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# Sunday Morning

The Sunday Magazine

MAGAZINE VOL. 2, NO. 21, OCTOBER 7, 1990 — Price: N5.00



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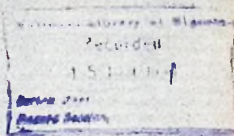
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NIGERIA  
AT

30

*Special  
Anniversary*

Reviews from  
the finest minds in  
the land ...



## A letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Some weeks ago, we at TSM decided to do a special on Nigeria to commemorate the 30th year of Independence. In considering the range of options, we felt that our most valuable contribution would be to create an avenue for a national soul-searching exercise. The soul-searching was to be done by those who should know - those Nigerians with a wide frame of reference, those who have wide-ranging experience in national affairs and have operated at a high enough level to permit special insights.

Among those selected are the most outstanding men and women there are in the country today. And what we requested them to do was simple: to take a critical look at our 30 years history and tell us what we did right, what we did wrong and what they prescribe for the future.

When our simple letter bearing this equally simple request went out a few weeks ago, nothing could have prepared us for the avalanche that was to follow. The reactions we got are a manifest testimony of the irrefragable nature of the Nigerian, that no matter the circumstance, the Nigerian will "Speak Out." They are deeply reflective of the great hunger for dialogue. Every word sizzles with that boldness and frankness that only a Nigerian can summon.

Our history may be replete with crises, discontinuities and reversals. Our governments and our system may operate in fits and stops. Our economy may be tottering towards the abyss. But our people, our people remain strong, bold and vocal.

This nation throbs. It's alive! What we have put together for you is a manifestation of that liveness. It's a package that reflects all shades of opinion, the character and essence of Nigeria. It is a package that provokes deep thinking. I promise you one thing: You won't finish this in one day. And when you do, keep it for your children. It is an epic they will find useful in many years to come.

The special is our gift to you, this Independence anniversary. Cheers from all of us at TSM. We're here for you. You can count on us.

Chris

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TSM (The Sunday Magazine) ISSN 0795-8331 Published weekly for N500 by Zest News Limited, 2 Ilesha Street, On Ikorodu Road, Ilupeju, P.M.B. 21687, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.

Letters to the Editor: Ely Obasi, should be sent to this address: Telephone 966324. Volume 2 Number 21 Copyright TSM. All rights reserved.

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# 30% of offices should go to party that loses presidency

— Phillip Asiodu  
*ex-super Permanent Secretary*

**Y**ou know I used to think that Nigeria was eminently governed. You know we fought a civil war, exactly for three years. At the end of it somebody said no victor, no vanquished. Back to your jobs. And quite unprecedented too in the history of civil wars, we reconciled, nobody was lynched, nobody was harmed. Fifty years after the Spanish civil wars, they were still settling scores. So in Nigeria. We are eminently governed. But on what basis? It must be a basis which demonstrably holds out to all of us, that we are subject to the same laws, equally. Have the same chance, equally. And have a prospect of progress, equally. How do we do this? For the next 10 years, if Nigerians are working very hard at say growing more food, harvesting on time... processing it, transforming it for local consumption and export. If we are working very hard on drilling our petrochemicals, turning our flaring gas to wealth. And the basic thing the government has just signed, doing the intermediate, fabricating machines competitively, if we were to work very hard at rationalising the steel sector, making it more efficient, creating more latitudes, so that all our casings and bridges we do, cars we produce can be produced from local steel. If we were working very hard to try to make telecommunications more efficient and reliable to increase what it is now. I think we have 10 telephones to at least 1000 people compared to six to eight people in America. If we were to even increase it to 100 telephones to 1,000 people you know, so that you don't go on the road when you could speak. If we were to make our roads better maintained, you at least have a programme of action which will keep us breathless for the next 10 years. Can't we buy from this. You know what we will say? Whoever gets elected, this is the work you must do. So that whether you get elected or I am elected, there is no surprise. That is one. Two, can't we agree? You know, work out a formula. So that if you are elected, I accept that you are elected. I don't go out of my way to conspire any how for you to be knocked out. Which we need to clear some instability. But how do we get to this? There are two ways of doing this. One is to say that whoever is elected is not going to take 100 percent of the action. We will zone or give 30 percent of the offices

or whatever to the other party. Because sometimes Democratic presidents in America have some Republican ministers. Here, it is fight to finish. Red and Black, no mixture. We have to develop that culture. But to relieve it in the short term, we are suggesting that since we have agreed that the programme of governance in the country is clear to everybody, to take ourselves from poverty in the next 10 years or so. What we have to start to do, therefore, is a matter of emphasis, who does this or that. Can't we then agree because up till today, the civilians have never organised elections that are accepted by all segments of society. Colonialists organised for us. The military do. But the next time is for civilians to or-

textbook democracy. But you have problems which you know from your history. That is what you should address. I don't see why people don't want to think about these problems. If you did that, it doesn't mean no election, it means the party produces a man. If he fails to gain 50 percent of the votes cast, he is defeated. They produce somebody else. In the meantime, for governors, posts for local governments, for state assemblies, for parliaments, we have competitive elections. It is only the presidency we are saying this. And then finally, I also think that we need a weather-cock. We need a political scape goat. How many times in Britain do you reshuffle cabinets and throw away some ministers? They were not bad. But the political process requires occasional blood-letting. And you must have a system which responds to this. But if you have a rigid system that if things are going bad, nobody resigns, nobody is defeated, until one day, maybe the army says this is intolerable and they remove the president. So we are saying let us have the prime minister. The use of the prime minister was demonstrated recently in Jordan and in Algeria when there was pogrom and all that. The prime minister resigned. They appointed another person. People felt there has been a response to the political problem. That is the use. So he is appointed by the president as the political chief of staff. The president can remove him. But also if the policies are bad, the parliament can move a vote of re-



trenchment and remove him. It is a good warning. It is an indication that democracy has thrived but the system does not collapse. And then nowadays that we heighten the dichotomies of North and South, of minority tribes, majority tribes, of muslims and christians. If you have two high profile officials, it enables you to balance the national etiquettes a little bit better. Aren't these sensible things to think about? That is all. But if in the wisdom of the new operators, there is no problem, so be it. But I think deriving from our history, a man should look at his own circumstances. There is no God-given formula for democracy. Things must adapt themselves to a nation's history and circumstances so as to endure. That is all I think. So these are the suggestions I would have put to any group whether it is a group of 10 or a group of 100 and say think about these things. Is there not something in it? Because all you are trying to do is to moderate in the political process. To put it within governable dimensions. Because if it is too hot, the thing explodes.

**I**t is a matter for concern that on this - the 30th anniversary of Nigerian independence, we, the people of Nigeria are denied the once-in-a-year glimpse of our president standing on the saluting dais and greeting the people. Yet Nigeria's 30th anniversary is being celebrated in far-away Moscow, of all places.

I suppose the occasion calls for sober reflection, rather than celebration. So, one cannot help looking back and counting the cost of our nationhood in lost human lives since independence, losses which include the carnage of the civil war, the petrol burning of political opponents in the Western Regional Elections of 1965, the butchering of Heads of State in coups as the new legitimate means of changing governments.

Anyone who cares should visit the National Museum at Onikan Lagos and count the cost of our search for a stable democratic government since the days of our Founding Fathers of the First Republic. He will find to his terrible shock that so many have died.

Inside the little thatch but near the main museum, there stands a permanent exhibition showing all our eight Heads of State in pictures from Balewa to Babangida, their Executive Councils, their stewardship.

In the middle of the exhibition broods the black Mercedes Benz saloon car in which Murtala Muhammed was ambushed to death on his way to work one morning, February 13th 1976. All the bullet holes are intact, and the splintered glass and ripped-open metal.

Since then, Nigeria has known no peace, yet is not officially at war. Political assassination had entered our quest for power: Military attacked Military, civilian burnt civilian, military flushed out civilian. Where was the Constitution?

And now we have progressed within our West African Sub-Region to a stage where we can send our troops to kill in other countries in the name of that elusive 'peace' we are also seeking in our country. Indeed, so many will still die, that one man might rule; there can only be one President at any one time.

The loss of lives has not failed to include those who dropped dead, on suddenly being retired over the radio at the peak of their physical and mental alertness, and those who dropped from millionaire-to-pauper due to unexpected fiscal policies, like paying for imports with devalued Naira. For a developing country we have shown little regard for our most valuable asset - human lives.

But Nigeria is not alone in butcher-

## So many have died



ing its own kind in its quest for power. Power for its own sake has become a drunken obsession. We who need the human resources either destroy it or retire men who are able-bodied and still active, in some cases, after investing hundreds of thousands of dollars paying for their training.

Alas, the golden dream of independence has become distorted! Every succeeding government since 1960, has promised us water, roads and light. We are gullible, but neither water nor roads, nor light have we seen. Our cities are pitted with craggy holes, our highways are unsafe, our water-pipes are dry.

Yet the potentials are still there for

Nigeria to rise above all black countries. We are still wealthier than many countries, and healthier, and more literate, more technological. Our country is not subject to earthquakes, droughts, landslides and other terrible disasters which befall many countries. Our problem is self-inflicted - our inability to work together as a team, our penchant for confrontation.

So long as our overriding thirst for power supersedes all other considerations, so long shall we keep paying the price. In that most precious of currencies - human resources, squandered. Let us from this 30th Anniversary, resolve to conserve our human resources.



# The feats of Biafra belong to Nigeria

— Onwuka Kalu  
[Whitzkid millionaire businessman]



ment to support effective large-scale industrialisation. That we haven't met this research and development challenge derives from the fact that our research institutions and schools are massively underfunded. While as far back as in the 1960s, the US spent about \$10.5 billion or about two per cent of the GNP on research and development, and in 1983 Japan spent about six thousand billion yen (15b) or 2.2 per cent of the GNP. Twenty-two research institutes in Nigeria were jointly allocated less than N4 million in a particular year's national budget. Any wonder then that we are where we are?

We must also strive to have a more stable government. That we have had to date eight Heads of State is not to our credit; it is a shame. It is even more shameful that only one of them, Ousegun Obasanjo, left the country's leadership voluntarily. Others were either sent to an early grave via assassination or forced out of a gun point.

As we make a trial for the third time for a democratic government, it is my fervent prayer that both the military and civilians give it a chance.

My prescription for the future goes to the youths because they are the future leaders. Our country is currently undergoing momentous social, economic and political transformations. We are in the process of building a truly self-reliant economy and

Looking at Nigeria for the past 30 years, one sees a picture of mixed blessings. We have had our problems. But we have also tried to manage such problems and survive.

It is to Nigeria's credit that she fought a civil war and survived it. She not only survived it, but she came back to her feet to assume a leadership position in Africa. And that is putting it mildly.

Nigeria has made a lot of progress politically, socially and economically since 1960.

Although it is true that we have had political problems, it is to the credit of the country that we are still one. And even though we have churned out more Heads of state than is necessary because of frequent changes in government, we have progressed more than some African countries.

It must be mentioned that Nigerians as individuals and in institutions have, under very difficult circumstances, made noticeable scientific and technological impact. Most noticeable of these impacts, was that made during the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70), by nationalists on the Biafran side that attempted secession.

Faced with a materials blockade — both military and economic — the Biafrans fired by a patriotic zeal to see the secession through, formed a Research and Production Unit (RAP). Under this condition, RAP manufactured quasi-armoured cars, land mines, 75mm alloy steel rockets, bomb shells, small arms of different calibre among a host of others. The feat was performed by secessionists, yes, but they are Nigerians.

In medical sciences, open heart surgery has been perfected by Nigerian medical doctors at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Such operations are now carried out fortnightly there, with patients coming from

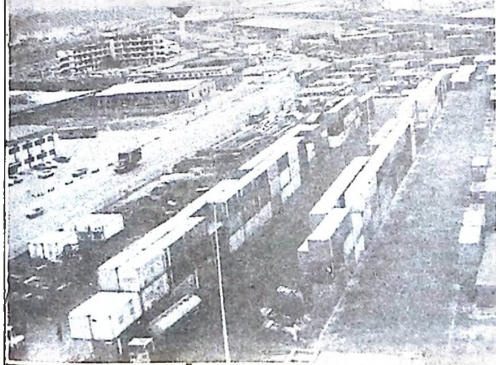
all parts of West Africa. A successful separation of siamese twins has been carried out there too. All these, with very little equipment. Also the Anambra State University of Technology put itself into reckoning with the manufacture of its own series of computers, which are now in use in government ministries in the State. Furthermore, in the same field of Computer Science, the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife, Nigeria is specialising in the manufacture of memory chips, and has recorded appreciable success in that.

On a lower but vital level, the Polytechnic, Ibadan, has built automatic photosensitive street lighting, kerosine incubator, chicken plucker, melon husker, groundnut harvester, rice thresher, among others. So have the other polytechnics and universities spread all over Nigeria.

Towards achieving food sufficiency, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Ibadan, Nigeria has developed a fast maturing cassava variety with a yield three times that of the local variety. The Nigerian Institute for Oil Palm Research, Benin, has developed a dwarf variety of palm tree that starts bearing fruits in three years, against the upwards of eight years required by the current tall variety.

Also, the Project Development Agency (PRODA), Enugu in Anambra State of Nigeria has perfected the manufacture of laboratory equipment of various sorts especially glasswares, and yes the first made in Nigeria car. Thanks to SAP.

On the debit side, we are yet to meet the challenge of research and develop-



Continues next page

Continued from Page 7

instilling a participant liberal democratic culture. The tasks at hand require the cooperation of all citizens and in particular the energies and creativity of our youths.

To make a meaningful contribution to this national regeneration, the youths must avoid the company and advice of professional fault-finders and self-proclaimed "people's leaders." Instead, they should draw their inspiration from the examples of their predecessors. Every Nigerian Youth is of course aware of the positive contributions which the Nigerian Youth Movement made to our nationalistic fight for Independence and the historic role of Ibadan University students in getting the neo-colonialist Anglo-Nigerian Defence pact abrogated. To make comparable contributions, today's youths must be prepared to make sacrifices and persevere with the masses. Their actions must be informed by the highest nationalistic ideals.

