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GOLDEN LEGACIES

MARWA

EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP
IN PUBLIC SERVANTSHIP



*Plus - Evidences & The Secrets
of His Success in Lagos*

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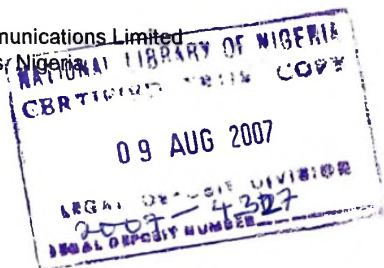
MARWA

EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC SERVANTSHIP

*Golden Legacies of a Leader
Foremost a Servant
Plus
Evidences and The Secrets
of His Success In Lagos*

OLUSEGUN B.A. OBANLA (B.Sc., M.Sc., AMNIM)

Maclords Communications Limited
Lagos, Nigeria



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DEDICATED TO

*The Ever-Living God, The Author of Life,
By whose Grace We Live and Triumph over evil.*

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REPORT

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FOREWORD

This is a book which is timely, simple and practical, written about one soldier with a difference, one who has demonstrated his love and commitment in truly serving the people he governs. ***"Exemplary Leadership in Public Servantship"*** encapsulates the success story of Colonel Mohamed Buba Marwa within two years of his administration in Lagos State and the essential elements of his success.

Nobody is perfect. No doubt, Colonel Marwa might not have pleased some individuals in certain regards but the picture he has cut in the eyes and minds of the generality of the people of Lagos State has been such a beautiful one and it is well captured and clearly expressed in the last chapter of this book. What you sow is what you reap. Whoever does good and has served truly well can be sure that people will speak well of him, sooner or later.

As we try to redirect the affairs of Nigeria for true unity, growth and development, it is important that our leaders and public office holders and Nigerians generally should learn and change for the better. The secrets of Colonel Marwa's success as articulated in this book are worthy of emulation.

I commend this book particularly to all those who are now aspiring to hold public office or may be interested in leadership at any level in the governance and administration of our great country. It is also a challenge to scholars and practitioners of Public Administration. Books like this are needed. I commend Obanla's modest attempt.

Chief (Dr.) Molade Okoya-Thomas
Asoju Oba of Lagos,
Lagos, August 1998.

P R E F A C E

This book is the product of watchful observation and careful study of the man, Mohamed Buba Marwa and his administration in Lagos State from the distance of an unknown independent observer over barely two years he has governed the State.

The urge to write this book had become irresistible given one's intense admiration of his result-oriented leadership and overwhelming tangible achievements from his early days in office. Indeed, Marwa markedly stands out as a case study for those keen on how a good government should be run. That is what this book is all about. Here is an attempt to document the success story of the Marwa Administration and the main elements and factors accountable for his success from the standpoint of an independent public analyst for the benefit of others.

By calling, I am an evangelist, a teacher and the General Overseer of a very young Christian Ministry. God-fearing leadership is the theme of this book - "***Exemplary Leadership in Public Servantship***". The Lord's standard is clear. "The greatest among you will be your servant and if anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all". Total selflessness in truly committed service to the people is the real mark of leadership from God's standpoint. This mark has been conspicuously registered on Colonel Mohamed Buba Marwa in his administration of Lagos State. Selfless men and effective public administrators like Marwa appear uncommon in Nigeria today. Yet, our leaders can be even better than Marwa if they would imbibe and govern with the fear of God like him.

God bless you.

O.B.A.

Lagos, July, 1998.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This book has been made possible by the concerted team work of a number of people. I wish to register my profound gratitude to all workers of Maclords Communications Limited who assisted the production of this book in various ways, especially in the conduct of the public opinion survey, collation and typing of the materials making up the book, proof-reading, computer type-setting, and design. Mention must be made of my friend and colleague, Evangelist Paul 'Kayode Fabamwo whose support and computer work I so much value. I cannot but mention the names of Pastor Mustapha, Brother Lanre Solesı and Samuel Akpofure for their encouragement, material and spiritual support. The typing work had rested squarely on Miss Titilayo Akinkuowo and she gave herself unreservedly to the job, so also Miss 'Timi Nosika in the area of computer type-setting.

Without the enablement in terms of material support by way of various published materials on Colonel Marwa and his administration in Lagos State, this book could not have been as rich as it is in information about the projects and activities of the government and the life of Colonel Marwa. My gratitude goes to the Secretary to the State Government, Mrs. Olufunmilayo da-Silva for her sisterly support and encouragement. My greatest indebtedness is to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Alhaji Chief M. A. A. Olagbaye who was formerly the director-general, Plans, Programmes and Budget Department in the Military Administrator's office. He has been a prominent motivator and the chief facilitator of this book. I also thank the Chief Press Secretary to the Military Administrator of Lagos State, Mr. Sina Ogunbambo whose edition of "Marwa in the Eyes of The Press", Volume One has proved so useful in assembling the speeches and quotations of Colonel Marwa presented in this book.

I thank my wife, Olufunmilayo, who stood firmly by me all through the period of writing this book and who has been a steady pillar of support in my journey through life.

It is not possible to mention the names of all that have contributed to this book in one way or the other. I thank all. Above all, all thanks, all honour and all glory belong to the Lord who has made this book a reality.

O.B.A.
Lagos, July 1998.

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Part One

MARWA

WHO REALLY IS HE ?

Chapter One

A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF HIS LIFE

*"From childhood to adulthood, my world has been
built around the Barracks"*

- M.B. Marwa

Birth and Place of Birth

In very ordinary circumstances of life many years ago, God gave a son to the noble Marwa family of Michika in the present Nigerian State of Adamawa. That son was the child born in Kaduna on September 9th, 1953 to a veteran soldier, Marwa who fought on the side of the British forces in Burma during the Second World War and served in the Nigerian Army for forty years before retiring as a captain in 1984, perhaps the longest serving. The son's name is Mohamed Buba Marwa, at the time of writing this book, the Military Administrator of Lagos State, a Colonel but already a Major, senior in rank to his father as at the time of his retirement in 1984. Today Mohamed Buba Marwa is the pride of his father, his people, his family, the Nigerian military, the people of Lagos State and the nation at large, given his sterling qualities and, much more, his enviable brilliant performance in the matter of state administration, especially as Administrator of Lagos State.

Upbringing and Childhood:

Mohamed Buba Marwa's childhood life was spent in the company of his widely travelled strict father whose military service was characterised by extensive postings around Nigeria. He had lost his mother when he was just about three and a half years old and could hardly recollect how her mother looked until a friend of the mother gave him her photograph almost forty years after her death. Even the picture was in such a state that required urgent restoration to preserve it. Marwa grew up under the stern discipline of his very religious Moslem father, a soldier who belonged to the Nigerian Army Physical Training Corps. The common indulgences of childhood were

far removed from him by his devout Moslem father who on many occasions performed the role of an Imam. His childhood was strictly guided by definite regulations to assure careful observance of fundamental Islamic principles regarding daily life, home training, and obedience to God and one's parents. Colonel Marwa recalled that on one occasion someone sent him to help buy cigarette and he did, his father flogged him seriously for ever running such an unwholesome errand. He was never to touch cigarette or alcohol; that was the father's rule. He recalled another time the father instructed him, because he was considered underage, not to join other children to go to participate in the National Independence Anniversary Celebration at a stadium and he sneaked out to the stadium. The father came right to the stadium, fished him out of the crowd and gave him a beating he could not forget.

Due to incessant transfers of his father from one duty post to the other, little Marwa had found himself moving from one army barracks in one part of Nigeria to another, having therefore his growing up spanning stays in Kaduna, Enugu, Zaria, Port Harcourt, Lagos, Abeokuta, Jos and Calabar, a background that obviously tells on his total-Nigerian, detribalized outlook and which makes him feel at home easily in whatever part of the country and amidst whichever class or tribe of people he finds himself. Indeed Colonel Marwa was quick to tell Nigerians that his posting to Lagos as Administrator was some sort of home coming, having spent a significant part of his childhood days as well as some part of his adult life in Lagos prior to his posting. On his first day in Lagos State as Administrator, he had told the Oba and the people of Lagos: *"Even before this deployment, I have always considered myself a Lagosian. I completed my elementary school here"*. Marwa never hides the fact of having spent virtually his entire life in and around Nigerian military barracks. *"From childhood to adulthood, my world has been built around the barracks"*, he disclosed. And he added: *"It was very exciting because that gave one that early advantage of mingling with various tribes"*

as it were, in addition to which of course is the fact that one grew up in the barracks itself which was made up of all the ethnic groups". Quite a socially integrating exposure he has had from childhood in the barracks, and the barracks with its pervasive wash of military life, chose his life career for him.

Education:

His primary education began in Enugu in the late 1950's and ended in Lagos in 1964, the year he sat the entrance examination into the Nigerian Military School, Zaria (held at the Abalti Barracks in Lagos) and came out in flying colours, passing the subsequent interviews and securing admission. Before his admission into the Nigerian Military School, he had also gained admission into one or two secondary schools in Lagos including St. Gregory's but had to jettison those schools for the Nigerian Military School, Zaria given his already circumstantially conditioned preference for a military life career like his father. And once in the military school, Marwa was resolutely determined to do his father proud by facing his studies and excelling in his examinations. In due time, very studious Marwa had completed his secondary education at the Nigeria Military School and got admitted into the regular course at the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna as a cadet, again coming out tops. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant into the army, starting in the Nigerian Army Reconnaissance (Recce) Corps and later having his firm military professional footing as an Armoured Corps officer.

Colonel Marwa's notably profound intellectual and scholastic capability is evidenced by his earning two Masters degrees from two famous reputable American universities. He holds a Masters in International Relations from the University of Pittsburgh and another in Public Administration from world-reknowned Harvard University, both in the United States of America. But for his quasi-military and public service engagements, he was to pursue a doctorate programme at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, which he has put on hold for the time being. The latitude of his military skills, knowledge, aptitudes

and behaviour have been further sharpened and fortified by various professional courses he attended both locally and overseas. He had attended both the Junior and Senior Staff College Courses at the Command and Staff College, Jaji, Kaduna.

Other courses he had attended include:

- * Communications Instructors Course - Armour School, Pakistan
- * Regimental Senior Officers (RSO) Course - Nigerian Army Signal School, Apapa.
- * Regimental Senior Officers (RSO, All Arms) - Military College of Telecommunications Engineering, India.
- * Armoured Officers Basic Course - Fort Knox, USA.
- * Armoured Officers Advanced Course - Advanced Corps Centre and School, Ahmadnagar, India.

Appointments and Work Experience:

An outstanding and forthright armoured officer, Colonel Mohamed Buba Marwa has set an enviable track record in the various command and staff appointments he has held since he was commissioned. At various times, he has been Troop Leader, Squadron Captain and Squadron Leader; Adjutant, 3 Recce Regiment; Deputy Assistant Adjutant/Quartermaster-General (QMG), and the Brigade Major, 23 Armoured Brigade; and later Commanding Officer, 233 and 212 Tank battalions.

At the Nigerian Army headquarters, he served as Staff Officer (SO), 'Army Equipment'; Fighting Vehicles'; and Staff Duties/Plans (Department of Armour). He also at a time served as Aide-de-Camp (ADC) to the then Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant-General Theophilus Yakubu Danjuma.

A brilliant scholar and an astute soldier, Colonel Marwa was also at one time the Academic Registrar of the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna when it assumed the status of a degree-awarding institution.

As a Lieutenant Colonel, he was Deputy Defence Adviser (Army) in the Nigeria Embassy in Washington D.C, U.S.A. when he was recalled and appointed Military Governor of Borno State on June 8, 1990 by the

Babangida Administration, a post he held until January 1992. Again, as a rather startling coincidence and a providential repetition of history, Colonel Marwa was Defence Adviser to the Nigerian Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, U.S.A. when in August 1996 he received the signal ordering his immediate return to Nigeria to assume the office of Military Administrator, Lagos State, to which he was sworn in on 21st August, 1996. He formally assumed office on 22nd August 1996 when he received the handing-over notes from his predecessor, Colonel Olagunsoye Oyinlola.

Colonel Marwa's resourcefulness as an intellectual in the army has yielded two books which are marked "Marwa Military Series". Marwa Military Series One is the "Nigerian Army Dictionary" in which several key military terms and words are defined. Marwa Series Two is entitled "Military Appreciation", written purposely to meet a specific identified need of officers attending courses at the Command and Staff College where he had doubled as an examiner at a time, for the entrance examinations.

Other Information

Colonel Mohamed Buba Marwa is happily married with children. The first wife, Mrs. Zainab Marwa, a nurse by profession, is a southerner of Igbo origin from Owerri, another clear pointer to Colonel Marwa's detribalized personality. The second wife, Mrs. Munirat Marwa, a product of Ahmadu Bello University and the chairperson of the Lagos State Family Support Programme (FSP), became the wife of Colonel Marwa towards the end of his tenure as Military Governor of Borno State. She is a princess from Gashua and a lasting testimony to the impressive performance and giant landmarks that Marwa registered in Borno State during his tenure as Military Governor. The two women are both proud mothers of Marwa's children - three sons and four daughters. Zainab has two sons and two daughters who were born prior to Col. Marwa becoming a military governor. The two sons are in the USA. Munirat has two daughters and a son who was born in Lagos during her husband's tenure as administrator.

Colonel Marwa is an agile sportsman and a 'bookworm'. He has an avid appetite for serious literature and reads a lot. As a sportsman, he made the Nigerian Army team for hockey and for long and triple jumps, with some exposure in boxing and other games through watching soldiers train under his father in the gymnasium in the early days of his life. He plays squash and chess.

An outstanding character of this bright star called Marwa is that he has an uncanny knack for excellence and problem-solving which he calls "the love of challenges". To him, where there is a will, there is always a way. "Problems are meant to be solved". Where there is a problem, a solution lurks in the corner somewhere for those who are discerning to apply. This summarises his attitude. He has a human face with a human heart, though he may pounce at problems and bottlenecks like a lion out to devour.

Marwa is a go-getter, an intelligent and brilliant person full of initiative, determination and courage to achieve given visions. He is a very knowledgeable administrator, a strict disciplinarian, yet so kind and so accessible. He is a very hard-working, honest, unassuming leader who does his homework and his calculations very well in every decision situation. A publication which chronicled his achievements and exploits as the Military Governor of Borno State described him as a 'Workaholic' of some sort, so much so that he was reported to have overworked himself to the point of breaking down. Even his workers, the commissioners, the permanent secretaries, his personal staff and others down the ladder in the Lagos State public service would always attest to his indefatigable working spirit and relentlessness in devotion. His commitment was never sagging and he was a no-nonsense man who would never feign his disdain and hatred for indolence and corruption.

He told Lagos civil servants on his first meeting with them: "*Lagos must work, Lagos must move*" "*No sukusuku, No magomago here*". He had preached the importance of probity, discipline, punctuality, accountability and commitment to duty at that meeting.

When swearing in his commissioners and some directors-general later, he warned that his administration had no room for indolent and dishonest officials. *"I will not hesitate to show anyone the way out should he/she fall below expectation"*, he sternly emphasized.

Colonel Marwa also had this to say of himself when addressing the commissioners and directors - general. *"I am a strict person. I believe that the assignment we are committed to is voluntary as none of us is conscripted against his wish. Your attitude to work should be exemplary as my style of leadership is leadership by example"*.

Those were the words of the Military Administrator of Lagos State, but what is Marwa like in his private life? Journalists many times have asked him.

"Your Excellency, Lagosians know you as a soldier and as an administrator, but we believe there are two sides to a coin. Could you tell us a little bit about Colonel Mohamed Marwa as a family man?" (THE GUARDIAN On Saturday, February 22, 1997, Page 6). Colonel Marwa would not say I am this or that, but is he truly what he appears to be in public?

Chapter Two

MARWA IN ORDINARY LIFE AT HOME

"What do you want to know? I am generally a private person".

- M.B. Marwa

Persons in high positions often times bear little or no semblance in their private ordinary life to the personality they appear to be in their public (official) life. Behind the media mask and the glittering facade of a pleasant positive personality, discoveries are often made, shockingly though, of an unmasked pseudo-Machiavellian entity far removed or distant from the publicly known media-orchestrated image, even right in their homes. This may explain why many in high positions make strenuous efforts to shield their private lives from receiving any probing attention of the public, particularly the press and so much fuss is often made about people intruding their privacy. One was naturally curious to dig into the private life of this enigma administering the state of Lagos when he would not give an insight into his family life but had simply asserted "I am generally a private person". Is Marwa quite different from what he is in the public glare? No doubt, a man's true self or real personality is better revealed in his private life. This is the reason the searchlight has been beamed on the life Colonel Marwa lives outside the public glare, particularly his private life at home, among friends, and outside the high public office of a state administrator. What really is he like in private life and how does he relate with common folks, his family members and the less-privileged?

At The Home Front

He rises daily usually by or before 5.00 am. His day starts with God when he does his morning prayers like other members of his family are guided and are accustomed to. Marwa is not just religious but a man of strong faith in God to whom prayer has become a second

nature. Colonel Marwa takes his relationship with God very serious and does not joke with his prayers. In deed, that this is so is evidenced by his averments when receiving the handing-over notes from his predecessor in office. *"I will administer the state with open mind, the fear of God and clear conscience"*. He may not read the Bible, yet intuitively, he knows and believes that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom" and that "if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from Him anything we ask, because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him" It is the belief of Colonel Marwa, that divine guidance and the mercy of God is the key to success in any human endeavour. According to him, *"you can be as clever as you think, you can be the best management wizard, but you still have the Almighty God whose final blessing is required for you to succeed in anything"*. He had no regrets in his life. *"No, on the other hand, every day when I wake up and before I go to bed, I say my prayers: I thank God"*. God is first and last in Colonel Marwa's life every day.

Marwa, in his private life is a well organised man who lives a clearly structured or regimented life. Time is precious to him and he is undoubtedly accustomed to the characteristic regimentation that attends military life. His day and his time is structured to maximize results or call it, productivity. A typical day is divided into three segments though he would not tell you this. He has his 'Morning Life', the 'Day Time' and the 'Night Life'. Morning life is devoted to first meeting God in prayer and committing the day into His hands, getting a clear focus for the day, basic attention to family welfare and preparing for the day's work or normal day time engagements. Day time is normally for work - official and otherwise - including personal engagements and appointments. In any case, inspite of the regimentation that has been identified, Col. Marwa is an all-time worker. Even the night life is never spared of its share of the work that must be done and attention to the home end. One thing he would always do every night was to review the day, both for him personally and the home in general. He ensures feed back from family members on how they fared and would usually conduct a periscope of what was achieved by him as

against what ought to be achieved according to his plan or agenda for the day so as to ensure a proper focus, monitoring, control and preparation for the next day. His day in private life appeared to be ever focused, and even in public life, this was the case. Colonel Marwa believed that his success in public life could be explained, given the grace of God, by his being focused and committed. His nights as military administrator are usually loaded. He would always retire into his home office till very late in the night to finish up pending work for the day or to prepare for the following day. He would normally round up his entire day by returning to God in prayers before going to sleep each night, usually very late.

Marwa with his Immediate Family

Mohamed Marwa is a family man to the core. He is loving and loved by all. Members of his family and his children are ever doting on him. He is a very strict but loving father who cares much for the well-being of the entire family. They all respect him so much because he cares and they have got so much to learn and copy from him. His leadership role in the family has never been a subject of question as he offered direction, support, guidance and counselling to all to enable them cope effectively with life.

The children love their father deeply yet they hold him in awe for his stern posture on discipline that they would ever wish and pray to do what pleases him. To them, "whatever is not pleasing to Daddy is unwelcome" "Train your children the way they should go and they will give you rest" Marwa's two older sons are in the USA pursuing their education and managing to cope with life on their own while the two grown-up daughters (the younger being about fifteen) pride themselves as daddy's brides at home. Of course, children usually provide more objective pictures of situations, things and persons through their descriptions or affirmative conduct. Marwa's daughters are already painting their father as the picture of a model husband. Sometime ago when one of Colonel Marwa's two grown up daughters, Uwani was graduating from Essence International School, Kaduna, she impressed it on her father that she would be very

sad if he did not attend the ceremony with her. Colonel Marwa, being the loving father he is, quietly took time out of his herculean schedule of state administration in hectic Lagos to attend his daughter's graduation in Kaduna, posing with her for a memorable photograph in the company of the mother, Zainab. It was such a lovely memorable occasion for them. The daughters all treasure their father's company.

Colonel Marwa has always been very caring. Several years ago, when he took a loan from the Federal Mortgage Bank, Yola Branch, he bought his first Mercedes Benz Car from it and also bought for his wife, Zainab, a Toyota Hiace bus from which "she made good money" This fact which was made known to Nigerians by Colonel Marwa himself was also attested to by his wife. Hajia Munirat Marwa, the Lagos FSP Chairperson could not hide her admiration, respect and love for her husband. Asked what she enjoyed doing, she had said emphatically without any hesitation, "my first pleasure is spending time with my husband and my kids". Studies in the nature of man (sociological and psychological) have established that people like spending and enjoying time in the company of personalities they find exciting, caring and complimentary. And Hajia Munirat also says with pride and readable innocence: "that time we were still in New York, my husband was a Defence Adviser to the United Nations. I was strictly a home-maker looking after my husband and my kids". As Chairperson of the Lagos State Family Support Programme (FSP), she also revealed that she considered it a challenge to meet up with the enviable standard her husband has achieved in the administration of Lagos State, for which reason she was always going to meet him in his private office at home after official hours to seek his advice and suggestions on many issues, given "his sincerity of purpose to serve". Hajia Munirat sees her husband as a very simple person who loves to make life easy and better for people, one who would not want to make himself a burden to anyone. To buttress her point, she explained that her husband was a man of simple taste. "Occasionally I cook some northern dishes for my husband which the cooks do not know how to prepare, but He eats anything he gets". Mrs. Munirat Marwa, explaining

that she drew inspiration from serving the less privileged, had said. "These are people without anything and my husband has a lot of these people in heart". This is a testimony that has been corroborated by very many people and by Colonel Marwa's open conduct.

Chapter Three

SOCIAL LIFE, RELATIONSHIPS & OUTLOOK

"I appreciate the fact that in the officer-corps of the Nigerian military, there are decent people like you, Colonel Marwa"

- Chief Gani Fawehinmi

Soft-spoken Marwa is not a man of many words. He is a good listener and one who is ever careful in his choice and use of words. He has a firm control over his tongue and is irritated and put off by gossips, idle talks and pettiness. He is frank and straight forward, calls a spade a spade, yet very polite and courteous. To those who are close to him, he is a pleasant humorous person whose jokes are always apposite and full of wisdom.

Those who know him closely in private life see him as a man of many parts who has no difficulty in making friends and in integrating himself into a given social setting or class. In practical terms, Marwa has friends in every part of Nigeria and from different tribes. Moreover, he has a very close relationship with common people whom his wife, Munirat, maintains occupy a prominent position in his heart. Marwa is in close touch with his roots as well. He is a people's man who delights in doing what he can to better the lot of his people. Traditionally, he would not despise or throw away the Fulani instinct of animal husbandry. He supports the maintenance and preservation of the 'gado' which assures the rearing and keeping of cattle, rams and goats in the family line. Through this system he supports many other people.

It is the opinion of some acquaintance that Marwa enjoys a unique aura which favourably predisposes people to like and respect him and which explains why he makes friends so easily, even with more elderly and highly positioned people as well as the common folks. A critical study and observation of the man, Marwa however has shown that his naturally endowed, polished leadership qualities and unfeigned concern for the welfare of others are the key factors which endear him to many hearts.

Mohamed Buba Marwa grew up in the company of his strict disciplinarian father, having lost his mother when he was just about three years old. He was brought up by his stern father, in the largely manly environments of military life which may explain why Marwa is very strong-willed, courageous, unemotional, and never overwhelmed by any problem, circumstance or development. Rather, according to him, he feels challenged when faced with problems and he is motivated by challenges. He has a special interest in getting things repaired or restored and in solving problems.

