later dropped by Mrs sclosed that the State mad o the widow of Imam Haror made Haron. a D ex No. 3 at G , ******* 0 ent <u>a</u>: С† С Ð ling e ene of <u>o</u>f ы

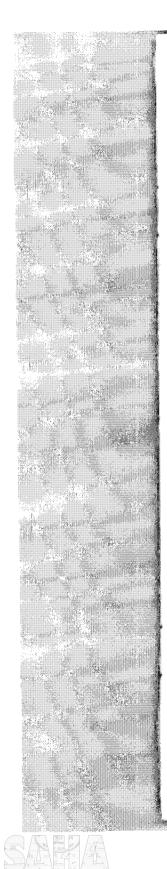
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TITY Imam's students were also hauled in for rity branch at the end of June. This re been close to the Imam to take a lov 2 D profile Co ന 0 5 and Bui 0 00 Уq 5 Φ

n's detention would ever be given. [Parliament on this issue, the then Minist reply to the Imam's detention said that of the public to know why he was details Q 0 BC đ **___** 5 D Ð 1 the sts > S

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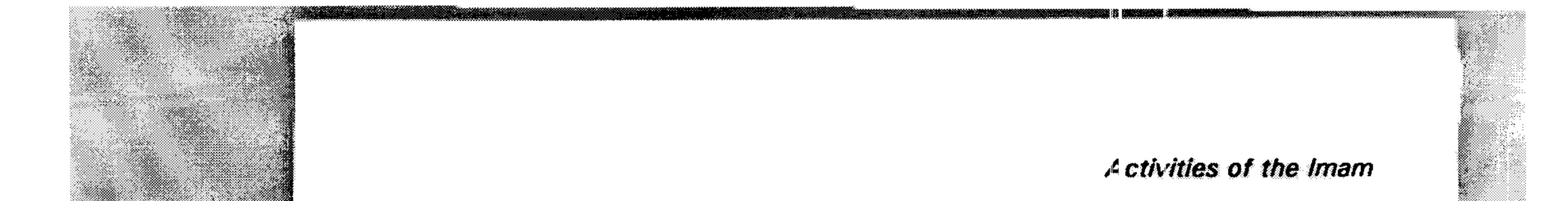
family or any lawyer. A post-mortem report from a private pathologist revealed the following injuries to the Imam:

- bruises ranging from as large as 10cm x 8cm to as small as 1cm x 1cm; and 100
- the 7th rib was broken;
- a haematoma of 2,5cm near the base of the spine;
- at least 10 bruises had been sustained seven to ten days before his death, mostly on the right leg;
- at least eight bruises had been sustained one to three days before death, mostly on the legs and
- the stomach was empty.

According to the police, the Imam sustained his injuries when he slipped down a flight of stairs at Caledon Square. Their evidence suggested that he slipped on his buttocks and side. The questions that arise are how did the Imam get bruised over a wide area of his body, front and back? And how did he get two different set of bruises if he only fell down the stairs once?

September 1994. Twenty-five years after the Imam's death, these questions still remain unanswered.

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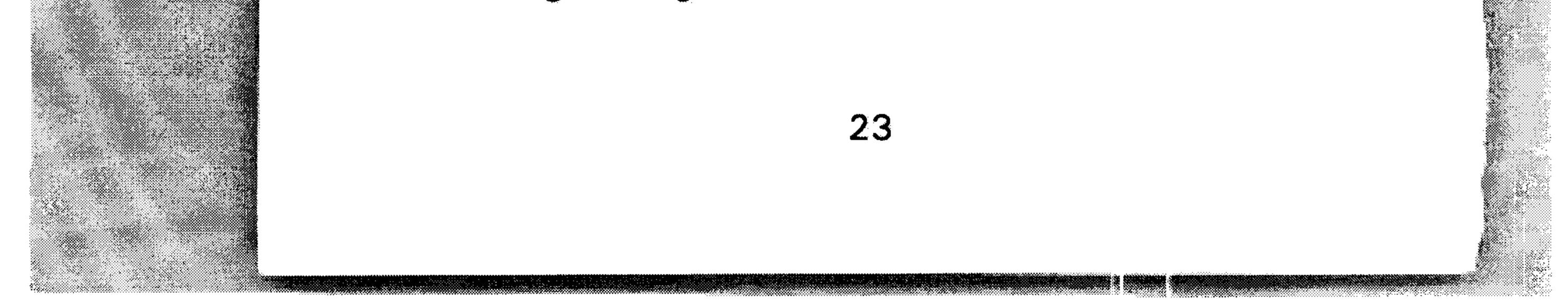


ACTIVITIES OF THE IMAM

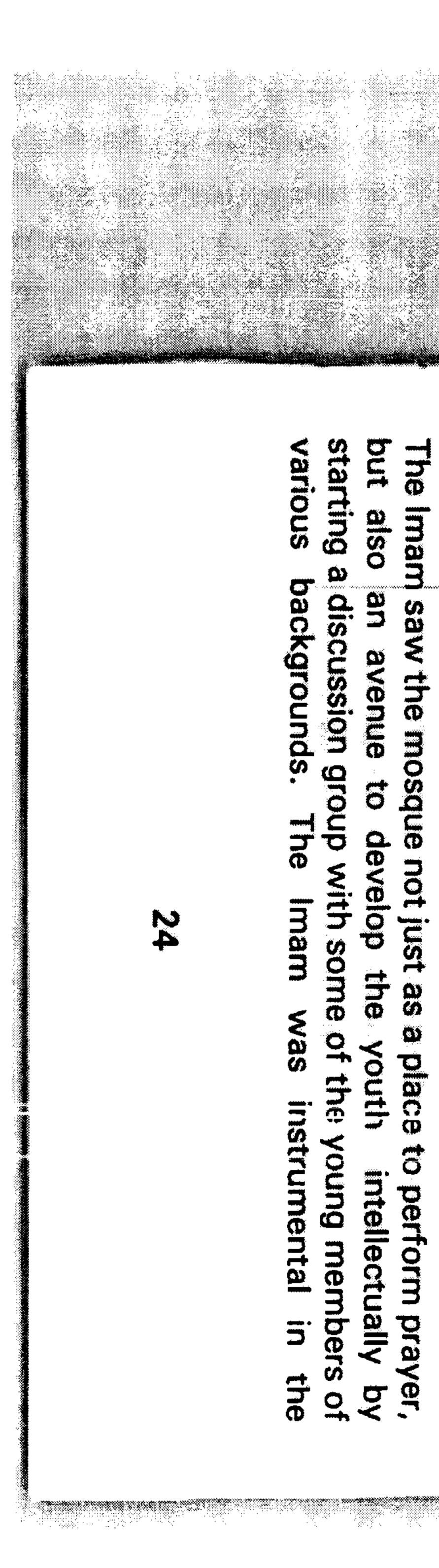
On the eve of the Imam's detention, the Muslim community's affairs were dominated by politically conservative organisations who were locked in the battle for the allegiance of the Muslim masses. These forces played a crucial role in the types of organisational response to the detention and death of the Imam.

The Imam was very committed to his youth base at the Stegman Road mosque up to the time of his detention. He also played a key role in the Ibadur-Rahman Study Group (formerly the Claremont Muslim Youth Association - CMYA) as well as the protest campaign against the Group Areas Act. He also became increasingly involved in activities of the PAC, providing relief for the families of those who had been banned, exiled or imprisoned. He also went abroad in 1966 and late 1968 where he attended a number of Islamic conferences. During his visits abroad, he came in contact with South African political exiles.

After his appointment as Imam in 1955, he edited a magazine of the CMYA, the *Islamic Mirror* and also *Muslim News*, a newspaper. The Imam saw the need to bring about social changes in the Muslim community who at that time were involved in gambling and the annual coon carnival festivities.







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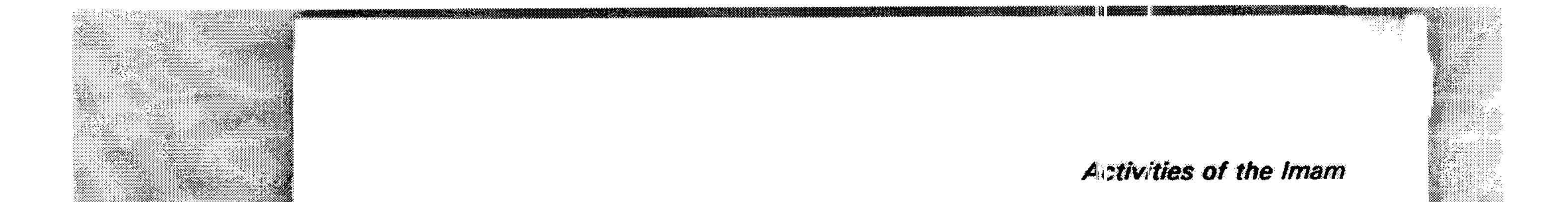
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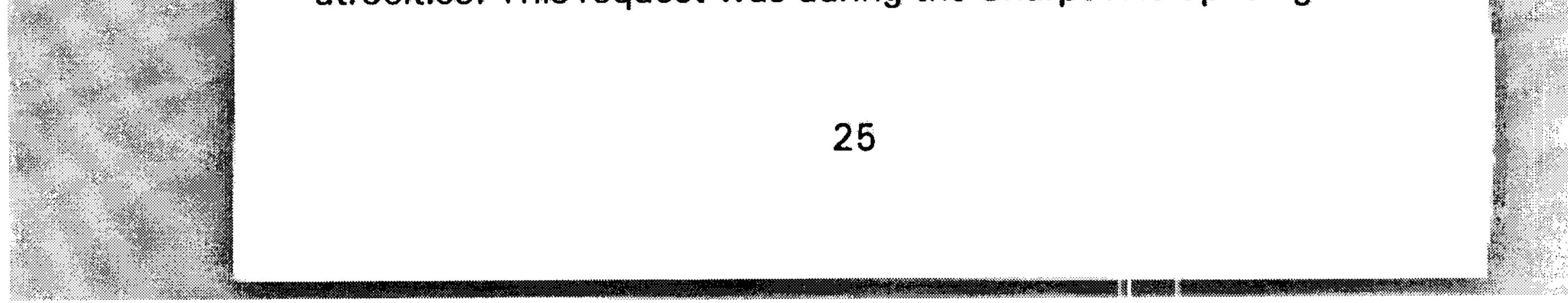