Like any other group in the country, the Nigerian youth has the right and indeed the duty to intervene occasionally in the political process to demand probity on the part of public officials or to make any other point of national interest. However, in undertaking this task, it is advisable that violence be eschewed. The destruction of lives and property only makes us poorer. It does not solve any problem. If the founding fathers of our nation could achieve independence without bloodshed, the youths of this modern generation can achieve much more through non-violent means. Peaceful protests and dialogues should, therefore, be your weapons in your avowed fight for a better Nigeria.

The on-going economic restructuring and political transition exercise provide immense opportunities for the Nigerian youth to make responsible contributions. Economically, he now has the chance more than ever before to demonstrate and get recognition and reward for his creativity.

Politically, with the lowering of the age of qualification of elective offices, the youth now has the chance to join the crop of emerging new breed leaders without being swamped by discredited past politicians, who squandered our patrimony.

I've spoken so far in terms of duties the youths owe our country. But as we all know rights and duties go together. In order to realise their full potentials and make meaningful contributions to our collective growth and development, the youths deserve and indeed are entitled to a number of incentives from the authorities and society at large. The youths deserve qualitative and functional education as well as employment opportunities, and to be consulted on matters that affect them particularly.

A Nigeria where there is no want and where no one is oppressed, and a culture that de-emphasises material things and rewards merit, one where everyone will have a chance to develop his innate abilities are ideals the youths rightly expect. Also the youths deserve a responsible and responsible leadership.

# We have maintained our oneness

Mrs Emily Aig-Imoukhuede

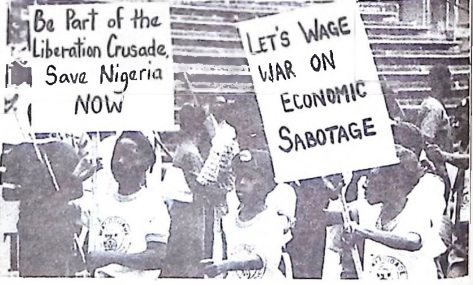


Thirty years of independence! I remember with nostalgia life 30 years ago when as a nineteen-year old, 'A' level student of the defunct Nigeria College of Arts Science and Technology, I joined tens of my colleagues to act as ushers at the various flamboyant ceremonies which ushered in Independence. Today, I am forty-nine! How different in the life of a nation? Thirty years may not mean so much as they would for the human being. All the same, a lot has happened to Nigeria since Independence, and almost everything is different.

What have we done right? We have maintained the independence of Nigeria as a sovereign nation and we have maintained our oneness. That is no mean achievement considering the cost to us when we remember the civil war.

What have we done wrong? To me it seems our founding fathers were all agreed on one issue - to rid Nigeria of the colonial masters. Nigeria must be free - a country administered by Nigerians. One often asks: What was the agenda for Nigeria beyond 1960? This is in the light of the persistent spoiling of the nation by privileged individuals to the complete disadvantage of the whole, over the past 30 years. How prepared were we to administer and improve on that which had been put in place by the colonial masters. In this regard one means everything - the services, health, education, the economy etc. How come that we found ourselves pre-occupied with the shaft and forgot the kernel of development despite the glorious development plans?

And what do I prescribe for the future? A more conscious effort on the part of us all to love Nigeria more than we do now. This calls for great commitment on all fronts. A sense of patriotism should be inbred in us, more especially the young ones, the hope and future of this country, by the government. Nigerians must love and respect all that is Nigerian, despite SAP, the first singular attempt to establish a proper economic base. Nigerians are still looking for alternative ways of beating the government to it! Nigeria is one blessed country. We have no other country we can call our own. I dare say that there is no other country we would wish to adopt as our own.



# Corruption,

# corruption

# corruption,

**Akinola Aguda**  
(Eminent jurist)

**T**

he thing I believe we have attempted to do right is trying to free, at one stage at least, ourselves from economic subjugation to our erstwhile colonial masters.

But it seems of late we have gone back on that. And it seems of late we have become far more subjugated to Britain and her allies in European countries and America, than ever before.

On the positive side perhaps, we have managed to raise the standard of living of the people as well as the level of education of the people. But then in neither sphere have we succeeded to the extent that was possible. In other words, even though we have raised the standard of living of the people, we could have done better had we managed our finances, material and human resources, better.

Similarly, although we now have about 30 or so universities, and millions of our children do go to school, we ought to have been able to do much better. Well, take health, we managed to eradicate certain endemic diseases. For example we thought that we have got rid of guinea worm but now, guinea worm is back. We thought that we were free from other water-borne diseases but now they are back. Simply because, although we have managed to provide clean pipe-borne water for millions of people, we have not succeeded also in giving water to several millions of members of the society. So, what I am saying all through is that those things that should have constituted our positive achievements in the last 30 years of independence have been marred by the negative side by lack of good management of the resources which I have been mentioning all the time.

Now, on the real negative side of our independence, we have managed to uplift or to raise corruption from its little beginnings to very large proportions. Corruption has become so pervasive that what we have today was unimaginable 30 years ago. Nobody thought that we could be so entrenched in corruption as we are today. And that is perhaps the most crucial of our negative failures. Because it affects everything else. It has made politics impossible. It has made administration impossible. It has made even educational attainments impossible. It has made it impossible for us to live without fear of molestation. It has made life actually impossible to the extent that an average citizen doesn't feel safe. Why? Be-



cause at the apex of all ills is corruption. Official corruption has gone to such a high level that everything else is negative. Even when I talk about there being no good medical and educational facilities, all that is secondary. Because the natural resources endowed us by god are sufficient to have transformed this country in the past 30 years. The amount of income which this country has generated merely by God's gift, not by our own doing, could have been sufficient to transform even a hundred million Nigerians into a happier people with better health, education and what have you. So in summary, that is all I can say.

Now, if you want to go to specifics, you can say for example that successive governments have been corrupt and when the government is corrupt, there is no way it can perform well. And of course, tied to that is the ethnic problem which has risen enormously. Because by the time we were fighting for independence in the 40s and 50s, there

was no distinction between Hausas, Igbos, Yorubas, Edos and so on. We were all fighting one battle against the British. Now, we are fighting different battles. Each ethnic group is fighting against other ethnic groups. Villages fighting against villages and towns against towns. Why are we doing all these regressive acts? It is because at the apex of it all is corruption. Everybody wants to make money or derive other material benefits out of the nation. So, people say the standard of education has fallen, may well be. You see, I know all that

But why I said people do say so is that many others controvert that. I say it is not so, because children now go to school too early, that is why. But the education law itself does not permit children to go to school before the age of six. And yet, people smuggle their children to school at the age of four and say they are six years old. But, certainly speaking for myself, I know the standard of education has fallen considerably. So, I know what I knew when I matriculated and I know what children know when they matriculate. So though I have read scripts written by graduating law students and I know how poor their knowledge and grammar is, but the saving grace, as I usually say is that if you have 2,000 students in the Nigerian Law School a year, out of those, you can find exactly 100 or two out of them who are extremely brilliant. So that upsets the position. So, it is very difficult to say that the standard of law for example has fallen. Because you have got the really extremely brilliant ones. So, the standard of discipline has fallen, that is, we are less disciplined than we were 30 years ago.

I cannot exactly say what the future will look like. But I can say what hope can make the future look better. There are very many things. But again the most important thing is to have a group of leaders who are less corrupt. Who rely less on money, money-money. We have not had that type of leaders before. Unless, God in his infinite mercy gives us that type of person. You see, you notice one thing that has dominated my discourse is this issue of corruption.

If we have for the future a group of leaders who depend less on what they can get out of the system and money, then we can talk of having a bright future. Therefore, I don't know in the sense that the immediate future holds a lot of hope. Immediate future means 1992. Never mind, that the present administration thinks or hopes that we will have clean politics. I hardly can share that hope. Because, the government has given 560 million naira for the party to start. When you invest in politics, you must look for gains. And when you look for gains, you look for them not only for yourself but for your family, your god fathers and your ethnic group. So to me, there must be some total change before one can hope that the future will be better.

# Future depends on the work force

Paschal Bafyau (President, Nigeria Labour Congress)

When one sees that we virtually not achieved nothing much during our colonial period, that is from 1861 to 1960. Our period of colonisation was a period of pure exploitation of Nigeria's natural wealth. In which all the mineral resources of this country were carted away. One then says that at independence we had a lot of work to do. And the work that should have concerned us when we got our independence in 1960 was to be able to build a firm political system — which is relevant to our cultural back ground.

For example, the Americans were colonised by British. When the British were chased out, the Americans did not adopt the parliamentary system of government of the British. They evolved their own system of government which they believed is unique to the American situation.

Though they had certain problems, but these are problems that galvanised the nation into greatness. We had our own crises too. But in our own case because the British administered us, when they were going away we adopted their political system. Only later to find it unworkable. That was mistake number one.

Mistake number two, of course is the development of our economy. What were then our priorities in evolving our economic strategy. Instead of taking a hard look at building a Nigerian economy based on what we have, our own political actors preferred to import finished goods using the meagre economic resources that we have from the metropolitan Western countries. We thereby built a very weak economic base. We did not have a firm and stable transportation system which could have been a railway system. We didn't develop that. Our banking was neo-colonial in outlook and thereby the economy was a dependent economy. To put it mildly, a neo-colonial economy, that was being manipulated using Nigerians as fronts. Hence, we never had a firm economic growth, so that we even find it difficult as it is today to feed ourselves. If you compare us to other nations that we got independence within the Third world, like Indonesia and Malaysia, they have made firm-rooted economic progress.

And then the social life which we intended to develop was a copyright of the colonial kind of social life. A Nigerian does not be-

lieve he is complete or wealthy if he does not own a house in London; if he does not import a toothpaste from London. And he has to live in luxurious surroundings like the colonial masters. So that, the social strata was not reflective of our own social background. In our own life class differences was nonexistent. But this was jettisoned when colonial masters left, people became African—Europeans.

## Our right steps

One can hardly pinpoint many things that we have done right in the past 30 years. Although when one makes that kind of assertion, one will be condemning the entire race; the entire nation for what it is. I think having seen what we have done wrong, what one can say is we still have a future. One can say in the political arena, we have started with a transition programme. And, if the transition programme is rigorously pursued and Nigerians rededicate themselves, to the transition programme, there may be a stable political process. With an appropriate, enlightened work force. Because the most articulate set of people that can determine the future of the nation, is the work

of scrapping off the Ajaokuta Steel Comale. And we are also determined to keep away the importation of certain products, though we are able to have Nigerian soil brought up like wheats that can feed our brewers. And now sorghum and corn are used in producing beer. So, these are indications that we may be heading towards a self-reliant economy.

And with further development of the petrochemical industries and the Liquefied Natural Gas that is now on, we may perhaps see some ray of light at the end of the tunnel. There is still a lot to be done in terms of social awareness. One of the first things that has been done is the establishment of MAMSER and which one cannot give full marks for its achievements so far. But certainly because of the nature of the Nigerian society of which the wealthy constitute a very powerful bloc, whose continuous power or dominance on the rest of the country, going to be based on how they are able to continue manipulating the rest of the society. They, of course, are opposed to institutions like MAMSER which is trying as much as possible to enlighten the masses. But I think it is a right step having a body like MAMSER.

There is a lot of illiteracy in this country. You will be appalled to know the percentage of Nigerians going to school.

## My dream of the future


My dream of a stable Nigeria is a Nigeria in which both the able and the disabled are able to live under shelter, and be able to have three square meals a day, and can have medical services without the present serious impediments of resources. They



fore, my Nigeria is Nigeria in which every body is gainfully employed. In which those that cannot, for reasons of disability, will be sufficiently catered for by society.

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## Not a complete story

### of woe

Rufus Giwa, (Chief)

Chairman/Managing Director, Lever Brothers plc.

On the economic front, we've not come far enough because we've had a lot of problems. We did not spend the oil money well in the boom years. In the past we didn't



being decontrolled. That's a plus because decontrol means market forces would dictate the pace and that's important.

So on the economy generally, deregulation points a way forward. It is very, very good. Introducing consistent policies is also important so that we don't have "stop-go," "stop-go" policies. Of course we're short of foreign exchange because we've been too dependent on imports, because we've not generated enough exports, because we've fancied too much those goods made outside our shores, because we've been unrealistic in our consumption patterns. Yet we've learnt our lessons.

### The Way Forward

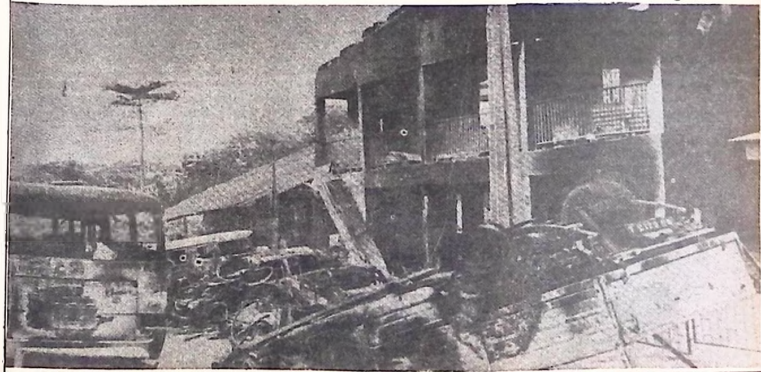
What Nigeria would be at the end of its fourth decade of existence would depend entirely on leadership, on followership as well, and on the policies that are put in place. I'd like to see a prosperous country — with infrastructure working like a clock, phones working, roads being well maintained, water never falling, where there'd be no power failure, where every child would have access to education. That's what I'd like to see. But what would be will depend on leadership, on followership, on the development of vital organs.

have consistent economic policies. Whenever government changed, it changed the rules of the game. But the present administration at least has settled down to introduce a seven-year tariff regime which signals that economic policies could become consistent. A new industrial policy has been put in place which would augur well for future investment. We have had an over-controlled economy. It's now

Nigeria has gone through many phases, both in the political and economic arenas. We've learnt a lot of lessons, gained a lot of experiences. A nation is not built in one day. The issue before us now is how well are we prepared to face the challenges of the future.