Prior to and long before his appointment as the administrator of Lagos State, Marwa in private capacity like many other well-meaning Nigerians had always wondered what was becoming of life in Lagos, given the widespread insecurity of life and property occasioned by armed bandits and robbers. *"You see, even though one was serving outside Lagos, we were always here for one thing or the other, and during those visits, I was surprised. Is there no authority in this place? One knew there was a peculiar problem in Lagos, but they were surmountable..... I had no doubt that they were problems that could be addressed"*. He even narrated his experience in the hands of 'area boys' on one of such visits when he was almost rough-handled and robbed and the soldier in Marwa had to come to the fore bringing out his pistol in self-defence. The 'area boys' had at this point immediately dispersed but Colonel Marwa wondered what would have been his experience if he had not his pistol on him and pitied the average or ordinary man on Lagos Streets for the horrors they had to face every time.

Marwa is at home with all major Nigerian staple foods, having grown up in every part of Nigeria. Much more, he is a man of simple taste when it comes to satisfying his appetite. Marwa, like a soldier at the war front, eats anything available as long as it will not undermine his agility, mobility and functionality. Some journalists who went after him at home had reported that they met Marwa eating rice and 'dodo' and he immediately invited them to join him at table, which they did.

The journalists could not but wonder at the fine gentle mien of the man who had been making things happen in Lagos State, especially his disarming, suave disposition in courteously handling even the so-called 'satanic' questions which they asked him.

Marwa privately often extends the hand of friendship and charity to many homes, particularly the less-privileged, but he hates to blow any trumpet regarding this. He does what he wants to do and moves on. This informed what some have called "Marwa's ram diplomacy", when he sent a gift of two rams from his 'gado' to radical social critic and human rights crusader, Chief Gani Fawehinmi during the 1997 Muslim Sallah Festival of Eid-El-Kabir. Even though Chief Fawehinmi did not accept the gift which he thought could be a 'Greek gift', Colonel Marwa had explained that he had deep personal regard for the social critic and that the gifts were not with any strings attached. Chief Gani Fawehinmi could not help speaking his mind and paying tribute to Marwa, saying: "I appreciate the fact that in the officer-corps of the Nigerian military, there are decent people like you Col. Marwa". Marwa had been forced at that time to reveal that more than half of his 'gado' had been committed to assisting the less privileged and not just people in Chief Fawehinmi's social class.

Marwa is a hard-working, resourceful man in the Nigerian military who believes that it is quite possible to hold public office dutifully, truthfully and incorruptibly. He also believes that one could make money and acquire wealth legitimately without soiling one's hands and name. Indeed, he is one of the few young officers that could be said to have earned a name for himself within the Nigerian military class. While launching one of the books by Colonel Marwa - Marwa's Military Series Two on 'Appreciation' - at the Chief of Army Staff Annual Conference on Monday 21st January, 1991, the then President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida had described him (then a Lieutenant Colonel) as belonging to the class of "Army Officers with patriotic intellectual perception".

General Babangida had proudly declared: "He has been my student, my staff, my subordinate through-out the few years he has served in the Army. Lt.-Col. Marwa has written a useful guide to tactical appreciation which I believe will assist young officers in their chosen career. I would very much like to see in our officers the likes of Lt-Col. Marwa's intellectually responsible minds in the Nigerian Army. He has every reason to be proud of his contribution to our development ". Surely Marwa has a name to protect, even more so now than before.

In his private life, Marwa is a tireless work machine and an avid reader. He is usually held up in his home office/study for many hours attending to official or personal work. He reads extensively and on this, he offers an explanation, "*Reading expands the capacity. It also helps you intellectually*". But this is not to say that the man, Marwa is all work and no play. He is sociable, a lover of good music and a sportsman of diverse interests.

In 1979, when he was a brigade major in Bauchi, Marwa had on visiting the officers' Mess, found broken down pianos, guitars and other musical instruments - all that one needs to raise a band. He sought the Brigade commander's consent to repair the equipments and it was granted. In no time, the whole lot had been repaired and restored for use by a musical band raised by Marwa and which he personally managed, even to the stage of waxing an elpee. The band under the management of talented Marwa used to play twice a week, even with weekend shows in hotels, but he was essentially not an instrumentalist though he played the side-drum.

In the area of sports, he had made the Nigerian Army team for hockey and for long jump and triple jump in his early days in the army, in those exciting yester years.

He now delights in playing squash rackets and chess which he considers as intellectually stimulating. No doubt, Marwa is a disciplined rugged soldier, a brilliant scholar and above all a very fine, humble gentleman whose private life is radiantly exemplary. He is selflessly committed to achieving his goals. He is a man on a mission that must be

accomplished no matter the sacrifice required of him. Therefore he had declared with an impeccable note of seriousness and commitment: *“Most of these social life and so on I have put them in the background now. There is so much to do. I would be happy to hear after I leave, that I have done my best”* Pious and self-effacing Marwa described his appointment as the Administrator of Lagos State (having earlier served as a military governor in Borno State) as *“a very humbling situation because it is not easy to even be appointed as an administrator at all, considering the fact that it’s not that you are the best man; it’s not that you are most intelligent”*. What a humble man, yet so tough and so gentle!

Chapter Four

MARWA, THE SOLDIER AND THE SCHOLAR

*"In this Lagos, I will dig in and do what I am expected to do.
I certainly will not attempt to do anything foolish"*

- M. B. Marwa.

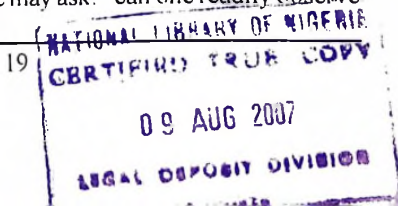
Let us start by agreeing that a professional soldier is one who is thoroughly equipped to do battle and is knowledgeable and skilled in the art and science of fighting wars. To him, soldiering or fighting battles is a way of life to which he is irrevocably committed. Characteristically, professional soldiers are normally men of strength, courage, discipline, commitment and valour. In the Nigerian social and political context, however, many of our so-called professional soldiers can be said to have fallen short of this conceptual characterization of a truly professional soldier. The Nigerian social and political landscape would appear to have reconditioned the Nigerian military class physically, mentally and psychologically so much so that many of our soldiers are no longer what they ought to be professionally. The situation is such that necessitates our asking if truly a man is a soldier when he is introduced or said to be one. Is Marwa really a soldier? How has he combined his calling as a soldier with the distinguishing marks of scholarship that have so visibly registered in his public discourse?

By education and training, but much more by practice and personal disposition, Marwa is a professional soldier to the core. According to Colonel Marwa, right from his childhood, he has always seen himself becoming a soldier like his father who served in the Nigerian Army for forty years and was one of the longest serving soldiers. Asked what he would have been if he had not been a soldier, Colonel Marwa had answered that he could not say because he had never given taking to any other profession an idea *"because I grew up completely within the military environment and right from the time I was a child, I always walked around wearing belt and my dad's uniforms and other things believing that that was the*

profession I was going to take to". For the same reason, Colonel Marwa explained that though he had already secured admission to one of the secondary schools in Lagos then in 1964, he still took the common entrance into the Nigerian Military School, Zaria and once he passed and scaled through the interview, getting admission, he "abandoned all others and went straight to Zaria".

"My dad never for once urged me to join the military. May be he didn't need to because I have lived in the military environment all my life. All through my childhood, I saw it as the only job I could do. I grew up in it and believed that was the job for me". And once in the military School, Colonel Marwa pursued his vision with zeal and determination to excel, firmly resolved to do his father proud. He passed all his examinations in flying colours. In due time he had finished his secondary education and proceeded to the Nigerian Defence Academy from where he graduated and was commissioned a Second-Lieutenant into the Nigerian Army, Starting his military professional practice in the Nigerian Army Recce Corps. Mohamed Marwa had the unusual experience of serving in the same rank with his father as Second Lieutenant in 1973 but in no time had surpassed his father in rank with the result that any time father and son met, *"my father saluted first. He took pride in saluting me first. Of course being my father, I always tried to beat him to it"*. Marwa's father retired as captain in 1984 after 40 years of meritorious service, most of which he spent in the Nigerian Army Physical Training Corps except during the civil war when he was drafted to head the Ikot Ansa Training School in Calabar. Like father like son, one would say.

Marwa's professional capability and skills have been enhanced by many local and international courses as well as a wide latitude of military appointments in both command and staff positions, as earlier enumerated in the general overview of his life. Having held fort as commander of a battalion, professionally oriented Marwa looks forward to becoming a Brigade Commander of the Armoured Corps. But one may ask: "can one readily observe



the soldier in this fine-looking gentleman of an administrator?" The skills, character and qualities of a professional soldier are very evident and unhidden in Colonel Marwa while his personal intellectual endowments and inherent scholarly resourcefulness have combined to produce a masterful finesse in his handling of people, problems and situations. Though he sees himself as a soldier to whom by tradition "orders are orders" and must be obeyed, Marwa is always conscious of his social setting as a public servant which is markedly different from the military setting of dictating orders. Yet, he approaches problems or objectives like a military strategist who sees his work as soldiering for the masses of the people to achieve determined ends. Hence, the ruggedness of a soldier often came to the front in a non-sense military style of dealing with situations. No wonder Lagos social problems have been tackled in warlike military fashions "Operation Sweep "Operation 100", Operation 250 ! One operation after the other!

Shortly after resuming work as the Administrator of Lagos State, Marwa had declared in clear military language, "*it is tough to govern Lagos but we will give it a shot. In this Lagos, I will dig in and do what I am expected to do*". Then he had explained himself. "*When you dig in military parlance, you dig in a trench like in defence and nobody can push you out*". He knew that being in charge would be meaningful only being in control. He had told the commissioners and the directors-general and all his workers including the Lagos State civil servants at the beginning of his tenure as administrator that there would be no room for any "sukusuku or magomago" in his administration. "*I will not hesitate to show anyone the way out should he/she fall below expectation*". Like a soldier at war, Marwa is very time conscious and manages his time critically well. Targets and goals are time bound and what must be done must be timely done. He had registered this strongly on the workers when, on his familiarisation visit to the office of the former Secretary to Lagos State Government, Chief Fidelis Adeyemi, he had explained that the purpose of his visit

was to determine the distance of the Secretary's office to his own so as to be able to know how long it should take the Secretary to reach his office anytime he sent for him. Yet Colonel Marwa would not accept that he is tough. Instead he maintains, ***"the correct thing is that I am positively result-oriented. Given an objective, (you) try to attain it correctly"***.

He wasted no time in dissolving the state's Executive Council and sending all the Commissioners inherited from his predecessor packing, once he discovered in barely one week of his tenure that they could not work with him.

"I have come to the inevitable conclusion that some urgent reorganisation is needed in the machinery of government if we are to meet our objectives". "In this regard, and as a first step", Marwa had announced the dissolution of the state executive council "with immediate effect", conscious that ***"in the military, timeliness and decisiveness is critical to leadership"***,

Earlier, before the announcement of the dissolution, Colonel Marwa had chided the commissioners and directors-general on account of some people who had gone ahead to withdraw Fifty Million Naira (₦50m) after and in spite of his order freezing all the accounts of the Lagos State Government to enable him sort out what the correct state of account was. He had categorically declared. ***"I am in the process of fishing out those responsible for this circumvention of my directives. I will find them and they will be punished"***. Colonel Marwa left no one in doubt that he was a soldier though it was not in his character to threaten anybody. Indeed, to him, ***"leadership is that capacity and capability to influence and harness resources - men and material - to bring about desired results, preferably through persuasive means"*** and at the least cost, not just at any cost. The skilful armoured officer sees a good leader as one who influences others and gets the objective attained with the least cost.

In his words, *"as a military commander, if you have the task to take an objective from an enemy, there are several ways you can go about it. But the best way that shows true leadership is that by which you can achieve the desired objective with less casualties in the loss of men and materials"*. Nonetheless, Marwa is apt to remind one of the situational element in leadership that often dictates the style or approach. *"There is a command element in military leadership that is absent in a civilian setting"*. He advises all the same that whatever the situation, your thumbs must be up. The situation must be under your thumb.

Colonel Marwa's inherent academic prowess and unfettered intellectual horizon have always come out crystal-clear in his day-to-day life even from his school days as a cadet in the Nigerian Defence Academy through the Staff College. The academic-minded soldier who was at one time the Academic Registrar of the Nigerian Defence Academy says of himself, *"I have always been interested in academics. Even after I left the Defence Academy, one had a deep-seated interest in academics, in reading"*. For that he has two Masters degree to show from two highly reputable American Universities - a Masters degree in International Relations from University of Pittsburgh and Master of Public Administration from highly rated Harvard University. He was to do a Ph.D at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria when he answered to the dictates of public servanthship in state administration and governance. *"I have no idea whether I can still pursue the Ph.D at this point when I am faced with the administration of Lagos State"*, Colonel Marwa had wondered when asked about his Ph.D programme. One striking thing about Colonel Marwa is the brilliance with which he handles both private and public discourse, revealing a rather confounding largeness and depth of mind which puts him undoubtedly and effortlessly in the class of the adroit intellectuals from the ivory tower. This is so evident in his talks, speeches and interviews that some people including his colleagues, friends, journalists, accomplished bureaucrats and management

technocrats have come to think that “if he hadn’t been a soldier, Colonel Marwa would have been a philosopher”.

His predecessor in office, Colonel Olagunsoye Oyinlola when presenting his handing-over notes to him, had described Colonel Marwa as “a superior who is intelligent”. He has been very brilliant right from school and is well respected by his colleagues. In 1975, when he took the promotion examination for the rank of Captain, he came out topping the list. He also came first, years later when he took the examination for promotion to the rank of Major which was also the entrance examination to the Command and Staff College, Jaji. In the Junior Division at the Staff College, Colonel Marwa also came first and was the first in the history of the Junior Division of the Staff College to earn a grading up and coming first again, years later in the Senior Division of the Staff College by dint of hard work and diligence in his studies for which he was well known. Marwa is not just a scholar by degrees. The thorough-bred soldier is a man with a large mind cut for excellence and broad vision. To Marwa, *“small minds discuss individuals and persons. The important thing is to discuss issues, ideas and institutions”*. The well-polished, widely exposed armoured officer has no room for pettiness and may not hide his disdain for barren senile minds. With unmistakable emphasis, he had opined, *“frankly, a senile mind is not good for the business of leadership and management”*

In Marwa is found an exciting, well-blended trinity of a soldier, scholar and administrator who loves and enjoys challenges because *“as soldiers, we are trained to cope with situations, to manage situations and to prevail over situations”*. And because of his highly sharpened mental and intellectual capability, Marwa has confidently declared: *“I certainly will not attempt to do anything foolish”*. In the wake of his being ambushed and trailed by bomb blasts round Lagos, the courageous, God-fearing soldier had told Lagosians that the bomb blasts have rather boosted his resolve to perform, given Lagosians’ massive demonstration of support for him and especially

because of his belief that *"unless and until God says your time is up, nobody, whoever it may be, can do anything. It is only God that determines when everyone will die. Only God gives life and can take life"*.

Marwa is an astute soldier who would not compromise his ardent love for his profession and one who wants the integrity and professional status of the Nigerian military to be restored and maintained. He has openly expressed this view on many occasions, even speaking to other soldiers and colleagues. *"Today, the military is in government. It is important for you to understand that this is not enough. We should not have been in office if not for circumstances. We are like fish out of water. We have to go back to the barracks where we belong"*

This being his position, there are many questions to answer.

How has Colonel Marwa stood the challenges of state administration in Lagos State? What are the evidences and secrets of his success? What lessons are to be learnt in the experiences and performance of Colonel Marwa in Lagos? Are there visible footprints he has left for those coming behind to follow? What legacies has he bequeathed that speak for him? These are some of the myriad of questions we shall set to answer in the second part of this book, the overview of which we will first consider.

Part Two

MARWA

IN LAGOS



Chapter Five

A MAN OF VISION WITH A MISSION

*"Vision is not just an element of leadership, it is critical.
A leader sees ahead. He sees what others are not seeing".*

- M. B. Marwa.

When on August 22nd, 1996 the baton of office was formally handed over to Colonel Mohammed Buba Marwa as the administrator of Lagos State, to say the least, peoples' expectations were very high. The people of Lagos State were generally in a state of heightened social and economic insecurity. The tension was high. Lagos was under the siege of armed robbers and assassins who operated in broad day light in open defiance of the nation's law enforcement and security agencies and in total disregard of the sanctity of human life. Lives of many law-abiding citizens were being abruptly terminated by armed bandits who unleashed terror on Lagosians dispossessing them, in swift movie-like operations, of their properties and assets especially cars, money and other valuables. Violent crimes peaked while, economically, life could not be said to be any better for the common man as prices of foodstuffs and other essential commodities continued to skyrocket. Social infrastructure in the State, particularly roads and transportation facilities, were in a disheartening, terrible state of disrepair and deterioration. The cost of accommodation was increasingly getting out of reach. It was a near-despair situation in which the people were totally losing hope unless a 'saviour' was sent.

Thus the sarcastic question that readily came to mind for many Lagosians on that day was; "what could this man do or could he be the saviour?" Moreover, many were openly disenchanted because, to them, the name did not quite ring a bell, not being a Yoruba man or a southerner whose genealogy was commonly known. While many saw him as just one soldier or Hausa man, yet many longed to know what stuff he's made of and has got to offer in meeting the challenges of administering a 'problem state' like Lagos. The elites were guidedly

poised to size him up by what he would say or do in his first few days in office. Even his background as a former Military Governor in the north-eastern state of Borno was discountenanced by many as not very significant because Borno, according to this class of people, was geo-politically, socially and culturally very different from Lagos State, the commercial and industrial nerve centre of Nigeria. Incidentally, an impression that has become very rife in Lagos and the south-western part of Nigeria at that time was that soldiers were largely semi-literates who knew possibly next-to-nothing about Public Administration but were just being forced on the people they governed. The general impression therefore was that only a thorough-bred personality (not likely from the military) could through the machinery of state governance and administration save the fabric of the society from further decaying and revamp it wholesomely. Eyes and hopes were already being shifted away from the military. Many simply resigned themselves to fate in a let's-wait-and-see attitude.

Marwa made his maiden broadcast to the people of Lagos State on 23rd August, 1996, and he immediately swung into action. No rhetorics! The man knew his onions well and it was obvious that he really had the right perception and the benefit of hindsight concerning the task of administering a state, especially one like Lagos. He could read in-between the lines of the handing over notes he received from his predecessor in office. He was able to gauge correctly the pause and the expectations of the general public and even the civil/public service to which he has been called to offer needed rejuvenating leadership.

Technically, success hinges much on a clear perception and definition of the problem(s) and the statement of objectives which provide direction for the activities and methods of mission accomplishment by an administrator or manager. Technocrats in public administration and management were therefore on their guard to watch the first steps of the new administrator. But Marwa knew

too well that “a leader must have vision” In his words, ***“You must have a picture of a projected future destination where you want to go, what you want to achieve” “Vision is not just an element of leadership, it is critical”.***

Colonel Marwa had a clear vision regarding his calling, and his mission statement was aptly striking. He promised to reciprocate the warm reception given him ***“in no small measure by a tenure of Service to the people of Lagos State. I stand firmly resolved in this pledge”.***

Of course, effective management requires that the effective practitioner should know his business, the environment in which his business is to be carried on, who the customers or beneficiaries of his products/services are, the opportunities, the problems, potentials and threats in both the internal and external environments in relation to his own strengths and weaknesses. Effective public administration requires not only that the administrator should be well grounded in the knowledge of the social, geo-political and cultural constituency in which he functions, but also in the economic dynamics of State Administration including the machinery of revenue generation and the efficiency/ effectiveness of tax efforts and public expenditure. The well groomed public administrator and military strategist knew this: ***“Each administrator is faced with a unique circumstance in each state. You have to deal with the culture and the uniqueness of the environment and the problems of the areas you are posted to”.***

Colonel Marwa proved his mettle as a public servant and a visionary administrator very sure of his mission right from the beginning. He not only took time to receive adequate briefings on the position of things in the state, he immediately embarked on a see-it - feel-it-yourself appraisal and know-your-people state tour to further concretize his vision and assure the appropriateness of considered strategies of mission accomplishment. He knew very well the importance of information in plan formulation, the definition of strategies and decision making.

The highly seasoned administrator never lost sight of the fact that while state and people's demands are numerous, the resources are highly limited. *"You can't satisfy everyone nor can you do everything"*. He charged Lagosians generally to co-operate with him and invited the co-operation of all and sundry including the Federal Agencies in Lagos State, the organized private sector and non-governmental organisations. More remarkably, he recognized the crucial need to pragmatically prioritise his projects and programmes according to the people's needs and the availability of resources, culminating in "a ranked list of priorities" an essential step and element in the planning process and given the defined relatively short span of his tenure. The two most disturbing problems received his immediate attention.

Colonel Marwa did not disappoint the people when he announced in his maiden broadcast that he was personally "shocked at the state of Lagos roads today" and that efforts would be made to address the situation urgently. His pronouncement that he was going to pay premium attention to the safety of lives and property and would himself assume the leadership of an expanded, stronger and more effective 'Operation Sweep' - the State's security outfit for combating armed robbery and other violent crimes received the applause of Lagosians. The people had their hopes enlivened, realising that they at least had someone who knew what their problems were and was committing himself to solving them. Lagosians again became hopeful. Marwa did not dash their hopes.

In a matter of days, Colonel Marwa had settled down to the arduous task of state administration and had come up with carefully articulated visions and missions in the different sub-sectors of state administration, the accomplishment of which he diligently pursued and from which he would not be distracted. His visions and missions as discerned through systematic observation and analytical appraisal are presented here.

A CODIFICATION OF THE VISIONS AND MISSIONS OF MARWA.

Public Security.

He envisioned a largely crime-free state where peace reigns and security of lives and property is assured as against the situation obtaining in the state at the time he took over. Therefore he resolved to pay premium attention to the safety of life and property. He further declared as he took over the direct supervision of "Operation Sweep":

"The situation of robbery in Lagos State is such that I am appalled. As a result, I have personally taken over "Operation Sweep". The war is now my war. Anytime robbers carry out an attack now, they attack me".

Roads.

Colonel Marwa was "personally shocked at the state of Lagos roads" which had become so dangerously bad. Lagos State being the centre of excellence, the visionary administrator immediately committed himself to a mission of restoring the roads in the state to really excellent conditions through a purposeful programme to "reinstate, rehabilitate, and maintain the road network in the state"

HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE CIVIL SERVICE

To carry the people and especially the State's civil servants along and imbue them with the correct visions to assure a unity of purpose and their unfailing motivation, to produce and bequeath a Civil Service that would continue to be "first among equals". These were visionary tasks that he seriously attended in his strategic choices and decisions.

"Lagos must work, Lagos must move", he told the civil servants and this became an official slogan of his administration.

Finance.

A prime objective and vision of the Marwa administration was to "enhance internal revenue performance" to assure efficiency, open accountability and the provision of services that will improve the quality of lives and welfare of the citizens of Lagos State.

Commerce, Industry And Tourism.

To foster and retain the pre-eminent position of Lagos as the industrial and commercial nerve centre of Nigeria and the most industrialized state in the Federal Republic of Nigeria through the provision of an enabling environment

Information, Culture and Sports

Marwa's government saw Information, Culture and Communication as veritable instruments for galvanising public opinion and mobilising the citizenry for active participation in societal development programmes, and especially to attain the national goal of democracy via the successful implementation of the Political Transition Programme with the support of the people. His administration viewed Lagos State as the heart beat of the nation's sports and centre of sporting excellence, providing opportunities for the physical development of youths and the actualisation of their latent potentials.

Education

The State's blueprint on education under Colonel Marwa set out to restore universal human values and discourage the debasement of scholasticism in Lagos State. It accorded greater prominence to education both as a basic right of Lagos State citizens and as a critical factor for restoring Lagos to its enviable position as the nation's citadel of learning.

Health:

Marwa's vision and mission in this area entailed the restoration of a healthy society through improved health care services and infrastructure for the prevention/control of diseases complemented by improvement in other social services in the area of security of lives, education, transportation, water supply, enhanced nutrition and sanitation.

Agriculture And Rural Development

The objective was to enhance the welfare and economic well-being of the citizenry by assuring food security through a revitalized programme of enhanced agricultural food stuff production, animal husbandry and fisheries with enhanced support services especially in the area of inputs provision, training and capacity building.