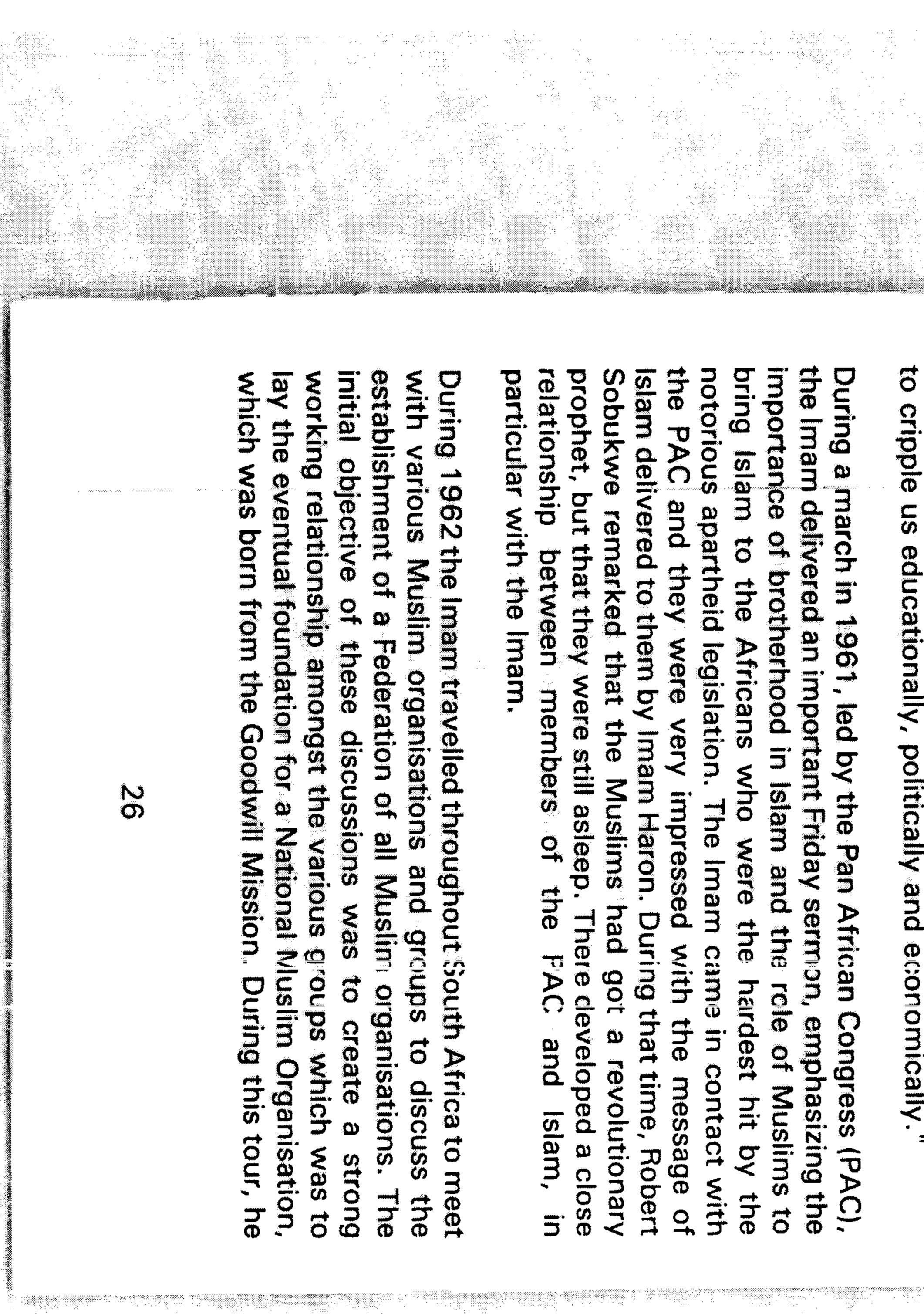
publishing of the country's first Muslim newspaper, *Muslim News* in 1960. With the launching of the newspaper, the political situation in the country was very volatile and *Muslim News* did not publish any statements condemning the government policies. The CMYA and his congregants criticised him for the passive stance of *Muslim News*.

Prior to May 31, 1960, the Imam and Shaikh Nazeem Mohamed were invited to participate in a march organised by the Christian anti-apartheid protesters. Although they were in favour of the march, they disagreed that it be led under the banner of the church because during that time, Islam was under constant attack from the Christian missionaries. The Imam was also invited by non-Muslim groups to address their meetings and to explain the Islamic viewpoint on justice.

Close to the end of 1960, the Imam succeeded in uniting the leading Muslim organisations, the CMYA, CMYM, Islamic Welfare Society, Wynberg Muslim Vigilance Association and Nyanga Muslim Association under the banner of the Good Offices Committee. It was one of the Imam's major objectives to see all Muslim organisations united and then to speak out against injustice. In 1961 the CMYA and Claremont Muslim Youth Movement (CMYM) took another step closer to unity by producing a pamphlet entitled *The Call of Islam*. The Imam also asked the Muslim community to conduct Qunut salaah (special prayer) to ask the Almighty to remove the unjust system and all atrocities. This request was during the Sharpeville uprisings and







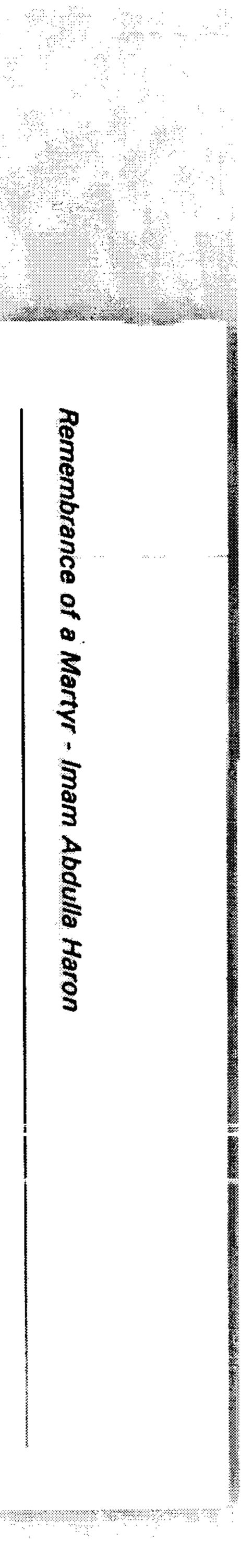
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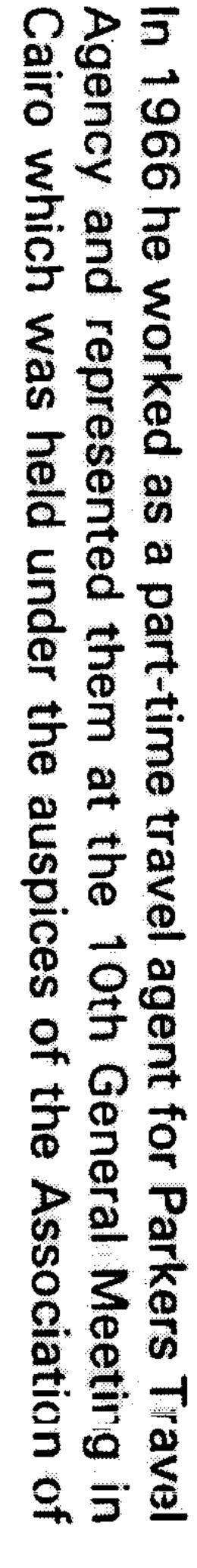
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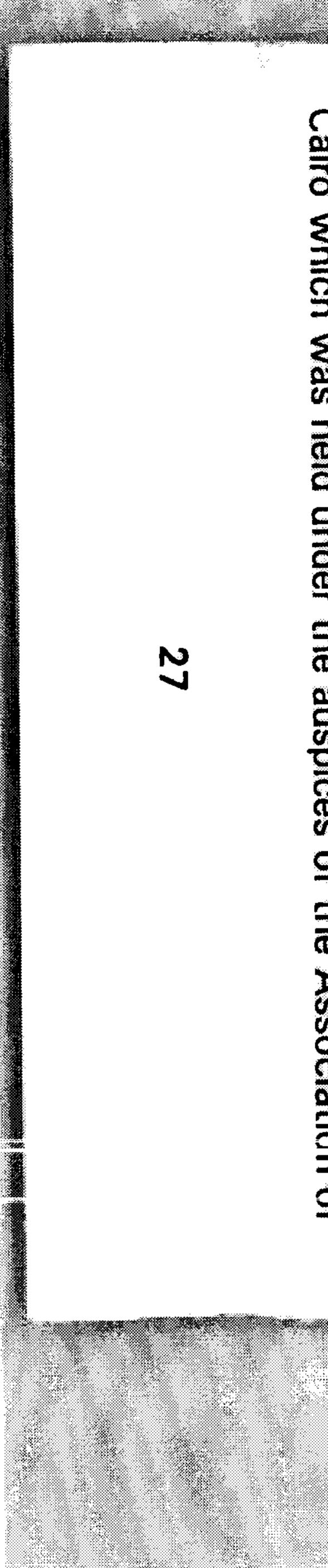
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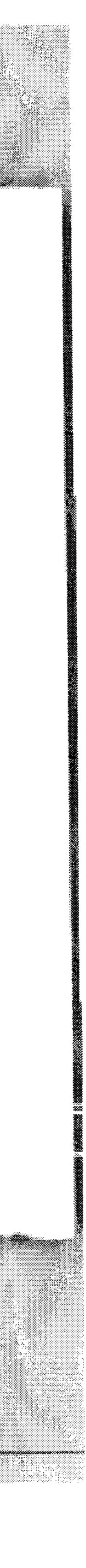


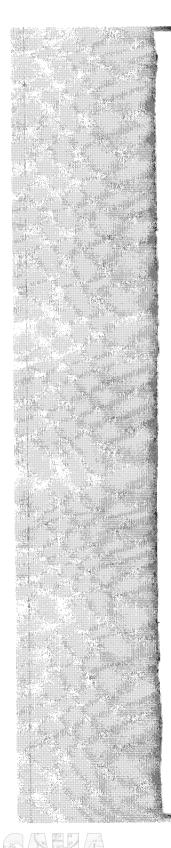
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Activities of the



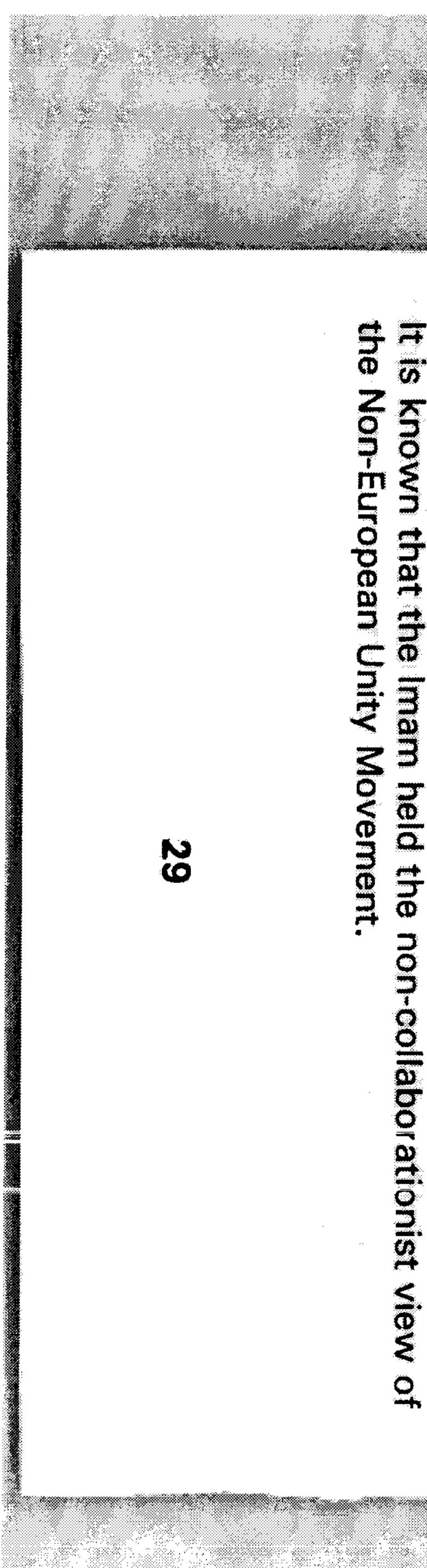


Travel Agents in the Middle East. The Imam encouraged South African Muslims to meet and visit other Muslims in the Middle East so that they could realise that Islam was not confined to geographical boundaries.