We must have a proper balance sheet of the country's fortunes. In spite of everything, it's not a complete story of woe. We've made progress in some areas; we've not progressed as far as we would have wanted in some areas. Although we'd have liked to be like one of the super powers already, but then... It's mixed bag of successes and failures. Provided we now would sit down, take stock and identify the key success factors, identify the key failure factors, capitalise on the success factors and make them stronger, eliminate our failure factors and then discover our other strengths and other success factors. We need to do our utmost to have a more positive attitude to our nation, to become more patriotic and committed, to develop ethos that would advance the interests of the majority of our people, capitalise on our culture which emphasises certain virtues. In this respect, I think the teaching of religion and civics in schools should be revisited. This is because all religions teach some good morals. No religion teaches people to steal or kill, no religion preaches laziness. So we should teach religion in schools. Civics too. We should find a confluence between our cultural background and what we want for our nation [by way of modernisation].

Things may not be as good as we would have wanted them after thirty years of independence. We've had a lot of chequered history, a lot of political instability, and we need political stability to develop



# Only by the mystery of God ...

Lateef Jakande [Albaji]

First, we have survived as a nation, which is not an easy achievement. We have had ups and downs. We have gone sometimes up to breaking point. We have succeeded in putting back to keep the country going. So, the survival of the country itself is an achievement. We have managed to build a nation. Before independence, we were put together by the British. In the years of nationalism and since independence, that Nigeria has been moulded into a federation that will not hold. I also think that most Nigerians are not committed to the Nigerian idea. But I cannot see any future without the country as one. So, I think that is a big achievement.

Politically we have not done too well. It is no credit to us that two-thirds of the 30 years of independence have been spent under the military regime. One can only hope that the next 30 years will be spent under the civilian administration. However nationalist, particularly now, everybody seems to agree even including the present administration, that this should be the last military government. I just hope that within the next 30 years, Nigerians will be blessed with a democratic civilian government.

Economically, we have not done too badly. The certain things that have taken place since independence, compared with what has taken place in other new countries are commendable. Not that we did all that we could. I



am sure we could do much better. I am aware of course that we are now in difficult economic circumstances, but all countries have their economic crises and they do get

over them. I am sure we will get over them too. It is not true that everything has been as a result of mismanagement  
Contd. next page

## This is not the independence we fought for

**Rloko Aka-Bashorun**  
(ex-President, Nigerian Bar Association)



igeria gained her said independence in October 1960. I cannot look at Nigeria in terms of achievements in our 30 years of existence as a nation. This is because our people are generally disillusioned both with the civilian and the military regimes that we have had the misfortune of being governed by.

Most especially, the periods that the military had ruled us had been those of devastating results. Today, still under military rule, we are being made to behave like we are a confused people who should be told what to do, when to do it and how to do it. Nigeria as far as I am concerned is still not independent. This obviously is not the independence that we fought for, not in the real sense of it.

Under the civilians, Nigerians fared better. At least, they (Nigerians) related with themselves in a brotherly manner. We see them as human beings, criticize when they go wrong, and praise whenever they go according to the

constitution. They (the civilians) are the choice between two devils. But then, that does not mean, they are clean. Not in any way. But then, they are attentive to the people's plight. Under the military regimes, in which we are right now, the nation now witnesses a gradual return to the colonial days when they had little rights. When they recognised the right, asked for it, Nigerians were given. Right now, the little right left has been completely taken away. Even the right to talk has now been taken away. And the future holds no hope with incoming civilians. The political leaders or whatever names you give them are military government surrogates. So, as far as I know, Nigeria is not a state. If it is, it is not independent. If it is independent the citizens are not free. And what is independence without the citizens having any sense of belonging? I shed tears for the young generation. Until there is a forum for expression of opinions and open consideration to solve whatever problem the nation faces, Nigeria at whatever age will continue to be what it has been and Nigerians too will continue to behave and see themselves as a conquered people.

# You can't congratulate yourself for mistakes

— Gamaliel Onosode



*Q: Could you tell us what we have done right in managing our economy in the last 30 years?*

**ONOSODE:** It is not a simple question to answer. You can't turn around to congratulate yourself for correcting the mistakes we have made. I find it difficult to say we have done anything right.

*Q: What have we done wrong?*

**ONOSODE:** After 30 years of independence economic infrastructures are still as rudimentary as they were in the beginning. Here I am talking about communications including roads, telecommunications, power, water etc. As far as roads are concerned, intra-urban roads, inter-city roads and rural feeder roads. These are areas in which we should have concentrated the bulk of our resources so that we could have an indigenous growth from within instead of committing ourselves to big projects that

are not supported by a healthy economic environment. In my opinion we have spent the last few years trying to correct the mistakes that we have made in the past. Mistakes of omission and of commission.

*Q: What recipe would you give for us to succeed?*

**ONOSODE:** The first thing to do is we must continue with the effort and this ought to be an honest effort to get all Nigerians to believe in Nigeria as a single nation under

### Continued from Page 14

of the economy by politicians. It is not true at all. Whatever is happening to the economy is the responsibility of civilians and soldiers who have been given the opportunity to rule the country. But I think that we should be looking forward to better days when the purchasing power of the average Nigerian will be sufficient to make him have a decent life, we should look forward to the time when the naira will be respectable as any other currency. I look forward to the day when food will be the right of every Nigerian, when work will not be a privilege but a right. And when we will have the care for the common man which is the hallmark of the developed nations.

### What have we done wrong?

Well, it is difficult to pinpoint. You see, it is easy to be wiser after the event. Some people have accused the leaders of the 50s of not being tough enough in some areas. Some even have questioned the need for the Nigerian union. I have heard it said by some that Nigerian leaders succumbed to British treachery. But I want them to know that in 1950, 55, 58, 59, 60, nobody foresaw 1990. I am too sure in my own mind that in all the decisions taken by our leaders in all the constitutional conferences of the late 50s and 1960s were right during the circumstances of the day.

There were a number of administrative measures which could have been done better. But I think at a time like this it is a barren exercise to go over all those in detail, when in fact no good thing could come from such exercise. It is better, in my view, to take the positions that we are now and go forward with the determination to make Nigeria better in the years ahead.

God.

Secondly if we really believe that this country is under God, individual Nigerians whether high or low in the society must recognise the need for them to be honest in their undertakings and actions.

Corruption is simply destroying the heart of this nation. If there is any truth in my statement, it follows that we can't really be able to solve this problem until the heart of the individual is right with god.

As for me I am now committed in my own personal involvement with the world around me before speaking or acting to ask myself the question what would Jesus do in the situation in which I find myself.

Until the heart that is desperately corrupt is dealt with by the Lord we are not going to make any progress because righteousness exalts a nation and sin is a reproach to any people. If I can keep my corner clean and you can keep your corner clean all those who profess the name of Jesus will make a mighty difference within this nation.

### Prescriptions for the future!

*First, I will insist that every Nigerian child is and ought to be entitled to and given education, at state expense, from the kindergarten to the university.*

*Two, I advocate and insist that such education ought to be free of fees or levies and should not be conditional.*

*Three, I will like to see a Nigeria in which there is full employment of every Nigerian. I will like to see Nigeria in which health and medical services will be free and available to all and sundry, without any regard to their social or financial status. I will like to see a situation in which food is available at affordable prices throughout the length and breadth of this country. I will like to see a situation in which public transport is at the beck and call of every citizen.*

*I will like to see above all, a Nigeria in which everybody, every person is looked after by his government and everyone exercises the democratic rights which are God given. I will like to hope that the fundamental laws of the land will make it possible for the talents of every Nigerian, whatever what his parents may be, are fully developed.*

*I will like to see a Nigeria that has fully developed her resources in such a way that her people are able to compete with such great nations as Japan and the Western countries or Eastern countries. That is my ambition.*

### Method of achieving these ideals

*Well, somebody said more things are wrought by prayer and God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. And one of the wonders he is going to perform, is to transform this country to the greatness, which I consider to be our birthright. Exactly, it is God's wonders that will take this country to our dream for it.*

**TSM:** What do you think the nation should celebrate in this 30th anniversary of her independence?

**MADU:** Well commenting on the fact that we are 30 years old, that is an independent nation, there should be a lot to celebrate. However I think with the advent of SAP which I would call the beginning of our march towards any notable achievements we've made, particularly in the areas of looking inwards towards getting ourselves industrialised as a nation, it may not be particularly too apparent what our achievements are now. But we have made some strides. Take a look at the reconstruction going on, particularly with the finance of this country, you look at the basic infrastructures that are being set up in the steel industry, the petrochemical industry, these are the things we should have done years back. We are doing them now and these things, all things being equal, we expect will streamline this country into the road of industrialisation. Without these industries coming up first and those other ones that are being put in place now, there is no other way we can begin to get to achieve our objectives as a nation in the field of technology and industry.

**TSM:** So you feel that ultimately SAP is in the best interest of the country?

**MADU:** Definitely it is, SAP definitely is, there could have been no other alternative financially speaking. I think the decision to use SAP as a base is a very notable one and I think we have to take it a level further. The civilian regime should be encouraged equally not to be in a hurry to scrap it. We need to continue with it until we get the positive results that we are to achieve out of it. Yes SAP is good.

**TSM:** I understand that, as you operate in a financial system you have a natural bias to speak on the financial sector. But apart from that sector what areas outside the economy do you think there must be something in Nigeria to cheer about.

**MADU:** That's difficult question I would think. I have answered this question earlier. I have told you to look at the industries, to look at the manufacturing sector and to look at the financial system.

**TSM:** What I have in mind is, for instance, you know that Nigeria is composed of diverse people. Now do you think that it has achieved anything in terms of social intergration, do you think it has achieved much in terms of social advancement in terms of politics?

**MADU:** Politics no. Judging from the fact that the two Federal Republics failed, I wouldn't say politically we have achieved anything. May be these are lessons that we are learning in order to forge ahead and I would think some of the major and civilized countries of the world have gone through the same phase like we are going through now. I would seriously think that as we are making these mistakes, we are learning from them. Socially, the government has had a couple of programmes towards social integration, but what I think

# The Nigerian car is coming

**B.C. Madu (Chief)**

**Manager Progress Bank Marina**

is going to be paramount in the country would be a sense of national patriotism.

We still have to work a little bit more. The national consciousness is not in us yet and, in fact, if Nigerians begin to embrace the attitude and habit of national consciousness we may not have the time to talk about ethnicity, religion and these other little things that we worry about. Now I think the area we need to impress on, to think about seriously, is our national consciousness. We

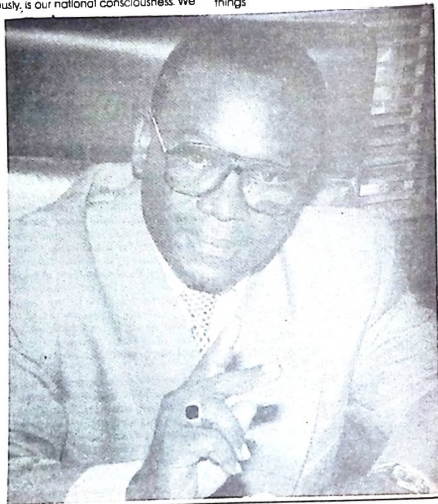
should be able to forget where we came from and see ourselves as Nigerians. Given our origins, our structure, our heritage, it might be a little difficult but I think the government and the people have a lot still to work in the area of our national consciousness.

**TSM:** So what is your image of Nigeria in say 10 years to come?

**MADU:** Definitely we are looking at the positive side. Things are going to change. I see a situation in the next 10 years where our dependency on foreign countries, particularly the so-called Eastern countries, industrialised and the rest of them are going to diminish, when Nigeria would become a manufacturing country and when we talk about exports we may not be relying strictly on agricultural exports. Nigeria is going to be talking about manufactured exports, goods, cars and the like. Yes! I have the vision that in the next 10 years Nigeria should be able to produce a car, you know, at least a Nigerian car would have been on the Nigerian road.

**TSM:** Are these infrastructures in place?

**MADU:** Well the infrastructures may not be in place now that we are talking about, but you can see what is happening in the assembly plants say in Anambra, here in Lagos and other places. You can see what the individuals are beginning to fabricate in this direction purely because there is a need for it. In the next 10 years I have a vision that we would have a vision, that we would have perfected on one of those things



# We must have a nationwide register of assets

By Dr. M.O. Omolayele

As Nigeria clocks 30 years of age as an independent nation, it is a useful exercise first to look back, then to assess the present and finally look into the future. This is an exercise that constantly reminds us that time is a trinity.

## Looking Back

One simple verdict I arrived at in looking back, is that as a nation our performance has been fair. There is considerable room for improvement but by the same token, our overall situation could have been worse. In the language of Accountancy, I like to look first at the Credit side.

## Credit

In spite of a civil war we have succeeded in remaining as one nation with our territorial integrity intact, if we discount the minor but irritating border dispute with Cameroon. Considering the way colonial boundaries were drawn, it is a miracle that we have not had more border disputes.

The exploration and exploitation of petroleum had been intensified in the 30 years of independence. We have moved from being a minor producer of petroleum to a major producer/exporter, and an influential member of OPEC. Indeed we have mastered the international oil politics better than our mastery of our internal political environment.

Our effort towards industrialisation has been quite commendable even if we are too dependent on imported raw materials. The number, size and scope of our industrial effort have been very impressive if it is realised that most of our industrial development effort, has come through internally-generated funds. As a country we have enjoyed a good dose of introduction of new technologies through our technical partners in industrialisation, but we have not enjoyed massive foreign investment. Therefore our industrial development has been largely due to our own financial resources.

Our manpower development effort has been

very impressive. When we became independent in 1960 there was only one university, the University of Ibadan. As of now there are 23 Federal Universities and 9 State Universities. In addition

there are about 30 Polytechnics. Secondary education and Primary education enrolment had increased by leaps and bounds. Many professional associations and bodies have been established, all of them training and admitting Nigerians to some of the highest levels of professionalism in the world. We have produced many Nigerian Chief Executives of strong, large and reputable Companies whereas in 1960 we had none. Our Stock Exchange had been developed and expanded almost twenty-fold.

Our Trade Unionism which was fragmented and which fell an easy prey to international Trade Union politics, has been streamlined and



stabilised. It now speaks with one voice at the central level.

Our womenfolk have progressed considerably. The rate of progress in many respects has been exponential. From a few Medical, Law, Accountancy or Engineering professionals 30 years ago, there are now thousands of female professionals in these fields. Even in Academics, great strides have been taken by

the women.

In sports Nigeria has made its mark in World Athletics, and Junior football. Indeed we have stamped our authority on Africa in the field of Table Tennis. We have received international honours including Nobel Prize for Literature and headed large international bodies such as U.N. Assembly and Commonwealth Secretariat.