Justice:

Efficient, fast and effective handling of all legal matters affecting the State to assure the effective administration of justice and exterminate identified bottlenecks in the Legal and Judicial systems.

Environment And Physical Planning:

The Marwa Administration resolutely committed itself to improve the quality of the environment through carefully planned programmes of rehabilitation, reconstruction and better management of environmental infrastructure/resources.

Lands And Housing:

The mission was to provide decent and affordable housing for the people, to address the grave housing inadequacy for workers in the state and to ensure family and social security through its accelerated housing delivery programmes, land improvement policy and rent control.

Works:

Rapid, cost-effective and efficient provision, construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of physical social infrastructure state-wide for the comfort and convenience of the citizenry within the state's available financial resources and giving regards to internal manpower capabilities and endowments of the government.

Social Welfare and the FSP.

The focus was to alleviate poverty and uplift the lives of women, the poor, the less-privileged, the disabled and the socially disadvantaged members of the society, to generally strengthen Nigerian

families in dealing with the realities and challenges of life and to offer succour to the down-trodden and hope to the hopeless, especially victims of natural disaster.

Beyond the Visions.

The clarity of Colonel Marwa's visions was undoubtedly not in question. He had a very clear conception of his goals and objectives. But be that as it may. It is one thing to know where you want to go. it is another thing wisely choosing your means and methods of getting there and being committed to getting there, so that the journey is not unnecessarily prolonged, inherently vitiated or extraneously frustrated. There is so much to learn from Colonel Marwa. How did he do it? Did he really manage to achieve so much in so little a time? What are the evidences of his success?

Chapter Six

GOLDEN LEGACIES Evidences Of His Success.

"You see, the problems have been there for years. Every successive administration has tried its own bit. The sole thing that sticks out is the search for ideas, bringing about new ways of solving the problems. On the whole one thanks God for the achievements"

- M.B. Marwa

It is simple common-sense that it takes the polished gem of excellence in one to excel not only in administering but in wholesomely redeeming Nigeria's Centre of Excellence. Colonel Marwa effectively became the key pivot and the combatant pilot of the administration of Lagos State, on 22nd August, 1996. There is no question at all that he has succeeded brilliantly in moving the state forward taking many bold steps and confident giant strides where many have tottered and faltered.

Such has been the very splendid enviable performance of Colonel Mohamed Marwa as administrator of Lagos State that many enlightened discerning souls have come to reckon him as a phenomenon of some sort. Many in fact see him as a clear benchmark against which the performance of public servants governing or administering the Nigerian state can always be measured. Marwa, by his excellent performance and record achievements in barely two years, has become a standard of measurement and a beacon for public office holders and seekers. Indeed, Marwa markedly stands out as a case study for those keen on how government should be run. If in barely two years the evidences are so confounding as to Marwa's shining performance and towering accomplishments, then surely, the way he has set about his programmes and achieved so remarkable results should in fact be a case study in good governance and effective public administration. What are the evidences which bear witness to Marwa's exceptional performance in office? What practical tangible successes

has he really recorded and how? One is not a praise singer hired to pour encomiums on somebody for a pay. No. Our conscience bears us witness that what we know, that which we have experienced, felt, critically examined and are convinced of, that we testify to as patriotic Nigerians and residents of Lagos.

Our basic motivation has been the very impressive performance of Colonel Marwa which has endeared him to the hearts of millions of Nigerians, Lagosians especially, including ourselves. Our other concern is to set the records properly in place from the standpoint of an independent observer so that others who may find themselves in his (Marwa's) shoes, politicians, administrators and bureaucrats, everyone who loves to succeed like him, students of Public Administration and allied disciplines, the general public and posterity at large may readily learn from his experiences and records.

Lagos Before Marwa

Lagos in the pre-Marwa era was in a very pathetic state. Security-wise, Lagos was a city under siege. The security of life and property was no longer assured. It was a state at war with armed robbers, violent criminals and murderous hoodlums who unleashed a heinous reign of terror on the citizens generally. At a press conference in November 1995, James Danbaba, the then Lagos State Commissioner of Police had told the whole world that an average of sixty (60) cars were snatched on the streets of Lagos each week. Patrick Erhabor, an assistant superintendent of Police and a spokesman for the Force in Lagos State at the time he was speaking in February 1997, put the figure at between 30 to 40 cars as at August 1996. Colonel Marwa had himself confirmed to journalists during a press interview the foreboding crime situation he met on his assumption of office. *"It was practically a lawless society back in August (1996), almost completely so. Those criminals moved about with reckless abandon, completely confident that they could get away with it. So that was the first challenge"*. Many citizens including some notable

and highly placed Nigerians had lost their lives in cold blood in the hands of these armed robbers and killers marauding the state of Lagos at the time, even in broad daylight. Virtually everybody lived in fear, given the general state of insecurity. But that was not all. Marwa faced many other tough challenges.

“Along with that was the shocking state of the roads. I remember I took a Sunday out. I spent up to six hours driving round the city and all the roads were horrible, to say the least. Then you can go on to the other areas like water, education, hospitals, sanitation. You are not short of challenges”. This was the way Colonel Marwa described his early days’ experience in office but the thorough-bred, well equipped, scholarly soldier- administrator would not be daunted or intimidated by challenges. *“Yes, in the sense that I enjoy challenges. I like to pitch myself against the other side and that is part of the training. As soldiers, we are trained to cope with situations, manage situations and prevail over situations. It is really part of the training. We are trained to be leaders and managers at the same time”.*

The roads were in a terrible state of disrepair, hospitals were without drugs, the public water supply system was running dry, accommodation was far too inadequate and outrageously expensive. The people were getting increasingly disillusioned, hopeless and disenchanted about government. People had almost totally lost confidence in the government. But Marwa courageously stood up to the challenges. In no time he has started to prevail!

No doubt, Colonel Marwa had amply shown the stuff in him that stands him out as an excellent administrator of people, resources, circumstances and situations. His sojourn in Borno State was a brilliant success. “The Legacies” tell of it. Concerning his tenure in Lagos State, one could confidently say that Marwa came; he ventured wisely, and he conquered triumphantly like valiant soldiers and astute administrators typically do. We will only attempt a highlight of his excellent score sheet. The full details of projects and records of his

achievements in office would have been chronicled by the relevant agencies of the Lagos State government. Our concern is to present a clear picture of the impacts these accomplishments have had on the Nigerian populace, particularly the people of Lagos State, in meaningful practical terms. We will not be concerned so much about the monetary cost and number of projects but the benefits and relief which accrue to the common man on the street and the extent one could say he has attained his vision for the state. Obviously it will be a herculean task to attempt to catalogue or articulately compress the numerous achievements of Colonel Marwa in two years into two or three pages but we will try our best to give a clear aerial photograph or overview of his major achievements that make him outstanding.

Let us now look at the scoreboard on how Marwa has fared in the different sectors and sub-sectors of Lagos State Administration, most especially as they tell on the wellbeing of the people he governed.

Public Security

Colonel Marwa squared up to the challenge of ensuring security of life and property throughout the length and breadth of Lagos state. He assumed personal responsibility for the supervision and strengthening of "Operation Sweep", the State's security outfit for combating violent crimes and armed robbery. He had declared then, *"the situation of robbery in Lagos State is such that I am appalled; the war is now my war. Anytime robbers carry out an attack now, they attack me"* Of course, the soldier in Marwa had picked up the gauntlet gallantly, giving robbers and other violent criminals - through the highly reinforced operation sweep - such a daring fight that they could not withstand. Within 100 days, Lagos had once again become a relatively peaceful state where security, law and order had once again been nurtured through the courage, sheer gallantry and timely strategic redirection of a brilliant social warrior by the name Mohamed Buba Marwa.

So impressive and comforting was the social turn around in the area of public security that many Lagosians generally came to look at Marwa as a saviour. Many called him "Magic Marwa" while others considered him "a phenomenon". The 'Marwa Phenomenon' is that which makes things happen and achieves results in record time. Once more, Lagosians could sleep peacefully without keeping one eye open for fear of armed bandits and robbers. Marwa had strategically overwhelmed every part of Lagos with the well-motivated and masterfully equipped men of the "Operation Sweep" and "The Neighbourhood Watch", forcing armed robbers either to rethink and repent of their way of life or to seek cover and perhaps greener pastures far away, elsewhere outside the state.

Roads

Within six months of his assumption of office, Marwa had effected the rehabilitation of one hundred strategic roads in Lagos State under what was called "Operation 100". The roads were those that were ordinarily on a normal day very prone to heavy traffic of both vehicles and people. The terrible state of these roads had therefore been a source of headache to many people, both motorists and commuters alike. It was thus not surprising that Lagosians started to inundate Colonel Marwa with praises and messages of gratitude for a job well done. And before the ovation could die down, Colonel Marwa had again dazed the good people of Lagos State with the launching of "Operation 250" by which additional two hundred and fifty were rehabilitated by the state administration.

Each local government was also mandated to complement the state's efforts by rehabilitating at least ten roads in its domain. This in effect meant that about five hundred and fifty roads were rehabilitated and put in good shape for use by the people of Lagos all within barely one year of Colonel Marwa's tenure as Lagos State Administrator. Yet he would not slow down the tempo of road work in the state. He has capped his achievements in the area of road network upliftment

and repairs by launching of "Operation Excellence" which was directed at further strengthening, rehabilitating, advancing and maintaining the road network in the state in excellent conditions. Going by press reports and public opinion surveys, Marwa's drastic rejuvenation and rehabilitation of many dilapidated, pothole and erosion-washed roads in Lagos State which had remained unattended for years prior to his assumption of office, constitute one of the most visible evidence of his good-heartedness and concern for the wellbeing of the people. Marwa has effected the dualisation of the terrible Ketu-Ikorodu road to save lives.

Lands and Housing

This is another area where Colonel Marwa's performance has been strikingly superb. Moved by the plight of Lagos citizens, particularly the ordinary common man typically in the low income group, Colonel Marwa had swiftly moved to check the activities of "Shylock landlords" in the state who seemed to be all out to take advantage of weak tenants. In the firm belief that "*government has a duty to protect the weak who are in the majority in the society*", the Lagos State Administrator had swiftly promulgated a rent edict to protect tenants and regulate ever-increasing house rents in the state. For this, many Lagosians have heaved a sigh of relief from an exploitative and socially intimidating reign of "landlord terrorism". Marwa timely came to the rescue of weak and poor tenants.

Much more, Marwa had embarked on an aggressive land improvement policy reclaiming unexplored swamps as well as a spirited housing development scheme to ameliorate the problem of shortage of affordable housing units. He had speedily resuscitated and completed various housing projects in the state which were initiated by some of his predecessors in office but had remained abandoned and uncompleted until his tenure. Of particular note was the Sir Michael Otedola Jubilee Housing Scheme. Those at Omole layout, Ikeja and Ikorodu have been commissioned. Brigadier Raji Rasaki's initiative

at Amuwo-Odofin was also resuscitated and completed while new developments initiated by the Marwa Administration have been prosecuted with zest and seriousness to assure earliest commissioning. The vast residential estate with 400 housing units within the Ikeja Central Business District christened "MARWA GARDENS" has already been commissioned by the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria. Others at Owutu, Ikorodu, Oko-Oba, Agege, Surulere, Ogba-Ijaye and Olushosun-Ojota would all have been commissioned by the end of August 1998.

The Marwa Administration also put in place an effective machinery for the granting of civil service staff housing loans to all categories of public servants including teachers. Provisions were made specifically in the state's budget each year which were promptly released to meet loan demands by civil servants.

Health

The health sector was, prior to Marwa's administration, enmeshed in the muddy waters of critical inadequacies and nauseating problems such as shortage or non-availability of drugs and medical consumable in the hospitals, old and outdated medical equipments, incessant cuts in power supply and non-availability of ambulances. Colonel Marwa, in his characteristic pragmatic approach had tackled the problems with required urgency, giving regards to resource limitations and the social responsibility of a government with a mission of restorative health.

As at today and indeed within the first year of Colonel Marwa's administration, these problems have been substantially eliminated. The dynamic, clear-visioned administrator had launched the Revised State Drug Revolving Scheme with a grant of 30 million Naira which had been further augmented to assure the availability of drugs in the state's hospitals all year round. Electrical generators in seven general hospitals have been repaired and new ones supplied to some. Bedding materials and uniforms for all cadres of health workers were provided by the

state government while various medical equipment including x-ray equipment, incubators, anaesthetic machines and surgical equipments were newly supplied or refurbished for the state hospitals and health centres. Motor vehicles and ambulances were refurbished with twenty-four new ambulances supplied to provide a 24-hour distress service to the public. More funds were pumped into the National Programme on Immunisation which assured 112.47 percent coverage in 1997, overshooting the 100 percent minimum target set by the administrator. New theatre equipments have been installed in many hospitals including the General Hospital, Lagos while the General Hospital, Ikeja has been upgraded and equipped to the status of a teaching hospital. Moreover, the administrator had decreed that certain categories of ailments including malaria should be treated totally free in the state's health institutions.

Education

Students of Lagos State origin in tertiary institutions who were each receiving only One Thousand Naira as bursary award before the advent of Marwa's administration now have every reason to be appreciative of the benevolence of Colonel Marwa.

The bursary award has been increased five times to Five Thousand Naira which the fatherly administrator considered even as a starting point, given the current high cost of living, books and other educational materials.

The state's tertiary institutions have all been given a befitting face-lift with more funds while the secondary schools and technical colleges were furnished with needed laboratory, introductory technology and technical education workshop equipments. Many new classroom blocks were constructed and old ones renovated in over two hundred primary and secondary schools while eleven (11) notable secondary schools were upgraded to 'Model College' status. A special budgetary allocation of 250 million Naira was committed to the upgrading and maintenance of infrastructural facilities in the state.

tertiary institutions including the Epe Campus of the Lagos State University and the Lagos State College of Primary Education, Naforija, Epe.

Information

Outstanding contributions of Colonel Marwa are to be noted in the resuscitation and refurbishment of the state's radio and television stations, lifting them from a decadent paralytic state to a lively, productive and enviable public-serving capacity. Particular mention must also be made of Marwa's knack for effective, productive and tamper-proof information management and excellent media relations which have positively boosted the public image of the government under him. A modern 80-man capacity press hall, tastefully furnished and equipped with the latest communication/information technologies was built and commissioned by Colonel Marwa for the convenience and comfort of journalists named the Ibrahim Sani Abacha Press Centre at the State Secretariat, Alausa- Ikeja.

Human Resources and The Civil Service

The Marwa Administration has deftly effected a remarkable transformation of the Lagos State Civil Service through skilful administrative and structural reorganisation masterfully complemented with highly motivational incentive packages. Today, the Lagos State Civil Service ranks the most highly motivated among all the states of the federation. Negative and deviant behaviours like truancy, improper use of time, inefficiency, indolence, lack of commitment and such common misconduct have clearly abated, giving way to zestful job performance, dedication and devotion to duty, positive use of initiative, high morale, enhanced positive moral judgement and good leadership.

The average Lagos State civil servant would do anything to reciprocate the love and tender care which Marwa was deemed to have showered on them. Morale has been interestingly very high and this was clearly brought to the fore in the time of social crisis.

particularly during the fuel scarcity crisis in the state. The civil servants gladly took up the challenge of ensuring availability and peaceful dispensation of fuel at the fuel stations. No doubt, Marwa's vision of leaving the state civil service better than he met it, bequeathing a civil service that would continue to be "first among equals" has been fervently pursued and today, there is every reason to shout "hurray" and clap hands for a job well done. Lagos State Civil Servants will for long miss their able administrator, Mohamed Buba Marwa.

Environmental and Physical Planning

Notable achievements which are well evidenced are in the area of environmental sanitation, water supply, flood control and physical planning/development control. The administration of Colonel Marwa vigorously pursued war against filthy environment. The Lagos State Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) regained sole responsibility for the clearance of domestic refuse. With the administrator himself often engaged in personal supervision, Lagos State has witnessed a frenzied clean up since the inception of the Marwa Administration. Many hitherto refuse dump sites have been cleared and restored to beautiful landscapes. Road blockage arising from indiscriminate refuse dump which was formerly a common experience had virtually disappeared. Today, Lagos is a far cleaner city than it was before Marwa, with his new law on environmental sanitation.

Public water supply has generally received a boost. Existing waterworks systems at Iju and Isashi and many mini waterworks were successfully rehabilitated and new ones commissioned. The Marwa Administration secured from the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) 1.05 billion Naira for the completion of the Lagos State Water Supply Expansion Programme. The machinery and network of portable water supply in Lagos State has become far more expansive and widespread, reaching more and more of the population down to the grassroots through increased provision and vigorous rehabilitation of public taps in the localities.

On drainage and storm-water control, a prolific drainage maintenance programme through Direct Labour was put in place. Flood and drainage problems have become a thing of the past in many flood-prone areas while the Marwa Administration continued to wage a winning war against ocean surging and flooding of some parts of the Victoria Island, just as federal government assistance was being pursued.

Illegal structures under flyovers and bridges/loops and along highways were successfully removed but unlike under the past administrations, a special Committee on Relocation of Displaced Persons in Lagos was constituted to take care of affected persons.

Finance

Though Marwa did not consider Lagos State as rich in the sense many think of richness, he believed that the state has got the wherewithal to excel in meeting the needs of the people within the realistic limits imposed by resource availability and ever-increasing demands, especially giving regards to the position of Lagos as the industrial and commercial nerve centre of Nigeria and the movement of the Federal capital to Abuja with the concomitant shift/reduction of the Federal Government's attention/commitment on Lagos. The Accelerated Revenue Generation Programme under Marwa's Revenue Improvement Action Plan has yielded very good dividends. The revenue base has expanded tremendously with the plugging of various loopholes and leakages in the revenue collection system. Colonel Marwa's administration had inherited a poor internal revenue administration system with a lot of loopholes for tax evasion and fraudulent practices like under-assessment and failure of companies to remit deducted taxes to the State Government. Colonel Marwa had wisely appointed a firm of tax consultants, Olusola Adekanola and Co. to compile tax assessment of companies in the state and generally to facilitate the development of an efficient revenue administration system and doubling the state revenue within his two years in office. This vision, as at today, we say, is a fait accompli.

Family Support and Social Welfare

As a sympathetic and loving father from whose bosom flows the milk of kindness and compassion for the less-privileged, Colonel Marwa's name, together with the wife's, will always be remembered in Lagos State, particularly by millions of despairing souls they have used the machinery of state to comfort and cater for and whom they have restored to life in practically hopeless situations. The rehabilitation of the Lagos 'Area Boys' who by some curious circumstances had become social outcasts, drug addicts, terror gangs, thieves, robbers and generally hopeless, weather-beaten destitutes is one very laudable outstanding achievement for which the Marwa name will be remembered and respected. The 'area boys' phenomenon had been a social problem which had bothered the State Government, Lagosians and many families for a very long time. It had looked an intractable problem until the kind-hearted, fatherly intervention of Colonel Marwa. Many of the 'area boys' have today become gainfully employed while some have been harmoniously integrated back into the civil society. Many of them have learnt new skills and trades for which the Marwa administration provided them start-up capital to start a new responsible life. Hundreds of them are employed by the Direct Labour Agency to work in the road rehabilitation programme of the State Government.

The Family Support Programme (FSP) had undertaken many far-reaching life-supporting and family-improvement projects and programmes with direct impact and bearing on the welfare of the population. The FSP Ambulance Service, the various model Health Centres and Clinics, the crop, poultry and piggery farms, schools, libraries, mini water works, the FSP Destitutes Home, Oko-Baba and the Women Vocational Training and Development Centre are only a few of the meaningful project achievements Lagosians readily recall. Worthy of mention also is the way the Marwa administration has responded to the plight of victims of natural disasters such as fire and flood. Incidentally there were two or three serious fire outbreaks during the tenure of Colonel Marwa. His response was so swift, sympathetic

and reassuring. The FSP and the state government promptly made arrangements for the support and rehabilitation of the victims, providing them with food stuffs and other relief materials and making special financial grants-in-aid to every clearly identified and credible victim according to given criteria. Fire victims at the Balogun Market, Amukoko/Mosafejo, Oko-Baba Ebute-Metta and Itire in Lagos could not forget the kindness of Marwa in supporting them.

Landmarks in other Areas

Justice: Most remarkable is the attention the Administrator placed on rejuvenating the state's legal and judicial system to assure fast and equitable, less burdensome administration and dispensation of justice throughout Lagos State. Of particular note was his concern for the multitudes of persons awaiting trial in the prisons in the state. To facilitate fast and efficient dispensation of justice, Colonel Marwa provided for the establishment of a magistrate court in the vicinity of every prison and also for the overhaul of the manual recording system by judges to allow for the use of comfortable modern technological communications equipments including computers, in Lagos State Courts. Magistrate Courts had been built near the prisons at Badagry, Ikoyi and Kirikiri by the Marwa Administration. Stenographic recording machines have been installed in Lagos State courts, first in West Africa.

Agriculture and Rural Development: Pursuit of rural electrification, water supply, rural road infrastructure and provision of agricultural inputs have combined to make life more meaningful, fulfilling and comfortable for the rural populace. Over 50 rural communities have benefited from the rural electrification projects. Link roads have been constructed to open up many rural areas.

Over 500 different communities and rural localities were provided with bore-holes to provide drinkable water within one year of Colonel Marwa's inception of office. The government also rehabilitated the Agege Abattoir and Lairage to ensure the provision of hygienically processed meat for human consumption.

In other to decongest the urban areas and to stem rural-urban migration, to promote the rural economy and improve the standard of living of the Lagos rural dwellers, Marwa's government established small and medium-scale industrial estates at Igando, Epe and Imota.

One could go on and on talking about the achievements of the administration of Colonel Mohamed Buba Marwa in Lagos. The physical, undeniable, lasting evidences are there on the ground for people to observe. Merit truly has no tribe. Colonel Marwa himself was of this conviction. *"The citizens of Nigeria know that you (in government) cannot do everything. But they also know when you are doing something. Once they (the citizens) read that there is honesty of purpose on your part, they will give their support"*. That perception obviously reflected on the attitude and performance of Colonel Marwa in office. He was well focused in his striving "to do the greatest good", knowing, in his words, that *"you can't satisfy everyone nor can you do everything. You can't solve everything. Do the best and move on"*. Surely Mohamed Buba Marwa is on the move, having done his best in Lagos. Not many public servants or office holders are determined to do their best and even when they want, their best is often not good enough, far below the expectations of the people they claim to serve. Lagosians are impressed by Marwa's performance and many will readily nod the head that he has performed or at least has tried his best. How did Marwa do it? What are the secrets of his enviable success? These are questions of interest to many people.

Chapter Seven

THE SECRETS OF HIS SUCCESS

"There is a certain degree of commitment and seriousness in which I took the oath of office It is a total commitment to do the best even when one knows that there is no perfection"

- M. B. Marwa

There is no doubt that many like to be successful like Marwa. Success is attractive but, more often than not, success is not a commoner's bit; success is for the noble - the noble at heart and in deeds. Yet, anyone can succeed like Marwa and even surpass his marks if he has or will cultivate, nurture, and attain a heart producing deeds like Marwa's. Noble deeds are the products of noble hearts. "The noble man makes noble plans and by noble deeds he stands" The secrets of Colonel Marwa's success are to be found in *his nobility of heart and deeds*, whereby nobility of heart in this context connotes the fear of God and selfless commitment of oneself in love and service to others or to mankind in general. To be like Marwa is to follow in his footsteps along the path he has taken to succeed and to excel. "Lives of great men do remind us that we can make our lives sublime, leaving behind us footprints on the sands of time" That is an ageless maxim. The footprints of Marwa are indelible in office but only the discerning may know the way he has taken to achieve such wonderful results in so short a time in Lagos. Interestingly, watchful surveillance and careful appraisal of Marwa's official and private life with the powerful binoculars of an illuminated mind have revealed the very secrets which constitute the leading flashlights and beacons on his road to success. The open secrets are here presented for the guidance of everyone interested in succeeding like Marwa or in knowing what power was behind Marwa that made him so tick. They are by no means exhaustive but the main elements of success are there which constituted the "Marwa phenomenon" that made things happen in Lagos State to achieve results in record time.

