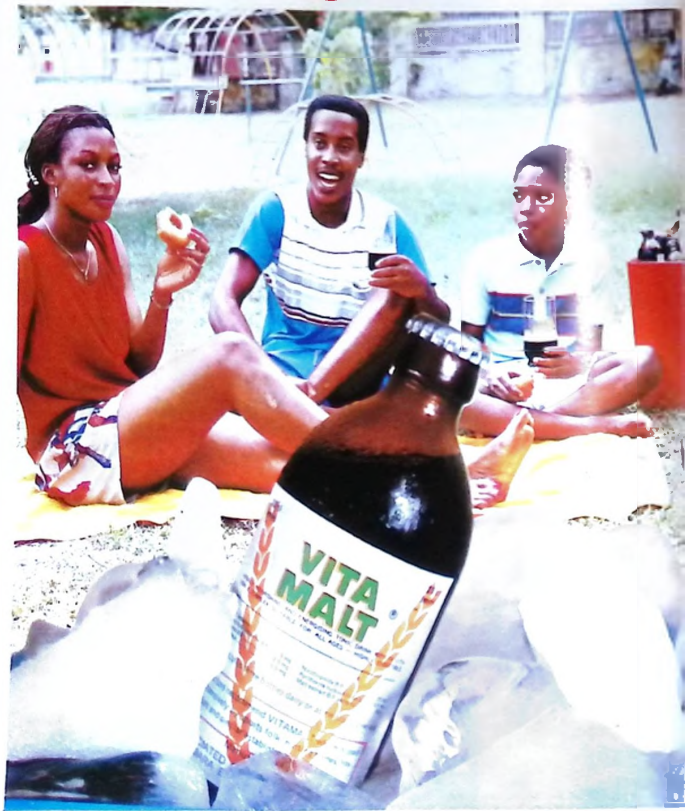


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THE Olympic Games come around every four years; as it is, every leap year — world celebration time, when humanity issues forth from various fortes round the globe in an especial liveliness.

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Yes, there is joy in participating but the more cherished thing is the glory of winning. By an interesting pattern, a correlation seems to invariably exist between economic and political clout of nations and their track records.

Available statistics indicate that the two super powers will also be super attractions for medals at Seoul. If it's just a coincidence, the fact must nevertheless inspire in poorer nations, a supreme urge to prove that the games are for equals.

This Cover Choice talks a great deal about what to expect.



But it is also a bird's eye view of the beautiful city of Seoul and a panoramic insight into Korean culture and politics.

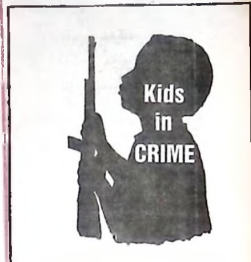
Everybody is going for gold but there cannot be enough of the precious metal to go round. Even so, here is a great dedication!

Andy Akporugo
Editor-In-Chief

Street kids

Is it abuse or parental neglect that drive them? Could it be the search for means of livelihood or the love of money that takes them out? They abandon the home for the streets. And from pilfering to big-time armed robbery, many Nigerian kids are getting into the vortex of crime.

Special Report Page 8



Economy

The First Bank, Nigeria Limited, has been wading through a pool of law suits over differentials in exchange rates for letters of credit. As it wins one it loses the other. But the fight is far from being over.

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Cover design: Yomi Muyemi Eshabata, Tony Okunri, Ole Shayan



International

The ongoing cease-fire in the Gulf provides Iraqis and Iranians an excellent opportunity to initiate the reconstruction of their war-devastated economies. But, instead, their immediate concern appears to be the prosecution of war against the Kurds and the Majahiden — the rebel groups in the two nations...

Page 22



Nigeria

Barely a few months old in office as the governor of Lagos State Colonel Raji Rasaki has already cut the image of a tough guy, owing to some radical measures he has taken so far. His commissioners seem to be following his foot steps. But the battle-line now seems drawn between the state NUT and one of the commissioners — an issue that may be a real test of the governments' labour crisis management.