We have acted as our brother's keepers. We sent our troops to Tanzania to put down a mutiny and assisted in peace keeping operations in many parts of the world.

## Debit

It is however a plain and conspicuous fact that we have also done many things wrong. The most glaring to my mind, has been our neglect on Agriculture especially the growing, processing and preservation of food; so much so that we were importing food massively until 1986, when the Structural Adjustment Programme was introduced and importation of many food items was banned.

Politically we have oscillated between Civilian democracies and Military administrations. In terms of percentage of the total time since independence, military administrations have predominated. The most critical time for Nigerians had always been the period when elections were organised (or should I say disorganised) as part of the process of transition from one administration to another. We never seemed to be able to change the baton from one Civilian regime to another without dropping it. Yet all true and functional democracies are a continual relay race. Until we master the relay race theory of smooth change of baton we would never have arrived politically. Our politics have been characterised more by greed for power and money by hook or crook.

On the social side, our social values have changed for the worse. We now venerate money and power, ostentatious living and conspicuous consumption, rather than knowledge, wisdom, humility and moderation in all things. Too many people are busy chasing wealth and the privileges which wealth can confer.

Abuses of power, corruption in form of bribes and kickbacks have tarnished public services. The early pioneers of public administration in Nigeria who are still living, look like totally different breed from the greedy, and corrupt ones that came several generations after them.

The most despicable period for corruption in our last 30 years was the import licensing era, the contract boom periods. It is ironic that this country which budgets billions of naira for new projects every year, has several billions of naira worth of abandoned projects. Some of these projects have been abandoned for over 10 years.

Another debit side of the nation is the continuing nagging problem of unemployment. The will to work hard physically has deserted us. We look for soft options. Nobody wants to walk two miles to work anymore. Bicycles are rare even in the rural areas. The city's developments totally squeezed out the cyclists. Nobody thought of bicycle tracks and pedestrian walkways in our road development in the cities. Educationally, there are signs that the system is crumbling.

Not enough financial attention is being paid by the States to Primary and Secondary education. The educational foundation in terms of quality of facilities and dedication of the teachers is not robust any more.

Our religion has assumed more noise than substance. We appear to be more religious and yet less godly. In this connection there appears to be more outward signs of religion but less inward grace.

The crime wave in the country has reached a high proportion, and is threatening to tear apart our social fabrics. Even confidence in law enforcement which was not that high even at independence has further weakened. Not many people in this country have ever regarded the police as their friend.

Our Time Management has suffered very serious setback. We are hardly able to start anything on time even in a military era.

Finally on the debit side, the image of Nigeria outside has taken a bash and a big dent since 1960. Admittedly nobody in the outside world now will ask where in Africa is Nigeria, which

was possible in 1960, but a great deal of the knowledge about Nigeria stemmed from unfavourable experiences with our compatriots abroad.

## The Balance Sheet

I still believe that on the whole our good parts and our Credits since 1960 have outweighed our debits. It is a matter of personal opinion.

## The Future As an incredible optimist

The future of this country to my mind is bright if only we can learn from our past mistakes as well as our successes. It only we can go back to those old virtues of hardwork (hardwork never kills) honesty and dedication, discipline starting from the discipline within the nuclear family (too many middle class homes over-indulge their children), frugality in our expenditure, adopting the modular approach to designing our projects in such a way that when we

have spent 10 per cent on a project, something

is available which is functional and ready to be used. No new projects should be embarked upon until all abandoned projects have been completed except in rare cases which should not be more than 10 per cent of the Capital budget for one year. We must vigorously educate our people about good spacing of our children within the family planning concept both for the health of the mother and child.

Functional literacy should be pursued vigorously through adult education classes and free education up to JSS 3.

Our Agriculture should continue to receive a lot of attention especially assistance by way of easy access to inputs for peasant farmers. Food production, processing and preservation must be intensified.

We must improve considerably our time management, and we must insist on high business ethics and administrative probity, through a nationwide register of assets. Who owns what?

Therein lies the path to future greatness.

# The Army ruined the nation

S.B. Daniyan (Chief)

**T**he expectation of a stable and economically viable nation at post independence did not quite materialise. What have we done wrong? Politically and economically we have done many things wrong.

In the political field the euphoria that accompanied independence hardly lasted three years before we started to witness threats to our political stability. We had violent eruption in parts of the North and the West. The coalition of parties at the centre were held together by very thin threads and so were liable to snap with any small pull. The immediate 10 years of independence should



have been used to build unity and trust among and between the different ethnic groups that occupy our great country. Instead ethnicity was used to destroy any fabric of unity that existed. While politicians were still grouping around to find solution to our myriad of problems the military boys struck thereby halting the process of learning and operating democracy. The most important single factor that has contributed to political instability is the military. It stopped and ruined the democratic culture that could have been built. The military is now regarded as the surest and fastest way to power and wealth.

With so much political instability it is not surprising that the country has not been able to achieve very meaningful economic growth. The only major economic growth

that we seem to have achieved is population growth which after all has become a negative factor in real growth. The country should have concentrated more on building economic infrastructure than on meeting immediate consumer needs. After about 20 years of oil exploitation what do we have in terms of realisation of the by-products of the industry? The same goes for our iron and steel industry. Agriculture which used to form the bedrock of our economy was neglected to the extent that we could not even feed ourselves not to talk of providing the necessary raw materials for our consumer industries.

Having attempted a post-mortem what direction should we now be heading politically,

and economically? Politically we have the assurances of the present military administration that their administration will be the last one. Let us pray and hope that this will

be the case so that we can have a sustained period of political stability. Political tensions are necessary ingredients in the building of a true democracy. It cannot be imposed, it can only be built by trial and error. If the military boys can understand this and do not at every sign of tension run for their guns and come over to the streets to take over government, then the democratic culture will be able to grow. Rome was not built in a day so the saying goes. Real democracy will take decades to have firm roots. When we have stability, we can then focus more on achieving economic growth. Fortunately the present administration seems to understand the direction it should be taking. We should continue to maintain and focus on present economic goals with only few adjustments here and there. We all know that we could achieve more economic growth if the level of corruption in the society can be reduced to the minimum. It is unfortunate that the level of corruption seems to increase with each succeeding administration. One can only hope that this administration will now be able to declare a total war on this cancer. The President has said that it is the leadership that is largely responsible for it. He is right and it is now hoped that the fight will start from the leadership. The ordinary man knows who is corrupt within the leadership.

# Abolish the states now!

Rihaji Ahmed Joda  
Chairman SCOA

The people of Nigeria have been right in their decision and determination to remain one country. As one country we have a tremendous potential for growth and development waiting to be tapped. If we had allowed ourselves to disintegrate, we, like many countries of Africa would become unviable, forever poor and dependent on international charity. As one strong committed and determined people, we can build a country which can proudly take its place in the world.

## What have we done wrong?

It is 30 years ago now since we became an independent sovereign nation. As October 1, 1960 approached, many looked forward to strong growth and sustained development. But it was evident, even at the



venue of the independence celebration, that not all was well with the body politic. The cracks had begun to appear. The no-

tion was to have to struggle to establish itself and remain firmly one.

Soon after crisis began to build up. The secret Anglo-Nigeria Defence pact, negotiated by all the political leaders during the series of constitutional negotiations was, perhaps, the first, inter-party and intra-party squabbles became national crisis of alarming proportion. Industrial and student unrests sapped the nation's energy. Allegations of corruption and election rigging were common and civil disorder in at least two parts of the country ended in a coup-d'etat.

Frequent and violent changes and attempted changes of government have left the country confused and unstable. In these circumstances, no development and no progress can be possible.

In common with the rest of Africa and perhaps, most of the third world, Africa became independent from colonialisation in the late fifties and early sixties. And most of them have since then engaged themselves in violent internal conflicts, leading to endless killings of their own citizens and dashing the hopes and aspirations we all had during the heady times of independence.

I think that these are some of the things we, in common with many other countries, have done wrong.

## What about the future?

Down-grade politics and the power of politics. Rationalise the government of the country. Abolish the states structure and decentralise the functions and responsibilities of Local Governments as second tier units. Government in order to dilute regional ethnic loyalties.

Decentralise the functions of the Government and generally reduce the tolerably high cost of Government. Undertake a thorough and urgent review of the entire educational system with a view to making it relevant to our needs and circumstances and so produce graduates and women capable of translating our ambitions and aspirations into tangible benefits.

We must review our present attitude towards commerce and industry in order to reduce our increasingly heavy dependence on the industrialised world. It is unrealistic to continue the present pattern in order to realise this country. We must to whether we can do it on the present of transferring whole factories to undeveloped countries whose people are and for ever be obliged to spare their plants with imported spares for maintenance and training to build our own. We must learn to build our own and develop and strengthen trade with itself.

We must seek to enforce the use of our nation and ensure that the lives and property of the people must seek to create a sense of well-being and happiness in the things that take place unhindered.



## Elites still accentuate ethnicity

Shehu Musa [Alhaji]

(ex-secretary to FG,

Chairman, National Population  
Commission)

away equally rapidly. The establishment of People's Bank, Community Bank and things like that are all steps in the right direction. At least they reflect the response of our government to the need of the society as well as the economy.

In the field of Petroleum resources exploitation, Nigeria is playing very noble and active role in OPEC and APPA [African Petroleum Producers Association]. There is no doubt at all, that the name of Nigeria among the committee of nations in this organisation, the UNO, OAU, ECOWAS, ADB, World Bank, and what have you, won her a kind of reputation and a favourable image. In fact aspects I can think of. Because, when you talk of education there are several areas that are attached to it. Areas like information, culture, social development, science and technology. They are all related to education and the expansion in education has ultimately affected the progress achieved in this other areas.

On what we have done wrong. Since independence, our problem has been diversity, ethnicity and to a lesser extent, we also have fear of domination of one ethnic or religious group by another. Till now, it doesn't appear we have over come this. We have not done well in the area of national integrator. I should think all categories of people should feel at home in every part of the nation. But it is not so in all areas. But like education and enlightenment make Nigerians ethnic centric, educated Nigerians, the elites, accentuate ethnicity. It is a thing of concern to me. That is a social problem.

In the political arena, the collapse or over-

**W**ell, I think this is very, very subjective in that what I saw about what we have done and what we have not done in the past 30 years is a personal opinion based on experience. First of all, I think that we should deal with positive and tangible progress which I believe we have attained in the last 30 years.

First, what I feel the urge to deal with is education. Our population has increased a lot and our educational institutions have also increased, although not as much. I recall that we had only one university. In many parts of the north, there was only one government secondary school. In fact; I remember in 1949, there were only two secondary schools in the whole northern region. But just before independence each province, as they were known then, had one provincial secondary school in addition to regional secondary schools. Now, the expansion of education at every level primary, secondary and university, is to my mind a positive achievement. The standard is something else, because with very rapid expansion, you don't expect the standard to be maintained. But as it were, it is the case everywhere in the world where you have very rapid population expansion. It is not easy to keep the standard. But I think the fact that the various constitutions used in Nigeria particularly the 1979 constitution, came out with provisions for keeping these educational standards is indicative of the positive step forward to ensuring maintenance of good standard. The establishment of the National Universities Commission (NUC) as it stands now, is another step in the right direction. It shows that University education is systematically and orderly organised and managed. Along the way because of economic problems, there were problems which brought about demonstrations by students over issues that probably would have been discussed, that's where we did not do very well.

In the field of health, again, we have made giant strides. From the days when there were only few hospitals, both private and public or general hospitals, to the days we have had very many centres of excellence. Of course, introduction of basic or what they call, primary health programmes. This is another standard set in the right direction. Never mind the problems. They are here, but there is hardly anywhere that you will take a step forward that you will not encounter problems. It was mainly as a result of our economic problems.

In the area of security, I believe we have witnessed a civil war and the military has been able to contain it. Many modern organisations have set in. And somehow, successive governments have been able to really contain any security breaches that have occurred. I think this is as a result of the good training and the various reorganisational stock taking for various arms of the military. They have acquired modern sophisticated equipment and machinery. All these are

things that I have seen as progress over the years since 1966.

Then, in the areas of trade, commerce and industry and monetary circulation generally we do have a very resilient economy.

The expansion in money supply, industrial and commercial undertaking, physical development, other infrastructures, power generation [electricity], development of our oil resources, these are all areas where you don't need to go really far to see that we have made progress, since 1960. We have made clear progresses in the banking sector. Now we have several banks and the habits of keeping money at home with the attendant risks to the economy is fading



throw of two civilian administrations is indicative of our inability to mature politically and in the democratic political process.

Also, in the handling of our economy, it has gone through several vicissitudes. But it has been resilient. One area that will continue to worsen the economic situation is malpractices and dishonesty on the part of business men, public workers and many non-Nigerians amongst us. The loss sustained by the country through fraud and such malpractices is very colossal. And no amount

of regulation and enforcement of law will help the situation. Unless we all strive to make money through hard work, regulation will be inadequate in realising our economic objectives.

My prescriptions for the future. I cannot say I do subscribe to the view that all hope is lost. Nigeria is still a country with bright future especially if the forthcoming experience to democratic culture proves success-

ful. We tend to forget, of course, that the polity is of human components and the nature of human, as well as other animal creation, is that you have to go through crawling, toddling, walking and then running.

Therefore in the course of all this, you make costly mistakes. It is part of life that you continue to correct the mistakes. You, shouldn't give up. Giving up means death. Nobody wishes that Nigeria dies. Let us correct the mistakes, not starting from the scratch. Be sincere to ourselves and each other.

## Ahmadu Bello was right

# We rushed into independence

Remi Fani-Kayode

[colourful politician of  
the 1st Republic]

country. Believe me since 1966 we have never ever had men like those who ruled us then. We just haven't got any like them again. If they had not been kicked out the history of Nigeria would have been different. Where would we get men like Tafawa Balewa? He spent his six years trying to keep the country together. He tried to please everybody, which was impossible. Sanduana of Sokoto was a man standing not for the North only, but in order to ascertain that there is level of understanding between the North and South. The man felt that the South was very combustible, educated and aggressive and that these factors would be mellowed down by stark realism. He understood his people and said that they were far behind and that time must be given to them to come closer to the South in order to make a joint demand. He said in 1953, *wait for me a bit, don't file the motion for independence. Wait for a few years. Let us file it together.* Then people went ahead and filed it. Nonetheless he said we are going to demand for independence as soon as it is practicable. They said they wanted it now irrespective of circumstances. Well, looking-back don't you think he was right? We rushed into it, and what's the result?