The identified secrets of Marwa's success (Marwa's Success Factors) are:

1. The Fear of God
2. Charismatic Personality
3. People-orientation and Selflessness
4. Exemplary Leadership and Commitment
5. Management Expertise
6. Education, Professional Training and Experience
7. Divine Providence.

The foregoing are indeed master keys employed by Marwa, that everyone can apply in opening the door of success and excellence in whatever may be his or her calling in life. Let us briefly consider how he has used them for our guidance. Attention to details and the nitty-gritty of some of these keys will be considered in separate chapters later.

The Fear of God

Marwa is a God-fearing man. He starts and ends his day with God. His faith in God is in no way pedestrian. He is a man of strong faith who does not joke with his relationship with the Almighty God. He reveres God highly and considers oath-taking a very sacred exercise that must be taken with all seriousness of purpose, from the heart. According to Colonel Marwa, he would always thank God for his mercies. "Everyday when I wake up and before I go to bed, I say my prayers. I thank God". He believes that his performance in Lagos derived first and foremost from his fear of God and his will to strive to please the Almighty God according to the oath of office he took on being sworn in as the Military Administrator of Lagos State.

"There is a certain degree of commitment and seriousness which I took the oath of office. You recall that I indicated in my very first statement in Abuja that I will administer the state with the fear of God. You know, it is a position of high responsibility whichever way you look at it. And you have sworn with the ho

Qur'an that you are going to do this job with the best of your ability, with honesty and so on and so forth. So it is a total commitment to do the best even when one knows that there is no perfection. But one can still give it a good shot to the best of one's ability. Frankly that is all I have been trying to do".

To those who thought he would be intimidated by bomb blasts targeted at him, Colonel Marwa had expressed his firm faith in God, declaring that he would never be scared of anybody seeking to kill him, knowing that only Allah who gives life can also take it at his own appointed time. Marwa obviously knew that governing a state, especially a very complex and delicate one like Lagos, requires great wisdom and "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom". He was not unaware too that "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil", always conscious that he had a duty to protect the weak and the poor as he said concerning the rent control edict he promulgated. "*Government*", he had said, *has a duty to protect the weak, who are in the majority in the society*".

A Charismatic Personality

To some people, Marwa is naturally a very loveable person. "You find yourself loving him for what he is without any deliberate prompting". This is a view that has been expressed by very many people, even many who have never met him person-to-person. Some persons have put it that he has an aura around him that predisposes people to like him. The truth, however, is that Marwa is a lovely personality, and lovely is lovable. The qualities are there which make him lovely and loveable. You too can develop these qualities and become like Marwa by character. These personal attributes are the reasons why many find him irresistible. And it is the balanced mix of these attributes or human virtues that we are designating as a charismatic personality, which was what Marwa possessed. This personality was not born with him but was developed over time, so it is possible for whosoever desires to cultivate, nurture and produce

them in no time. The total mix of the virtuous attributes of wisdom, love, courage, discipline, uprightness, diligence, humility, kindness and gentleness which Marwa possesses in large measures is what makes up his charismatic personality. Marwa is highly respected for his wisdom among his colleagues and all categories of workers in the Lagos State civil service, the elites, notable and distinguished Nigerians, particularly Lagosians, intellectuals and other persons of substance. The wisdom of Solomon (to use the words of one of his top workers) with which he set about solving the problems of Lagos State and achieving so marvellous results that readily testify to the soundness of his mind and decisions is something very rare and quite desirable. Wisdom is even required to strike a balance in the mix of virtues for consistency and strength of character as well as the suitability of decisions to given situations with regard to which Colonel Marwa was never found wanting. His workers and the people respect him for his uprightness, discipline and diligence in serving the people with love, kindness and unfeigned humility. Of course, being a valiant soldier, the highly skilled armoured officer was being admired by all for his courage in standing up resolutely to the challenging problems of administering a state as complex as Lagos and winning every social battle of providing solutions to seemingly intractable problems one after the other. Marwa is most especially respected by his staff who got motivated by his consistent hard work and leadership by example in his own attitude, approach and commitment to work. He was to be copied. He would preach only what he was himself doing, committed to do and personally ready to do. So it was mainly a learn-from-me, do-as-I-do affair between Marwa and his workers, especially his personal staff, commissioners, permanent secretaries and other top civil servants.

He resumed work daily before 7.30a.m. and would close by 7.00p.m. at the earliest, sometimes staying very late into the night in his office. His own hard work, see-through wisdom and knack for excellence were challenges to all his top staff, who would therefore

always endeavour to be at their best to give the best of themselves on any issue that would be passed to his office, or on which they were invited by the military administrator or on any assignment they might be given by him.

The love and kindness he showed people could be seen to be quite spontaneous and genuinely from the heart. His love for people and his kindness were evidenced by the very swift way he characteristically offered help to disaster victims, the zeal and the commitment with which he went about his service to the people of Lagos daily seeking ways to better their lot and with all his programmes clearly people-oriented, his show of concern for the welfare of the common people during periods of crisis such as his personally going right down to places like Ojuelegba and Ijora to apologise to drivers, motorists, commuters and the people of Lagos State over government's incapacity that could have contributed to the problem of fuel scarcity and truthfully explaining what was being done to bring the situation under control. Marwa had readily come to the aid of the state civil servants by paying them a special allowance during the fuel crisis, to cushion the painful effects of the commonly associated almost quadrupled high transport costs. Families of some police officers who lost their lives to armed bandits while on duty in the "Operation Sweep" were promptly consoled and offered sizable financial assistance to cushion their loss. Families like these including that of one of his personal staff Julius Afolabi, whom Colonel Marwa had personally travelled to far away Oke-Igbo in Ondo State to attend the funeral and offer succour to the family members, were very many that would attest to it that Colonel Marwa has a compassionate heart flowing with the milk of love and human kindness. Indeed many who worked closely with him would always tell of how he had often disarmingly come to their assistance at a time they would ordinarily have expected a boss to deal with them or show no concern for their personal underlying problems. The case of a civil servant at the lower levels who breached all protocol and ignored the bureaucracy of service

regulations by phoning Colonel Marwa directly to intimate him of his accommodation problems was a pointer. While some other persons in Marwa's shoes would have reacted sharply on the issue of breaching protocol, the civil servant was the better for it as very sympathetic Colonel Marwa immediately came to his assistance. Yet everyone reckoned Marwa as a no-nonsense boss, very upright in his ways and highly disciplined. Everybody knew that corruption was not only despicable but an anathema to the administration of very pious, straightforward Marwa whose driving philosophy of government was open "accountability", "the fear of God and a clear conscience".

The charismatic personality in Marwa was a highly mobile man full of courage and drive to pursue and attain his visions "to do the greatest good". In his words, it is a personality poised to "do the best and move on". Stagnation is not akin to this personality and neither is sluggishness. Call it a soldiering person that is always at alert, watchful and quite sensitive to happenings in and around his zone of command. It takes the real soldier in a man to succeed in the battles of life and especially at the commanding heights like Marwa was in Lagos.

Exemplary Leadership and Commitment

Marwa is a leader but not just a leader but an effective leader per excellence. This was a very strong factor of his success in Lagos. He knew what it was to lead a people and to lead a very complex, highly sophisticated population as in Lagos. He was sound in the basic principles and knew the different approaches to leadership and the situation element in choosing an appropriate style. He was a highly visionary leader who had great skills in motivating people to accomplish given tasks and "at the least cost with less casualties".

We will still be looking at the leadership style of Colonel Marwa in his sojourn in Lagos as state administrator in another chapter to allow for extensive details from which to learn. It is enough to say that he favoured leadership by example and his commitment was exceptional.

Management Expertise.

It would not be a misnomer if by his achievements and practice in office as Lagos State Administrator, Colonel Marwa is described as a management guru. The effectiveness of a manager is indeed to be measured by the results he produces or attains by or in the management process, but a man is not a manager unless he does what managers do, unless he functions as one at a given level either at the top, middle or low management levels. Marwa was an effective great manager of men, materials and other resources at the top level of state administration where he excellently provided direction for and coordinated the entire process of the management of state resources and affairs. The formulation of strategies and the strategic management of change were the key areas where Colonel Marwa stood out clearly. Inheriting a civil service that was rather paralytic and characterized by snail-slow movement in achieving given goals and a disenchanting, disillusioned population/public that had almost totally lost confidence in government, Marwa had rapidly transformed the state civil service and the largely apathetic public, re-orienting them and injecting life into the service, boosting morale and facilitating the creation of a motivated work force and a receptive public that shared common visions with the government. As a manager, Colonel Marwa realized the central critical role of the human factor in achieving the desired ends of public administration and therefore gave it every attention necessary.

He was aptly involved in leading, coordinating, reorganising and restructuring the civil service administration to cope with new challenges, motivating the work force and Lagosians generally to be alive to their civic responsibilities, effective communication and decision-making promptly and decisively to move the state forward. The nitty gritty of how Colonel Marwa effectively employed and demonstrated sound internalization of tested management principles, techniques and tools cannot be effectively handled in a book of this volume but we will again reconsider this success element in the Marwa

saga in another chapter. His pragmatic employment of the military-born concept of management by objective is a good lesson for the success-conscious. Also his strategic prioritisation of projects culminating in "a ranked list of priorities" cannot be brushed aside by any serious-minded manager or public administrator who knows and believes like Colonel Marwa that "if you spread yourself wide, you become thin and the impact is almost negligible" when your efforts are not focused.

Education, Professional Training & Experience

Do not be deceived, there is a place for education, training and experience in the success of Colonel Marwa. Marwa's personality, leadership ability and expertise in public administration have their roots in his education, his professional training as a soldier and administrator and his previous experience in the practice, art and science of public governance as former state governor in Borno State as well as his experience on his various military postings. These prepared, equipped and fortified him to face the daunting challenges of administering delicate Lagos. Even his experience in ordinary life and his self-development informal education activities have all got to do with his success. Colonel Marwa readily recalled how his experience in successfully prosecuting "Operation Zaki" in Borno had come in handy in rejuvenating, reinvigorating and repositioning "Operation Sweep" for a very successful outing in Lagos. He did tell also how his professional military training had conditioned his responses to certain developments or situations like the time of the first bomb blast targeted at him. He had indicated how on hearing the bomb blast behind him and his convoy was broken, he ordinarily would have stopped on impulse but "the training would not allow". He would also tell you how his having been a student of military tactics and strategy had often come to the fore in his daily decision-making. There is no doubt as well that Colonel Marwa's intellectual horizon, perception and breadth of vision have been further sharpened by his academic pursuits.

work exposure and life in the advanced culture of the United States of America where he worked as Defence Adviser to the Nigerian Permanent Mission to the United Nations. Concerning experience he had said, "you could be too young for certain responsibilities because a little experience helps". Of course, experience, it is often said is the best teacher.

People-orientation and Selflessness

If there was anything that most quickly facilitated the popularity and success of the Marwa Administration, it was essentially the populist thrust of virtually all government policies, programmes and projects with particular emphasis and concentration on see-it-feel-it projects and programmes that have immediate impact on people's lives and social psyche. This was indeed a clear strategic component of the 'Marwa Phenomenon' which laid "emphasis on projects that can be completed within the life span of the present administration" for people to benefit and with "focus on services that will improve the quality of lives and welfare of the citizens of Lagos State". *"We are continually looking for more ways to develop the state for the benefit of the citizenry. It has been challenging, no question about it. It has not been easy but we are working at it"*. Those were the soothing words of the selfless Marwa when the heat was on him as Lagos State Administrator. Even when they threw bombs at him, he became more resolved to perform and to offer his best, even at the risk of his life.

Divine Providence

Above all, as Marwa had often said, he owed his success as administrator of Lagos State to God Almighty and he explained. *"I think there is also a divine dimension to the whole question of leadership. We have to accept that we ourselves do not understand everything. I believe there is God who guides. You can be as clever as you think, you can be the best management wizard, but still you*

need to have the Almighty God's final blessing to succeed in anything". Colonel Marwa considered his appointment in the first place to be an act of Divine Providence as it was rare to be appointed twice, to captain the governance of a state, having earlier served as Borno State Governor under the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida between 1990 and 1992.

Chapter Eight

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND MANAGEMENT OF STATE RESOURCES.

"Within the limit of our resources, we were able to identify problems and assess our strengths to achieve our aspirations for the state. I had to be directly involved with most programmes to ensure prudence and accountability in the management of resources for the achievement of set objectives".

- M. B. Marwa

Principles of (public) administration are essentially the same though there may be differences in the situational configuration of people, resources, problems and challenges. However, strategies, styles and approaches of administrators most time differ due to differences in their personal abilities, social and economic preferences and values. While how sound an administrator is in principles may not be obvious, strategies, style and approaches are mainly in the practical realm of application and management performance the effectiveness and suitability of which can be easily gauged by the results. The impressive results and performance of the Marwa Administration make it necessary for us to undertake a review and appraisal of the key strategic initiatives of his administration together with basic management programmes and techniques which were cardinal to his success, considering the fact that many past administrations were not able to make such marks and impacts, even when some stayed in office far longer than the Marwa administration. Yet it was not that they had more problems to contend with than Colonel Marwa faced in office. The problems were largely the same and in great abundance but Colonel Marwa was able to truly excel where others tottered and groped around without focus. He had soared to very great heights like an eagle where many had disappointedly fluttered about like a hen. He is admirable, hence we need to know how he did it and what exactly were the strategies that made him stand out so clearly, confronting and overcoming the challenges of administering 'problem' Lagos.

"It has been a great challenge. Lagos State, as you know, is not short of problems. In fact, if there is anything one can point to and say, 'we have this abundance', it is problem. It is there in various sectors and perhaps what I have to grapple with is how do we tackle these problems in different ways to achieve results. . How did Colonel Marwa engage in the search for ideas culminating in the formulation of new strategies or new ways of solving problems? Having identified the management problem to be essentially at the top level and basically strategic, he took up the challenge.

Strategy Formulation: Elements and Process

Given his professional training as a soldier, Colonel Marwa would not underrate the importance of the careful appraisal and choice of strategies in winning battles or attaining given objectives. Given the problems and a set of objectives, the effectiveness and appropriateness of a considered strategy in achieving the given visions were therefore critically assessed, giving regards to other available options, resource requirements and availability, environmental considerations, cost and other parameters of efficiency. The process of strategy formulation and the choice of strategy involved serious sector-by-sector position/environmental analysis and review of the state administration to determine and assess its strengths and weaknesses, both internally and externally. With a rather participative, open-door management approach, Colonel Marwa had in his earliest few days in office held extensive meetings and consultations with his top administrative staff to determine the position of their respective ministries and departments/parastatals with a view to harmonizing their visions and coming up with resilient, result-oriented strategies for the effective realization of their objectives and especially to produce "a ranked list of priorities" for proper focus, with public security and road (rehabilitation) being topmost.

“My strategy was to prioritize. My strategy was to focus on the two most important challenges facing Lagos State : security and road repairs. I didn’t have difficulties in identifying the two priority areas and focusing on them. When you remain focused, it helps. That is why we have been able to make the kind of progress people are talking about. As an administrator, if you spread yourself wide, you become thin and the impact is most negligible”. That was the way the military strategist and astute administrator had described his immediate posture on strategic redirection on assumption of office. But there was more to these. Other areas were not left out. The Marwa administration at its inception identified some cardinal programmes as strategies for ameliorating the problems of Lagos State citizens which include:

- (i) Strengthening of security of lives and property through the fortification and expansion of “Operation Sweep” and the establishment of the “Neighbourhood Watch” in all communities in the State.
- (ii) Rehabilitation of roads, most of which were in very bad state of disrepair, through the establishment of the “Direct Labour Agency”.
- (iii) Prompt and effective health care delivery services through a comprehensive revamping programme which includes the replacement of obsolete medical equipment and electricity generating sets, the introduction of an efficient Drug Revolving Fund, Provision of ambulance vehicles etc.
- (iv) Provision of adequate funding for the educational sub-sector, particularly secondary and tertiary institutions, with a view to improving the quality of education.
- (v) Equipping of Lagos State Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) and recruitment of street sweepers for the maintenance of a healthy environment.

- (vi) Provision of portable water to all parts of the state through the intensification of World Bank Assisted Surface Water Schemes and construction of Mini-Water Works and Micro Water Schemes.
- (vii) Completion of Jubilee Housing Schemes and the inauguration of new estates.
- (viii) Commissioning of an integrated study on the socio-economic problems of the state with a view to producing a blueprint on same.
- (ix) Revitalisation of the machinery of government, the civil service and motivation of workers for higher levels of productivity.
- (x) Acceleration of Revenue Generation and Improvement in Management of State Finances.

Although Colonel Marwa knew where he was going, interestingly, these strategies were the products of an interactive process of the meeting of minds that ensured that everybody in the top hierarchy of administration was carried along while identifiable square pegs in round holes that might become bottlenecks were deftly and swiftly removed. He left no one in doubt as to his scale of priorities which were effectively communicated to provide necessary redirection and focus of efforts and resources, including the tactical reorganisation, realignment and motivation of the work force which is the Lagos State Civil Service. Colonel Marwa also left no one in doubt as to the central emphasis on and the critical importance of the time element in goal accomplishments under his administration. Colonel Marwa had no love for procrastination. To him, whatever you have to do to make things better for people in the State must be done now. This informed the emphasis of his government on projects that could be completed within the life span of his administration, given the pervasive incidence of abandoned government projects in many states, including his experience in Lags State where he ensured the completion of such

projects in the area of housing. A review of the key contents of some of the major outstanding strategic initiatives of Marwa that were most critical to his success will now be undertaken.

'Operation Sweep'

This was the crime-bursting security outfit initiated by Colonel Marwa's predecessor in office to combat armed robbery and other violent crimes in the state. It consisted of an amalgam of personnel drawn from the police and other armed forces, most especially the army. Prior to Colonel Marwa's inception of office, this outfit was fighting a losing battle with armed robbers in the state and appeared strategically unable or incapacitated to really give the robbers any serious fight. Even though the outfit had thousands of able-bodied combatants, its impact on the security of life and property was nothing to write home about but very dismal. Given these open inadequacies, the organisation could not achieve or show much of tangible results. Security operatives lacked enough fire power to effectively combat the crime wave in the state at the time. That was the state in which Colonel Marwa met 'Operation Sweep' and it was no doubt necessary to effect a strategic overhaul and strengthening of the organisation. Even at the risk of his credibility, Marwa immediately undertook to personally take charge of 'Operation Sweep' as the state's chief security officer, quite confident that he would do exploits and make a success of the outfit, given his experience in successfully prosecuting 'Operation Zaki' in Borno State during his tenure as the state's military governor some years back.

Colonel Marwa knew very well that the problem with 'Operation Sweep' was mainly in the area of strategy. Knowing it lacked fire power, the armed robbers practically despised and dared the state's security outfit. According to Colonel Marwa, *"those criminals moved about with reckless abandon, completely confident that they can get away with it. You know they are rational too and they are always calculating costs and benefits. Once the costs are practically absent,*

they go for it". The strategy therefore was to build a fearsome, intimidating and highly mobile anti-crime machinery well equipped with sophisticated weapons, modern communication gadgets, vehicles and other paraphernalia to assure functionality and effectiveness in discouraging, uncovering, preventing and fighting crimes. So the strategy was more to prevent crime through the pervasive presence and reinforced lethal fire power of the outfit. And it paid off handsomely Colonel Marwa would tell you that the main difference between the successful, shining 'Operation Sweep' that restored the security of life and property in Lagos and the hitherto lame duck that robbers despised and took for granted was strategy

"You will notice that I didn't begin 'Operation Sweep. My predecessor did as far as the name is concerned. I retained the name believing that the word "Sweep" is an expansive word and you can use it to address several areas. Crime yes. We are sweeping the roads and sweeping other areas too, as we continue. But let's look at the philosophy of it. The agencies that are being used for 'Operation Sweep' are existing within Lagos State. The Police Command remains and its primary function is the control of crime. It is the primary agency of state given the task of controlling crime. Even after I leave they will be here. And the military, one of our roles is to aid the civil authority. So the soldiers are simply performing this secondary role by aiding the police. What else did we do? We acquired additional vehicles, communication gadgets and of course, they all carried their personal weapons. So all these things are there. The only element in addition to all these is that we all sat down and used our brains to figure out how to marry all these resources to bring about the state of affairs today as far as security is concerned".

The strategic arms of "Operation Sweep" consisted of the Intelligence and Investigative arm to fish out criminals, working on information gathered/supplied; the physical arm is poised by physical presence and clear domination of the environment to deter criminals

and respond swiftly and immediately to distress calls or reports of armed robbery. Intelligence information from the public is facilitated by anonymity, letters carrying no postage stamps, public information stands/boxes at each local government office where letters can be dropped and a long list of telephone distress call numbers to reach the "Operation Sweep" *"It is essentially a crime-preventing strategy but where prevention fails, we go out to combat and ensure that the criminals don't get away with their violent crimes"*, Colonel Marwa had explained. An important strategic element of the "Operation Sweep" that also needs to be mentioned is motivation. Colonel Marwa's personal attention and involvement has been a morale booster to members of the 'Operation Sweep' in addition to the special hazard allowance being paid them. The Marwa administration also made special provisions for any of them that might suffer any harm including death in the course of the discharge of his duties. Colonel Marwa renovated and upgraded the police clinic at Ikeja and supplied them with drugs. One needs also not lose sight of the dogged commitment of the Marwa Administration to the persistent re-invigoration and strengthened maintenance of the 'Operation Sweep' in assuring greater public security. Even when people have all been lauding his administration for a job well done, Colonel Marwa had simply said, "I am not yet satisfied", like a man resolute in his pursuit of excellence.

Direct Labour Agency

This was one of the most outstanding strategic apparatus and initiatives of the Marwa administration that marked him out as an excellent manager of men and resources, a good administrator of state affairs and a competent hand in social engineering. In a society where the public service was commonly being reckoned as a bastion of inefficiency, corruption and non-performance, and in a state where the citizenry was generally getting disillusioned and hopeless about the government, it would be rather not quite realistic, if not outright

inappropriate and too risky, for an administrator to commit himself to the negatively perceived slow-moving coach of direct-labour approach in the gigantic, urgent task of rehabilitating the pervasive terrible roads in the state. But Marwa had his perception and perspective proven quite right by the undeniable, very visible success of this strategy in Lagos. And by the success of the Direct Labour Agency, Marwa has gone a long way to show that the common picture is not really a true one that portrays civil/public service establishments in Nigeria as inefficient, corrupt and slow-moving in attaining results. He has demonstrated that though there may be quite a few bad eggs within the system, very much actually can be accomplished by government through its machinery, given the right leadership.

Faced with the scenario of mounting limitations on state resources, increasing social demands and responsibilities on government, poor public perception of civil service establishments, disturbing public outcry about the suffering occasioned by the collapsing road network in the state and the rising incidence of non-performance and abandonment of projects by contractors in the public projects sectors, Colonel Marwa at the inception of his administration had to face the uneasy critical strategic choice of what to do in urgently revamping the widespread terribly bad roads in Lagos State. The alternatives were identified and the costs and benefits were weighed, together with other attendant implications and giving regards to government aspirations in other facets. Colonel Marwa, after a very careful analytical appraisal of the alternatives, informed by his earlier experience in Borno State and considering heavy cost savings that could be gained by eliminating contractors, favoured the direct labour approach having established that it was a more cost-effective means of executing and monitoring road projects. Based on this strategic choice, Colonel Marwa had immediately moved to put the civil structure in place to facilitate direct-labour execution of road projects by the state government. The old Public Works Corporation was scrapped and a new Direct Labour Agency was created, inheriting all

the assets of the corporation, and charged with the task of implementing the Road Rehabilitation Programme of Marwa's administration. Colonel Marwa, in the process of his meetings and consultations with the various ministries on assumption of duty had also carefully identified and pencilled down the names of some staff as 'good materials' he would want to use in building up a winning team for his public service. Engineer Kehinde Oshikoya was one of such so marked though unknown to him. "He was not a director - general or director" but he was selected by Colonel Marwa to head the Direct Labour Agency directly responsible to his office. "He has performed and deserves to be commended", were the words of Colonel Marwa himself. The evidences of performance have been so undeniable.