In 1963 the CMYA elected the Imam as Honory Life President and the association continued to jointly produce the magazine, Islamic Mirror with the CMYM. The CMYA fell under the Security Branch surveillance because of their contact with the CPC. The Imam was involved with a group of Muslims in establishing the Cape Muslim Charitable Fund (CMCF) which was launched in March 1963 but failed to develop further. The MJC was not prepared to give its assistance to the CMCI⁻ and because of a lack of community support, it had a short life.

In May 1963 the Imam was involved in unity talks between religious leaders from the Western Cape and Eastern Cape. Shortly after the unity of the two provinces, the Imam looked forward to the realisation of the work of the Good Offices Committee which laid the necessary ground work for the formation of the Cape Islamic Federation (CIF). The CIF was launched and the Imam was elected as vice-president and Shaikh Nazeem Mohamed as president.

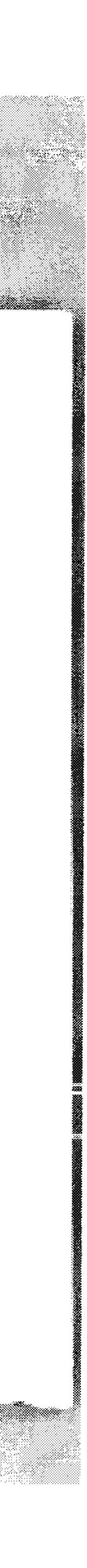
The CIF had its first public meeting in July 1963 at the Cape Town Drill Hall where it addressed the social conditions and immoral activities of the Muslims. However, the CIF did not exist for long as Dr Hoosain Kotwal with the support of Shaikh

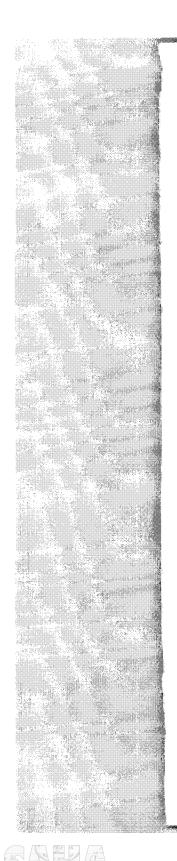


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In February 1966 the Imam and his wife, Galiema Haron, went on hajj and visited Cairo and London. The Imam then met with the PAC members in exile who had been in contact with him. Prior to performing hajj, he went to Cairo to attend the 10th Annual Conference of the Association of Travel Agents of the Arab lands. On his return to Mecca, he met Abraham, a former member of the CPC and held long meetings with the PAC regarding the political situation in the country and the assistance the Imam gave to the families of those who were banned, exiled or imprisoned.

Days before the actual performance of hajj, the Imam produced a pamphlet, hoping to conscientise South African Muslim pilgrims on the existing injustices in their country. The Imam thought since the SA pilgrims were in a spiritual environment, the pamphlet might help to create an awareness in them on the plight of fellow oppressed people at home. After performing hajj, he and his wife left for Cairo where he attended an important Islamic Conference held under the auspices of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs in Egypt.

He had personal contact with the secretary general, Dr Muhammad Tawfiq Oweidah, a member of the Egyptian parliament. At this conference which was attended by various Muslim leaders of different Muslim countries, the Imam addressed the conference and lobbied support for the PAC, ANC and for Muslim minorities in South Africa who were experiencing religious and racial oppression.



Activities of the Imam

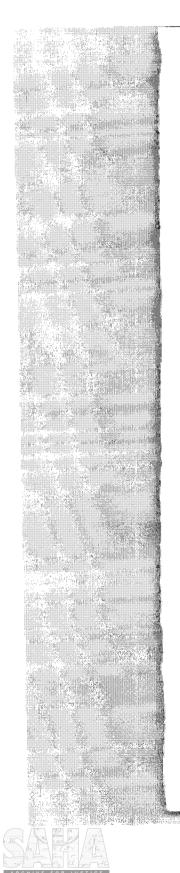
He was then able to meet with government officials from Syria and Jordan and to visit Palestinian refugee camps. It was also the Imam's intention to highlight the plight of Palestinians to South African Muslims. On his return to Cairo, the Imam once again visited the PAC offices to strengthen his ties with the organisation. Before returning to South Africa, he travelled via London to meet with Canon Collins of St. Paul's Cathedral who headed the Christian Action Organisation who founded the banned charity organisation, Defence and Aid Fund.

After six months abroad, he continued his teaching career and provided his congregants with more insight into the Qur'an and hadith (sayings and practices of the Prophet), and drew from these fundamental Islamic sources to interpret social justice in South Africa. He was concerned about the lack and low standard of Muslim education. In 1966 the Imam convened the amalgamation of a few Muslim schools to form the Cape Islamic Madaris Association. During that same year he started Sunday schools at the AI Jami'a Mosque for children who were unable to attend school during the week. He also delivered a speech on "The Youth's role in the propagation of Islam" in Port Elizabeth and East London. At the same time he received a substantial amount of financial assistance from overseas to distribute to the destitute, needy and oppressed families.

With the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1967, the directors of the Wilson Rowntrees requested Imam Haron and Shaikh Nazeem Mohamed not to make their feelings known to the company's Jewish





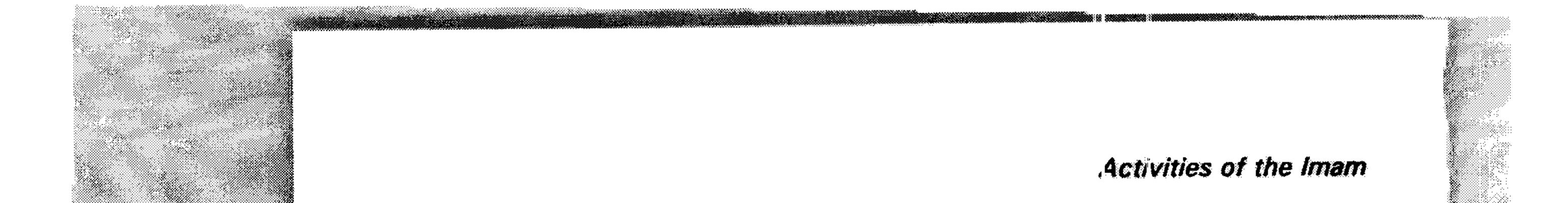


clients. Both were not happy with the company's decision and Shaikh Nazeem made a formal protest which led to his resignation from the company. The Imam had always taken a strong anti-Zionist stance but did not follow suite with Shaikh Nazeem to resign. He held his position as sales representative dearly, since it gave him the contact and access into the townships to meet with PAC members.

During 1968 to 1969 life became more difficult for the Imam as the Security Branch were watching his movements more closely. At the beginning of 1969 after settling his eldest daughter in at a college in London, he went to Saudi Arabia to meet with the Minister of Education, Hasan Abdullah Ali Shaikh to discuss educational issues. The Minister then arranged for him to meet with King Faysal at the Royal Palace in Riyadh. The Imam was allowed to address the Muslims on Saudi Arabian television about Muslims in South Africa. From Riyadh, he went to Cairo to meet with the PAC and to address a conference of Muslim representatives, which was also attended by PAC and ANC members.

Before going to London, Imam Haron stopped over in Holland where he met with the Director of the International University Exchange Fund, Lars Gunnar Ericksson. In London he met with the PAC members, including Barney Desai, who had been in close contact with the Imam's activities against the oppressive regime. Barney Desai then advised the Imam to leave the country as the Security Branch was closely perusing him. The Imam

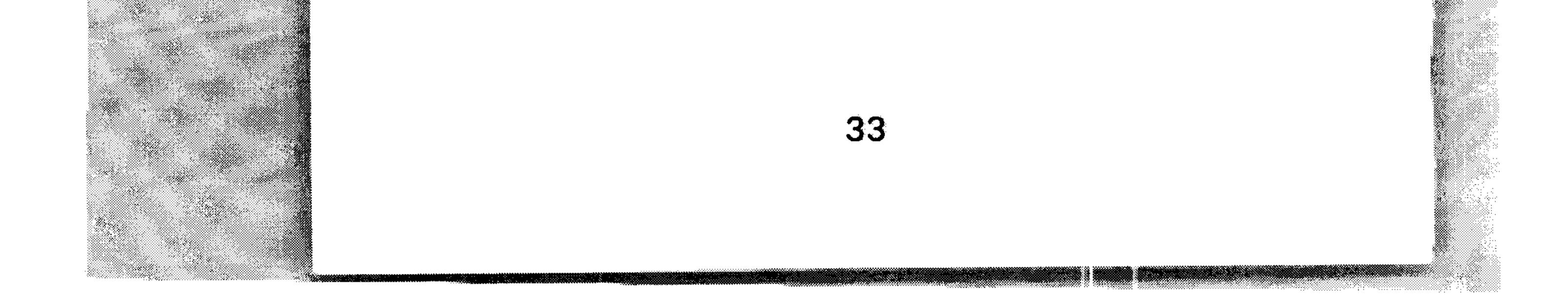
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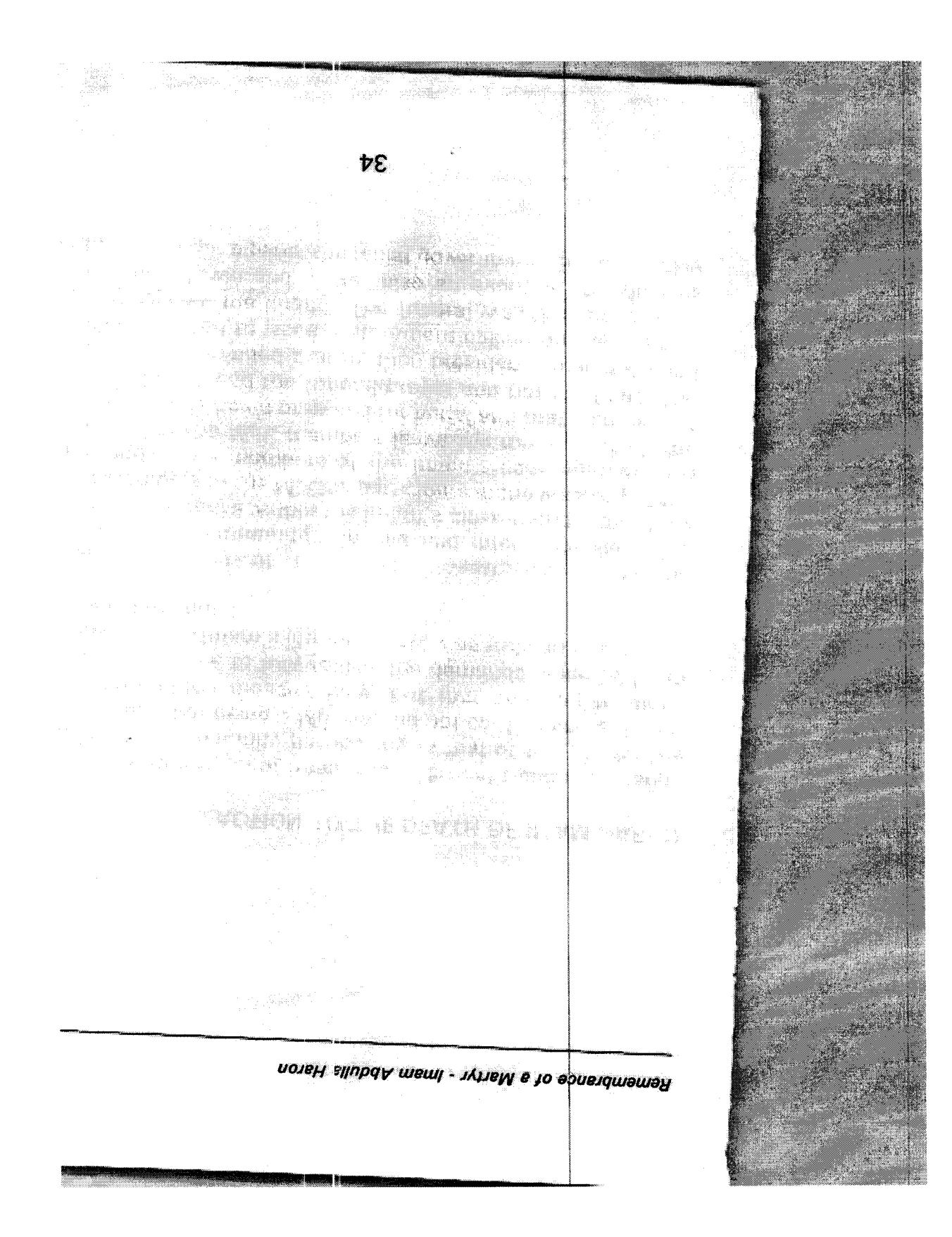
considered emigration and sent his papers to the Canadian Embassy, but was refused and he realised it was too late.