**TSM:** But some Southerners feel that it is unfair on them to be asked to wait for the Northerners to catch up. Even though they now seem to have caught up, they still see the Southerners as arrogant and uncompromising. The federal character thing allows them to occupy the key posts.

**F.KAYODE:** Who occupies the key posts?

**TSM:** The Northerners.

**F.KAYODE:** Let us look at it practically. When we classify North or South we forget the state structure. Why should they talk of people coming from the states and not North or South. Then we have to ask ourselves who is waiting for who? The quota system has its merits and de-



merits. What I would have suggested will be that a certain percentage of posts should be made available on merit for the simple reason that without merit Nigeria can never ever progress. The reason we have mismanagement is that people with merits are not placed in the right jobs. But at the same time looking at the federal structure and development of each state, certain posts should be kept in order to make those states climb up. It is a question of ratio, such that will not injure the development of society. It is also a question of balance, communication and honesty. Nigerians always respond when you make a genuine plea to them. Some years ago it was the style to have confrontation with the North. People in the South felt if you had a confrontation you were a hero. Certain politicians became famous because of this act. A few of us believed that we cannot allow the people to lead us, we have to lead them. Since we know that negotiations and dialogue was the answer, we became very un-

Continued on page 23

**TSM:** How did it all begin? How did nationalists become politicians?

**F. KAYODE:** It was easy. Most of us were young men from different ethnic groups — Hausas, Yorubas, we were all mixed up. We all felt that the British must go, so we started activist movements to arouse the people into a state of extreme nationalism. We believed that the tree of liberty will be watered by the blood of tyrants. That time many of us believed that our activity might lead to something akin to armed resistance if everything failed. Therefore, we were not looking for anything. We felt that in the process if 1,000 Ibos, 2,000 Yorubas, 4,000 Hausas were killed, this would sort of weld the country together into one unit and we would be able to fight as nationalists more. That was why I made a speech in 1959, when we were about to be given independence, that the British has robbed us of our struggle for liberty. They have given us liberty free of charge. We shall never ever appreciate it.

**TSM:** There are some people who actually attribute the nation's problem to this. Instead of feeling like a group we still see ourselves as North or South.

**F. KAYODE:** The British were very clever. They gave independence to the age group older than ourselves. They were naturally more mellow, actually because of their age, and they were not likely to give them problems. If they had not given independence to those people they would have been compelled to give it to us. They would have had a leadership that was not friendly. I don't blame the British. But what followed was even worse. Patronage became the order of the day. Nobody cared anymore. The ambition to hold presidential appointments became more important. The basic feelings of politics crept in and overtook every one. With time the emotion spread that the sheer purpose of entering politics was to grab power and make money.

**TSM:** When young people trace the history of Nigeria, they tend to put the blame for the country's planlessness on politicians of your generation. That if they had placed the country on a sound footing we would have been up there like Japan, Korea etc.

**F. KAYODE:** There is this thing [the British] call the learning graph. When you are learning something your growth is slow. How long were these people left to learn about government? They got into government in 1960 and were hurried out in 1966. They were still learning how to rule and govern a very, very difficult

**TSM:** There has been a lot of religious problems in the past few years, what do you think is responsible for this?

**ADEBAYO:** In recent years, the problem of the consciousness of differences has been more national than state. It is a reflection of government's attitude.

**TSM:** How do you mean?

**ADEBAYO:** I guess it became so volatile nationwide when the question arose as to Nigeria's position with regards to the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). Is Nigeria a member? If we are, why? When did we become a full member. Do we have a right to know? Was it a subject that we should discuss openly and agree on especially under a government that allows a debate on views important to the development of the nation? The issue of IMF and SAP were thrown open, shouldn't we discuss OIC? This I think is responsible for a lot of misgivings and misunderstandings.

**TSM:** Why didn't we have these religious problems during the Second Republic under Shagari administration?

**ADEBAYO:** We didn't. We couldn't have had. The civilian government is always different. That was why Awolowo said the worst civilian government is to be preferred to the best military government. Because a military government by its very tradition is not a democratic institution. When it allows a measure of freedom of expression it is an effort that people take note of and commend. We could talk as much as we wanted to about the Shagari government because it was a democratic one. There was even a place designed for talking and people paid to talk. At least in a democratic setting you could have your say, even if government would have its way. We didn't have religious problems because Shagari did not take us into OIC. And if he did it would have been debated on the floor of the National Assembly, the public could have joined too.

**TSM:** How would you assess the performance of the various leaders we have had, starting with the Buhari administration?

**ADEBAYO:** The regime had its pluses. It's now critically being viewed. A number of people in Nigeria generally don't see anything good in governments that have passed. We are full of adulation for those who are in power at the moment and protective of them, sometimes sickeningly. All the evils that governments do are only remembered when they are out. But Buhari's coming was generally welcomed because Nigerians were tired of a 'democracy' Nigerian style. They thought that this was a negation of what was promised under the 1979 constitution. Election was not absolutely free nor fair, coupled with the government's insensitivity to the plight of Nigerians. A salvaging job, became necessary and somebody came to do just that. But Nigerians became frightened when the government used far more force than was desirable. It attempted to bring some order into our lives with WAI, but untold brutality marred its enforcement. There was absolute disregard for the freedom of the individual — the incarceration of past public office holders beyond the bounds of reason. And the obvious involvement of the government in double standard, people in government were implicated in some of the

inquiries that they wanted to hang past rulers for. It had so much internal contradictions which makes it a pity really.

**TSM:** Can you do the same analysis for the present administration?

**ADEBAYO:** Because of the excesses of its successor, this government learnt and has paid far more attention to basic freedom, at least in its utterances and in the early months of its coming to power. It won the heart of a lot of Nigerians because of the prompt release of people detained unjustly. They also went low-keyed on the force that was then becoming unbearable. Instead it concentrated its efforts on national development and opened its doors and ears to the views and opinions of the people. Lately, with regards to its treatment of the press and its attitude to public opinion, human freedom over which it was initially commended there was a period of alarm. But I guess there is a check again. We hope that the press would regain some of the freedom it had under the same government.

**TSM:** Having assessed the various leaders in the country and found them tolerable, what do you think of the followership themselves, are they not responsi-

# OIC membership responsible for religious tension

— **Cornelius Adebayo**  
ex-Senator and ex-governor  
of Kwara State

ble for some of the problems?

**ADEBAYO:** I never said it's not a problem of leaders, our problem has definitely been that of leadership. You need a perceptive leadership that has access to the best minds in the land and utilises those minds maximally in the interest of the nation. You need a leadership that will lead by personal example, that leadership will be worthy of an equally dedicated followership. That leadership will be one that people will want to live, work or even die for. Definitely we have had a problem of leadership with insight foresight with a vision that approximates with national vision.

**TSM:** But there is another school of thought which says Nigeria has not lacked a dedicated followership. When a new leader comes they fall into line.

Continues next page



# God is angry with Nigeria

Hogan [Kid] Bossey  
— ex world boxing champion

**H**aving been able to come this far, I think Nigerians owe God a lot of gratitude, and if I may add, more devoutness. When I remember the nationalists' struggle, the persecution they went through, our eventual attainment of nationhood, the 30-month civil war, and how we have survived it all, one cannot but think that this country is indeed a creation of the Father Almighty. True, not much may be said to have been achieved in terms of national development yet, I believe that Nigeria still ranks as a very strong force on the continent. I say with all modesty that of all the African countries I have been to, not many may be said to be as developed as ours. Compared to what

obtained 30 years back, successive Nigerian governments have been able to improve in the provision of certain basic amenities like electricity, potable water and other infrastructure like schools, good network of roads, hospitals, uni-



versities, stadia and the like. Over the years also, we have excelled ourselves and, of course, the nation in other areas of human endeavour like sports, human research and education. Even though a lot more ought to have been achieved

in terms of even national development, I still commend those regimes who thought it fit to carve out more states from the original three regions, for it was only through such that any meaningful development could come about.

Still, I believe that a lot more could have been achieved than what we presently have on the ground for a country that showed abundant promise at the beginning. It is sad to note that Nigeria today is in dire need of moral uprightness. Virtually, everything virtuous is lacking; be it patriotism, honesty, dedication to duty, brotherly love, orderliness ... you just name it. Insincerity, greed and distrust appear to be very prevalent today. Yet the lot of the common man has hardly improved. The hardship presently being experienced is to say the least killing. Also, I do not believe that the nation's bountiful resources are being tapped fully. You may never appreciate how blessed this nation is until you visit other parts of the world. Much as we may have pushed up the nation's economic front to some point, agriculture which used to be our mainstay way back in the 50s and the 60s appears to be suffering from neglect. This may sound rather far-fetched, but I believe that our present predicament is a sign of God's anger against us.

As a people I honestly think we have gradually but steadily been moving further away from God. We need to retrace our steps back to the righteous path or else ... the welfare of the masses should always be paramount in the minds of our leaders while the furtherance of Nigeria's interests should be the responsibility of all concerned.

Thank you.

## Continued from Page 21

popular with our own people. They accused us of selling out to the North, but we stood our ground. We were hated and abused because of this courage all down the line.

**ISM:** Your policy of dialogue with the North, in what way has it helped in forging a national understanding?

**F. KAYODE:** Without that I am sure we would have reached a point of collision where Nigeria would have gone the way of confederation which would have led to a total disintegration of Nigeria.

**ISM:** What do you think is responsible for the religious divide in the country now? It's as if we have never had muslim and christian groups working together before, why didn't we have this problem in the First Republic?

**F. KAYODE:** Because it was never an issue. Sometimes I think we have many people of both religions who stir things up for political reasons.

I was in the Action Group and I composed the words to one of our marching songs and parts of the song ran thus: *From North to South, from East to West, Nigerians carry on, without national banners blazoned with crescent moon and cross* — we all wore uniforms and marched down the streets of Lagos. We were all mixed, Ibo, Hausas and Yorubas, and were proud of the song. It was a song of unity and solidarity.

The religious situation today is such a dangerous trend that it really frightens me.

**ISM:** If West and East Germany can talk

about re-unification in 1992, why can't we bury our differences and forge a unity?

**F. KAYODE:** We can, we can, but we have to learn that we are dependent on each other and bury the suspicions first. That whether we like it or not we are going together. I believe Nigeria can be a world power, because everything that makes a country great is here. We have the manpower, the resources, the market, the population. We have the right to be first.

## Continued from Page 22

after they desert him and start complaining?

**ADEBAYO:** A leader is lucky if he is hailed when he comes to power, but in a few months he has words of criticisms hurled at him. In fact, that is what I think we did not do enough. Leaders do not encourage and listen to enough criticisms. I think it's not a problem if people criticise. Critics, after all, don't overthrow governments. They in fact, more than anything else sustain government by showing it the other side of its performance. We are a land where critics abound. Some of them are not realists but they give us the other side and enable us to relate to the practical sides of things. But if a government detains, silences, or dismisses critics then it's not helping itself.

**ISM:** We have fought a civil war, but some people still argue that we have not learnt anything from it because we still have all the problems we had then.

Do you agree with them?

**ADEBAYO:** If people say we have not learnt anything, then we should ask what was the war about? Is it just a matter of ethnicity? Is ethnicity a peculiar problem to Nigeria? In other developed nations some of the problems facing them are ethnic. In spite of the commendable efforts of Gorbachev, his problems are mainly ethnic, but they are referred to as national questions. The same with Great Britain and Ireland. The moment we realise that the issue of nationality is not peculiar to us, the better it will be for us. We should look outside at how others have managed to co-exist without emphasising the differences unduly. I think our own problems are exacerbated because of the current economic climate and the management of our resources. The main thrust of our problem is more economic than tribal.

**ISM:** What is your view on the Federal character. Some people argue that it arrogates supremacy to some sections of the country and that when the national cake is being shared they appropriate larger chunks to themselves, leaving the crumbs to other parts of the country?

**ADEBAYO:** There is a very serious issue here which everyone is very conscious of. It's not as simple as it has been presented. Because once analysis has been presented in greater details, you find that all the assumptions made are false. I insist that the management of our resources has been the problem. It's not the nationality that was important but the lack of even handedness.

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# Cynics abound in Nigeria

Ebenzer Babatope



# W

hen Ghana's highlife Musical sensation E.T. MENSAH and his TEMPOS band struck the tune- "Freedom, freedom, Nigeria for all Nigerians, freedom for ever" to herald the Independence of Nigeria, it was a deserving tribute to our nationalist fathers Herbert Macaulay, Ernest Ikoli, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Ahmadu Bello and Tafawa Balewa who fought all the way to give Nigeria a place among the free nations of the world. That Nigerian leaders sank all differences to push away British Colonial administration is to me the greatest achievement of Nigerians this century. Despite the cultural tribal and religious differences that exist in our federation, Nigerian leaders were still able to battle through the various LANCASTER HOUSE conferences with the British government to give Nigerians the freedom to plan and direct their own destiny their own way.

That our people in Nigeria have succeeded in maintaining their sanity since independence and have been able to continue to live together in the midst of constant poverty of ideas that they have been encountering in the governance of their beloved country is equally a positive achievement worth recording for posterity.

There are many things that we have done wrong however since our independence. Nigeria has since 1960 been a country of

Cynics where no one believes in anything said by government any more. We have been governed since independence by many regimes that have proclaimed messianic roles when they appear on the socio-political scene but have ended up as painted sepulchres and tragedies.

We have never had set national objectives. We have never properly defined our priorities. We have always sacrificed qualitative leadership for mediocrity. The result has been a constant decimation of the innocent in our national life. The senseless civil war we fought between 1966 and 1970 is a clear example of this. We ended the civil war in 1970 and like the French Bourbons refused to learn anything from the mistakes that had necessitated the carnage. We have recorded eight successful and abortive coup d'etat since our independence in 1960. Twenty of Nigeria's thirty years of independence have been spent under various military regimes and yet we profess to be lovers of democracy and democratic governance. Military rule is an abnormality.