With respect to the Direct Labour Agency activities, one could see Colonel Marwa employing effective management tools to assure performance. His characteristic style of Management by Objectives has yielded very positive returns. He ensured that objectives were set and agreed upon right from the beginning and the resources required were determined. Then target setting had set in with tactical plans for important roads in priority areas drawn up, which were to be completed within three to six months. Indeed, the setting of targets according to established priority of roads and given time frame was a key driving force behind the impressive performance of the agency. Special monitors were put in place to ensure accountability, quality and timely good performance while the Agency, like the "Operation Sweep", was put directly under the Military Administrator for its day-to-day guidance and performance evaluation. Colonel Marwa had suspended the award of road contracts in the state while matching the Direct Labour Agency into the field of road operations by launching the first set of critical priority roads the Agency was to handle - "OPERATION 100". A target of one hundred important roads in strategic locations in the metropolitan areas of Lagos State was what Colonel Marwa used in

setting the Agency into action and this was to be achieved within three months. The target was met and Lagosians were highly impressed while Colonel Marwa had again immediately flagged off "OPERATION 250" to "reinstate, rehabilitate and maintain" additional two hundred and fifty roads in the state which were all completed in record time to the joy, great relief and comfort of the citizens. The Agency has since been engaged in "OPERATION EXCELLENCE" whereby all roads in the state would be rehabilitated, reinstated, and maintained in very excellent conditions all the year round.

The Lagos State Direct Labour Agency has become a household name for its good performance in the rehabilitation of the road network in Lagos State and also for its employment generation, including the very commendable absorption of some of the 'area boys' rehabilitated by Colonel Marwa. Its social and economic contributions in eliminating traffic jams caused by terrible potholes on roads in the metropolis, enhancing the welfare and security of life of citizens through reduction in motor accidents traceable to bad roads and reducing loss of man-hours on the roads have combined to make the direct-labour strategy of Colonel Marwa a very wise choice and a social palliative of some sort.

It should be mentioned however that the success of the Agency was due also to the fact that it was sufficiently and adequately equipped for the job at hand. Colonel Marwa's priority attention on roads had meant in practical terms that resources were also directed at meeting the targets set for the Agency. This explained why the Agency had to buy bitumen in the open market like any other person at one time and why the state government had promptly acquired and commissioned a ₦450 million, 300-ton asphalt plant to meet the needs of the Direct Labour Agency in its road rehabilitation programme. Resource commitment was a strategic imperative, but how were the resources mobilised and marshalled for the attainment of the goals of government in its various sectors?

Accelerated Revenue Generation and Improved Management of State Finances.

This is the enabling strategy at the core of Marwa's success game plan in Lagos State. Many think of Lagos as a very rich state where finance should pose no problem, failing to appreciate the high-profile responsibilities, demands and problems of state administration which attend the status of Lagos as the commercial and industrial nerve centre and most densely populated state in Nigeria, and perhaps too, with the most sophisticated mix of people. The truth however is that finance, relative to the high-profile responsibilities of state, is far short of state requirements to effectively tackle the challenges and problems of Lagos State. It takes the genius in an administrator therefore to rise to the challenges with the strategic apparatus to ensure that finance will not get him hamstrung and unable to move forward midway. Colonel Marwa was fully conscious of this fact and first got himself adequately apprised of the state's financial position before deciding on the ways and means of attaining his objects. He requested to be furnished with the government's daily income and expenditure and weekly closing position figures. Given his vision for the state, he realised the critical limitations finance could impose and therefore gave prime attention to the evolution of fruitful and effective financial management strategies to complement and give effect to his key strategic initiatives.

In order to accomplish its set goals in the various sectors, especially in the area of capital projects execution, the Marwa Administration had adopted the following strategies:

- (i) Intensification and improvement of revenue collection.
- (ii) Restrained recurrent expenditure through prudent management of resources.
- (iii) Emphasis on projects that could be completed within the life span and financial capabilities of his administration.

- (iv) Use of determinably more cost-effective direct labour approach especially for road rehabilitation and maintenance.
- (v) Effective monitoring.

Contrary to rife speculations that the Marwa administration got special financial favours from the Federal Government, Colonel Marwa had declared that Lagos State did not get any extra funds from the Federal government outside the normal statutory allocations or what was commonly granted to every state. Indeed, the only time he went at his inception to seek such assistance, the Head of State had challenged the Lagos State administrator to "go back, plan and work within your budget".

Since the available funds were far inadequate to do all that was required, his first fundamental strategy was to prioritize. *"I set about identifying what were needful. Clearly if you want to address those areas, we must have the funds to do it and the next thing is to prioritise. I didn't have difficulty in identifying the two (greatest) priority areas which are security and roads."* Colonel Marwa said that the focus of attention and resources was mostly on those two areas initially before descending to other areas, and when *"you remain focused, it helps"*. *"If you have great difficulties in meeting what is your priority area, you quieten the other areas and bring resources to where you need it, and you get on"*. Colonel Marwa went all out to meet the needs of his priority areas so much so that when bitumen became very scarce and the open market price jumped by 750 percent, resources had to be garnered to buy at the open market to keep the road rehabilitation programme going. Prioritization was paramount but the priorities far exceeded the two areas of security and roads. There were other pressing demands that were also of great priority and with far-reaching implications for the well-being of the people that could not just be brushed aside. The onus therefore was on the government to source more funds to meet its responsibilities.

His administration had inherited a very weak internal revenue administration system with a lot of loopholes and defects which made it highly susceptible to convulsions arising from tax evasions and other fraudulent practices which amplify leakages within the system. His first tactical move was therefore to strengthen and streamline the structures and machinery for revenue collection in the state. Colonel Marwa brought both the Central Licensing Authority from the Ministry of Public Transportation and the Pools Betting Section under the Home Affairs Office under the Board of Internal Revenue. The machinery between the Land Use and Allocation Committee and the Board of Internal Revenue was also streamlined to plug leakages through fraud, loss and waste of funds arising from under-assessment and other ineffective practices. Other elements of the reform are the directive on payment of all state government taxes directly into designated accounts in selected banks in the state and the establishment of Revenue Courts to expeditiously deal with culprits and recalcitrant defaulters.

Colonel Marwa had introduced a Revenue Improvement Action Plan and then launched the Accelerated Revenue Generation Programme together with the constitution of a Task Force on Revenue Drive and Reconciliation headed by a professional accountant and soldier, who was at one time General Manager, Nigeria Army Welfare Insurance Scheme. A private consultancy firm of tax experts and chartered accountants, Messrs. Olusola Adekanola and Co. was also engaged to ensure that "all existing sources of revenue are fully tapped for optimum returns, coupled with the need to break new grounds for revenue collection". The expectation and target was for the government "to double its monthly revenue within the first year of the consultancy" which was engaged for twenty four months. This had become necessary according to the administrator because "government was in dire need of funds to undertake development projects, maintain existing infrastructures, provide adequate security for lives and property and to improve the general welfare of the

citizenry” Colonel Marwa’s multi-facet strategic approach to the finance problem had very resounding impacts on the state’s finances which became markedly improved thereby facilitating the pursuit of his other important strategic programmes for the enhancement of people’s welfare in Lagos State.

Civil Service Reorganisation & Other Management Factors

To ensure a functional efficient and well-motivated work-force, Colonel Marwa effected both structural and administrative reorganisation of the Lagos State Civil Service and also put in place a well-packaged Staff Welfare Improvement Programme which embodied many incentives for committed good service. Substantial funds were committed each year to the servicing of staff loan requests particularly in the area of housing and refurbishment or purchase of cars and cycles. All officers in the directors cadre were provided with official cars. Most especially, Colonel Marwa took great care to ensure that he built a winning team at the top level of the Lagos State Public Service. He took extra time in appointing his commissioners, allowing the directors-general to learn and adjust fully to their new position as the accounting officers for their respective ministries and departments/parastatals. He got rid of some staff at the top that could not readily adjust to the new dispensation of tidy and smart result-orientation. He chose his team with wisdom especially in the area of project execution. He placed the Water Corporation and the housing development corporation, Lagos State Development & Property Corporation (LSDPC) under able leadership and same with the Direct Labour Agency.

Chapter Nine

EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP AND PEOPLE-CENTREDNESS

"My style is leadership by example. The attitude to work must be exemplary. We must be accountable".

- M.B. Marwa

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the capability and process of influencing - guiding, directing or commanding-others to achieve a desired goal or vision. But much more it is a position of responsibility for the service of others in a group in the upliftment of a cause, in meeting their common aspirations or in achieving defined goals and objectives which promote the welfare and the interest of the group.

Leaders are those who know where they are going or ought to be and take others along with them. Public leadership is a position of servanthip one assumes in achieving public goals and in getting others to join hands with us in this regard. To be the number one citizen of a state is to be the servant of all. A mark of leadership in public service is the sensitivity and the speed with which one responds to the needs, suffering and outcry of the people and the degree of commitment of one in the discharge of one's responsibility, the pursuit of goals and the achievement of results. Indeed, the effectiveness of a public leader is to be measured by the results of his actions, programmes and efforts in bettering the position of the people he leads and in moving the administration of the state forward in attaining given visions. A public leader is essentially a servant of the people he leads. Leadership styles often vary among persons and even from time to time and situation to situation. What is most important and which is the measure of effectiveness is the result. What type of leader is Marwa? What styles has he adopted in leading the machinery of governance in Lagos State and how has he fared in his approach? These are the main questions we will seek to elucidate upon in this chapter.

As just pointed out, leaders are of many sorts. In the command economies of the Far East and in typical military settings, leaders may be largely autocratic and dictatorial just as is the case in many administrations by oligarchy. But autocratic and dictatorial leadership styles are increasingly becoming more unpopular and ineffective in today's world of popular democracy and increasingly more enlightened and sophisticated elite population of people who want to have a say in how their visions for the society would be realised and in holding their own destinies in their hands. Lagos is no doubt made up of a good proportion of the elite class in Nigeria by reason of which it is one of the most difficult and delicate states to govern in Nigeria. But Marwa has made a brilliant success of his leading the people and government of Lagos State. What was his style?

Marwa's Style

Being a professional soldier, the dictatorial style of leadership would naturally be expected to have come to him handy but Marwa baffled all book makers by turning his back on military dictatorship. At the first Executive Council Meeting he held in the state, he had declared that his type of leadership would not be leadership by orders and dictation but rather "leadership by example", which is approved of God, having pledged to serve the state with "the fear of God". Like it is written, "join with others in following my example", Colonel Marwa went all out to show Lagosians and public servants especially that he has come to work, to serve the people and work he must to the best of his ability. He swiftly declared his assets and enjoined all his team members (commissioners and directors-general and others) in the top hierarchy of the Lagos State Civil Service to follow his example, declaring their own assets within thirty days of their assuming office. And he cautioned everyone, emphasizing that there would be no room for corruption in his government. In fact he was the type of leader who was sure he had no skeletons in his cupboard and could confidently face the public and the Lagos State workers to

challenge them. "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me - put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you". At that first Executive Council Meeting with the directors-general in attendance, he had assured that he would run his administration on an open door policy with accountability being the prime character of his government. He preached the importance of probity, punctuality and discipline, saying: *"I am a strict person. I believe that because the assignment is voluntary in the sense that no one was conscripted to do the job, we must work. My style is leadership by example. The attitude to work must be exemplary. We must be accountable. There will be no magomago here. Don't allow me to catch you doing what you should not be doing. Nobody here is mandated to wander around contractors to get money for the military administrator because I don't take money from people. I have today declared my assets and it is on the way"*.

Team Building

Marwa also warned the inherited commissioners and directors-general of the need for them to keep pace with his administration which he intended to move fairly quickly in job performance and goal accomplishment. He was a leader who attached great importance to team and capacity building, knowing that he could not do it alone. He had moved swiftly to shed any unwanted load or any not-good-enough material at the top echelon of the Lagos State Civil Service.

Having determined that he could not carry a team of politicians to do what he wanted to do without them becoming a clog in the wheel of progress of the state administration, Colonel Marwa had thereafter snappily in his first week in office disbanded the former Executive Council made up of politicians, which he inherited from his predecessor, especially when some of them had smartly started flouting his directives. He dropped all the commissioners, the secretary to the State Government and two directors-general. He reshuffled the directors-general, changed the state accountant-general and reassigned the general manager of the water corporation. A new Secretary to the

State Government was appointed while he took his time in appointing new commissioners and directors-general.

By June 1997 when ten new commissioners and four directors-general he later appointed were being sworn in, Marwa, the dynamic administrator was already in a position to describe his team as one that has already made an outstanding mark in the state and he challenged the new members.

“Without being immodest, I wish to inform you that you are joining what is already a winning team in Lagos State Government that the articulate and discerning citizens of this state have come to appreciate and identify with I will not hesitate to show anyone the way out should he or she fall below expectations”.

The administrator, Colonel Mohamed Marwa recognized the critical place of the human factor. (the Lagos State civil service) in realizing his visions for the state and that unless he could effectively carry them along, he could not make any meaningful progress. At his first meeting with civil servants, in very encouraging words, he had described the Lagos State Civil Service as very vibrant and articulate and assured them that his administration would take very good care of them. He announced the cancellation of the monthly withdrawal of one hundred Naira from their individual salaries for the staff bus service promising to provide more buses to meet their needs free. He also told them that he had directed the land department and the Surveyor-General to scout round to find land for medium and low income earners so that the civil servants and the low income, both rich and poor could have access to land in the state to build their own houses for which he was also enhancing the housing loan scheme.

Staff Welfare and Motivation

Obviously and quite sensibly, one of his first major preoccupations was how to motivate and boost the morale of the civil servants to make them put in their very best to assure good performance and the accomplishment of given targets. A staff welfare package was introduced by Colonel Marwa which made the workers

very happy. Salaries were to be paid without delay by latest 27th of each month. Housing, car, motorcycle and bicycle purchase and refurbishment loans were released to many staff while the amounts staff were entitled to were also augmented across board. Provision was made to take care of fire and flood victims and a funeral allowance for serving civil servants was introduced which ranged from 20,000 Naira to 50,000 Naira. It was a welfare package to which much was committed. During Christmas, Colonel Marwa had a standing arrangement by which the government made gifts of foodstuff, particularly rice, to all categories of civil servants in the state including teachers. This went a long way in making his administration popular as one genuinely concerned with the welfare of the workers. During the periodic crisis of fuel scarcity which the state experienced during the tenure of Colonel Marwa, the state civil servants had received special allowances as cushion for the usually attendant very high transport fares in the state during such periods and this went a long way to assure industrial peace, high morale and commitment of the staff.

Personal Leadership Qualities

All these aside, Colonel Marwa's personal attitude to work and his response to distress calls concerning staff who suffered some natural mishaps or accidental death on duty were quite exemplary and went a long way in encouraging the staff to put in their best like the 'Oga' himself. Marwa typically resumed work by seven in the morning and would not close until 7.30pm in the evening at the earliest, staying in the office long into the night on many days.

Colonel Marwa was very hard-working and had a penchant for rewarding hard work and outstanding performance. Merit awards were usually given with attractive prizes to staff who excelled in given areas. He took particular interest in the conduct and Welfare of his high-flyer staff and rewarded them accordingly. Those retiring who had meritoriously served the state, like the retiring chief Judge he

gave a brand new Peugeot car, a television set and a plot of land at Ikoyi would attest to his recognition of hard work, merit and excellence. He had openly commended the performance of the General Manager of the Direct Labour Agency, even before press men, on many occasions. And this was hitherto a green horn of some sort that Colonel Marwa himself fished out and saddled with a challenging responsibility! Colonel Marwa had promoted him from Grade Level 15 to 16 in recognition of his good performance.

Though openly unemotional, Marwa is a leader who is compassionate, sympathetic and very kind. The relations of one of his personal staff, deceased Julius Afolabi whose funeral Colonel Marwa had attended in person at Oke-Igbo in Ondo State and on whose family the kindness of state and that of Colonel Marwa himself had been lavished, would always remember him and the name Marwa. Very soft-spoken and gentle Marwa would often leave many wondering if he was truly the man making things happen in Lagos State and Marwa would confound them by not claiming any glory to himself. Humbly he would tell whoever cared to listen: *"Almighty Allah, that is really the answer"*, the magic behind his success. *"The Lagos State public service has been marvellous, giving this administration their maximum support and co-operation. Like I have always said, they are the engine, I am just the driver"*. Yet everybody knows that the input determines the output. What you get is a function of what you put in. Colonel Marwa would look back to his days with a smile when he had said *"we have the biggest budget in absolute sense. But when you look at our responsibilities you'll discover that we are far from being the richest state. And as it is, we are doing the best for the civil servants"*. That was an important key to the support he received. He was able to carry the people and the civil/public servants along.

Marwa's interpersonal communications skills put him ahead of many. He is a thoughtful speaker who always chooses his words with care, avoiding ambiguities and ensuring clarity of expression. He is

frank, straight forward, always calling a spade a spade, yet very soft, polite and courteous. He is always calm, a good listener and hardly ever taking offence at people expressing their minds or asking questions, even the type some journalists have called "satanic" questions. He is a man who has a very tight reign or control over his tongue. This quality contributed in no small measure to Colonel Marwa's leadership position.

His largeness of heart, his clarity of vision even on a long range basis are qualities which have helped in making Marwa stand out as a unique leader. To be a good leader, *"first you need to have a clear vision"*, said Marwa. *"For instance, ... my vision for Operation Sweep is yet to be realised. I alone know the state I want to bring Lagos State as far as this matter of crime is concerned. It hasn't yet been achieved but I have my vision and I am working towards it"*. No doubt, Colonel Marwa was resilient, determined and deeply committed in his resolve to give his best in service. Above all, he is a very good public relations man who knows what it takes to remain in the good light of public glare. His media use and press relations were carefully directed at the highlight of government programmes and achievements, especially as they benefited or stood to benefit the public. No media glitz can however take the position of true accomplishments. People know when they are truly receiving good service and this was a consciousness that never slipped Colonel Marwa at any time.

People-Centredness

The hallmark of Marwa's administration, as indeed of any good government, was its committed people-oriented service, programmes and projects. The welfare of the people and the impact of government activities and projects as they touched on the lives of the common people of Lagos State constituted the basic concern and drive of the Marwa Administration. His wise prioritization of state problems and challenges was based on the measured importance the general public attached to the necessary ends the solution required would produce.

It was the perceived urgency and importance the public attached to their needs and demands on the government that indicated the degree of priority his administration would attach to a problem. Thus, he had not much difficulty in determining his scale of preferences. "I didn't have difficulty in identifying the two priority areas which are security and roads". His administration had concentrated on these two areas before later expanding to other areas and still keeping the two areas under focus.

Colonel Marwa favoured projects which had direct impact on the lives of the common people and devoted the chunk of state resources to their prosecution. That was the reason his administration relentlessly pursued the rehabilitation of roads in the State and the restoration of the security of lives and property. Indeed Colonel Marwa had declared that he earnestly looked forward to restoring the state of security in Lagos State to the good golden yester years when Lagosians freely held and enjoyed night parties and could move about freely without any fear or threats of armed bandits and robbers untimely and forcefully denying them of their lives and properties. Colonel Marwa's administration, unlike many before his and in other states, had embarked on roads repair, reconstruction and rehabilitation with prime importance attached to their strategic place in the lives of the people rather than ownership considerations of whether the road belonged to the federal government, the state or local governments. Housing was also of great priority to Colonel Marwa. Hence he had speedily come to the rescue of tenants in the state who had hitherto been sighing under the yoke of widespread "landlord terrorism" by promulgating a rent control edict and providing an accompanying judicial machinery in form of rent tribunals set up purposely to assure compliance. Abandoned housing projects of former administrations in the state were resuscitated and speedily completed while new housing projects were initiated which were also executed with despatch and commissioned to provide shelter for the people and mitigate the problem of housing inadequacy in the state.

In response to public complaints, the administrator ensured that illegal checkpoints in the state, particularly on the Lagos-Badagry road, were swiftly disbanded. His concern for the less privileged was unfeigned and from the heart. Colonel Marwa provided for the rehabilitation of destitutes in the state under the Family Support Programme headed by the wife, Munirat. He was always very swift in his response to the plight of victims of natural disasters such as fire and flood. He would always hurry personally to visit such people in distress, sympathizing with them and giving them words of comfort and encouragement, usually with an assurance that the government would come to their aid and he never reneged on his promises. Rather his administration always rapidly came up with relief materials and donations to provide succour to such people. Victims of fire at Oko-Baba, Ebute Metta, Balogun Market in central Lagos and those of Amukoko, area in Ajeromi Ifelodun Local Government could never forget the state benevolence that Colonel Marwa showered on them.

While past administrators had regarded the 'area boys' in Lagos as social delinquents, hoodlums, drug addicts and misfits that the society must get rid of and who must be treated as outcasts, Colonel Marwa's fatherly disposition and love for the less fortunate would not permit him to treat them as outcasts. He had extended fatherly love to them and made every effort to rehabilitate and re-integrate them back as useful, responsible members of the civil society with a means of livelihood. Interestingly his efforts had paid off bountifully and the 'area boys' phenomenon has today become almost forgotten. His unalloyed belief that government must protect the weak went a long way in shaping government attitude and projects in Lagos State under the leadership of Colonel Marwa. Even the welfare of criminals and other accused persons awaiting trial who were in large numbers in the prisons in the state received his attention. He was very concerned about delays in trying accused persons and made frantic efforts to solve the problem. Magistrate courts were ordered established in the vicinity of each prison in order to make for a faster system of court trials unimpeded by transportation logistics usually associated with the movement of accused persons from the prisons to the law courts.

During his tenure, even at the risk of his own life, Colonel Marwa would always be seen timely present at volatile trouble spots in the Lagos metropolis personally addressing the people and calming frayed nerves in times of heated social crisis such as during the fuel crisis, pro-democracy demonstrations and the violent reactions that attended the announcement of the death of detained Chief M.K.O. Abiola who was reputed to have won the annulled 1993 presidential election in Nigeria. Marwa, no doubt, was one leader who felt great empathy with the common people he governed. During the widespread scare of poisonous beans in Nigeria in the last quarter of 1996 when official reaction was uncertain from the appropriate federal agencies and the public had to avoid eating beans for fear of being poisoned, Colonel Marwa had dispelled the rumours by going out to publicly buy and eat beans cake (akara) in order to assure the people that the poison scare was all a hoax. That was Marwa for you, right at the level of the common people, the ordinary man on the street.

His Perspective of Leadership

An attempt is made here to collate some of the views that Colonel Marwa had expressed which provide an insight into his perspective of the subject of leadership and the type of leader he is at heart, irrespective of, or giving regard to the leader's operational environment. He is a soldier proud of his professional calling and training but quite broad-minded and very sensitive to the differential elements in his operational environment particularly regarding the social setting and the human factor. Though he believes that the definitional elements of leadership are to a large extent the same, marked differences could be noticed in his situational approaches to problems and people compared to what was common normal practice in military settings. Quite unlike a pure military setting where "order is order" to be obeyed, Colonel Marwa has been found on different occasions appealing or apologizing to the people in times of social crisis, given the differences in the scenario as he explained.

“I am administering for the most part, civilians. I have to recognize that and tailor myself to that. If I was in the barracks, the question of apology would never arise in the first place. But here is a different scenario and one has to adapt to the changing circumstances. To get the job done is really the key, bearing in mind that you are not barking at soldiers but that you are administering a state made up primarily of civilians”.

“As soldiers, we are trained to cope with situations, to manage situations and to prevail over situations. We are trained to be leaders and managers at the same time. Leadership goes with responsibility, taking a problem head on and rising to the occasion. It would be recalled that in my maiden broadcast, I put my credibility on the line when I said I would personally take charge of the security of Lagos State. To do that, one needed experience, one needed to have done some work and believe with certain amount of confidence that it was a 'doable' thing. That was why I made that statement, and in any case, as the chief security officer of Lagos State, I am in charge of the security.