The Imam had been visited by the Security Branch on several occasions. They laid a trap for the Imam by sending an "African" informer to his house, under the pretext of being part of an underground network, to seek financial assistance. After the Imam had assisted him, he realised that it was a trap. Thereafter he was aware of being followed by the Security Branch and considered going into exile. The arrangements for exile were made too late and on May 28, 1969, the Imam was picked up by one of the Security Branch officers, Spyker Van Wyk. He was detained on the same day of the commemoration of the birth of the Prophet. It was also the last day his wife saw him.

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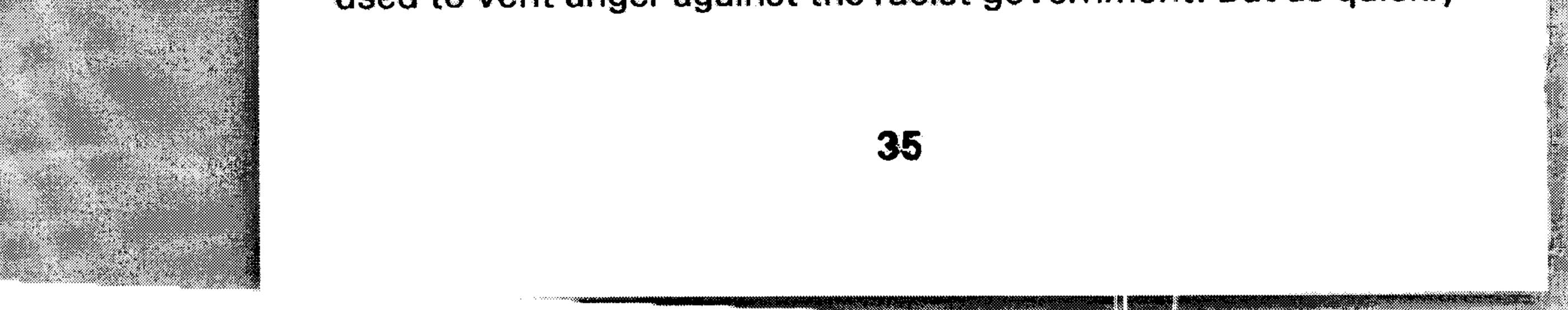




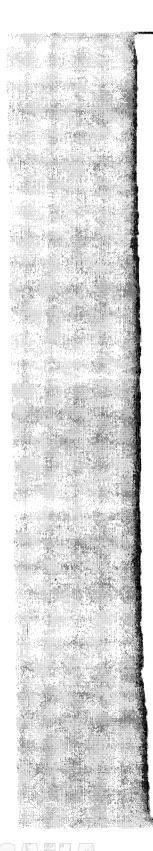
REACTION TO THE DEATH OF IMAM HARON

The death in detention of Imam Haron brought about a change in the Muslim community particularly in that of the youth. The youth realised that being a Muslim, did not confine one's doings to activities in the mosque only, but that one had to move beyond the mosque to fully realise the demands made by Islam on a Muslim. The Imam's life therefore, was truly an example of what was demanded.

The announcement of the Imam's death, spread rapidly throughout the community - locally and internationally. The anger was so intense within the Imam's close friends, that they refused members of the MJC to participate in the washing of the Imam's body. The members of the Imam's congregation then requested that the MJC members leave the room in which the Imam's body was being prepared for burial and that a student of the Imam should lead the funeral prayer and not the MJC. The MJC was also reminded that its then president, Shaikh Ahmad Behardien, refused to issue a statement calling on the state to charge or release the Imam. The funeral was the largest ever seen in Cape Town and it was also an event which Muslims used to vent anger against the racist government. But as quickly



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as Muslims got worked up with anger at the Imam's death, so too they crept back into the silence.

Although the MJC was silent over the Imam's socio-political life, they nonetheless sent a letter of sympathy to the Haron family. This letter was standard practice in the community in the event of death.

Generally Muslims were apolitical and to a large extent the average Muslim was not aware of the Imam's political activities which the Imam had also sworn to secrecy. It was the Imam's detention and his ultimate death, which made most Muslims aware of the role the Imam had played. There existed a political silence despite the fact that there were 18 cleaths in detention prior to the Imam's death who was the 6th during 1969.

For the first time, a death caused a major uproar over deaths in detention. The Imam's death was vigorously taken up by the white liberals. Although the liberals were in a better position to protest against death in detention, they took all advantage of avenues opened to them such as parliament, press and major legal channels to keep the inquiry alive regarding the Imam's death.

Muslims though, in their state of political apathy, did not bother to examine or use the influence they might have had over the state, to take up the Imam's cause. The large number of Muslims at the Imam's funeral cannot serve as an indication that Muslims

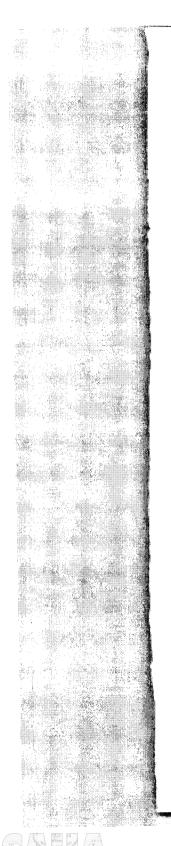
Reaction to the Death of Imam Haron

were indeed politically conscious or identified with the plight of fellow oppressed in Azania. A large number of those present at the funeral, were there due to the fact that it was a prominent and well-known Imam who died and not an Imam who struggled to instill a political consciousness within the larger Muslim community.

During that time, Muslims constituted 1,3% of the South African population. The newspaper, *Muslim News*, was the only major Muslim media in the country. The Imam helped to change Muslim News into a newspaper which addressed political issues as well. Subsequently several editions of *Muslim News* were banned. However, there were no raids by the security members of the police at the offices of *Muslim News*. Reasons for that could be that the government was afraid to clamp down totally on the newspaper which would cause an uproar from the Muslim community, and that such action might have severed the government's relationship with Saudi Arabia regarding oil into the country.

It was then easier to clamp down on the Imam, since it was known that the Muslim clergy were mainly conservative and did not approve of the Imam's activities. It is not surprising though, that the youth who were students of the Imam, the youth of the late 1970's and 1980's, have blamed the Muslim clergy, Muslim organisations such as the MJC and the Muslim Assembly for being responsible for the death of Imam Haron. After the funeral, the Imam's memory was not kept alive and his death was only





commemorated after many years by militant youths.

On 3 October 1969, Muslim News published and distributed 15 000 copies of a four-page tribute to the Imam. However, the newspaper failed to condemn the appalling circumstances under which the Imam died. There was no formal commemoration at the first anniversary of the Imam's death and only the AI Jami'a masjid edicated the Friday sermon on the Imam. In their editorial, the Cape Times focused on the Imam's first anniversary whilst the Muslim News and Shura were both silent on the issue.

The inquest findings which were completed almost six months after the Imam's death, caused a new round of protests from the Cape Times, Mrs Catherine Taylor and Professor Hansi P. Pollak, chairperson of the Institute of Race Relations. The doubts of the inquest findings were supported by Rev. C.S. Sergell, Rev. J.A. Stewart and Mrs Mary Schurr of the Bellville Rectory, whom as members of the Christian community expressed their concern and sympathy to the Muslim community, who they said, must have *"felt sickened with horror at the facts revealed at the inquest."*

But whether the Muslim community was indeed "sickened with horror" at the inquest findings was not known, since they did not protest or comment against the findings. Neither did the Muslim clergy, Shaikhs, Imams or the *Muslim News* for which the Imam worked, comment on the findings. So one may argue that the Imam's death did not politically "awaken" the Muslim

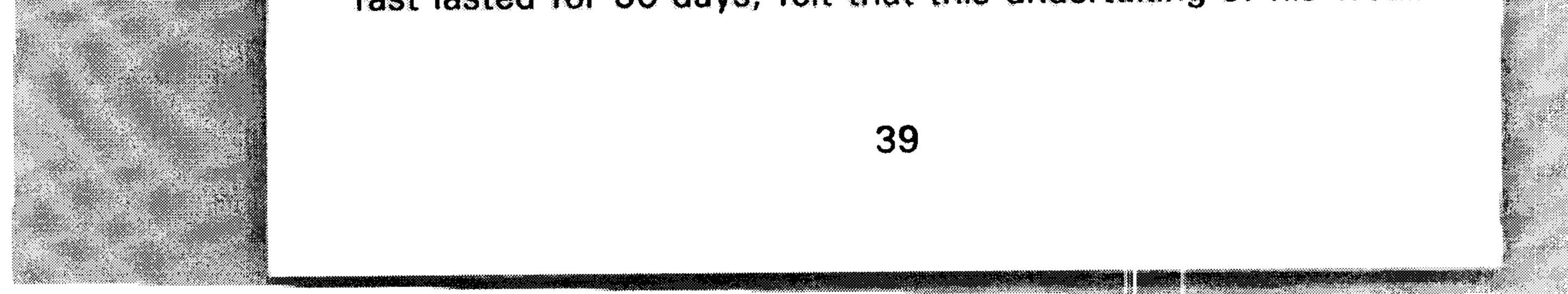


community but rather drove them into further submission of oppression, racist politics and religious parochialism.