The abnormality of our socio-political existence has led to two republics collapsing like a pack of cards since 1960 and with the third one being prepared to take oil in 1992 already sentenced to death.

On top of our failures has been the inability

of Nigerians to embrace the principle that anyone could rule or aspire to the leadership of Nigeria such a person has come from. A feudal cabal has continued to believe since independence that Nigeria must continue to remain an extension of their private family compounds.

The problems and wrongs mentioned above are all created by the unimaginative elite of our society that has remained too parochial to be objective and too self-centred to make positive impact on the lives of their fellow countrymen and women who long for sincere and patriotic leadership.

Nigeria is however a country destined to succeed in the end. For as long as the Heracleitean theory of society ever being in permanent state of conflict has been found to be empirically correct, the future for Nigeria is definitely bright.

There is need for us to cement justice in our national life. There is also the need for us to ensure that Nigeria remains a united democratic federalism that will completely deaden and expunge unnecessary fratricidal struggles, ethnic chauvinistic interests, religious bigotry and economic oppression in our national life.



# Kidnapping is all we have

## Beko Ransome-Kuti

Human rights activist  
ex-Scribe, Nigerian Medical Association



I was born in 1940 during the 2nd World War when Hitler was proclaiming the inferiority of certain

members of the human family. These were the peoples of the world who were not pure white. To Hitler and his cohorts, the highest human beings must be blondes with blue eyes but since Hitler himself was neither blonde nor had blue eyes, the people being referred to essentially were those who were of pure European descent — the so-called Aryans.

From this definition, it was obvious the blacks were supposed to be the lowest scum of humanity since they were the farthest from this definition. Unfortunately for the Jews, they were very serious and successful citizens of various European states. They controlled or had a great proportion of the capital of most of the advanced European countries. That was why they were the first to be put down for extermination and the outcome of the war became a lucky escape for us.

In an effort to rally the rest of the world, including the non-Aryans and their resources, the Allies 'advertised' the equality of everyone. This was how it came to pass that after the war and the formation of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A(III) of December 10, 1948. The opening paragraph in the preamble reads thus.

"Whereas the recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world...."

This became a handy tool for colonised peoples all over the world, after the war, to start asking for independence and to claim equality after the victory of the Allies who controlled vast empires.

It was under these circumstances that I grew up. My parents happened to be part of the few well-educated Nigerians of the time. They had had the opportunity to travel abroad and had seen how the ordinary citizens of these colonial countries assumed their rights as a matter of course. They were also able to assert these rights when they were abroad but reverted to slave-status when they returned to their own country. This was one of the irritants that fuelled the zeal of those who fought for our independence.

We and others who attended their schools were therefore brought up under certain non-negotiable assumptions: the strong belief that you are not inferior (or superior) to anyone else and that a good person is never afraid while fighting or asserting his rights and that you can also only get ahead by hard work in any endeavour you undertake.

As I passed through Primary and Secondary School in the late forties up to the mid-fifties, there was no doubt that the country was 'orderly' and people were not grumbling as much. But as independence approached and became almost inevitable, there arose a debate amongst Nigerians on whether we were ready for independence. That debate was not too long ago re-echoed by former Governor Mbakwe on whether we should not call the British back to rule us.

It arose as a result of undesirable developments as power was being gradually transferred to our people. Corruption, tribalism and many of the ills that are now rampant started to rear their ugly heads. Previously, any senior civil servant could be transferred to any part of Nigeria and he will enjoy the same facilities and hospitality as his peers — including the whites.

Our colonial masters stuck firmly to the rule of law and the regulations subsisting at the time. In areas where they attempted to discriminate, the slightest protest made them revert.

But what do we have now:

We are now more oppressed than when the British were here. We now have Decrees which allow a fellow Nigerian to detain you indefi-

nately without trial. We have individuals kidnapped in broad daylight and in our 30 years of Independence we have had governments for over 20 years, composed of "fellow Nigerians" who initially came "to save us" and later transformed themselves into our ruthless masters. They strutted with pride that they can destroy the property and future of over 300,000 people just like that!

Many Nigerians are banned from participating in the politics of their country; manifestoes are being written and approved for us and all we do is sit down and grumble.

Corruption has escalated from the days when the late Chief K. O. Mbadiwe was admonished in the Federal House of Representatives for leasing his property to a government agency for £5,000 while a Minister to where we are told in last week's *African Concord* that the Minister of Defence, Maj. General Sani Abacha, is building a house worth N200m; not to talk of the many Governors exposed for gross corrupt practices which Vice-Admiral Aikhomu, the Chief of General Staff, as he then was, terms mere "misappropriation"; where our new civilian Vice-President was accused of detaining a man who claimed he gave him \$500,000.

Where do we go from here?

In my heart of hearts, I know that Nigerians are very much aware that there are many things very wrong in this our dear country. I am also aware that we all subscribe to some ideals.

I believe most Nigerians would love the country to be one indivisible nation where we all can live in any part of the country without any discrimination on the grounds of ethnic, geographical or state origins or gender or religion or political beliefs.

Those who cause the problems are those who proclaim these ideals but bend them out of recognition to suit the purposes of themselves and immediate relatives and friends.

We must utilise all available force where these things can be discussed openly and those guilty are called to order. We should be able to point out to them that they are the ones who are causing hunger and chaos and give them a chance to tell us, if they dare, that people should suffer so much in their own country.

With the greatest respect, I believe that we can all still take part in the general discussion of our destiny as a nation within the ambit of our various professional or social groupings.

It is hard work but not as hard as so many think. As a matter of fact, the more the people who agree or are committed to be involved the easier and more effective it becomes. I can also tell you that it is not as dangerous as many seem to think. It is a great irony that to call people to order in one's country can even be considered dangerous!

Dr. Udo Udo-Ako  
Applied Resources

Consortium Limited, Lagos

# Much remains to be done

**T**n Nigeria, self criticism is a national past-time. Even though thirty years in the life of a nation is a very short time, an individual at 30 is not too young even to lead a nation. However, a realistic assessment of Nigeria's performance in 30 years of nationhood should be research-based rather than observational.

On achievement of political independence one of the immediate tasks of a nation is the adjustment of inherited institutions to meet the needs and aspirations of the citizens. Nigeria in the past 30 years, has made deliberate efforts to adjust some inherited system to meet the aspirations of the Nigerian people in all spheres of national life and has not done badly on this score.

In the past 30 years, the major objectives of Government seemed to have been the following:

- (I) achievement and maintenance of national unity and cohesion;
- (II) acceleration of national development to achieve self-reliance and permanent improvement in the standard of living of the people.
- (III) preparing Nigeria for entry into the scientific and technological age
- (IV) playing increasingly leading roles in world affairs.

The performance of Nigeria in her thirty years of nationhood can conveniently be assessed on the basis of these major objectives.

The first adjustment to be made was in the perceived role and responsibility of Government. Government was no longer only involved with the maintenance of law and order but to play an active catalyst role in the development process.

The country was committed to controlling the commanding height of the economy. In order to give effect to this change in philosophy, Nigeria invested heavily, over the years, in all types of economic activities.

We have made considerable effort to achieve national unity and cohesion. What is involved here is multidimensional and complex. Progress made in other spheres, or lack of it has a bearing on our national unity and cohesion. There is no doubt that a lot of sacrifice and investment have been made in the pursuit of national unity. Nigerians had, unfortunately, to fight a civil war to keep the country one.

Much has been achieved in the economic sphere. The Nigerian economy has expanded since independence to an enviable level of dynamism. The large population, coupled with the entrepreneurship of the people has created a large market for goods and services. A combination of public policies has provided environment for establishing of industries through both

Government and individual initiatives

We have not done badly in our aspiration to play a significant role in World Affairs. Since



Independence, Nigeria has pursued a dynamic, foreign policy with Africa as the cornerstone. We have played a very significant role in the struggle for the freedom of the black race. We have made sacrifices in providing material and diplomatic support to Liberation struggles in Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Liberia and to Africans in Diaspora

## Negative Performance

The giant strides enumerated above have their limitations. Being human undertaking the developments in the past thirty years could not be perfect. There are areas we have not achieved what we are capable of.

For instance, much is yet to be done in the pursuit of national unity and cohesion. Events in the political sphere have not shown that Nigerians have internalised the lessons of the civil war. It is hoped that the new political culture will usher in such unity and cohesion.

The level of religious intolerance in Nigeria is worse than at independence thirty years ago. Though all religions of the world teach tolerance, there seems to be a heightened religious fanaticism and intolerance capable of impeding national unity and cohesion.

At thirty Nigeria has not been able to infuse discipline in the society. Discipline has manifested itself in every aspect of our national life and has remained a national malaise that has defied solution.

Because Nigerians are impatient, well articulated policies and programmes are not given enough time to materialise and take roots before being changed or cancelled. The country has wasted a lot of resources because of lack of continuity.

The expansion in the education system has been haphazard and not well planned and coordinated. This has brought about the large population of unemployed products of the educational system at all levels.

# We're still heading for a bloody revolution

**Adeayo Lambo [Professor]  
(ex Deputy Director General,  
World Health Organisation)**

**W**ell, I will say that before Independence during the colonial era, my feeling was that although Nigeria was ruled in indirect administration, we had a great peace. Things were not too bad from the point of view of the economy. We had the essential infrastructure say health, agriculture, etc. Education was very good. We had ex-patriate teachers, local teachers and they were all very committed. There was a great deal of religious activity. The Judiciary was highly honoured. All the professions. Medicine was the same. They were of great importance in our society. On the whole, I will say Nigerians enjoyed a great deal of what I will call basic needs and infrastructure for development of the future during the colonial era.

The post colonial era brought about a devastating blow to this society because of politics, because of selfishness of individuals. It brought about a great deal of unhealthy competition. It brought about a great deal of hatred.

The leaders failed us. They became egotistical, selfish, behaved with no politics. They behaved as if they had no really good background. Not all of them but many of them especially the ministers. Then, unfortunately we had the first coup. I was the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan at that time. For the first time in my life, I wouldn't say I wept but I was close to it. I knew very well through history, ancient and contemporary, I knew very well from my knowledge of Latin America that once you start having a coup there will be no end to it. And that you will go on all your life destabilising yourself. Everyone would think he could do better than others and that was what has happened all along.

This country has not known peace for such a period that will give it opportunity to develop. This country has not been able to have a good leader that will be able to look at Nigeria and say this is my country, not just my state, not my village, not where I come from. I don't feel I am an Egba from Abeokuta, I couldn't care less about that. I have always considered myself, and I will al-



ways do so, that first and foremost, I am a Nigerian. And secondly, I am a citizen of the world. I will do anything possible, to help any part of Nigeria, because I feel the country belongs to me and I belong to the country. I owe the country a lot and I am sure, quite a number of my colleagues must have felt the same. But we were let down. Why did we fail? It is not because the institutions or models were bad. We failed because we never had anybody of great statesmanship to lead this country. There has always been the rivalry either between the south and the north, between the west and the east, or between tribes. We have never been able to get over those fundamental issues which have divided us. We have never been able to make the best out of our activities. I don't know really what we have done right that will merit being mentioned. That one will say has had impact on the society. The teachers were not paid, schools collapsed, institutions collapsed. When the last coup took place, Gen. Abacha whom I respect a lot, whom I thought would do a lot, as a young man, to rescue this country from the abyss of collapse, as the man who announced the coup, mentioned that they did this because all the institutions had collapsed, especially the health and he mentioned specifically that even in hospitals there were no drugs. Now, those conditions are worse. You can't get drugs anywhere. And many other things which he mentioned that they were going to put right are 10 times worse. And of course, things are there today. Poverty has completely dominated this country. A country which has tremendous resources, oil

has destroyed that inspiration in every Nigerian to work hard for himself, for ourselves and for this country. And in addition to that, the institution of family has disintegrated. New things have come into this country like lack of social justice etc. As everybody has said, I have been in international organisations since 1957 attending meetings in Geneva, New York. I have held many important positions, I have seen my colleagues all over the world, I have spoken to them and the question asked is that your [my] country had every opportunity to give Africa the lead. But I don't think we have given Africa that lead.

Since, as I said, if you take for example religion, I used to be very proud of the country that there was a high degree of religious tolerance. I have always respected my colleagues who belong to other religions and they have always respected me. Now, it has become a major issue.

## What do we worship?

Not God or Allah but money. Many people live in abject poverty. More than 80 per cent of the people in this country are in a devastating situation of not being able to afford one good meal a day. Crime has become almost ten fold even with the police.

But, you could say that we have done better than most African countries in giving our women a respectable position in our society. But this is almost universal. Agriculture in the country, is not producing enough. And today as I see it, and as many people see it, leadership is about the greatest problem. What happened on April 22, this year, I pray should not happen again. It shocked me and it shocked a lot of people, but we must learn a lot of lessons from it. That if we go on as we are, we are all in a great mortal danger. There will be a blood bath. That was what I learnt from it. It shocked me, I hope it will never come to this country. But if we go on as we are going and we are depriving people of their fundamental human rights. And we are also glaringly in the presence of the oppressed, the depressed, showing our wealth, wealth which is owned by .00001 per cent of our society. Then, I see no end to it except a bloody revolution. I pray it will never come to this country. I love it too much for us to end like this.

So, those who have learnt a lesson from what happened in April, should have a second thought. Before that, our head of state and president assured us, when some officers were retired, that there is still solidarity and there was no crack in the wall. But after that April incident, I saw a big hole. I think all of us must try as much as possible not to outsmart ourselves because there is a lot to be gained by being just one country. There is a lot to be gained by not playing tricks thinking other people

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don't think. We must have well-defined objectives to ensure and guarantee good life, quality of life for the majority of our people in this country. Ability to walk in the streets without being molested. Equitable distribution of wealth. Guarantee of good education, not education which is diluted and being changed day after day. Allocation of resources should be fair. We are one, we should remain one. And those who want to divide us, history in this country will record them as villains. And according to history, according to my international organisations' experience, all those who have tried it in history, in contemporary life, have never succeeded. And you can count several of them. They were absolutely powerful, omnipotent. They thought nothing could touch them. They trained their own private army. They were supported by big powers and yet, when the almighty God and Allah said there should be a change, there was a change.