I don't know if leadership has a different meaning in a military setting from that of the civil populace. I believe leadership has one basic definition. In my opinion and this is probably not a dictionary definition, leadership is that capacity and capability to influence and harness resources - men and material - to bring about desired results, preferably through persuasive means. I have used the words “preferably through persuasive means” deliberately. Some leaders would say the end justifies the means, that it is the result that you want, so you can do anything to get results. But I am not sure if that is the preferred form of leadership - getting the job done anyhow. That doesn't fall within my own definition of leadership. A good leader needs to get the job done with the least cost, cost not necessarily in terms of resources in general. For instance, as a military commander, if you have the task to take an objective from an enemy, there are several ways you can go about it but the best way that shows true leadership is that by which you can achieve the desired objective with less casualties in the loss of men and materials.

You can achieve results in Operation Sweep with less manpower, vehicles and so on. It will still control the situation but you will suffer great losses because the robbers will calculate their chances. They will feel their chances are bright since they don't see overwhelming obstacles in terms of security forces everywhere as there are now. They will be inclined to go out and rob and kill, taking their chances. And if they do that and the security forces intervene, there will be a shoot-out and there will be casualties. But now that we have security forces all over Lagos State and there is going to be more, you find that it deters by itself and they pitch their tents elsewhere immediately. The logic is: why take the risk when you immediately know that there are people that are going to deal with you if you do?

By and large, leadership has the same philosophy, be it in the military or in a civil setting. A leader has to be a problem solver. If you can't solve problems, you are not a leader.

My style is leadership by example. The attitude to work must be exemplary. A leader must be principled. He must be honest. He must have integrity. People must believe you. A leader must have and cherish certain values and ideals. He sees what others are not seeing. A leader must be able to take calculated risks. He is decisive. If you want to take a decision, you can't be milling around, dithering about when you have to move. You have to take your people along. That is why persuasiveness is an important element of leadership. You can't be a leader without having followers, as they say. As a leader, you should have a certain amount of knowledge of the terrain. If you don't know, you learn it.

A leader must have vision. A leader sees ahead. You must have a picture of the projected future destination where you want to go, what you want to achieve. Unless you have that you probably have not started yet. First you need to have a clear vision. For instance, I have my vision for 'Operation Sweep'. Despite all I have heard from the public, my vision for Operation Sweep is yet to be realised.

I alone know the state I want to bring Lagos State as far as this matter of crime is concerned. It hasn't yet been achieved but I have my vision and I am working towards it. Vision is not just an element of leadership, it is critical. Unless you have a clear goal based on an objective you want to achieve, you can't start anything.

Having determined where to go, you then strategize on how to get there. What are the options available? What does each option involve? What are the advantages and disadvantages? Which has the least cost? A leader has to be a strategist. At a higher level in the military, you need to be a strategist. At other levels, perhaps the junior level, you may not necessarily need to be. There you simply need to be a tactician with a lot of common sense. Strategy is the big picture. Tactics is an offshoot of strategy. It comes within the framework of strategy. Tactics deals more with details at the lower level.

In the military, timeliness and decisiveness is critical to leadership. Can you imagine a situation where one man sitting aloof somewhere would bark out an instruction for ten thousand men to go and face the enemy when they know and he knows that some of them will perish, some will lose limbs, and they would actually carry out the order immediately without thinking about it? There is a command element in military leadership that is absent in a civilian setting.

I think there is also a divine dimension to the whole question of leadership. We have to accept that we ourselves do not understand everything. I believe there is God who guides. You can be as clever as you think, you can be the best management wizard, but still you need to have the Almighty God's final blessing to succeed in anything. If I was to sit here and tell people that when I came in August (1996) I could look into the future and see myself achieving success in some of those areas then, I wouldn't be telling the truth. But having said that, commitment is important. People have their own style. Each administrator is faced with a unique circumstance

in each state. You have to deal with the culture and the uniqueness of the environment and the problems of the areas you are posted to. In some areas you see desert environment, lack of water and so on, you have to deal with it.

Challenges motivate me. I like solving problems. The challenge of public service is a motivation. What motivates me is a desire to do the greatest good. Yes, age plays a part in management and leadership. You could be too young for certain responsibilities because a little experience helps. And on the other hand, you could be too old. Frankly, a senile mind is not good for the business of leadership and management. All said, leadership has a lot to do with common sense which they say is not common. Another key thing is to enjoy whatever you are doing. It motivates you to keep on moving along doing your best."

Chapter Ten

THE MARWA FACTOR IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ENGINEERING

"The citizens of Nigeria know that you (government) cannot do everything. But they also know when you are doing something. Once they (citizens) read that there is honesty of purpose on your part, they will give their support"

- M.B. Marwa.

The Marwa Factor

The 'Marwa factor', as earlier explained, refers to the totality of personal qualities, attributes, virtues and other endowments of the man, Marwa the balanced mix of which produces what we have described as his charismatic personality. That which made things happen, which assured his success where others have tottered and failed, that which uniquely enabled him to make bold giant strides where many have been dithering and appeared immobilized, that which facilitated change and his adroit management of change, engendering and assuring public trust, confidence and support from a populace that has hitherto become disillusioned and disenchanted about government and its orchestrated services to the people. that is what is wrapped up as the 'Marwa factor' It is the phenomenon which has really enabled Colonel Marwa to do what many would want to do or have attempted to do at some other time or state without success whereas he has persistently recorded impressive success in so many facets. The Marwa factor has made it possible for Colonel Marwa to record notable enduring landmarks in the very turbulent field of social and political engineering to produce the Nigeria, the Nigerian citizen and social populace of our dreams. His administration's socio-political engineering efforts did yield impressive results in many facets of our public life, some of which are considered here.

Restoration of Public Confidence

Colonel Marwa's inception of office in Lagos State was at a period in which the government's public image was at a very low ebb. Nigerians generally and Lagosians in particular were increasingly disillusioned and losing confidence in the military government, given its widespread inactivity and non-performance as well as the heightened campaigns and deafening vociferation of pro-democracy groups against continued military governance of Nigeria which they characterized as dictatorial, corrupt, non-representative and inefficient. The Lagos State government was particularly in a state of limbo, unable to cope with the problem of general insecurity of life and property and terribly bad roads which had reduced transportation in the state to a very agonising experience occasioning untold suffering and discomfort for the people. People were largely-disenchanted with the government, giving no serious regard to its activities and programmes again.

It was to the credit of Colonel Marwa that his administration was able to turn the situation around within his first hundred days in office. This was achieved mainly by his administration's introduction and committed pursuit of people-oriented policies, programmes and projects which had direct and largely immediate impact on the well-being of the citizens, especially the common man on the street. It was a hope-restoring and confidence-building approach which made people to start to give regard to the government once again.

The administration's people-centred populist policies went a long way in redirecting the interest of the public and enhancing public confidence. While poor subsistent street traders have been under siege of the Task Force on Environmental Sanitation members during the tenure of Colonel Marwa's predecessor, he immediately suspended any raid on street traders and markets by the Task Force. Colonel Marwa indeed gave a sympathetic official backing to street trading, directing that street traders should not be dislocated without alternative arrangements being made for them and no market should be closed

by any authority or local government in the state until alternatives have been made to accommodate them. To him, street trading was to be preferred to armed robbery and other crimes and the state should not make life unnecessarily difficult for its law-abiding citizens.

Public confidence was much affected and accentuated by the speed with which the Marwa administration progressively recorded physically visible achievements in the area of road rehabilitation and public security. The swift response and high sensitivity of the government to the plight of the unfortunate and the less privileged, especially victims of natural disasters, really impressed Lagosians and this contributed to the quick restoration of their confidence in the state government.

Colonel Marwa's extensive commitment of state resources to very laudable social welfare activities was almost incredible to a populace that for long has become almost unfamiliar with such kind state gestures. Public hope and interest in government was enlivened and this assisted in gearing up the people to their civic responsibilities. Colonel Marwa also wisely employed his social welfare activities to encourage and motivate his work force, particularly the members of the Operation Sweep who risked their lives in ensuring the security of lives of other members of the society. He upgraded the Police Clinic at Ikeja and donated drugs worth several millions of Naira to military hospitals to reciprocate the contributions of the police and the soldiers in combating violent crimes in the state. Unlike many others, Colonel Marwa held tenaciously to the principle of continuity in government. He resuscitated and completed many abandoned projects that had marked bearing on the welfare of the people and even named some of such projects after their initiators who preceded him in office. One of such is the Otedola Jubilee Housing Estate at Omole Estate, Ikeja, named after former civilian governor, Michael Otedola who started the scheme. Chief Otedola had this to say on the occasion of commissioning the estate on its completion by Colonel Marwa: "It is rare to have an occasion like this. Previous holders of

office are hardly remembered, not to talk of honouring them. The fact that it has pleased the administrator to ask me to be here and to deem it fit to name this estate after me is an act that is blessed by God. The project itself carried with it blessings. The interest of the common man is in your heart, Marwa. So it was in my heart and my colleagues at this time made it possible for me to start the project". On that occasion, the indigenes of the state, goal keepers Dosu Joseph, Abiodun Baruwa and Teslim Fatusi who were members of the Dream Team that won the Atlanta Olympics goal medal in soccer were presented with keys to their houses.

The government, by dint of hard work, exemplary performance and committed pursuit of people's welfare improvement through carefully prioritized projects, was able to boost its public image in so short a period of under six months that the public started to deem it as one of the best governments in Nigeria, if not outright the number one state in terms of administration. Public security of life and property was restored while more and more resources got strategically committed to government's priority areas as other areas were being explored.

The National Unity Question

A major question and one of the most crucial goals of our national social and political engineering efforts in Nigeria since the attainment of independence has been that of national unity. It has been our objective and one consistently entrenched in everyone of our national constitution to create and promote a Nigeria where all the peoples are united and bound by the bonds of brotherly love, where tribalism, tribal allegiances and discrimination are given no room to thrive, and where every Nigerian enjoys the full rights and privileges of citizenship wherever he may be resident in Nigeria. It has been a very tall dream, the realisation of which many national efforts and programmes have been directed, such as the National Youth Service Corps. No doubt some measure of progress has been attained especially

under the military's central unitary government system. But tribalism has remained a social ogre which the arrows of our political engineers have been unable to bring down. We are still looking forward to a Nigeria where you will freely claim to be an indigene of whichever state you are born or have been resident for a given period of time and freely contest election to the highest political office in the state. Marwa's exemplary shining performance as military administrator of Lagos State has shown that this goal is not a dreamer's hope after all.

Though Marwa is an Hausa man from Adamawa State in the northern part of Nigeria, the people of Lagos State, made up mainly of Yorubas of South Western Nigeria, were so impressed by his performance that many have openly canvassed for his transmutation into the next civilian governor of the state through the ballot box, under a democratic system of government. Indeed, the tribal factor has become quite irrelevant to a majority of Lagosians by reason of Marwa's meritorious performance. Merit, they say, is what is important and merit has no tribe. All that the people and the common man want is a man who can deliver the goods and assure that their interest is not sacrificed for some selfish materialistic interest. Thus, Colonel Marwa has by his own performance exemplified the fact that our social engineering efforts would be much more productive given the right leadership.

The fact was that Marwa lived what he preached and never attempted to substitute propaganda for real performance in the service of the people. His focus was always the utilitarian interest and welfare of the people he had been called to serve, and he served to the best of his ability, knowing that Nigerians really were not as ignorant and gullible as some supposed. *"The citizens of Nigeria know that you cannot do everything. But they also know when you are doing something. Once they read that there is honesty of purpose on your part, they will give their support"*. Those were the words of Colonel Marwa when called to speak on "The Challenges of State Administration: The Lagos State Experience" at the Nigerian Guild of Editors forum in Lagos as far back as July, 1997.

It is very evident by Colonel Marwa's example that we could have truly detribalized Nigerian leaders who are totally Nigerian in their outlook and would not pander to sectional interests anywhere they might find themselves. The Hausa Community in Lagos State had sent a high-powered delegation to congratulate 'their own son' who had just become the administrator of Lagos State and to make some demands, including the carving out of some area for them to be known as 'Sabo'. Colonel Marwa, while thanking them for their love, had sternly declared that his administration would not show bias or any undue favour to any ethnic group in the state. *"Though I am an Hausa man, I am not here to protect the interest of the Hausas alone. I am here for the welfare of all citizens of this state. You must learn to tolerate other people in your community. This is the only way you can help me to govern successfully"*. The message was direct and quite striking. Colonel Marwa had proceeded to explain that his posting to Lagos was a demonstration of late General Abacha's administration's love for a truly united, one Nigeria, which was the reason why Hausas were posted to the West, Ibos to North and Yorubas to North and South as military administrators at the time.

Even in his personal life, Colonel Marwa was detribalized. His first wife, Zainab is an Igbo from Owerri. His children bear names from all the major Nigerian tribes while the son born to him by Munitat during his tenure as Lagos State administrator was given mainly Yoruba names, an indication of his detribalized nature. Also, Colonel Marwa was at the vanguard of a campaign for the Lagos Area to be conferred a special federal status that would assure greater revenue allocation to the state to cope with the numerous added responsibilities which its status as the nation's former federal capital has thrust upon her in addition to being the nation's commercial and industrial nerve centre. Obviously, he has done this with a very high sense of responsibility not considering only the short-term nature of his tenure but the long-term benefits accruable to the state and Lagosians generally.

Management of Public Reaction/Response.

This is one area in which the service of Colonel Marwa has been very useful and may never be fully quantified. His brilliant and excellent performance in Lagos State as administrator went a long way in redeeming the faltering and rather despicable image the military was assuming as a class from which nothing good should be expected, given rising pro-democracy campaigns and agitation which were sweeping through the land. Even die-hard radicals like Gani Fawehinmi appreciated the decency of Marwa by nature. But much more, the Abacha administration benefited immensely from the popularity of the Marwa administration in Lagos State and invaluable from his dexterous, masterly handling of public reactions to the purported self-succession bid of late General Abacha, his effective management of social crisis like the incessant fuel scarcity crisis and pro-democracy demonstrations. Marwa's swift but very wise moves to moderate people's spontaneous albeit violent reactions to the death of Chief M.K.O Abiola in detention (just as his release was almost being finalised) helped in no small way in averting what could have thrown Nigeria into anarchy, prolonged civil strife and a very bloody tribal upheaval that could have pitched the Yorubas against the Hausas in Lagos and Nigeria at large. But Marwa had what it takes to quench crisis before it gets out of hand and that he aptly brought to use - excellence in crisis management.

Campaign against Corruption and Public Sector Inefficiency.

The campaign has been on for a long time to rid Nigeria of corruption and stamp out inefficiency in the public sector. Colonel Marwa's leadership by example, open door policy, accountable government in Lagos State was practically committed to this campaign in its conduct and activities. He did not delay in declaring his assets and communicating the impeccable commitment of his administration to transparent, honest service. His personal example was to be followed by the civil servants and all members of his winning team.

The issues of inefficiency and corruption have been the two main reasons while public projects and programmes have commonly hit the rock. These twin problems accounted for the general skepticism that has always greeted any new government policy, project or programme in Nigeria but such skepticism has been misplaced regarding Marwa's Direct Labour Agency. Colonel Marwa created the Direct Labour Agency on the conviction that it would be more cost-effective in attaining the goal of rehabilitating the very terrible roads in the state if efficiency could be assured. Efficiency was not only assured by revitalizing the machinery of project execution by the government, the apparatus for ensuring security of life and property was equally strengthened and reinvigorated to provide a conducive environment. The problem of corruption was not allowed to rear its ugly head to cripple these establishments because of the transparent leadership style of the administrator himself which motivated and encouraged others to copy him in being and giving their best in service to the state. It may thus be inferred that given effective, pro-active leadership, the followership will be positively more productive and more inclined to give its very best. Our campaign for efficiency and war against corruption will thus be very more effective starting with the leaders, and evidenced in their own conduct and attitudes. If the leaders would realize like Marwa that true leadership consists in faithful servanthship to the people, the Nigeria of our dream will not be far-fetched. Colonel Marwa indeed has set a standard that Nigerian political office holders and seekers cannot ignore, especially in Lagos State. It is a mark to at least attain even if you cannot surpass it, otherwise the boos and jeers of the populace may be reserved for you. Public office is a position of responsibility, a call to service. The public knows when you are honestly serving or have served them. With the measure you have given you will receive.

'Area Boys' Rehabilitation & Social Adaptation.

Marwa's social engineering efforts in this area have been successful. Colonel Marwa has demonstrated by his fatherly approach to the handling of the 'area boys' problem, the so-called social miscreants' phenomenon, that perceived dislocations in the social system could be redressed, given the will and the right approach on the part of the administrators of state or other leaders. Indeed, existing social institutions, structures and organs may be adapted to achieve some given ends. This was one consciousness Colonel Marwa always exploited in his decision-making process of exploring and assessing alternatives. The traditional rulership institutions, the very common vigilante groups and the notorious area boys were all some of the existing social institutions, organs and structures that Colonel Marwa masterfully adapted in the accomplishment of his visions for the state. The traditional rulers and the vigilante groups were not left out in the game plan of securing lives and property in the state. The Neighbourhood Watch was an improvement on the local vigilante system. Following the incidents of bomb blasts in Lagos, Colonel Marwa did not leave the traditional rulers out of the groups he met to discuss the security situation in the state while many of the area boys have been remodelled to provide required labour for the direct-labour rehabilitation of roads in the state.

Government, Press & Media Relations

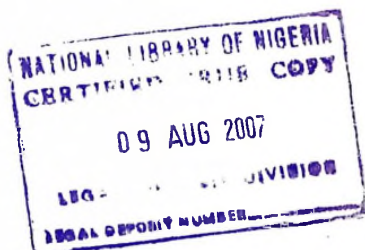
Expert handling of its press and media relations' activities and the effective management of information are important elements of the 'Marwa factor' which accounted for the success and the undeniable towering public image of the Marwa administration. Conscious that no amount of propaganda can substitute good performance and committed honest service to the people, the populist, people-oriented nature of projects, policies and programmes of government was not to be compromised.

However, Colonel Marwa also knew as a thorough-bred good manager of men, materials and affairs, that the best of policies, programmes or projects may be wrongly perceived/accepted if not properly presented in the light of favourable public information and media use. Thus, extra care was taken and substantial resources were committed to public information and media relations management. Charity, they say, begins at home. The Marwa administration swiftly rose to the challenge of rehabilitating and modernising its radio and television stations and assuring good staffing, committing close to one hundred million naira. Today the stations are back on course positioned to excel. Colonel Marwa also built a new press centre at the State Secretariat which was equipped with modern sophisticated communications equipment and gadgets to facilitate the work of journalists attached to the governor's office and assure their comfort at all times.

His open-door administration policy ensured that journalists had ample access to his office for information and clarifications. This assisted in ensuring the correctness of information going to press by journalists. Significantly, Colonel Marwa marked his first year in office visiting virtually all the press houses in Lagos, including those that have been openly critical of his administration and against anything military or Abacha such as Tell and PM News. On his visit, Colonel Marwa had thanked all of them for their support, stating that even those that were critical have assisted his administration in making amends and seeking better ways of meeting its responsibilities to the public. He had a specific word for each house visited and took time to answer any questions put to him. It was management of press relations at its very best. The in-house press officers and public information departmental staff of Colonel Marwa were also decidedly at their best, coming up with press releases, information bulletin, magazines, books and publications of various types to highlight the achievements, programmes and activities of the Marwa Administration.

Interpersonal and Intergovernmental Relations

This was another area Colonel Marwa impacted a lot on the Nigerian's social psyche. He knew when to call a meeting of the who is who in Lagos State, such as after the bomb blasts in those days and every new year to usher in the year with a toast of glasses at his new year party. He had an excellent relationship with colleagues, traditional rulers and those who matter in the top hierarchy of government and the Armed Forces that had got something to offer the state, such as the Chairman of the Petroleum Trust Fund, heads of strategic federal parastatals, the Chief of Defence Staff, other Service Chiefs, the Inspector General of Police, and key federal ministers especially in his fight against insecurity and violent crimes, the rehabilitation of Lagos roads and the realisation of other paramount objectives of his administration. He carefully related with the local governments urging them to follow his example in broadening their revenue base and in rehabilitating at least ten roads each in their domain. He was most careful and full of tact in his relationship with the government at the top, the Federal Ministers, and especially with 'Aso Rock', knowing when to tactfully say 'no' to a proposed pro - Abacha rally that could have put a question on his competence and wisdom as the chief security officer of Lagos State.



Chapter Eleven

EXCELLENCE IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT

"...Timeliness and decisiveness is critical to leadership. A leader must be able to take calculated risks. He is decisive. You can't be milling around, dithering when you have to move. You have to take your people along. (But) whatever you do, your thumb must remain on top".

- M.B. Marwa

Introductory Notes

Crisis connotes an uncertain time or state of affairs, a moment of great danger, insecurity, uncertainty, difficulty or hardship, or a sudden turning point in the course of anything, which forces or attempts to force one to veer off the desired path to achieving an objective or goal. The objectives of public administration are many but generally, to enhance the well-being of the people and assure the security of life and property are fundamental. Crisis or near-crisis situations were encountered during the tenure of Colonel Marwa in which society could not be reasonably said to be moving towards the accomplishment of these objectives. These were periods when the security of life and property was very frail and hardships and avoidable sufferings came upon the people through extraneous events on which the Lagos State government had very little or no control. The most critical of these situations included: the periods of chronic fuel scarcity, the period of frenzied, renewed pro-democracy agitation against continued military government and the clamour for self-succession by late General Sani Abacha, and the days immediately following the announcement of the death of detained Chief M.K.O. Abiola who was acclaimed to have won the annulled 1993 presidential election in Nigeria.

The stuff, resilience, capability, ingenuity, wisdom and effectiveness of a public administrator is brought to the fore and is perhaps best tested and revealed in crisis situations when tension is characteristically high and crucial decisions must be timely and

correctly taken, with very dire consequences attending indecision, delay or the inappropriateness of decisions and methods of execution. In crisis situations, the decision-maker/leader is often unavoidably faced with a dilemma that requires great wisdom, timeliness and decisiveness in deciding the option which will minimize the inalienable negative consequences of necessary actions and any miscalculation usually spells doom and great disasters. The management of crisis therefore can be a very important yardstick for assessing the effectiveness of a manager. It is to many management scholars the real test of resourcefulness, skilfulness and mastery of management. Colonel Marwa performed excellently in everyone of these crisis situations. He was such an effective manager of crisis that we need to review and learn from how he tackled each of these crisis situations. In the context of this discussion, effective crisis management denotes very critical, urgent strategic decision-making masterfully communicated and wisely well executed to restore law and order out of chaos, to foster social equilibrium, peace and stability and to bring under control a social situation that is fast getting out of hand and uncertain. That was what Colonel Marwa did.

The Fuel Crisis

Between 1997 and 1998, at least three periods of chronic fuel scarcity occasioning very high transport fares and untold hardship for motorists and commuters alike have been experienced in the Lagos area. The problem of prolonged acute fuel shortage giving rise to serious social and economic dislocations in many parts of the country, however, has become a familiar one. Ironically, it was a problem over which state administrators could exercise little or no power because the production, distribution and marketing of fuel did not fall under the ambit of state executive powers. Colonel Marwa surely recognized these limitations but he also valued, possibly more than anything else, his obligations to the people of Nigeria he has been called to serve as Lagos State Administrator. His love and concern for the people

coupled with his high sense of responsibility in safeguarding the interests of the state and assuring public security, peace and tranquillity, made him to be highly sensitive to the plight of Lagosians and any situation that could threaten, even at the slightest, the security of state or the welfare and peace of the public. Colonel Marwa had viewed the fuel crisis in the state as capable of undermining state security and eroding the well-being of the populace which he has pledged to uplift. He therefore responded to tackle the crisis as if all depended on him.

"Petroleum and its supply and so on is not directly under my wings but on the other hand, everything that moves around Lagos somehow comes within my purview, especially when you are faced with the citizenry". Colonel Marwa was enthralled by his responsibility to the people in assuring their security and well-being as the administrator and chief security officer of the state. Of course, he knew he must do something to get the situation under control and he wasted no time. What was within his power he swiftly proceeded to do. He apprised himself sufficiently about the situation and immediately went ahead to call the attention of the relevant authorities to the social danger the crisis posed to the state, urging them to act fast.