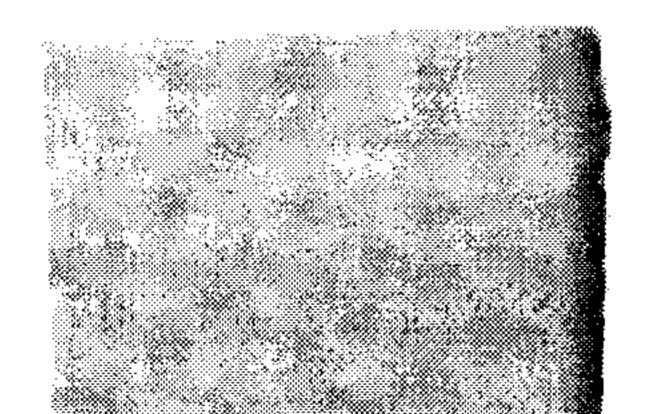
At the Imam's funeral, Shaikh Nazeem of the MJC asked: "Where do we go from here? Did the Imarn die in vain?". Muslims decided to continue life under an apartheid and repressive regime and the Imam was then forgotten. His cause was only remembered by his faithful congregation and Parliamentarian, Mrs Catherine Taylor, whom for two years tirelessly fought to establish the true cause of the Imam's death in detention.

When it was clear that Mrs Taylor was getting nowhere with her persistent enquiries and requests for a judicial commission to investigate the Imam's death, an Anglican priest, Rev. Bernard Wrankmore decided to fast for 40 days at the shrine of Matura on Signall Hill in an effort to get the Prime Minister, B.J. Vorster to grant permission to appoint a judicial commission.

Rev. Wrankmore went to see Mrs Haron and described himself as *"feeling so ashamed"* as after Mrs Talyor's vain struggles, the democratic process did not take place. He began his fast on August 19, 1971 and on September 27, 1971, he took a decision to continue his fast after the Prime Minister informed him of his refusal to appoint a judicial commission. On this same day the Reverend also held a prayer meeting at the shrine which was attended by more than 2000 people. The Reverend, whose fast lasted for 66 days, felt that this undertaking of his would

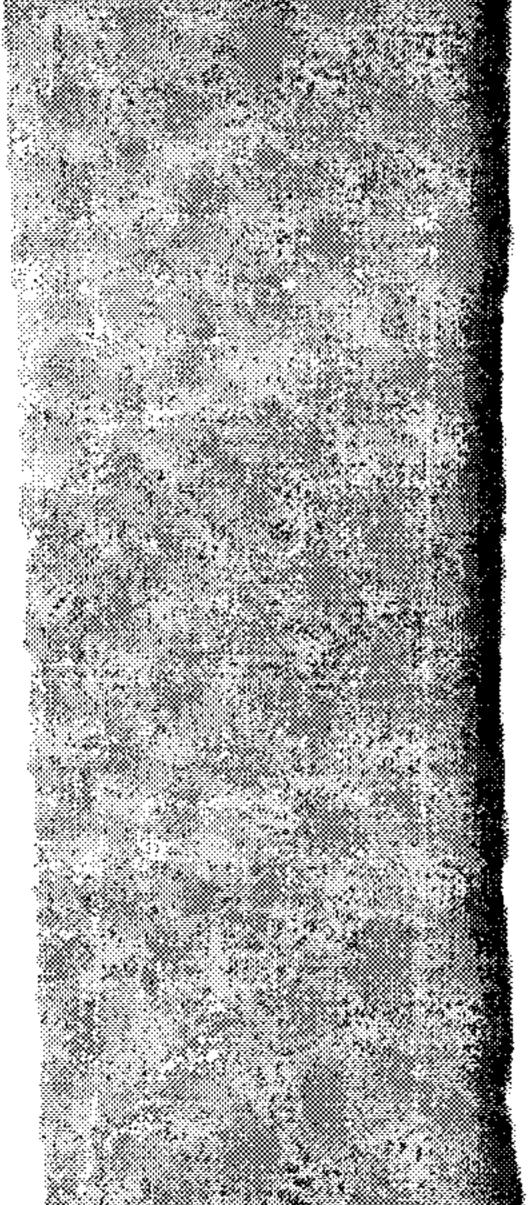






stir the consciences of his society in order to see the implementation of justice, equality and freedom. It was also during this period that he came to learn about the Imam and that the "Muslim Hierarchy did not agree with the Imam, but the people dearly loved him".

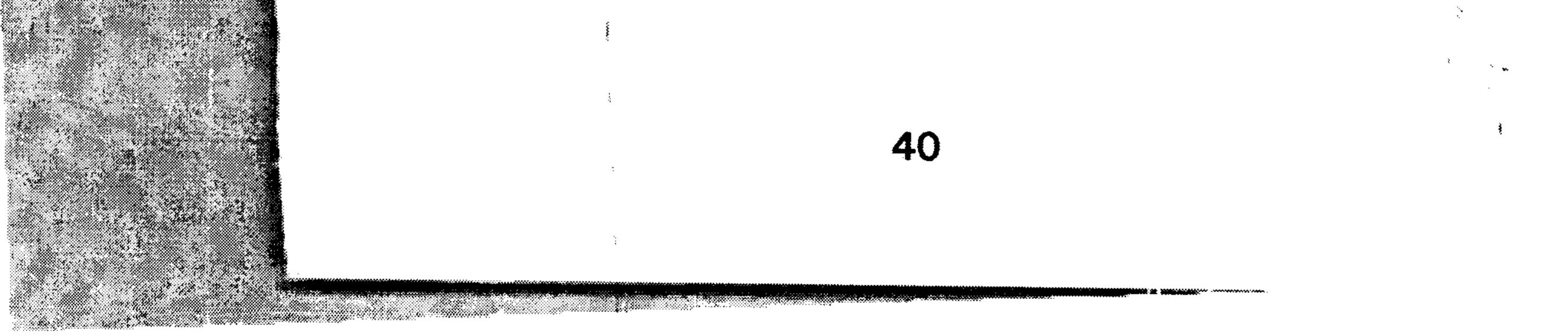
Mrs Taylor continued her battle in parliament for an inquiry until September 1975 when documentary evidence proved that the 26 bruises on the Imam's body were not due to natural causes, but as a result of assault by certain members of the Security Branch interrogation team. The dossier which contained the hard evidence which she was busy collating into a book, disappeared



with the UCT lecturer who was assisting her.

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The Relevance of the Imam Today

THE RELEVANCE OF THE IMAM TODAY

The Imam's example was used by many political organisations in their struggle for justice. Today his name is on the lips of every activist and even President Nelson Mandela often reminds people of the sacrifices of Imam Haron and other martyrs.

The Muslim Students Association (MSA) and the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM) emerged and advanced Islamic consciousness followed by Qibla and the Call of Islam (COI). It was indeed the youth who revived the legacy of the Imam as they took a leading role in the liberation struggle and anti-Tricameral protests. The students were a driving force for Islamic resurgence and hoped that Muslims would "... see Islam as a Revolutionary Message..."

In 1982, Inqilaab, a mouthpiece of the MSA said in its editorial: "During recent years, Muslims have come to play an increasingly more active role in the national struggle for freedom and justice. A significant milestone has been the martyrdom of Imam Abdullah Haron who "died" in prison in 1969 after being held in detention for 123 days incommunicado. After the Imam, there



have been many others, especially, amongst the youth, who have been involved in demonstrating against prevailing injustices on all kinds of levels..."

At mass meetings and funerals, large banners of Qur'anic verses were prominent. The international events in the Muslim world like the revival of the Intifadah in Palestine and the Islamic Revolution in Iran, had a significant impact on the lives of Muslims at a social, religious and political level. These international events and the Imam's example were used by many political organisations in their struggle for justice. The political unrest in the 1980's was also due to internal political awareness campaigns by various organisations.

The Qibla Movement published a pamphlet, *Tribute To a Martyr* on Imam Haron and during the Qibla/PAC trial in 1986, the movement also published a bumper sticker with photos of Imam Ayatollah Khomeini, Imam Abdullah Haron and Imam Achmad Cassiem.

The spirit of Imam Haron was revived so much, that state president PW Botha stated in parliament in 1984:

"As you are aware we have a large Muslim community who, like all other religious denominations, enjoy complete freedom of religion. Furthermore, you also know that South African Muslims are respected citizens of this country. However, a small group has emerged within this community who, under the influence of Libya and Iran and with funding from those quarters, have

The Relevance of the Imam Today

committed themselves, with the ANC and PAC, to terror and violence".

The General Synod of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) warned Muslims that: "Participation in radical and revolutionary actions and the incitement of people towards acts of terror would seriously damage the relationships between Muslims and the majority of Christians in South Africa as well as endangering the peaceful co-existence of the various religions."

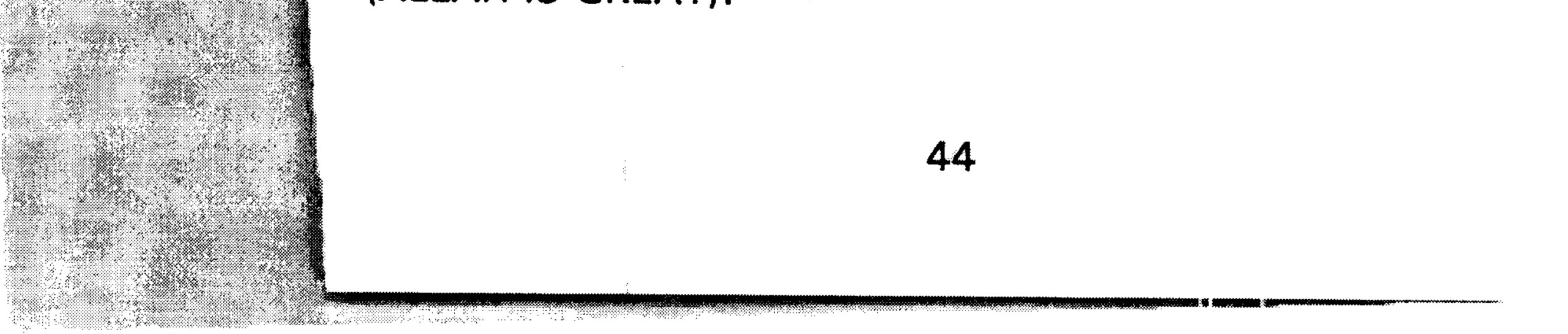
The youth also came to learn that the fundamental difference between the Muslim clergy and Imam Haron, was that the Imam did not separate politics from Islam and vice versa. The Imam attracted many people to the mosque to listen to the Friday sermons he delivered. He addressed issues on contemporary events and of relevance such as socio, economic and political problems which was a breakaway from the monotonous sermons delivered by other Shaikhs and Imams. The Imam also gave opportunities to his young students to address the congregants on auspicious occasions. In 1958 the Imam gave Islamic classes to women once a week on Wednesday evenings. He was severely criticised by the MJC whose attitude was not to let women grow intellectually and to participate more fully in the growth of society. But their criticism did not persuade the Imam to terminate the classes for women and he argued that women's position was not clearly defined or understood. Women were also actively involved in the CMYA. The Imam's recognition of the rights of women and to improve the plight of women in



