**“ESQUIRE” The Family Man**

“Daddy was a very loving and God-fearing person. The most optimistic and enthusiastic individual I have ever known! We never heard the words “Failure or Set Back” in his vocabulary as a parent. Daddy aka “Esquire” was a great encourager and instilled in us godly morals; to love God first, love your family, others and yourself. He pumped us up with pride and confidence in who we were. His favorite phrase was “You’re the Greatest of All the Greatest.” Daddy always let us know that we meant the world to him and that we were not ‘a mistake’ because God had a Divine purpose for our lives. He made us feel special and honored us. Even though he traveled frequently, he still made time to go on trips with his children, cook and take us to church. He showed fatherly love to so many Cameroonians and others. Those who met him looked at him like a visionary.

My father instilled the love of our heritage in us. I remember as a child, asking him why he wore dashikis and big African robes and never wore a suit. His response was quite clear: “He didn’t wear European tribal clothes because he was not European and he wore African tribal clothes because he was an African.” [Hmm! that was easy for a child to retain] At that, Daddy was true to his word: he stuck to his beliefs till the very end.” …….***my thoughts Pamela Ekoto Engo - daughter***

Dad was part of the African Independence ERA. ***Activist Africa Engo, Paul’s youngest daughter made this comment about our father.*** “Dad was a great guiding force in my work and shaped my world view. The private conversations he and I had on his work were very shaping. When I was with him, he did make a context of global work in a personal way; and the reason he was great was because what he created in policy were things he believed personally. For instance he would refer to nations rushing to get control of sea beds in his maritime cases in the way nations robbed the continent of its resources and that related to his personal belief of Africa and Africans as powerful if they would be rooted in African pride. That is why he wore African robes to **affirm** his personal beliefs in his public work. Dad was the truth of his messaging and it showed in his policy and personal life. It is also why he interacted so easily with Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King and many great international diplomats; because he was in his truth and they respected him for that. He was internationally called, “The King” and was the only Judge at ITLOS to keep his African Hat on all the time, as the tradition required for a man of his status. That’s a great thing for a child to see in a father.”

“Every trip was a Fun-Filled Adventure! Daddy loved to sing and crack jokes. We looked forward to travel with a Ready-To-Go travel bag!! His ***daughter Abigail (Nina Engo)*** remembers; “We would go on historical site-seeing trips. In Cameroon, Daddy took us on trips including: Kribi (stopping to eat roasted plums, bush meat and mandarins), Mile 6 Beach in Victoria (now known as Limbe), Ambam to see how cocoa is processed to chocolate, Luna Park in Obala, went swimming at Mont Febe…oops! I almost forgot! Trips to BRIQUITERIE for soya and Kilishii, Ebolowo’o to enjoy the village for the weekends, Foumban to the Sultan’s Palace, the Sanaga in Bafia area, Nkongsamba at the falls and other places. There was never a dull moment with Esquire!

It was the same in the United States and wherever Daddy lived or visited with his family. Dad took us to different amusement parks (stopped for ice cream at the nearest Dairy Queen, seafood joints, etc), every Sunday after church we would go get Fried Shrimp in Brooklyn (waterfront), New York City (that was a given!!); he took us to Staten Is on a ferry; and we visited historical monuments like the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Statue of Liberty in New York City, Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC- and Ocho Rios in Jamaica; just to name a few. At the end of our trip; we wrote book reports about the trip and in the concluding paragraph; what we enjoyed and learned. We had serious discussions about these trips. Dad was a fun-loving upbeat kinda Guy! There was never a dull moment when he was around. His diverse cultural upbringing made him who he was”

***Paul’s daughter Teresa (Engo) Etame*;** reminisces as she makes this interjection: “Our father was a visionary and never stopped dreaming! He and his wife were one of the first people to buy land in Etoug-Ebe (now Yaounde 6 ) in the early 70s. He, the late Ambassador Lima and his late friend Steven Okang decided to move to this undeveloped side of town visualizing that progress will eventually come to the area. It finally did happen! Daddy also created a lake in our hometown Abang (approximately a mile wide) and planted various fish. It had a dual purpose:

1) to supply food/protein to the relatives in the village

2) for our hotel guests to enjoy boat rides and relax.

“Esquire was very much into Theatre Arts and Movies. I would also have to mention his love of films especially Westerns (like Magnificent Seven/Bonanza) and making home movies.  How many interviews did we all participate on camera with one of his friends? I remember holding up the credits “ENGO HOBBIES” at the beginning and end of these films.” ***reflections by Barbara Engo-Aranha - daughter***

“My grandfather was a great cartoonist,”***remembers granddaughter Kimina Engo-White.***

“I loved receiving birthday and Christmas cards from him because he would always add cartoon characters making lovely comments about me. I felt really special and on his last visit we sat by the lake behind our house and I was in awe just listening to him talk about all the places he took my Mom and her siblings to. It must have had a big impact because my Mom took after him taking us to amazing destinations".