"When we had this difficulty, I went to establish from the honourable Minister of Petroleum Resources what was the matter and what he was doing to address it". But Colonel Marwa did not stop there. He was full of compassion for the suffering citizens whose welfare he believed he owed it a duty to protect. He also knew that the situation could conflagrate into violent protests and other anti-government activities and appreciated the very negative impact of these crises on the image of the Abacha administration. Therefore, he had moved swiftly leaving no stone unturned in ensuring that peace reigned in Lagos, knowing Lagosians to be the most sophisticated and most delicate people to govern in Nigeria. Armed with necessary facts, Colonel Marwa had strategically plunged ahead to condition the reaction of the general public to make them persevere and exercise patience with the Federal Government. But quite unlike many others,

he was down-to-earth and very frank in his explanation and appeal to the people. Colonel Marwa, having visited the Minister of Petroleum Resources, knew there was no time to waste in reaching the people to let them know that the government was not unconcerned. *"It was after that I thought I should stop and talk to the people directly to inform them of what was happening and the efforts being made to solve it"*. He went directly on the streets of Lagos where motorists had queued to buy non-available fuel and commuters were forced to trek long distances because of unavailability of vehicles. That was where Colonel Marwa addressed the people, becoming a great public relations expert laundering the public image of the Abacha Administration. However, his first concern was the welfare of the common people whom he regarded with so profound empathy. Second and of critical importance was the danger or likelihood of a breach of the peace should the public be pushed to react violently to the mounting hardships being suffered. Third was the deteriorating public image of the Abacha regime which badly required every rejuvenation it could get.

Marwa, after his visit to the Petroleum Minister, during the very first fuel crisis he experienced in Lagos had driven straight to Ojuelegba and Ijora, two bubbling commercial districts in the heart of Lagos, to address and placate Lagosians, especially commuters and commercial bus operators. For many of these common people, it was the first time a military chief executive of the state had stood shoulder to shoulder among them on their own turf to exhort and reassure them on a problem touching their lives directly. His concise and very frank face-to-face talk with the people was a master piece that immediately drew thunderous ovation from the listeners for calling a spade a spade and putting the blame right where it belonged before turning to ask for perseverance, patience and co-operation on the part of the public. Lagosians were delighted that they had a leader who showed real concern for them and would not tell obvious lies or half truths in the name of being diplomatic or tactful. Marwa was

their man for being so frank and for his boldness, courage and love in condescending to come right on their own ground to explain things as he did.

"I have been speaking with the agency responsibly. There are some problems with our refineries which are not producing to capacity. That is the truth. I cannot tell you that the problem will be solved in a day or two but I do know that the agency involved is doing its best to bring the situation to normal. I urge you to persevere with government at these trying times. As soon as there is more information about the fuel problem. I will let you know. Thank you very much". Later, Colonel Marwa had to come out heavily lambasting the government agency in charge of petroleum production, distribution and marketing in Nigeria, blaming the fuel crisis on saboteurs bent on discrediting the Abacha Administration. Again, the public applauded him as he described the fuel scarcity problem as "not only embarrassing but scandalous for a country producing oil to be in this situation" and that "those responsible should bury their heads in shame". Marwa had pointedly asserted: *"everyone knows that the refineries are producing below capacity and are inefficiently run"*. He had added, *"on behalf of the Lagos State Government, even when we do not have hand in petroleum matters, we want to call for the Lagos residents' patience and greater understanding of the others"*. He explained further that the federal agency in charge had been alerted and that a directive had already been issued for more fuel to be pumped to the Lagos area, even if it meant diverting supply from other areas since Lagos accounted for 60 per cent of fuel consumption nationwide. His explanation which he was apt to give publicly during such crisis, went a long way in calming the frayed nerves of many Lagos motorists and commuters who might otherwise have resorted to protests and demonstration which could be hijacked, as had often happened in the past, by hoodlums to terrorise innocent citizens.

Apart from these, Marwa used the machinery of state, his executive powers and military contacts and capabilities to assure that fuel meant for Lagos State consumption going to the filling stations suffered no diversion or any leakage within the system. He personally paid timely visits to the oil depots and fuel stations in Lagos including Atlas Cove to have first hand knowledge of the situation of things during those crisis periods. He was always on the neck of the top executives of the NNPC and the PPMC to ensure adequate fuel got pumped into the Lagos area. Press briefings were adequately employed to allay the fears of the public that often resulted in panic buying, hoarding, and dangerous storage of petrol resulting in fire accidents. To get rid of persistent long queues at the filling stations, Colonel Marwa had wisely introduced the even and odd number buying of fuel by vehicles on alternate days, an exercise which recorded instant success in getting rid of the long queues. To ameliorate the financial hardships civil servants faced in Lagos during the crisis as a result of high astronomical transport fares charged, Marwa also approved a special allowance to be paid to civil servants during such periods to cushion their position. Thousands of civil servants were also deployed on special assignments of ensuring desired, prompt, orderly dispensation of fuel at the filling stations during the crisis, also with a special inconvenience allowance attached. It was most gladdening to see how zealous and committed the civil servants were in the discharge of their responsibilities on those occasions. Colonel Marwa also swiftly intervened to get tanker drivers return to work in the state who had gone on strike protesting the extensive damage done to their trucks during the violent demonstrations following the death of Chief M.K.O. Abiola. This he achieved even by undertaking to compensate the truck drivers for the damage suffered and they had immediately returned to work, easing the problem of fuel scarcity that was already getting very serious.

Pro-Abacha Versus Pro-Democracy Demonstrations

A very trying time during the tenure of Colonel Marwa was the period of widespread intensive campaign of people for self-succession by late General Sani Abacha, the former Nigeria Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces who appointed him as the administrator of Lagos State. Somehow, the campaign for General Abacha to succeed himself as civilian president had been so intense in some areas, championed by one youth organisation or the other but getting to a climax when all the then five registered political parties came together to quickly adopt late General Sani Abacha as their consensus presidential candidate. The state seemed set for General Abacha to succeed himself and everyone including many state administrators seemed to be dotting on him to win his favour by campaigning for him or supporting/promoting those campaigning. While Colonel Marwa had tactfully said that he would not be unwilling to support late General Abacha if and when he declared his intention, he took extra care never to sacrifice or compromise his duty to ensure security of life and property, peace and social well-being of the people of Lagos State. The Anti-Abacha Campaign had also been building up a strong tower of resistance in Lagos at this time. Incidentally, all the pro-democracy and human rights groups and organisations in Nigeria had their headquarters or presence in Lagos. A serious confrontation therefore loomed large between pro-Abacha organisations on the one hand and the Pro-democracy activists on the other. Viewed against the background of the damnable carnage, total breakdown of law and order and wanton destruction of properties that greeted the pro-Abacha rally in Ibadan, it should be obvious that the conflagration to be experienced in Lagos would have been far more disastrous and destructive of both men and materials but Colonel Marwa, by his special God-given wisdom had averted such bloodshed. Tactfully, he withdrew the Police permit that had been granted one youth organization to hold a pro-Abacha rally in Lagos and would no longer allow any rally to be held at the State Secretariat or indiscriminately anywhere any time.

Ordinarily, given the personality involved, it was not an easy task for Marwa to outrightly just say no to a powerful youth group proposing to show in his state their support for his master, the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief. He would be risking being labelled unfaithful and disloyal. Neither was it easy getting the Pro-democracy groups not to demonstrate because these were groups of radicals who believed it was their fundamental human rights to express themselves and associate freely. But Colonel Marwa knew he wielded enough authority legally to assume full responsibility for the peace and security of the state and the citizens generally. Smartly, he resorted to the exercise of the legislative powers already conferred on him and outlawed all rallies and demonstrations in the state, no matter the purpose or at whose instance unless certain basic conditions were met which included obtaining Police permit, and the restriction of such rallies to given days in the week, time and government specified venues. That was the joker that frustrated the Pro-Abacha rally and removed the teeth of the Pro-democracy groups thereby averting a situation that could have resulted in great bloodshed and heavy casualties in Lagos State.

July 1998 Protests/Riots Following Abiola's Death

This was one time Marwa's maturity and wisdom was again seriously put to test. There had been spontaneous protests and demonstrations in many parts of Lagos following the announcement of the death in detention of National Concord publisher, Chief M.K.O. Abiola who had been incarcerated by the Abacha Regime for treason since 1994, following his unilateral declaration of himself as the President of Nigeria on the strength of the annulled 1993 presidential election which he was widely acclaimed to have won. Chief Abiola had died at a time when the public was full of expectation for his imminent release. He was being expected to be released in a matter of days and then the man died, whom the world represented by the United Nations had earnestly canvassed for his release. It was such a

terrible blow seriously aggravated by the suspicion of foul play on his death. The authorities were jolted and the public was gored. There was a serious threat to public peace and security. Lagos was on fire and Lagos boiled. People's reactions had been too swift. Hoodlums and criminally inclined persons took advantage of the situation. The crisis must be contained and the costs must be mitigated, otherwise it would have been disastrous. Apart from the extensive heavy casualties and the monumental loss of lives and properties that would have followed, the entire beautiful record of achievements that the Marwa administration had been parading right from its inception would have been terribly smeared, making it a non-issue.

Once more, Marwa proved his mettle. He had discreetly ensured the initial withdrawal of the 'Operation Sweep' from the most volatile spots in Lagos to avoid a situation in which the security personnel would have been forced to open fire on some of the protesters in self defence and it would no longer be viewed in such light but that the government had masterminded the killing of 'harmless demonstrators' protesting the death of the 'Nigerian symbol of democracy'. Marwa was too wise to fall into such a cauldron of boiling soda. He directed that the security agents should exercise great restraint in the use of force and fire arms. He had quickly gone on air to address the good citizens of Lagos State and arouse their senses to receive wisdom that would persuade them to be more reflective and sober in the prevailing circumstances of the time. Colonel Marwa called the people to reason, giving them many pertinent pieces of information that would enrich their thoughts and decisions. He informed the people that the government would co-operate with the deceased's family to give him a befitting burial. He had extensively poured encomiums on late M.K.O. Abiola, eulogizing him for his numerous good deeds in his life time, especially his love and pursuit of peace. Colonel Marwa had advised that everyone that truly loved Chief Abiola would always stand for his ideals of love and peace instead of violence. Interestingly, Marwa the devout Muslim was to be seen in a very sober mood

supporting his counsel with words of God from the Holy Bible concerning the death of M.K.O. Abiola, himself a devout Muslim. Yet, even in such a period as this, Colonel Marwa clearly reminded any trouble shooters that the security of life and property in Lagos State was a task that must be done. He therefore warned that the security agents would henceforth deal ruthlessly with any trouble maker or criminals in disguise. Marwa advised that parents and guardians should take care of their wards and immediately declared all schools in the state closed as a mark of honour and respect for Chief Abiola. Marwa then deployed security agents to the trouble spots around the state to prevent and quell any uprising. He succeeded in making law-abiding citizens reason while at the same time wielding the big stick to chastise or discourage the criminally recalcitrant ones, while the result of the autopsy on Chief M.K.O. Abiola's corpse was being awaited. It is now history. But for Marwa's very careful handling of the situation the story would have been different. It was reported that even when Colonel Marwa had gone to pay a condolence visit to the family of late Chief M.K.O. Abiola and he had been obstructed by students who insisted they would not entertain anyone in military uniform at the funeral of Chief Abiola, he had immediately turned back, gone home and changed into civilian attire and came back. The students had all hailed him as their man.

Colonel Marwa had to meet with the association of tanker drivers in the state to find solution to the problem of fuel scarcity which their strike had caused in their bid to protest the extensive damage that their trucks had suffered during the riots on Chief Abiola's death. He pledged government assistance in form of a handsome donation for the repair of the vehicles and enjoined them to go back to work without delay and they did. Marwa surely has been marvellous. In all, the crisis that Colonel Marwa confronted in the course of his service in Lagos State transcended these three. The security situation, the state of sanitation and the very deplorable state of disrepair Lagos roads were found on his assumption of duty were all of crisis dimensions.

Much more, there was the crisis of loss of confidence in government which had become so pervasive and overwhelming throughout the nation. In all and everyone of these, Colonel Marwa was never found wanting. The speed and despatch with which he had moved to tackle the problems, his undeniable matured approach, the "wisdom of Solomon", decisive and prompt moves, commitment, superb communication, and unalloyed concern for the greatest good of the greatest number were common factors that made him stand out clearly like a beacon.

Chapter Twelve

PORTRAITS OF AN ACHIEVER

- MARWA IN THE EYES AND MINDS OF THE PEOPLE

"What motivates me is to do the greatest good. You cannot satisfy everyone nor can you do everything. Do the best and move on. I will like to be remembered as someone who tried his best. I would be happy to hear after I leave, that I have done my best"

- M.B. Marwa

How has he fared?

Colonel Mohamed Buba Marwa has become a scion whose indelible footprints shall ever remain on the sands of time and the history of Lagos State and Nigeria as a whole. He has clearly cut the radiant image of a role model for many Nigerians, particularly the youths and the middle-aged. This book has come as an expression of admiration of him but much more to articulate, for record purposes, and for the benefit of today's generation and posterity, the essential elements of Colonel Marwa's successful administration of Lagos State and the tremendous love and respect he has earned himself from Nigerians and the people of the State by his unassailable brilliant record of accomplishments in so short a period. As at the time of writing this book, Colonel Marwa has not yet attained two years in office as Lagos State administrator but the vastness of his achievements was such that made him appear as if he has administered the state for five years already. He has fared very well, in all modesty, clearly far better than many of his contemporaries and predecessors in office. We have reviewed some of the evidence of his success in an earlier chapter but it needs be emphasized that the indomitable administrator has continued to make advancements in the accomplishment of greater successes each passing day and he has not been resting on his oars. He has continued to forge ahead by leaps and bounds while Lagosians continued to esteem the resourceful administration of this dynamic leader. But how really do Lagosians see him and how do they cherish

him at heart? A public opinion survey has been conducted together with interviews and rigorous press reviews to enable us capture the exact portraits of Marwa in the eyes and hearts of the people of Lagos State, especially of a man who "would be happy to hear after I leave that I have done my best". Do they see him as such?

Public Opinion Poll Results

A public opinion poll was conducted among a stratified sample of ten thousand Lagosians made up of common folks or the ordinary men on the streets, in the low income group, civil servants, students, elites, and distinguished/notable personalities. The sample consists of randomly chosen five thousand common folks, two thousand Lagos State civil servants including teachers, one thousand students, one thousand elites and one thousand notable persons. In the class of common folks are rural dwellers, farmers market men and women, commuters, bus drivers and conductors, artisans, hawkers and low income factory/office workers and labourers. The one thousand students were randomly chosen from the main clusters of student population in tertiary institutions in Lagos State including Lagos State University, Lagos State Polytechnic, Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education and the University of Lagos. Elites consist mainly of educated car owners in the middle income bracket while the distinguished persons class is made up of company chief executives, chief executives of parastatals, traditional rulers, chairmen of local governments and persons in the high income bracket randomly selected. The survey was by means of a structured questionnaire personally administered and collected by the facilitators. In all, only eight thousand six hundred and fifty one copies of the answered questionnaires were returned validly completed/answered.

Ten questions were raised each with structured answers from which respondents were to underline or tick one. Of the total number of (8,651) respondents, going by the validly completed returned questionnaires, eight thousand three hundred and sixty six ((8,366)

considered Colonel Marwa's performance as either excellent or impressive. While only two hundred and eighty five or just about three percent described his administration's performance as fair, it is noteworthy that none of the respondents considered his administration's performance as being unimpressive or below average. The inference of course is that the success of Marwa's administration is not in question among the entire population. Lagosians are unanimous in their assessment that the Marwa administration has been successful, given that ninety seven percent of them see Colonel Marwa's performance as having been excellent or impressive. Marwa has not only tried his best, he has given his best and Lagosians all appreciate him.

Though a professional soldier with a brilliant track record in his chosen career, Colonel Marwa distinguished himself as a highly resourceful administrator and public servant whose conduct and performance markedly differed from that common to his colleagues in the military junta. He did not see himself as a leader to boss people around barking orders at them to get things done but as one that should influence others to achieve desired ends through persuasive means. This disposition of his endeared him to many people and impacted positively on his image and performance which in turn went a long way to improve the collective image of the Nigerian military class. No wonder then that ninety two percent of the respondents believed that Marwa's performance has gone far in conditioning their perception of the Nigerian military positively.

Has Marwa's tribe had any impact or made any difference in people's perception, acceptance or assessment of him? The public opinion poll results did not in any way lend much credence to this. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents believed that tribe has got nothing to do with it at all. Most of those of the remaining twelve percent who saw tribe as having made a difference in their assessment confessed that they were indeed initially prejudiced but were all made to reassess the shallowness of their position by Colonel Marwa's

unfeigned, total-Nigerian detribalized outlook and approach in his official life. It is thus evident that true unity of the Nigerian nationhood can be attained if our leaders would lead by the example of their own lives. Merit after all has no tribe, for we are all equal before God and God is no respecter of persons. No matter your tribe, what Nigerians want first and foremost is your meritorious, selfless service to the people in general.

The populist orientation of the Marwa Administration is undeniable and prioritization as a crucial success key in his project conception and execution programme has been greatly emphasized. The wisdom in this and the appropriateness of Marwa's priority rating to the immediate needs and ranking of the public is again reflected by the results of the survey. The public viewed roads and security as the two most important projects of the Marwa administration which have most endeared him to Lagosians. Fifty-six percent of the people identified roads rehabilitation as the single most important project that endeared him to their hearts while another twenty one percent ticked security as their pet project by which the Marwa name has come to be dearly loved, giving regard to the near-anarchy situation and the hopeless state of security in Lagos State before the inception of the Marwa regime. The respondents and Lagosians generally (or the good people of Lagos State as Marwa would say) did not have any reservations or misgivings about Colonel Marwa as the administrator except for his being a member of the military class to which many Nigerians who are lovers of democracy are now highly averse. But such was the love Lagosians have for Marwa that all the common folks were unanimous in their answer to vote for Marwa any day should he retire from the army to seek any elective office in the future. Indeed, ninety five percent of all respondents were quite sure to vote for him because of his very excellent performance. The entire population of the good people of Lagos State were all getting uneasy that they would be missing the good services of Colonel Marwa very soon going by the transition programme of ushering in a civilian regime

Obviously, Lagosians would have loved Colonel Marwa to continue for a longer time so that they might enjoy his good services the more but a good proportion of the population would like to see an unprolonged end to military rule. About twenty percent of Lagosians, particularly those in the elite class would like to see an immediate end to military government in Nigeria, even though they overwhelmingly expressed their uneasiness about missing a true public servant like Marwa. None-the-less and significantly, Lagosians were quite unanimous in their choice of Marwa as the type of leader Nigeria needs. All the Respondents (except four who were not sure) pictured in their hearts that Nigeria would be better off or even far better if all states' administrators and public servants in the country were like Marwa. Marwa has become to millions of Nigerians and Lagosians especially a clear picture of an ideal leader, the excellent portrait of an achiever and a patriot. He has become a standard and a powerful beacon of what success in public life and service to the people should entail. Interestingly over three quarter of the respondents held the view that their position represented that of at least fifty percent to seventy percent of the entire people of Lagos State. They believed that they were not just speaking for themselves but speaking the minds of the majority of Lagosians. Most delightful however is that the respondents were all of the view that Colonel Marwa's performance has been very good and unanimous that "no doubt, he tried his best". The practical evidence and tangible results have been so conspicuous that nobody would dare say there was not much in practical terms. Among the respondents, there was nobody that was not sure what to say about the Marwa Administration's performance. The accomplishments were so tangible, traversing the length and breadth of Lagos State, that they could not be denied. Many in fact have got more to say than the space on the questionnaire could contain that they attached sheets and volumes of positive comments, acclamation, accolades and commendations to the returned questionnaire. Evidently, Marwa has made no mistake in his assessment of Nigerians and in

tenaciously holding on to his view. "The citizens of Nigeria know that you (government) cannot do everything. But they also know when you are doing something. Once they (citizens) read that there is honesty of purpose on your part, they will give their support"

Nigerians surely appreciate good government. It is not how long but how well. "Wisdom is proved right by her actions" Marwa has been proved right.

What the People Say

We have been inundated with comments and commendation by people on the Marwa Administration and the man Marwa himself that would make tens of volumes of books like this if they were all to be published. Where does one start and where do you stop? Thousands of comments and remarks by thousands of persons that an assemblage of the names of the respondents/commentators alone would itself make a book! For ease of handling, arrangement and brevity, we have sifted the multitudes of these comments to attain those that were considered most representative of the common position and thrust of people's comments on the Marwa Administration and the "phenomenon" called Marwa himself. The common strands in all the comments are that Marwa has been a purposeful, effective leader and selfless servant of the people, that his administration has succeeded in putting smiles on the faces of Lagosians in some definite ways and areas, that the Marwa Administration has not been a disappointment to the people of Lagos State and that Marwa has set some enviable standards of accomplishments in the different sectors and sub-sectors of state administration that would constitute some basic yardsticks against which the performance of incoming or future administrations would be judged, so that whether or not they meet these standards would be the first key test of the effectiveness and success of their policies, programmes and projects. Since the comments here published have been determined to be representative of the people's popular views about Marwa and his administration in Lagos State, we have refrained

from putting names on them in order not to personalize them all over again and that they may remain truly what the people say for ages. Instead we put the initials, the profession, class or social strata to which the person belongs. The few selected comments are here presented.

“From the first day he arrived Lagos, Colonel Marwa had raised the hope that his would not be just another administration, that he would rule with the fear of God and the dictates of his conscience. But perhaps, only a few people took him serious in a nation where promises are easier made than kept by government functionaries. The achievement within so short a period are eloquent testimonies that Colonel Marwa is a man of his words, a man of the people”.

- O. A. (Journalist)

“Before Marwa, Lagos roads were so bad that it was like going to hell to drive in the town. Without apologies to anybody, life in the pre-Marwa years turned sour for both the high and the low. Although it was the former capital of this great nation, law and order had become suspect, security of life and property was not assured. Now there is something different. Marwa has moved mountains. He has changed all that and life has again become more meaningful”.

- E. O. (Social Analyst)

“There is no doubting the fact that Colonel Mohammed Buba Marwa’s administration has embarked upon a total and deliberate drive to march Lagos back to excellence”.

- L. A (Businessman)

“If you don pass here before Marwa people come do this road, you for know the things wey we dey suffer Make una help me thank

Marwa. Even if na only this our Ejigbo road alone wey he do, e better well well say government don remember us at last. But im government don do many many roads for this Lagos, make una go round, you go see say Marwa and im people dem don try for this our Lagos, no be joke. You no see Isolo road? I like im government, the man dey try”.

- U.O. (Cobbler)

“The efforts of governor Marwa at repairing the bad and deplorable roads in Lagos State is worthy of commendation”

- O.B. (‘Okada’ Operator)

“The best assessor of a leader is the citizen, the beneficiary of his actions and inactions. As one who has followed the actions of Marwa in Lagos State, I can say that the officer has demonstrated the vision and charisma required of a good leader”.

- C.O. (Civil servant)

“Marwa came in, knowing that effective administrators are hard to come by. Those who put him in Lagos knew that they needed someone who could market the military administration where it matters most. And so the Colonel came, targeting the more visible areas of concern. He deserves a national honour for a job well done”.

- N.O.I. (Human Rights Activist)

“Marwa has been a special blessing to Lagos. He has done well and the people love and respect him. Even our own so-called Yoruba sons who ruled Lagos State at one time or the other did not accord us traditional rulers as much regard and honour we received from Marwa. May God continue to grant him more wisdom and strength”.

- M.A. (Prominent Traditional Ruler)

“Colonel Marwa is different from all of them who have governed Lagos State since the termination of Alhaji Lateef Jakande’s popular government. He has encouraged me as a teacher. I had laughed when he said “Lagos teachers are now to earn their reward first on earth and later in heaven”. I thought it was one of those sweet jokes but I was wrong. It was no gimmicks at all. See, I am now an ‘Okada’ (motorcycle) owner through his enhanced teachers’ loan schemes. Before, if you apply for the housing or car refurbishing loan, you don’t get a reply until after one or two years when they will regret to inform you they could not accede to your request. I applied for the car refurbishing loan and it was granted me within three months. I tell you, it was like a dream. Or do you want to talk about the rice he gave teachers at Christmas last year? It was such a timely valued gift among teachers you would think it was more than rice”.