### Prescription for the future

That ideally, we should plan for our development for the entire Nigeria without any bias, without any camouflage or sign of oppression, of discrimination or domination. We do not know what may come, but we can plan in such a way that we can all share the benefits, the opportunities. The rights of man and woman, the right of a child should not be stepped upon.

In the years that I have been out of this country, I have met people with dedication and respect for their country and fellow country men. I have met people I will love to live the rest of my

life with. Honest, firm, conscientious to their country and fellows, in all fields of endeavour. These have been a great lesson. That is why I have come back home with renewed vigour to serve this country more than ever before and love my fellow country men wherever they live. I may fail but I have my conscience that I have tried. I had alternatives, I had a choice to stay behind to stay back and enjoy the toil and fruits of my labour, to sit down in my house in Geneva, to do consultancy services, to travel occasionally. But, no, I have come and in fact, I have come to suffer. But I hope during that suffering I hope to do something that will be beneficial, helpful and contribute immensely to the lives of the young people in the country.

Absolutely, it overwhelms me to see young people being frustrated, taking drugs, getting mental illness. And those who have remained very normal, disciplined, and have studied very well, you can see them carrying their certificates round the country looking for jobs. Unemployment has gone beyond control. Poverty has been recognised by the entire world including the World Bank. To retrieve ourselves from where we are today, will take us probably another 50 years.

Economically, this country is very lucky indeed. Having been in Geneva, I have seen that we in Nigeria have always had a big edge over most African

countries. But we have no conscience at all, and with no sense of management. Economically, we are not too bad off. The economy would be restructured. It should be allowed to be totally controlled by Nigerians. And everybody should be given every opportunity to participate in the economic affairs of this nation. Not to be just in the hands of a few. And we should also make allocation to other sectors of the economy like agriculture and also train people to be able to set up cottage economy, cottage industry and also bring about some innovation from other countries. Take for example, a professor in India whatever he wears, is made in India. So, what have we been doing? There is a lot of room for rethinking, for restructuring our economy on the basis of what has gone wrong in the past. The economy today, I think the large part of it has been in the hands of expatriates. We are mortgaging ourselves day in day out. I think this may well be a destructive force.

Politically, we need a very strong leader. Whether the president, who I know means well in many ways, will be able to control the country which is so undisciplined, to become infamous, to be tough even with friends, is another question. I am sure he can do it, he may need the support of all of us. But it won't be easy because there are many forces in this country. That is all I know. If we are not careful, the great lesson which I learnt from that brutal, horrible moment in our history in April this year is a great symptom of what is to come, if certain things happen.

**TSM:** This year Nigeria turns 30, how does it make you feel?

**OGBEH:** We are 30. We are growing, we are reaching middle age as a nation. We can easily say we have experienced tantrums of youth, more than our fair share perhaps. Civil war, instability in government, economic crisis. One expects that each will have beneficial effect of giving us a very solid middle to adult age. On the other hand, 30 years is still young. In 30 years we have achieved quite a lot even though cynicism and nihilism seem to be the hallmark of our critical opinion today. Nobody should carry on like we have achieved nothing, that will be absolutely wrong. The critical issue is we don't tend to want to compare ourselves with any other African country. We tend to reach out to the industrialized nations of the world as our yardstick for measurement. That itself is a good ideal but not realistic. This is because they have taken much longer to get to our age of today. At 30 we can count on a number of things and say we have done well in those sectors. I have always said that on the average, we've done alright in some sectors. For instance 54% of Africa's universities are here in Nigeria, well over 48% of primary school enrolment of Africa is in Nigeria alone, 40% of Africa's tamed roads are here. Yet, Nigeria is really not the richest African nation. In terms of social development, very few places

# Call the British back? Ridiculous!

— Rudu Ogbeh  
ex-Minister, farmer)

in the world can the media exercise the freedom it does here. It may not appear as such a great achievement but it is. Today, Nigeria virtually provides, for North, Central and West Africa, most of its plastic and detergents and vehicle spares. Yes, there are many areas we've done reasonably well. That is not to say we could not have done better still. I guess at 30 we have achieved certain things and if politically we are still trying to find our feet, a fact of life. Many countries have gone through political highway.

**TSM:** You were Communications Minister under Shagari. Some Nigerians believe the 2nd republic is most responsible for our economic problems today.

**OGBEH:** I have always made it quite clear that the 2nd republic had its share of the problem.

Part of its own problems then was the venom of the opposition. The 2nd republic came in on

1st October 1979 and the opposition charged at it from that day. I think it was a little overwhelming, government did not seem prepared at all. Those who are shouting themselves hoarse might as well insinuate that the economic problems of the 3rd world and the East of Europe was caused by the 2nd republic. We are talking of Africa's debt problem, same with Nigeria, Russia, Latin America. Unwary critics swallow the leading of the 2nd republic. It is obvious that there is a general pattern. It is also forgotten that by the time we came, the foreign loan pattern was already there. Jumbo loans and commitment to heavy industries like the steel matter for example. The contracts were already signed before we arrived. Besides, how many of our governments have been probed since history. There was a minor probe for Gowon's regime and at that time only two people came out clean and then the 2nd republic. May be history will reveal that there are greater circumstances in the economic morals of Nigeria than meets the eye.

**TSM:** Our economy is one of belt tightening measures these days, SAP and all that. Nobody needs to tell us that we have an economic problem. What could we have done in the past which could

Continued from Page 31

have seen us through this decade of economic gloom?

**OGBEH:** In 1983 I expressed the views that I cannot see how government as constituted by politicians can successfully run day to day machinery of the economy. The cumulative problem from the colonial time to the very recent past is the false belief that government can run successfully every facet of national life. From Dry Cleaning Services to Steel Mills. The consequences are that efficiency is no longer called into question nor is prudent management. The treasury is always there to supplement. Competence of the managerial class is no longer a central issue. Patronages are used to appoint people to posts. The result is that we have simply subsidized everything only to discover that money was no longer there to support it. In realisation of this, the privatisation exercise is on. It is, to my mind, the best thing to happen to this country. I believe that the consequences even for politics are yet to be realized but they shall be immense. Appointments to boards, big contracts, and ways of making money will no longer be there. After all, each time we need

loan, we borrow from the Europeans, yet they manage their economy by privatization. Government can do it all. Politicians are not trained to manage economies, they manage sentiments.

**TSM:** What is your impression on our third try at democracy?

**OGBEH:** There is an overall good expectation. With the newbreed our problems of the past hopefully should no longer be with us once they take over in 1992. We look forward to greater times, we hope the old diseases would have been cured for good.

So the only language that all Nigerians will like to speak fluently in the 3rd republic and beyond is a sound economy. The biggest threat to the future, the way I see it as we approach tomorrow is the question of unemployment and discontentment of the youth, that is the most frightening phenomenon and that has to be looked into quickly.

**TSM:** Over the years people have analysed the Nigerian problem. A lot of solutions have been postulated, one in-

teresting one is the suggestion that we should call in the British to take over national administration. What are your comments?

**OGBEH:** I think that suggestion is preposterous, simply ridiculous. The British taught us and we got into the mess we are in today. Britain does not have a sound economy. Those making such a suggestion are a disgrace to the African race. They can go back to the United States as slaves.

I think the SAP philosophy was put in place to teach us all that there is no more free lunch anywhere in the world. Everyone has to work to survive. Those who cannot work will simply perish. St. Paul said in the Bible that if you can't work, you shouldn't eat. The tragedy is SAP though it its implementation. Government has either knowingly or unknowingly put up the most important road block on the highway to growth. As it is now, nobody other than a trader can go to a bank, borrow money and expect to make profit in any sector. The economy has been handed back to traders which is Nigeria's greatest disease. The present interest rate is a disincentive to investment that this country has ever seen. The agricultural loan in India attracts 3½% interest rate. In Nigeria it is 30%.

## How we write the coup-makers' speech

Ojo Maduekwe

— Lawyer and  
newbreed politician

The mere fact that Nigeria is still one country today is a big achievement. There is one thing Nigerians are quite certain about. And that is that they don't want to divide this country. They want to stay together and sort out their problems. I think that is naturally the most important achievement we have had in terms of leadership.

We have missed a lot of opportunities. We have missed the opportunities that arose from making this country, particularly after the civil war, a very self-reliant economy. We had the oil boom years which with new and more imaginative leadership, those resources could have been used to make Nigeria a very successful industrialised country. Those opportunities were missed because of leadership myopia. Because we couldn't plan ahead. Because our vision of Nigeria was very limited. We did not really have big dreams about this country. We just took things for granted so we drifted from one indecision to another. There was no master plan for what Nigeria should be in five or 10 years. So those

golden years between 1972 and 1977 were missed.

We also missed a wonderful opportunity during the civilian administration 1979-1983 to make a mark in civilian legitimacy in governance. I would have liked to see the civilian government of the time to have been very conscious of military pretension towards governance. And approach that problem from two angles. One that is to provide a government that could have been incomparably superior to any government the military could have never offered. A government that was definitely responsive to the yearnings of Nigerians. A government that could harness all the many skills that are naturally available to a civilian government. Because whatever anybody may say about a military government in terms of its positive aspects, a military government is basically in a position of an occupational segment to the administration of our country. So, the amount of skills that are available to them are limited.

And one would have liked to see a president in 1979 say hey, wait a minute, as the civilians and not the soldiers. There wasn't that concern, that excitement that goal, that push, it wasn't there. So, we had a military intervention. I have been consistent in my view that military intervention in Nigeria politics will never produce quality civilian politicians, it will always result in evolving politicians who are worse than the past ones. Who have acquired new skills of election rigging, new kinds of corruptive ten-

dencies and new forms of polarisations. The only hope for the military not coming back is for the civilians to help themselves. I am quite convinced that no matter the success of the transition programme which I am very part of, many of the things that were wrong with the second republic are going to re-occur in one form or the other.

## Prescription for the future

First and foremost, civilian politicians must be given a chance. They should be given the chance to get their act together, take-off and succeed. By running down a civilian government you are writing the speech for a coup-maker. We should through the political system mobilise the energies of millions of Nigerians, raise their consciousness, give them a dynamic vision about this country, and by so doing use their many skills to build a great country. I want to see the country in which we shall not be afraid of each other.

I also want to see a country that is becoming more aware of her international responsibility. One out of every four Africans is a Nigerian, so we have a responsibility to prove that the black man can organise himself to create a modern state, successful technological feats and generally provide leadership for West Africa.

## Oh yes, we've done quite well

One of the things which I think we have done right as a nation is the policy that has enabled the economic sector to grow in leaps and bounds, to the extent that in my experience around Africa, and other parts of the West African coast, there is no country in Africa, with the exception of Egypt, which has a private sector as developed as our own. When I say private sector, I mean the indigenous private sector.

There has also been an entrepreneurial skill which you cannot decree in favour of or against. It is difficult to kill enterprise. When I think of what is happening in Eastern Europe, I think the kind of entrepreneurship and private sector participation that we have in Nigeria, the people in Eastern Europe will love to have it. We will not say we are the most efficient private sector in the world but at least we have a mixed economy. And the people in Eastern Europe who have just been emancipated from communism must still wish the kind of private sector participation and market-led economy that we already have.

I think there are many other things we have done right but that is the most important. We have invested in university education. We have about 32 universities, universities of science and technology, agriculture and normal universities. We have had basic primary, secondary and tertiary education fully developed. We even had free educa-



tion. We invested a lot in good roads. And we have also invested wisely in the petrochemical industry, being our mainstay. We have done very well in removing some marketing boards because they constituted a nuisance to our export drive. So the farmer who produces cash crops can now benefit fully from his sweat.

Another thing we have done right is the emancipation of the banking sector whereby Nigerians all by themselves or in conjunction with foreigners in some cases, have started banking enterprises. That is one of the greatest things that I believe this regime has actually achieved. I mean we have over hundred banks and we are about to have more and I see nothing wrong in that. Because I do not subscribe to the notion that they should curtail the number of banks. That smells monopoly. It smells of anti-marketing philosophy. And is anti-capitalistic. All right in USA and other developed coun-

tries, you have banks which capitalise on mere two main doors. And it is contradictory to complain of too many banks. We have specialised banks in those countries like manufacturing bank, chemical bank etc.

Another thing we have done right is that we now allow banks to invest in the private sector. One of the good things of the last 50 years is the Japanese, German miracles. In the developed economies, many multi and transnational companies like Mitsubishi own banks. Therefore, before a business like that can collapse, the banks we really round to save it. Hopefully, with this new permission given to banks to invest in private industries, our banks will go that way.

All revolutions have started with the middle class. The future depends on the newborn. If the newborn are like the old breed I mean the politicians of the first and second republics, then we may have a disaster on our hands. But if on the other hand, they have learnt from past, and they are truly newborn with new ideas, new responsibilities to their community, improving the lot of the masses, the masses who are more than the elites, all will be well.

I think a future should be a democratic one. We should try as much as possible to restrict the army to the barracks. We can do that by having a good government. We must have accountability by all those going into politics. We should develop a national political culture where if a man is found wanting, he should resign rather than wait to be disgraced.

The right example should come from the top. Our leaders must provide purposeful example for followers to emulate.