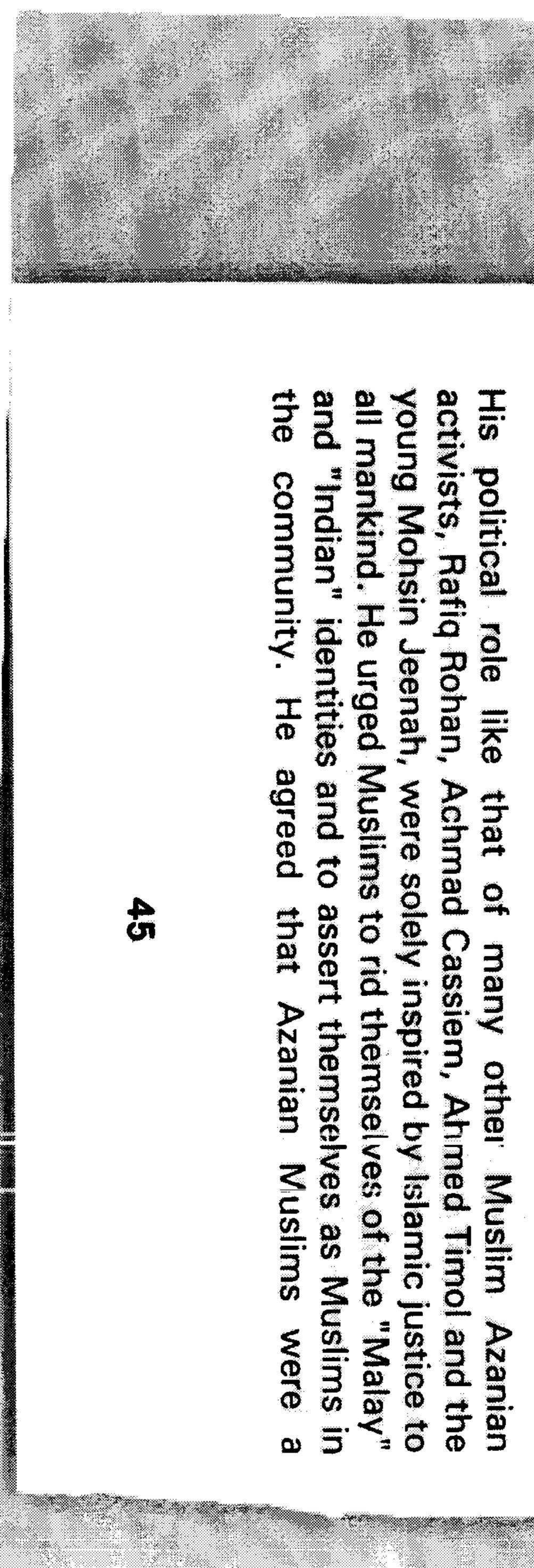
society, was another breakaway of the Ulema patriarchy. During 1961 the CMYA invited different and prominent politicians, community workers and political activists to address them on activities and ideas existing in other communities. Those invited included, Dr. Zach De Beer (PFP), Ray Alexander of the Food and Canning Union; also a member of the Nationalist Party.

The Imam as a Muslim and true believer in Islam, could embrace people outside the fold of Islam which explains his "humanness" and his universality of brotherhood. The Imam had spoken to street dwellers "bergies" in the same manner as he spoke to the mayor and city councillors. His main objective was to fight against political oppression by a racist regime and not to display his anger towards an individual white face, but against the oppressive white government. He is described as a man of great tolerance and even more so of political tolerance.

The Imam continuously reminded Muslims that under no circumstances should they isolate their specific problems from the problems of fellow oppressed people. He encouraged the Muslims to become what the Almighty had commanded them to do, ie. propagate and implement universal justice and social action. He thus urged Muslims to become involved in the social problems prevailing in the country, and as Muslims to offer a solution and method of struggle. This only became a reality in 1985, 16 years after his martyrdom when the streets of the Cape Peninsula echoed with the TAKBIR - ALLAAHU AKBAR (ALLAH IS GREAT).







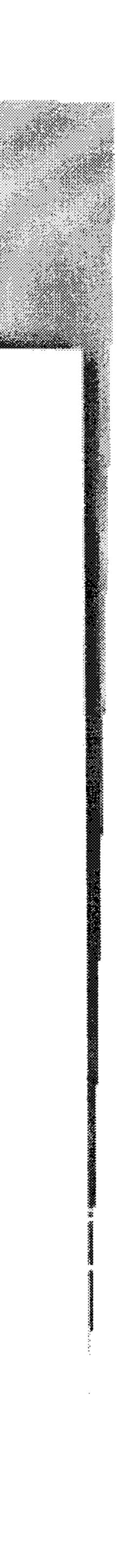
y, nobody can claim to which political on would have been aligned to. Although he lous differences to the MJC, Muslim Assim News editorial, his differences did not process to work with them. The Imaru for implement changes into these organis Ū ation O D 0) 0 030 ົດ Φ **A** 2 0 es. 9 olitic Itio he De 90 9 Imam could and the the

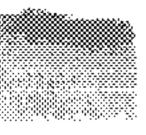
Ped, = 2 icameral election stance if he was a strived selflessly to bring together all the red, Indians and Africans) to form a ct that Imam Haron refused twice to for Coloured People and the Labo could perhaps indicate that he might h cameral election stance if he was a state injustice. Indians and 9 ddo \mathbf{T} Œ 0 G D Q 00 5 Q groups leapon -Outh Buo The

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the countrywide politica reminded the Muslim unity to lead the Muslim d to play a prominent leading funerals of t marches. prominent political struggle those ggle against **V**Blap uprisings killed that address 5 d. the 2 <u> 0</u> B () **_** Q С 5 5 7 ወ Φ riots Œ D 0 0 0 3 ergy and ass **Te**

The Releva 0





minority, but not that Muslims should operate on a minority status which would give them a minority vision. During his travels to Saudi Arabia and the Middle East, it was his sincere intention to conscientise Muslims in Azania of the plight of Muslims in Palestine.

He sought to skilfully educate the Muslim community on their social and un-Islamic practices such as gambling and activities in the coon carnivals. This he did through personal inter-action with individuals, from the pulpit of the mosque and public lectures. The mosque, a powerful medium of resource to the Muslim community whom he used not just for the performance of prayers, but as an institution of educating the community on the social and political evils in society. It was his lectures and the informal manner in which he conducted them, that drew the youth to the mosque. He made it clear to the Muslims that their duties were as a revolutionary force, to forbid, prevent and eradicate what was wrong and to propagate, implement and defend what was right.

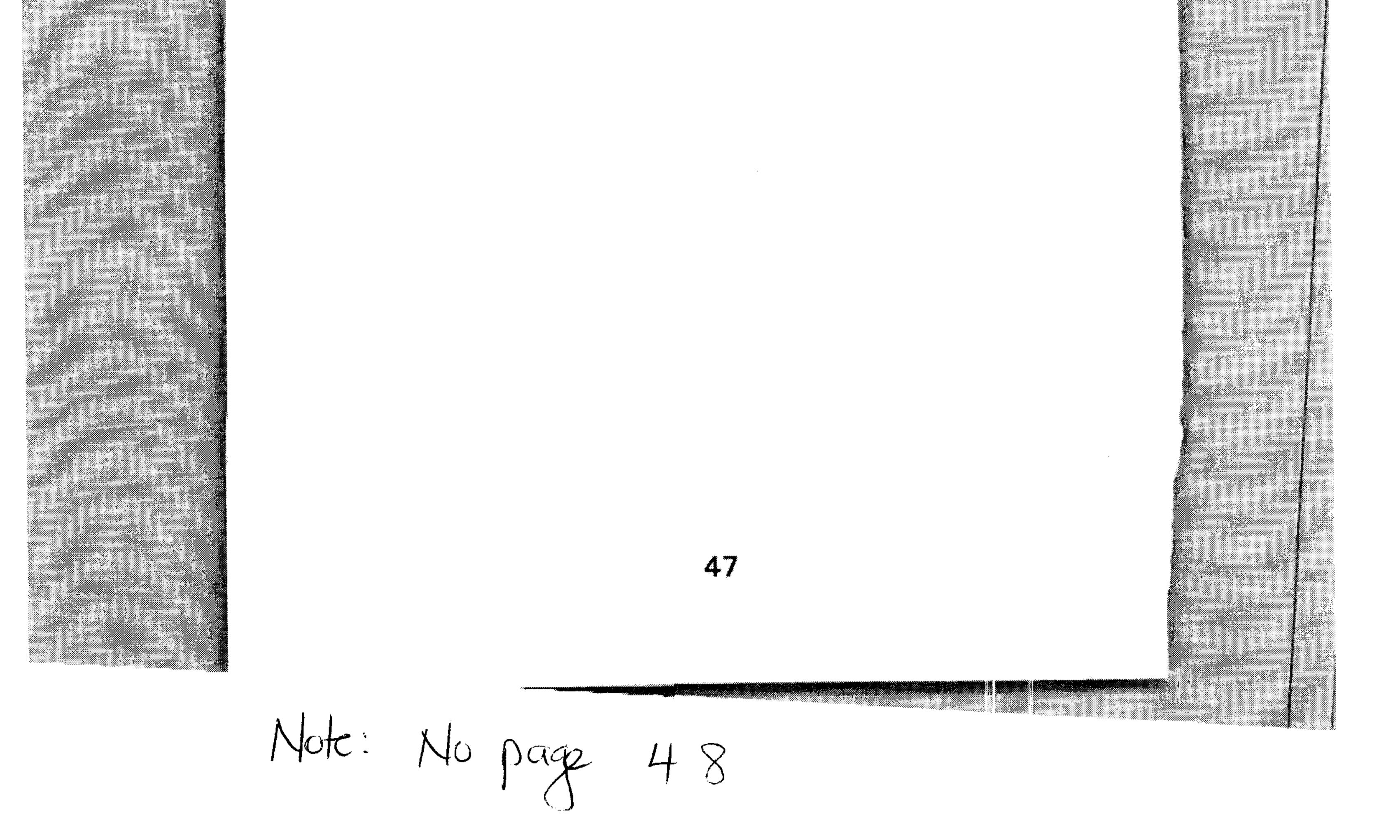
There were many times when the Imam made attempts to unite all Muslim organisations under one banner. Now, 25 years later, that dream of a United Muslim Ummah has still not been fulfilled. Muslims in Azania made two attempts to form a united body representing all Muslim organisations, the Muslim Unity Conference in 1990 and the Islamic Unity Convention in 1994.

