Excerpts: His Highness the Aga Khan on his private aircraft

by NANOWISDOMS ARCHIVE OF IMAMAT SPEECHES, INTERVIEWS AND WRITINGS,

**Geoffry Barker:** It is often suggested that your affluent lifestyle is very different from that of most Ismailis who live mostly in the poverty of the Third World. Do you think that is a fair comment?

**Aga Khan:** I think that affluence is perhaps the wrong terminology. I do not seek to do things, in fact I have stayed away from things which did not seem to me to be good sense, where it was affluence for the sake of affluence. I'll give you an example. I have a private aircraft, but that aircraft today is flying between 450 and 600 hours a year. You take 600 hours of time -- that translates into approximately two months of working days.

I cannot afford, nor can people who work in my organisation, to eliminate two months of working time ... if you have to run an organisation in as diverse areas as I do there are certain things you've got to do to be efficient.

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 1979 The Age interview with Geoffry Barker, (Melbourne, Australia)


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**Caroline Pigozzi / Jean-Claude Deutsch:** How are your days organised?

**Aga Khan:** I allocate 90% of my time at Geneva and Aiglemont to institutional tasks. Our offices are open seven days out of seven, because with us Muslims, Sunday corresponds with Friday. I must be available on the week-end to receive institutional directors who pass through. My life is highlighted by official visits to the twenty or so countries where
members of the community live, which keep me moving from one end of the year to the next. This takes approximately six-hundred flight hours per year! To gain time, I always make sure I’m accompanied in my private plane by some assistants.

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 1994 Paris Match Interview (1st) with Caroline Pigozzi and Jean-Claude Deutsch (Paris, France) [Translation]

http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/850/

Margot Dougherty / Richard B. Stolley: The subject of money inevitably comes up when your name and your foundation are mentioned. Could you put to rest some of the myths?

Aga Khan: A lot of stories have been told. My grandfather’s jubilees were events which the Western media thought were very spectacular. The impression was given that very substantial amounts of money went straight into his personal wealth. These funds are offered to the Imam because he is the Imam, and he uses these funds for the benefit of the community. My grandfather left me some wealth which I use for my own living. I have some institutional expenses. If I didn’t occupy the office of Imam, I wouldn’t fly on a private aircraft, I wouldn’t have a secretariat of some 100 people. You really should apply to the Imam the same criteria you would apply to any public office. But that's never been done, because there has been a sort of inheritance of gloss. Maybe I should have addressed that issue more quickly. I have felt that the area of the world I work in has not had the misperception; that's much more a Western misperception.

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 1983 Life Magazine Interview with Margot Dougherty and Richard B. Stolley (New York, USA)

http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/2997/

Anne Loesch: You travel a lot, do you not? You have even bought a plane ...

Aga Khan: Yes. To make time. I spend more than six hundred hours flying, going from one community to another. I fly to India next month, actually. I am happy to keep returning often rather than to stay too long in any one location; you can better appreciate the problems when you come with fresh eyes. So the plane has rendered great service: I
have the leisure to take stock and I have solved many problems in the sky.

His Highness the Aga Khan's 1967 Jeune Afrique Interview (1st) with Anne Loesch (Paris, France) [Translation]

http://www.nanowisdoms.org/nwblog/1436/

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