*Job they come to, when they commence to divide the spoils of a successful coup. It is also because their training does not admit of criticisms, no matter how well-intentioned. The mentality "obey before complaint" but this often leads to grievous harm coming to the "obeyer" ever before he has time to complain. These are part of the main reasons why it is extremely dangerous to have the military in political rulership. Generally speaking, the military are not sensitive enough as a collective to dabble in the art and science of political leadership.*

*None-the-less, the military in Nigeria have recorded some pluses. Starting with the six months of Ironsi, the military successfully checked rebellion and mutiny arising from the events of January 15, 1966 thereby ensuring the continued existence of the Nigerian Nation in one piece. They went further and by promulgating the unification Decree no 24 of May 1966, in which Nigeria was*

## Nigeria, a toddler at 30

Osita Okeke (Chief)  
ex-Commissioner

*It's start from the positive side of the balance sheet. I know, as a matter of keen observation, that the current administration while it welcomes criticism of the objective kind, cannot stand it if nothing is said of their considered achievements. So I shall oblige, if for nothing else, at least to get*

*functionaries of this administration read through this.*

*I agree entirely with Chinnua Achebe along with Wole Soyinka that the trouble with Nigeria lies in its leadership. This apportionment should make the military think. Their thinking should lead them to make whatever effort is possible to see that the present one is the last full scale military intervention this nation witnesses. To be sure, civilian rulers have often provided the excuse for military intervention through overweening greed, nepotism and bribery. But that is not to say a corrective regime should go on for ever. Six months is enough for it to clear the mess, and install another civilian administration.*

*I spoke earlier about the need to message the ego of military administrations generally, by giving them some credit. Having presided over much of Nigeria's independent existence.*

*Military governance is an aberration. It is, principally because the military, by their training, are ill-suited for*

# There's no hope... and there will be no revolution

— Abubakar Alimi  
ex-Governor of Kano State

**V**ery little. I think we have done right. Very little because basically what has been happening in the last 30 years is an act of trial and error. We were colonised by the British and in 1960 when we attained our political independence we should have charted a completely new course for the nation, instead we spent a lot of time trying to ape the British. We simply stepped in to their shoes and became black colonialists in our own country. We stayed in the GRAs like the white people, we retained the same privileges like the white people and I took us a very long time. Our leadership saw Nigerians as some strangers who must be ruled in a strange kind of way, there was no actual involvement of the people and frankly speaking the leadership was not concerned so much about the welfare of the people, rather it was concerned about its own welfare and that was why politics was fierce because the fight was for self not for people, not for the nation. And of course when the military came in 1966 one thought that they came in to change the status quo for the better but as it has now become history they ended having a civil war which lasted for 30 months leading to the death of hundreds of thousands of Nigerians, destruction of property and lives. After that there was the rehabilitation and re-construction, re-integration. We moved on as if we never had stability in the country since the first coup and in these 30 years although one can say that social and economic progress has been made compared to what the situation was in the country 30 years ago but you see things could have been better than they are, whatever we have achieved we would have achieved more if we had handled situations properly and patriotically. One can only hope that the mistakes of the past would be used as a lesson for the future.

It is very difficult to point out a particular thing that we did right because if you take it on the political point what have we done right? Very little. I think the only thing that has been done right is the creation of states. The creation of states has reduced a lot of tension, also the creation of local governments, it has accommodated people, it has provided opportunities for employment, it has provided avenues for people who are politically ambitious to be accommodated at the local government and at the state level unlike what the situation was when we had

four regions. So to that extent one could say that something positive has been done. I think in this respect the credit must go to the military because there was this demand for the creation of states from the time of the colonial rulers to the period of independence and the Nigerian civilian leadership wouldn't allow the creation of more states despite the clear need for doing so. Gowon must be praised for having the courage to create states in Nigeria and I am sure history will commend him well. Further creation of states by Murtala and Babangida will also allay a lot of tears of people who feel they are being dominated by one section or the other. That apart honestly speaking it is very difficult to say what has been done right.

The greatest mistake we made was to maintain a colonialy oriented economic policy in an independent Nigeria and that sadly couldn't have succeeded because the British who came to rule us against our will, were here not for our own good or for our own benefit but for their own good and their



own benefit.

If you are talking about the leadership in the second republic that is October 79 to December 83 I think we made our own mistakes which was only natural. But you see, whatever mistakes were made were mistakes in the process of development, and mistakes will always be made, but if mistakes are made, and they are realised and they are corrected, that is okay. What has been our basic problem is that the military in Nigeria does not allow civilians to make mistakes and correct them. Well the military themselves can make mistakes and stay long enough to correct their mistakes but

the civilians once they make mistakes the military will not allow them to correct the mistakes.

Members of the Armed Forces have become wealthy from doing nothing other than staging coups and controlling government and because of that you cannot expect the their colleagues in the barracks will not come back to taste power again, and because the new leadership is inexperienced it is bound to make mistakes, and those type of blunders and mistakes are the excuse the military boys in the barracks are waiting for. If the banned leaders were to lead the nation into the third republic those type of mistakes wouldn't happen because they've been long in the game, because they've made the mistakes, and realised the mistakes.

Yet, the country is doomed only to the extent of having problems until it gets the right leadership to that extent, yes it is doomed. But there is real hope only in the sense that whatever happens there will always be some Nigerians who are patriotic even if they are not in a position to express that patriotism.

I don't think the prospects for a revolution in Nigeria are very good. I don't think so because generally speaking Nigerians are cowards and generally speaking Nigerians don't want to suffer now and enjoy later and because of this Nigerians wouldn't go in for a revolution. A lot of things have happened in this country which would have caused revolutions but Nigerians didn't go on the streets.

## Continued from Page 33

*broken down to 3 Groups of provinces. The foregoing notwithstanding, we still have problems.*

*We still have improper siting of projects, arising from considerations other than those of economic advantage like some refineries in this country with the resultant unnecessary expenditure in piping etc. we still have the mindless and thick headed drilling for oil in clearly unsuited areas.*

*Gen. Babangida has shown the courage only a military regime can display. In most of his important decisions. He has not minded the unpopularity inherent in such actions, which, if he were sponsored by a political party, would have cost him the next election! A fine tactician, he has often struck when the iron was hot.*

*Such essential, but unpopular actions like SAP, Population Census, the trimming of a top-heavy military by the ruthless retirement of several Generals.*

*Nigeria, the adult toddler, has suffered from the affliction of inadequacy in its leadership over the last 30 years. Let us hope and pray that before Nigeria attains middle age, most of these nagging problems would have been solved. It is a prayer to which I invite everyone to say AMEN.*

Extracts from the new book:

"Publish and be damned". So the cliché says but not for me. I want to publish, be examined and vindicated, not damned. Do you remember a Nigerian called Dede Gwa? Since I started working on this book I have not stopped thinking of Dede and letter bombs. This book, my fourth, may well be my last. For the first time in my life, I am really scared of what will happen to me. I don't know who or why Dede was killed, but it is generally believed it was due to his pen. Truth is bitter and I write the truth. Will it make some people go for me like in Dede's case? If they do not use Dede's tactics, will they send hired assassins disguised as armed robbers to deal with me? Some of those who may not cherish the exposures and truths in this book are highly influential members of our Society in and out of Government. They may decide that I blow an unpublishable whistle and bring pressure to bear on the Government to arrest me on trumped up charges, set up a Kangaroo Tribunal, sentence me to death and stage a bar beach show with me as the sole actor. This may be openly frontal and brutal but why not? Influential forces in the world have been known to do worse things and get away with them. "Hang the bastard Nzeribe", I can hear them echo. Since I have no price, cannot be bought or intimidated, their solution may be the above. My fears notwithstanding, I will go ahead and write what ought to be written, say what needs to be said, whilst I pray that this regime, under the cloak of its Human Rights stance will not succumb to the machinations of evil men. They have tried politically to eliminate me. Will they try physically?"

"I have a President nicknamed MARADONA, who has done everything he said he would not do, and has not done everything he said he would do. My president says initially trying to be loved by all and to please all but ends up being doubted by all for being unpredictable and contradictory. Yet, I vote for him because

"... if I therefore publish in this book the full text of my letter to former President Shehu Shagari in 1983 giving details of the 16 billion dollars Nigerians have smuggled out of Nigeria into foreign banks. The list shows that most of the account operators are civil servants, military officers, Government functionaries of all cadres, retired and serving. How and where did they make the money?"

"... therefore, having exposed in detail the incontrovertible sordid behind the scenes operations of the NECAD and Transition to Civil Rule Tribunal, at least in my own case, I depose that both Professor Humphray Nwosu and (Rtd.) Justice Fred Anyagbum should resign since they must be men of honour, pride and conscience. If not, they should be sacked with spemmy forthwith, in order for the entire Transition Programme to command any cloak of respectability and acceptance locally and internationally. Otherwise, the entire exercise is open to questions."

"But what Dan Agbeles left unsaid, perhaps diplomatically so, is the historical fact that if Babangida had been executed each time he had taken part in either plotting or executing the illegal act of overthrowing a government, he would not have been around to be President. But even that is beside the point. The key issue is that here is a clear example of a man who acts in whichever way he does, only with his own personal security and preservation in office, as the foremost consideration in his mind. Yet, I vote for him."

Read Nzeribe's predictions for 1992

# NIGERIA

Seven years after Shehu Shagari

## WHO NEXT?



## WHAT NEXT?

... a little to the left, a little to the right.

CHIEF ARTHUR NZERIBE

## ANOTHER

# BLOCKBUSTER

Remember Chief Nzeribe's previous books:

**Nigeria: Another Hope Betrayed.** Published and printed in the UK in 1985. Over 100 000 hardback copies distributed. **Free** throughout Nigeria.

**Nigeria: The Turning Point.** Published and printed in the UK in 1986. Over 50 000 hardback copies distributed. **Free** in Nigeria.

**Nigeria: I Believe. A manifesto for the Third Republic.** Published and printed in the UK in 1988. Over 500 000 hardback copies distributed. **Free** throughout Nigeria. 20 000 copies were seized by the SSS.

This information demonstrates that the author does not write for monetary gain but because of his undivided patriotism and convictions. However, this fourth book on Nigerian public affairs by the author can be available only through private circulation.

If you wish to receive a copy send a stamped, self-addressed envelope, not less than 10" by 6", enclosing 100 Naira or £8 in postal or money order or bank draft/cheque made payable to the publishers.

Killimanjaro Publishing House Limited, PO Box 4034, Lagos, Nigeria or c/o, 2nd floor, 11 Bruton Street, London W1X 8BN, England.





PHOTOGRAPH BY

Diplomats, media executives, ex-governors and top government functionaries graced Jubril Aminu, Petroleum Minister's send-off cocktail party for El-Mihoub Mihoubi, Algeria's Ambassador. Wonder then why the Ambassador is saying good-bye to Jubril Aminu and Abubakar Rim?



Do you know that Igbofe Girls' High School is already ten years old? Old girls of the school had an anniversary bash last Saturday to mark the day. Here, Abiola Oginni, President of the Association, Joseph Arhavanan, Kayode Ladipo and others to cut the cake.



PLUS UTOMI EKEFI

Officials of Nigerian Association of Interior Decorators (NAID) surely have cause to smile. The association was officially launched and an exhibition is now on for discerning home lovers. Prince M. Latunji, NAID's President beams like a cat with cream as he watches Chief Abovade Cole cut the tape.



come to Nigeria. Leo Nwokoana, Chief Executive of Spary Products in Lagos seems to be saying to Robert who is on a business mission to the country.

**T**he wine-coloured Daewoo car made a quick swerve off the busy road and halted. And suddenly as if in a terrible haste, the young man alighted. He took a quick glance at his designer's wrist-watch partly decorated with diamond stones. And by the time anybody could blush at his ex-

# City of glitter and gloss

*Opebi road grabs the  
elitist garb from  
Ikoyi and Victoria  
Island in Lagos.*

**By Yusuph Olaniyonu**

pensive attire made of a 'pongolno' — skin shoes, a black linen trowser and the gray silk suit, he walked briskly away into an equally magnificent office complex tagged Olajuwon House.

The office complex partly made up of tinted glass stands in its majesty, commanding attention. It is the dream of many upwardly mobile, aggressive, business-minded Yuppy youths of today. Just as Opebi road, where that edifice cited has become the abode of ambitious young men and women.

You are welcome to Opebi road, an elitist suburb, about two kilometres away from the headquarters of the Lagos state government. Sitting pretty on the eastern part of Ikeja local government and occupying about half a kilometre stretch of land, Opebi road confers a superior status on its inhabitants. And no less a personality than the Daewoo car-owner can live there. This fact possibly agitated a newbreed politician who once boasted that "I am a comfortable man. Do you think it is a small thing to have an office on Opebi road?"

Expectedly, the street boasts of a rich collection of baby money-bags. They are rich, trendy and with a taste for classy goods and services. They are always ready to pay more for their conveniences. The shops are as glittering as they are exclusive. In fact, Opebi is a world of its own, capable of being a unique island. Exquisite dry cleaners, gift shops, professional offices, travelling agencies, airlines, computer shops, club houses, car dealer shops, furniture houses, name it, Opebi has got it! And in style too.

Computers and satellite dishes are ubiquitous in the offices and residential buildings. The people are as cagey as the electric fish. Just try to get them for a brief chat and you are rewarded with a contemptuous look. They are too busy to waste time on unrewarding business.

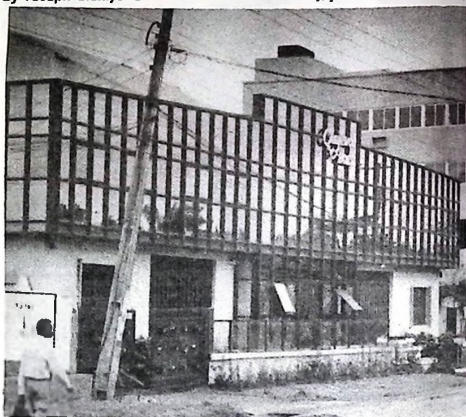
Like Samuel Adejoro, managing director of KTS construction company and the proprietor of Ogee fashion in the area, most of the residents be-

Those with bucks. It is for the affluent young men and women whose style and standard of living reflect a class. A penchant for the best and the most expensive.

TSM learnt that getting a job in this area is a difficult task. But the workers are well remunerated. Business is very competitive as several people offer the same services. But generally busi-

ness is very fair.

Perhaps this extravagant way of life makes some Lagosians to envy Opebi residents and dub them "cocaine pushers and dupes". But Onwuocha said "if you are a young man with a lot of money, you will want to live like



lieve it is "an excusable luxury talking to people who will not mind their own business".

But according to Moyo Awoyinka, general manager of Footwear Services Ltd, securing a house on Opebi is like gate-crashing into a pool of opulence. The smallest single shop is between N8,000 and N13,000 per annum. The minimum rent for a three bedroom flat is just about N2,000 higher than that.

A furniture maker who requested for anonymity said "Opebi is not a place for anybody to come for shopping. It is a place for the people on the go

and Opebi offers you the type of convenience other parts of Lagos cannot afford. So with such a lifestyle, people think you are either a cocaine pusher or a dupe, 'forward nine' guys".

Nightlife on Opebi road is something else. Akin to that of Madison square garden in New York or Trafalgar square in London. Nightbirds, posh cars take over the roads. A Volkswagen beetle stands out like a sore thumb. The night clubs and casinos can set people back as much as two thousand naira in a night. But who complains, money made in the day has to be spent in the night.

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ACK

# Mothers...



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