He was also concerned about the plight of Muslim women and

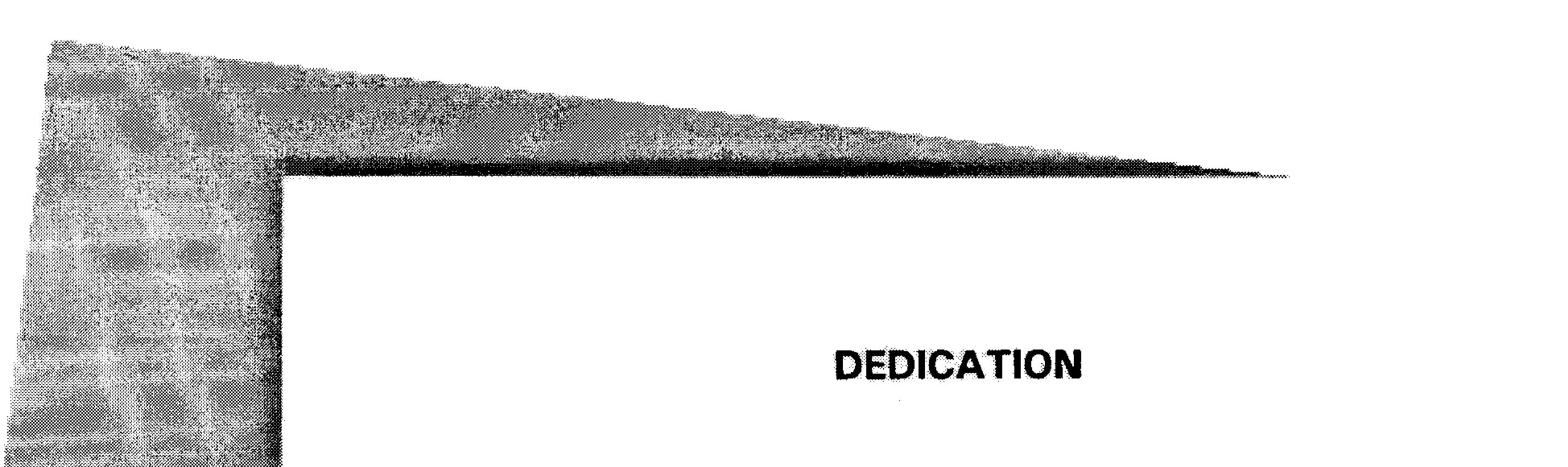
The Relevance of the Imam Today

offered classes to them despite objections from the MJC. Muslim women today, are not afforded their rightful role in society by the Muslim patriarchy. The Muslim women, basically have to force their presence at meetings on the Muslim Personal Law.

Looking at the present political situation, there can be no conclusion as to whether the Imam would have been part of the new government. He was closely involved with the PAC and was in contact with people from various political persuasions. It is true that the Imam stood for justice and truth and did not alienate himself from those who thought otherwise.





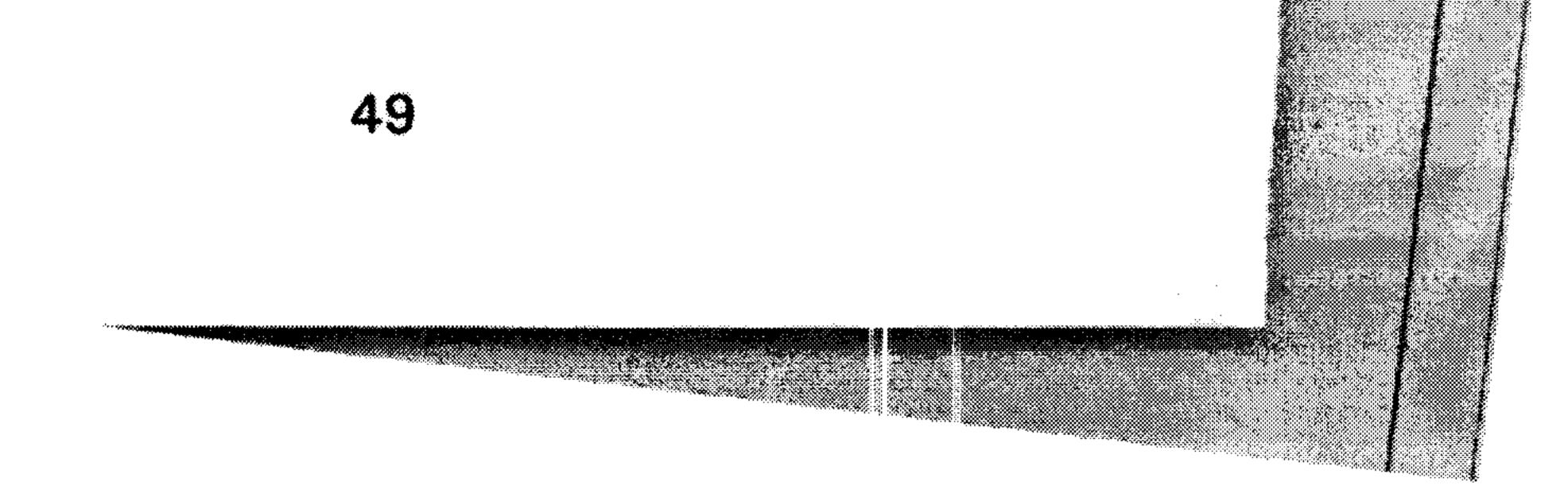


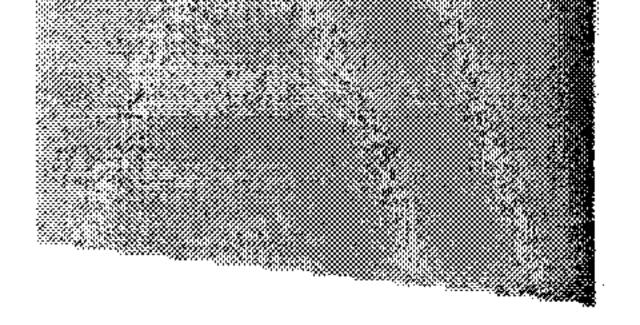
They placed him in a prison cell This man who had a dream That every man should father To his brother's son And love should not be tempered by The colour of their skin Was he Patriot or terrorist?

His concern for children not his own Made of him the keeper of his brother A widowed mother found in him courage And a woman wronged compassion Was he Patriot or terrorist?

In a prison cell they placed him His guilt his plea for justice That would not be a tyranny for most For his dream, he died What was he Patriot or terrorist?

> Dedicated to Imam Abdullah Haron by James Matthews







Then there was that priest upon the hill Who fasted for freedom He said his prayers in a tomb Of a man not of his faith

The flesh fell from the face Of him man of God As he did penance for the death Of a man whose sermon was one of peace

An Imam who died in a prison cell Because freedom was what he preached And this priest upon the hill Believed in what his fellow-preacher prayed

His fasting days lengthened unto forty Detractors he had many They dubbed him fool for starving on a hill For a cause that should not be pursued Their exhortations could not make him sway He did his two score days and more The reason for his self-denial was Why did that Imam die that way?

> Dedicated to Rev. Bernard Wrankmore by James Matthews



TOP MOSLEM ELD UNDER 80-DAY LAW PROMINENT Moslem leader, Imam Abdullah

Haron, editor of the Moslam News, was delathed under the 180-day detention clause in Cape Tewn on

The birthday of the Prophet In his position of editor of the

Leaders of the Mosleon com-munity yesterday seld they felt bitter and "utterly disappointed" sbout the fact that the Imam was arrested on the anniversary of the Prophet's birthday.

In his position of editor of the Noviem News he expressed anti-rectalist ident and condemned rectalis injustices in South Africa

Mohammed. Mohammed. Because of his arrest he was not able to attend a chromony in his measure where more than his measure where more than 1000 people had rathered to Lood people had rathered to bechings. He drew no salary in these prophet's birthday and his place Prophet's birthday and his place had to be taken by a deputy: had to be taken by a deputy.

The police telephoned the firm on Wednesday morning and left a message for the Jmam to come to Caledon Square police station.

station. Haron, who is in his issues to be a state of the series of the series with three early 40's, is married with three early 40's, is married with three early 40's, is married with three early 40's and the series of the s TAKEN HOME Intern Haron was summoned to Caledon Bquare police station at 11 a.m. on Wednesday and was later accompanied to his home in Repuise Road Crawford, by in Repuise Road Crawford, by detectives, according to spokes pen for the Al-Jaamia. Monque to set her husband, Caladon Bouare police station at 1 a.m. on Wednesday and was later accompanied to his bome inter the bookermen told the Cape inter that they wished to voice inter that they wished to voice inter the strongest protest ever the fast they would approach other design bodies in Cape Town for apport. I in his religious teachings at the Mosque, imam Haron often

INQUEST UNCERTAIN The Argus Crime Reporter .295671469

TF laboratory tests show that Imam Abdullah Haron, I the Capt: Town Moslem leader who died at the week-end while being detained under the Terronism Act, died of natural causes, no inquest will be held, L1.-Col. C. F. J. Flenaar, head of the Security Police in Cape

Town, said loday.

"So far all indications are that He said the Imam complained he died of nistural causes, but about pain in the chest and stomach iwo weeks ago. This death is not known, Lt.-Col He was examined by a doctor his death is not known, Lt.-Col who prescribed pills to be given



them,' he added.

PAINS

At 11 a.m. on September 28 the limam complained of pains in the chest and was given pills. The following morning he again took the pills.

When the police made their rounds of the police cells at Maitland, where he was being detaineti. at 9.15 a.m. on Saturday, he appeared in good nesith.



Moslem leader dies in detention in City

Cape Times Reporters 29 SEPT

INAM ABDI LLAH HARON. leader, who died in detention under the Terruriam Act al the Matiland policit cells on Seturday, uppeared in have died from natural couses, but tout rom narorar change, and arlosed till after could not be deriosed till after insensed is al. Col. C. J. F. Thrank Bend of the Secardly Police in Cars Town, revealed All Indicali mis are that he fast night.

All indications are that he died due to philiral causes. But because he died in police deten-tion an inquest will he held by a magistrate and reviewed by the Attorn y-Ceneral. This makes the matter sub Indice and precludes a prior discionurg at the actual cause of death. Columet Plenaar suit.