***Grandson Paul B. Engo III*** is engaged in long jump and high jump; with every jump he says “This is for you, Grand-dad!!” According to Paul III, Grand-dad inspired him to do sports and he also wants to become a lawyer like Grand-dad. “After all we have the same birthday and same name!!” says young Paul III.

***Granddaughter Ekwara Hope***is also an athlete inspired by her grandfather. Her choice was basketball and she says that grandpa motivated her to be the best sportswoman she can be. “So here I am playing College Basketball on a full four-year scholarship. Thanks Grandpa, You’re the greatest of all the greatest!”

***Daughter MaDi reminisced***... “I was in awe when my brother Edjoa showed me some of the medals Dad won at the Commonwealth games. It made me proud to know my father was part of something historical.”

“My Grandfather coined the term ‘You are the greatest of all the greatest’ and shared it to anyone and everyone he held dear. However, I believe he didn’t realize how the power of his words encouraged and uplifted each person who heard them. Grandpa Paul was the greatest, he set the great mark and I love and respect him for that. He always reminded me that I was a Cameroonian and to never lose root in my heritage because it was the best and can never be changed.… ***thoughts from granddaughter - Viola Antonio-Engo***

“One of the warmest memories of my childhood was my father taking us crab hunting early in the morning before sunrise.  We would go to the ocean on the Victoria (now Limbe) coast line where black sandy beaches yielded hundreds of large crabs waiting to be steamed.  Dad would light a fire, put a huge pot of water on and show us how to catch and hold crabs without being pinched by their claws.

During the Christmas holidays, my father would take us to his village, Abang, Ebolowa. We would go to the cacao farm and just pluck the delicious fruit and suck on the seeds. Then on Christmas morning, we would take all day to open gifts because of Daddy's announcement antics, and after dinner we would all play his favorite card game 'Last Card' where he would always make sure that his only grand child at the time, Zahra and any younger siblings or cousins would win several games. Good memories”... ***quoted by daughter MaDi (Yondi) Engo***

“My grandfather was a very accomplished man. So accomplished that many of us in the family could agree that we have a certain level of confidence in our ability to become whatever it is that we desire in life, or at least try. We say to ourselves, "if he can do it, I can do it, because we share the same blood!" I thank him for setting a prominent example for the entire family.

In our conversations we talked about everything it seemed. I took those times with him seriously because it was a chance for me to learn something from someone who had the credentials and led by "example".  And because of that, I have a deep respect for him. The more I listened to him, I came to realize that he was one of the most down to earth people I had ever spoken to. He had a wonderful sense of humor (sharing personal jokes) and a realistic yet positive outlook on life. He was so much older than me, yet we related to one another as though we were best friends. I understood everything he was saying about life's journey. He was able to take the words right out of my mouth at times. I thank God that we were able to have that connection before he passed, because up until this day he still gives me inspiration. He is truly missed and I will always love him dearly!”**……*profound thoughts from granddaughter - Zahra Lysora.***

Our father admired and was inspired by Kwame Nkrumah (foremost proponent of Pan-Africanism), Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Nelson Mandela, was good friends with Mariam Makeba (Mother of Africa-of whom I was privy to meet many times as a child) and Martin Luther King, Jr.

I Thank God for giving us a kind and loving father with wonderful memories to always cherish. I will never forget when Daddy came to our rescue. This was in the early 70s and we were on our way to Yaounde for the Christmas Holidays. My siblings, our dear friend Hannah (Haddison) Williams and I took the train (Couchette) from Douala destined for Yaounde, the capital. All of a sudden the train developed engine problems and we were stuck in the middle of nowhere for several hours. Being the oldest, I had to be brave and console my younger siblings who were quite petrified at this point. Needless to say, I had butterflies in my stomach! I started praying that Daddy would come save us from this dilemma. Then all of a sudden, out of the thick of the forest appeared Daddy in his Mercedes Benz driving on the sandy ground. Wow! I thought to myself; God answers prayers in an instant!! Thank you Lord!! We jumped off the train dashing towards him crying out his name. There was such a relief among us. Abandoning the train and hopping into Dad’s car was such a secure feeling. As we left to go to Yaounde, we marveled at the path Dad took to get through to us. No road; just a clearing and two planks of wood that crossed over a stream. I will never forget that day!.......***.fondest memories– Pamela Ekoto Engo*** -***daughter***

**Many thanks to my entire family for corporately contributing to the almanac of our father, Paul Bamela Engo, Sr.**