- A.F. (Teacher)

“But for Marwa there would have been chaos, bloodshed and unimaginable disaster in Lagos during the scheduled days of pro-Abacha versus pro-democracy rallies in the state. What happened in Ibadan, the mayhem that attended the pro-Abacha rally there would have been a child’s play. Thank God Marwa averted it by his wisdom and tact, coupled with the people’s regard and love for him. If it were somebody else, Lagos would have been on fire.

- F.S. (Local Government Chairman)

“In a nation where government has become an avenue for self-aggrandizement and where nothing seems to work, it is praise-worthy that men like Marwa are in office serving as an example that things could be better with the right man in the right place”.

- G.T. (Businessman)

"I think Marwa's administration is the best in the whole country. Undoubtedly, his policies all feature in-built people-oriented objectives such as security, health, housing and education. What makes his administration different is the concern for people's immediate needs"

- U.I. (Trader)

"The man is committed to service and the accolades he is enjoying from well-meaning Nigerians in and outside the state prove that a good man will always stand out from the crowd"

- D.N. (Technician)

"I want to assure Colonel Marwa that God will never abandon him as long as he is for the oppressed masses. God is not unaware of his good works: his simple but effective method of rehabilitating our roads, checking the menace of armed robbers, protecting lives and property, instilling discipline, making our environment more hygienic and so on. He should simply continue to be his good self.

- C.O. (Motor parts seller)

"Marwa is my man. He has made life better for the people. He has repaired all our bad roads. He has really helped us. It was Marwa that saved us that time we were almost totally forced out of business when people would not buy or eat beans again on the fear that poisonous beans were being sold in the market. It was his eating akara (beans cake) in the public right on the television that helped to restore people's confidence"

- M.A. (Beans seller)

“As a driver, we all like good roads. Apart from making our work easy and quick, it also makes the vehicles last longer. If only for repairing Lagos roads, I give the man more than average. He has really tried in this regard”

- C.U (Bus Driver)

“I am happy the task force men are more humane. They have changed from their former practices of beating and harassing people, confiscating our wares every time. We really thank Marwa that we can now earn a legitimate living”

- G.E (Street trader)

“Among the toughest states to govern in Nigeria, Lagos is pre-eminent. Marwa should be congratulated for confronting the problems of Lagos head-on and making a headway”

- M.S.U (Civil Servant)

“Marwa’s monumental achievements cannot be denied. His celebrated miracles in Lagos are evident fruits of proper planning, dedication to plan implementation and of course testimonies to his love and concern for the well-being of the entire populace. Where others cried impossible, he has affirmed possibility”.

- O.K.O (Manager)

“The day I learnt that new administrators have been sworn in at Abuja to resume office in their respective states, I simply concluded that a new regime of vain promises and unfulfilled hope had once again started. But I was pleasantly surprised. With the brilliant performance of the Lagos State Administrator, Colonel Mohammed Marwa my perception has now changed. His is at least an exception”.

- G.Y. (Stock broker)

“My admiration of Mohamed Buba Marwa and his glorious accomplishments in Lagos State within a short period has prompted me to equate his name with ‘Excellence’. Join me to congratulate Nigeria’s MR. EXCELLENCE”.

- O.A.O. (Lagos Socialite)

“It is indeed astonishing to see and feel the good administration and practical work Marwa has done. Where did he get the money? Were the same resources not there during the time of his predecessors? What Marwa has demonstrated and proved is that we should not gullibly believe any administrator or governor who tells the masses: “Where is the money? Or there is no money”.

- B.C.E. (Clearing Agent)

“For me, Marwa has given a new definition for leadership in Nigeria. Before him, I had become sceptical of every leadership, military in particular. As far as I was concerned, all they were useful for was to make promises, give excuses afterward and get new postings. Marwa came with a refreshingly different style never before witnessed either at national or state levels. With the way he went about administering the state, I am convinced Marwa came with a purpose to deliver, and deliver he has”.

- R.D. (Medical Doctor)

“I agree no less. He has excelled in his performance and I call it an achiever’s index. Indeed, he has set a standard for other state administrators and other public officers to emulate”.

- J.F.O. (Management Consultant)

“Governor Marwa has impressed me. He has set a challenge for his fellow soldiers and even for civilians. Lagosians will now start weighing the performance of public officers on a MARWA SCALE. Marwa has turned himself from a person to a phenomenon. He is now a BENCHMARK against which others will be measured”.

- I.K.M. (Public Policy Analyst)

“I bet we will all terribly miss him. It will take some time before anybody can fill the gap and measure up to Lagosians’ expectations which he has ably met and has now become the minimum standard of performance the people will appreciate”.

- W.A. (Lawyer)

“He is one with a difference. He cares for everybody especially the poor and the down-trodden”.

- M.I. (Christian Minister/CAN Executive)

“Marwa is the Moses of our time sent by God to deliver Lagosians”.

- I.A.J. (Market Women Leader)

“It will be gratifying if all those politicians now spoiling for office will learn from the Marwa phenomenon. Here is a man who, despite the notorious ‘Nigerian factor’, has ruled without the services of greedy politicians and has achieved so much to the amazement of all and sundry. In effect, what is required is purposeful and honest leadership and the will to serve the governed and not self”.

- T.K. (Journalist)

"We should all know that Nigeria cannot move forward unless the Lord blesses us with the likes of Marwa at the helm of affairs at the national, state and local government levels. Unless the Lord builds the house, the labourers labour in vain; that is the word of God. Marwa's Lagos sojourn was not an accident. Why Marwa at the very time he was posted to Lagos? It was all in the wisdom of God to achieve an end, though people, Marwa himself and those who appointed him might not know it. Lagos was the most delicate, fragile and most volatile state to govern and it got about the wisest and most effective leader, the right man in the right place, for the right job, at the right time! May God help us to attain such at the national level. It is time we all turn to God. That is the way forward for Nigeria"

- A.B.O. (Prophet/Church Leader)

"May God in His infinite mercy give every state of Nigeria a Marwa"

- R.K. (Auto Mechanic)

"What The Papers Say

Apart from individuals' comments, the editorial position of some major newspapers also affirm the notable good performance of Marwa

Marwa's first 100 days in office. (Vanguard Comment)

Last Monday, Lagosians, like their counterparts in some other parts of the country, marked the first one hundred days of their new Military Administrator, Colonel Mohamed Buba Marwa in office.

The occasion indicated, for the first time in about 13 years, a unanimous sigh of relief by Lagosians over a marvellous handling of the multi-faceted problems of the state by a single man.

Since the days of Alhaji Lateef Jakande as the executive governor of the state 1979-1983, Lagosians have not seen the like of the purposeful action put on by Col. Marwa to the benefit of all and sundry in the state just in three months.

When he first resumed duty as the Lagos State Administrator last September, Col. Marwa described himself as a Lagosian apparently to allay any fear in the citizens of the state, that non-citizens are non-committal when it comes to governance.

Events in the state since then have proved him to be a man of his words, both in theory and practice, as his administrative activities have shown so far.

Col. Marwa assumed office at a time when the state was in its most precarious condition ever with infrastructure from roads to health capable of being described as terrible.

At that time, security of lives and property could no longer be guaranteed as the state had been virtually taken over by vagabonds commonly known as 'Area boys'.

With the courage of a soldier, and the conscience of a pious patriot Marwa embarked upon the herculean task of restoring sanity to a state which had been struck by an arrow of delirium.

And just in 100 days, what looked almost impossible last September had been achieved.

The roads are now motorable; the heaps of garbage have disappeared; Lagosians have been able to sleep with their eyes closed as armed robbery has been drastically reduced while most of the 'Area boys' have been effectively engaged.

While we commend Col. Marwa for all these laudable achievements and urge him not to rest on his oars, we are constrained to caution against any abuse to which some state agents may subject those achievements to the detriment of the good intention behind them.

We also implore other leaders, wherever they may be, to imbibe a sense of dedication and patriotism in their deeds, not just for today but even beyond tomorrow.

- Vanguard
December 5, 1996

“He represents a rhapsodic phenomenon in the governance of Lagos State since its creation in 1967. Even the most trenchant of military rule has been forced by his performance into temporary retreat from the accustomed aberrational value accorded to military presence in the temple of political power. That is Col. Mohamed Buba Marwa, the urbane Military Administrator of Lagos State.

Like men of achievements, he radiates a duality of character, a fine officer and a scion of the academe”.

- The Diet
August 21, 1997

“In the few months that Col. Marwa has presided over the affairs of Lagos State, there has been tremendous improvement. He has acted expeditiously on the problem of bad roads, many of which have been made motorable through a direct labour project. He has been equally active in tackling the menace of armed robbery and other crimes in the metropolis. His commitment to make Lagos safe for living and investments has yielded much dividend by way of remarkable decline in felonious incidents. The popular view of Col. Marwa is that his is the best administration in Lagos in ten years”.

- The Guardian
Wed. Dec. 18, 1996

“Colonel Marwa should not be simply wrapped up in the glory of his achievements but should use same as another foundation to strengthen civil-military understanding and national unity, as well as mobilise the people of Lagos in readiness for return to democratic rule.

- This Day
Thurs. August 21, 1997.

Some Parting Words from Marwa

So much has been said about the enviable achievements and the splendid personality of the man, Marwa. But what are his hopes and plans for the future? So many people have been pressurising and urging him to retire from the military to seek elective office as a civilian because of their love and people's interest in him. What is Marwa's disposition? What does he intend to do and how would he like to be remembered? These questions are better answered in his own words. Marwa has had cause to say on many occasions that he had no political ambition and indeed no interest whatsoever in running for elective office. His concern was to forge ahead in the attainment of his career goal, to rise to greater heights in his professional field as a soldier. He has commanded a battalion, he looked forward to when he would command an armoured brigade. He seemed for now unable to visualize anything taking him away from the dream profession of his love from childhood. He viewed his posting to Lagos State as administrator as a call to service that must be faithfully answered. He believed nothing short of his very best must be given that the records might speak for themselves. To him, accountability was paramount.

"In Lagos as elsewhere, I plan by the grace of God at the end of my tenure here, to produce a document that will demonstrate openly, accounts of all the projects that we embarked upon with public funds, how the funds were sourced, what payments have been made, how far the projects have been executed and so on".

Colonel Marwa believed it was high time Nigeria got fully democratised. He would seize every good opportunity to express his views in this regard and would often remind his colleagues that they have no locus standi in government.

"Today, the military is in government. It is important for you to understand that this is not enough. We should not have been in office if not for circumstances. We are like fish out of water. We have to go back to the barracks where we belong".

"We have our roles. Politics, I am afraid, is not one of those roles; we have our own responsibilities". Colonel Marwa had firmly told those who were speculating or urging that he retired from the army to become a civilian governor that he had no such desire.

"The question does not arise. I do not have such interest in the unenviable functions. Look at it, day and night, it is from one office to another, trying to sort out issues, address problems. If someone in this kind of assignment is actually doing the job, he will be praying as I am praying that the Almighty God guide him successfully to the end of the tenure without any betrayal of trust".

Colonel Marwa was puzzled why some people sit tight and would want to die in public office. To him, whoever really does the job the way it should be done knows that it is not easy. He cautions anyone aspiring to his type of public office.

"There is far more to it than meets the eye if you want to work. I am looking forward to when I'll leave. There is far more to it than meets the eyes".

Having said that, Marwa has straightened up to write his will for Lagosians after his exit from office

"You see when I was posted here to do a job, frankly if I want to say there is one thing I want to be remembered for, I would be happy to hear after I leave, that I have done my best".

APPENDIX

*Photo View of some of the
Golden Legacies*





TO COL. MARWA, STAFF WELFARE WAS PARAMOUNT. FLEET OF STAFF BUSES PROCURED BY HIS ADMINISTRATION FOR FREE RIDE, BY LAGOS STATE CIVIL SERVANTS



MARWA REHABILITATED LAGOS STATE ROADS. IT'S "OPERATION EXCELLENCE" 'KORODU ROAD DUALISATION' WHEN IN PROGRESS, NOW COMPLETED. THE ROADS BUILT BY MARWA'S DILĀ ARE TOO MANY TO COUNT.



THE RURAL SUBURBS WERE NOT LEFT OUT. IPAJA - IKOLA ROAD WITH THE NEW BRIDGE BUILT BY MARWA.
THERE ARE SO MANY LIKE THESE.

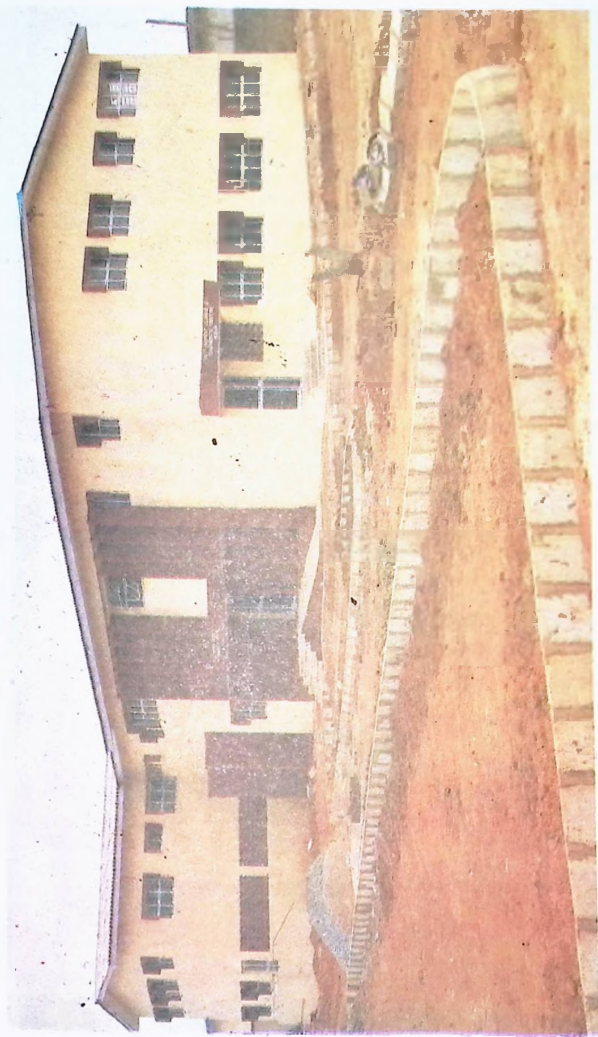




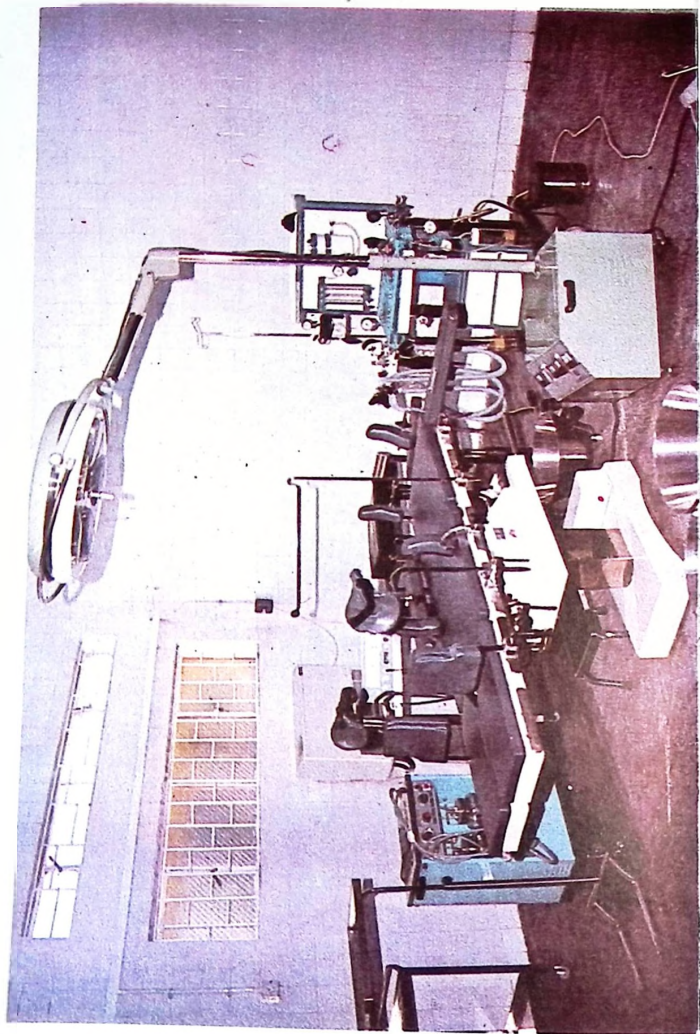
THE VAST, BEAUTIFUL HOUSING ESTATE, 'MARWA GARDENS' WITH 400 HOUSING UNITS
COMMISSIONED BY THE HEAD OF STATE.



THE NEW ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CENTRE AT THE IKEJA GENERAL HOSPITAL, NOW UPGRADED TO A UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL.



OUT-PATIENTS CLINIC AND DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE NEWLY BUILT AND COMMISSIONED AT IKEJA GENERAL HOSPITAL BY THE MARWA ADMINISTRATION.



LAGOS STATE HOSPITALS CAN NOW BOAST OF ULTRA-MODERN EQUIPMENT. MARWA REFURBISHED AND RE-EQUIPPED THEM ALL TO ASSURE EFFECTIVE RESTORATIVE HEALTH SERVICES DELIVERY TO THE PEOPLE.



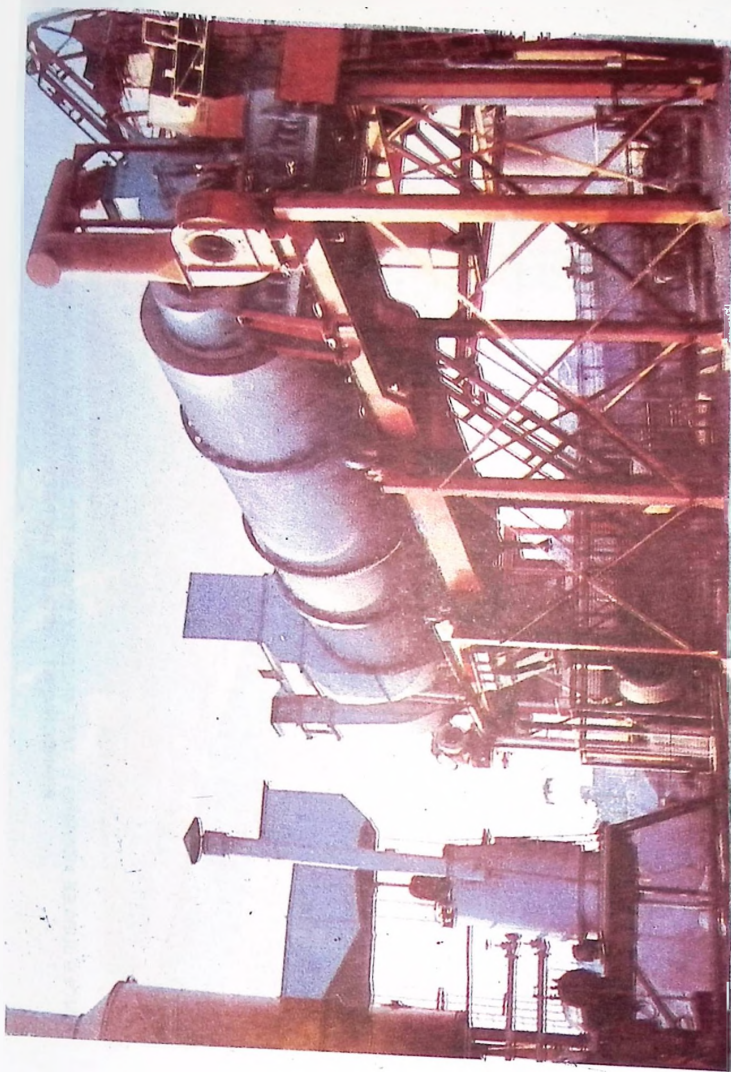
LEKKI TOURISTS' CHALETS BUILT BY MARWA TO GIVE TOURISM A BOOST.



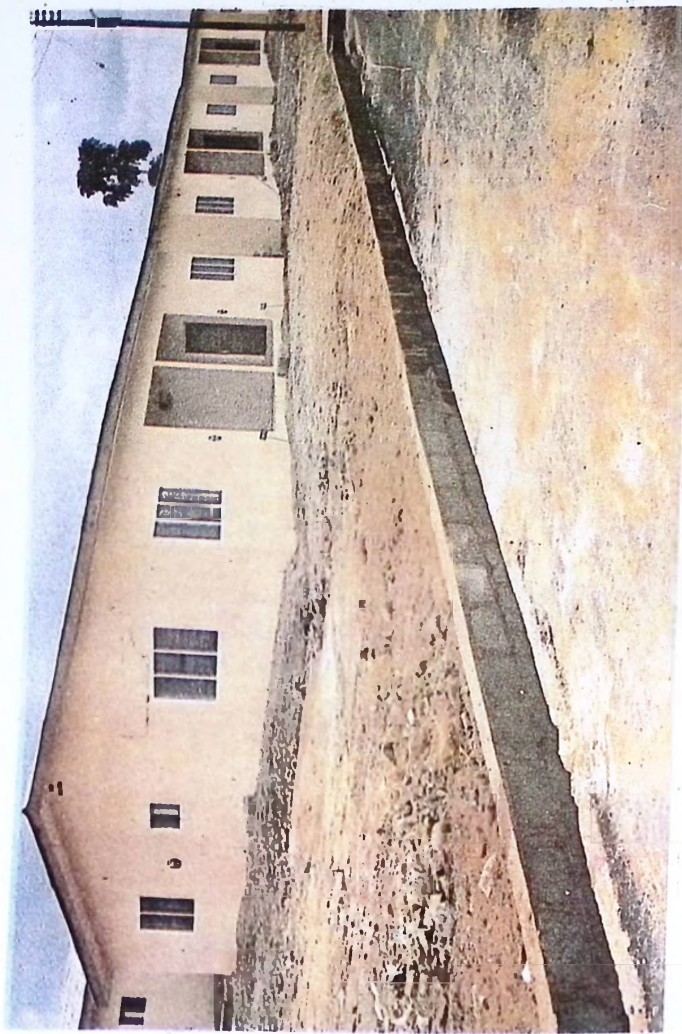


THESE ARE SOME OF THE NUMEROUS MICRO AND MINI WATER WORKS OF THE MARWA ADMINISTRATION IN OVER 20 DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES. PUBLIC TAPS AND BOREHOLES SUNK IN THE RURAL AREAS ARE INNUMERABLE





DLA'S ASPHALT PLANT ACQUIRED AND COMMISSIONED BY THE MARWA ADMINISTRATION. IT IS THE BIGGEST IN NIGERIA



OMOLE JUBILEE HOUSING ESTATE SPEEDILY COMPLETED BY THE MARWA ADMINISTRATION AFTER YEARS OF ABANDONMENT / NEGLIGENCE / NEGLECT BY PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS.

Such has been the very splendid enviable performance of Col. Mohamed Buba Marwa as Lagos State Administrator that many enlightened discerning souls have come to reckon him as a phenomenon of some sort. In less than two years, the evidences have been so confounding as to Marwa's shining performance and towering accomplishments that many in fact have come to see him as a clear benchmark against which the performance of public servants governing or administering the Nigerian State can always be measured. Given his excellent performance, the way he has set about his programmes and achieved so remarkable results should in fact be a case study in good governance and effective public administration. This book is an honest attempt to bring to the fore the essential elements of success which constitute the Marwa saga, for the benefit of everyone willing to learn.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Olusegun B.A. Obanla is the General Overseer of Christian Life Restoration Ministries, an Evangelistic Outreach Ministry committed to church support and growth services. Now an Evangelist and a Teacher, he is by profession a banker, financial analyst and management consultant who has had extensive experience in the Nigerian business, political and academic fields before his ministerial call. He holds a Masters in Finance from the University of Lagos and a Bachelor's in Economics from O.A.U., Ile-Ife, Nigeria.