CHERT PAIN

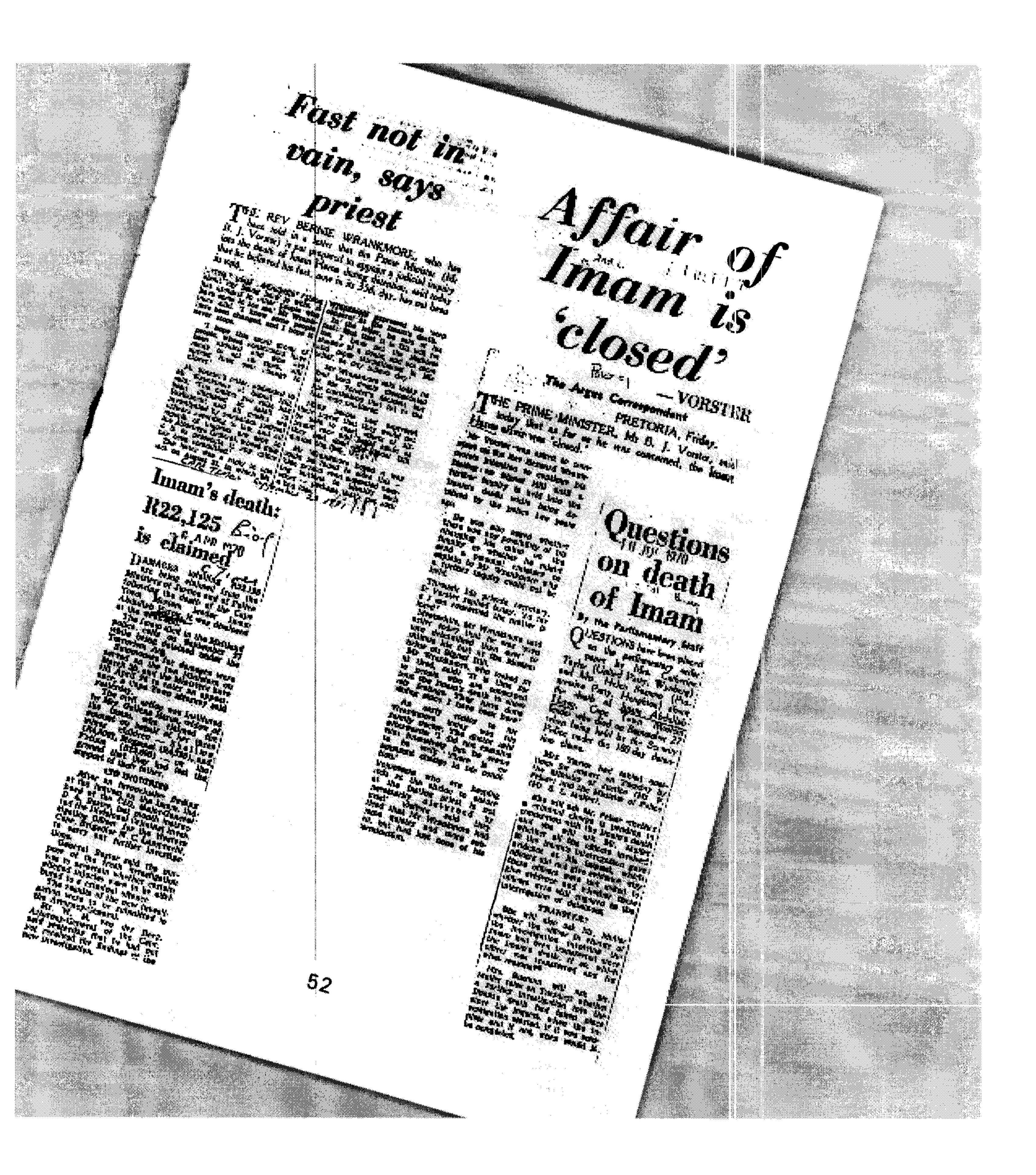
The linear had complained about pain is his chest and A doctor hid examined him and prescribed pills which were in be given to him whenever he saked for them. At 11 a.m. on September 16, the Imam com-plained of pidns in the chest and was giver pills. At 3.30 a.m. on September 27 he again took pills. When the police made their stemach a fert sight ago.

When the police made their when the point moto their normal hourly rounds of the cells at 8.15 a.m. mithing irregular was noted. An hour later, the iman was found apparently dead A district surgeon was imme-distely called, and he was certi-field dead, Colonel Pienser sold.

51

An hour later he was found dead. A district surgeon was called in immediately and certified him dead, Colonel Plenaar

Mr. Haron was detained under said. the Terrorist Act on May 28. Mrs. Haron and her three children. Shamila (18), Mogamel (13), and Patima (5) had not seen him since his arrest.



DEATHS IN DETENTION 1963-1990

1963

- Solwandle Ngudle: Suicide by hanging
- Bellington Mampe: undisclosed

1964

- * James Tyita: Suicide by hanging
- * Suliman Salojee: Suicide jumped from the 7th floor

1965

- * Ngeni Gaga; Natural causes
- * Pongolosha Hoye: Natural causes

1966

- James Hamakwayo: Suicide by hanging
- * Hangula Shonyeka: Suicide
- * Leon Pin: Suicide by hanging

1967

- * Ah Yan: Suicide by hanging
- * Alpheus Madiba: Suicide by hanging

1968

- * Jundea Tubakwa: Suicide by hanging
- * Unknown Person: Unknown date, place and cause (stated in Parliament on 28 January 1969)

1969

- * Nicodemus Kgoathe: Natural causes
- * Solomon Modipane: Natural causes

- * James Lenkoe: Suicide by h
- · Caleb Mayekiso: Natural cau
- Michael Shivute: Suicide
- Jacob Monakgotla: Natural (
- * Imam Abdullah Haron: Natura

1971

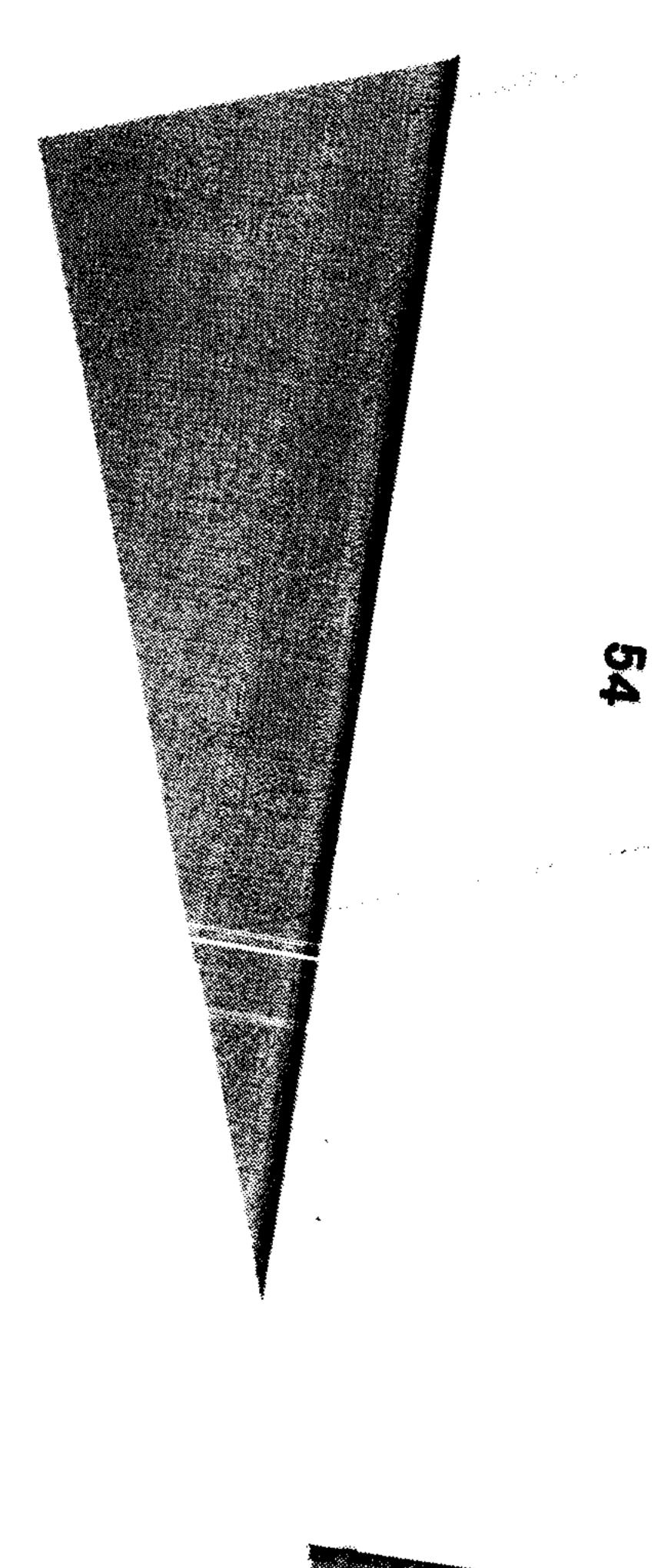
 Matayeni Cuthsela: Natural (
Ahmed Timol: Sulcide - jum) the 10th floor

1976

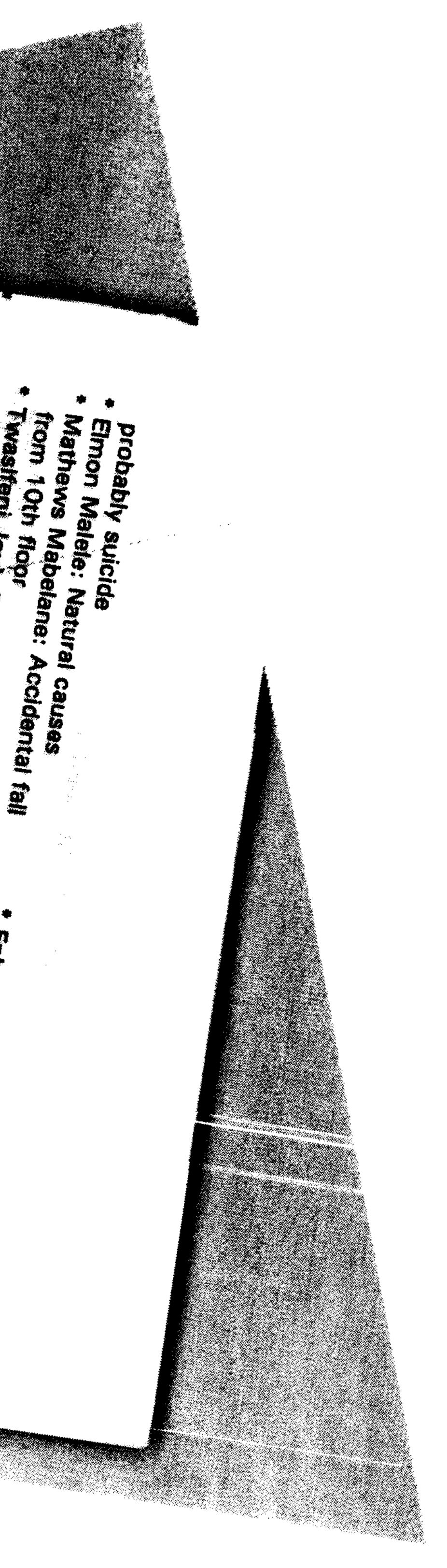
- Joseph Mdluli: Injury to nec falling against a chair
- William Tshwane: Shot whil to-escape. Justifiable homo-
- Mapetia Mohapi: Suffocation result of hanging
- * Like Mazwembe: Suicide by
- Dumisani Mbatha: Natural c
- * Fenuel Mogatusi: Natural ca
- * Jacob Mshabane: Suicide by
- * Unknown Person: Undisclos
- * Edward Mzolo: Undisclosed
- * Ernest Mamashila: Suicide by
- Thato Mosala: Natural cause
- Wellington Tshazibane: Suic jumped 6 floors down the s

1977

- * Lawrence Ndzanga: Natural
- * Dr Nanoath Ntshuntsha: Ha



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