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Sharks at war

There's more to your cover story, Yar'Adua Vs Abiola (August 22). Can these people please tell Nigerians whom they served in various capacities, how they came about these millions they are fighting about? For, I know that Tukur and Dokpesi were civil servants with the Nigeria Ports Authority before their three months stint in Gongola Government House in 1983, and Yar' Adua our former Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters during Obasanjo's regime.

Ibadan, Imo State
Ojo, Lagos

Just as we recognize the need to expose some inappropriate dealings among our society's top echelons, the inadequacy of pre-occupying our minds with a matter as little as (ordinary?) ramblings between two business magnates must equally be recognised. No matter what the condition now is, Abiola and Yar'Adua have been long time friends who share their thoughts, feelings and aspirations together. So whatever might be the source of their recent misunderstanding, we shall not give our time discussing it to the detriment of other pressing problems.

In these days of escalating cost of things, let's think of how to end SAP, stop graduate unemployment, restore the purchasing power of the naira and how to usher in a viable, stable third republic.

SEAJ Ewurua
Nauka, Anambra State

Perhaps you had nothing more serious for your cover, hence your going into private quarrels of business associates. The millionaires should be left alone to settle their million differences!

Thomas Ekeoying
Ogburn, Cross River State

The right to be told

I quite agree with Andy that every government, civilian or military, "owes certain irreducible responsibilities to the people". But unfortunately what we have known as "governments" in this country are usually a group of self-seeking opportunists who, once they acquire state power — by whatever means — automatically become "gods", all knowing and all powerful.

They become the repository of wisdom while the rest of us become dummies who they can kick around. Isn't it high time Nigerians called the bluff of

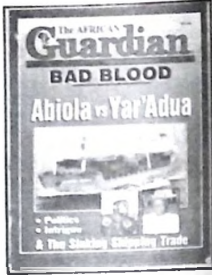
these self-confirmed messiahs?

Lilachoti Ovwurua
Jose, Nassau State

Squabbles in the cooler

Haba! Why should a mother disapprove her children? And of course, it is truly believed that women are our mothers, wives as well as sisters. But women have spent at least two weeks at Abuja without electing their president! Is this progressive or retrogressive? Nigeria's First Lady was quoted as saying "PEACE and UNITY" of this nation should rest in your hands.

Another quote says "what a man does, a woman does it better", but not



in Nigeria, because the women have disapproved it!
Mohammed Lawal, Damballa
Suina, Niger State

Bendel: Gods own state?

If for once the "quota theory" will be tested, the best of Nigeria will always be available to do what ever is required.

And believe me, 70 per cent of them shall turnout to be nonclitics. Good old Bendel, weep not from the injustice of quota, for if God wishes, we shall overcome!
Micoyan Iyehina Uwugira
Otin, Lagos

Your piece on Bendel was, to say the least, a fine touch of journalism. It was frank and crafty. I am least surprised because when it comes to Bendel, it is always a perfect finish.

Godwin Bary Iyamu
Ibadan, Oyo State

Your cover on Bendel State at 25 (August 5) was thoroughly researched. From the professionally taken cover pic, to the expertly handled cover designs and stories, it was all a master piece.

If Anything, it went further to buttress the slogan: 'Up Bendel!!!'

*Osaro Ademwaju
Oshodi, Lagos*

Rev. Jackson: A dream unstuck

Olatunji Dare's article (August 1) was very educative especially to students of Contemporary American politics. Jesse Jackson may be "Unelectable" at the moment but in the future there may be a Black President in the White House, taking cognisance of the political awareness created by Rev. Jackson among the Blacks in the American body politic.

Rev. Jackson is very charismatic but lacks the requisite resume of the exalted office of the President of the USA and furthermore, the White House is not a training base for politicians. It is for tested and experienced politicians.

*Alunstanley Ozuzu
New Jersey, USA*

Change of guards

It is disheartening that Akwa Ibom's first and second governors are non-natives of the state (August 1). Is there no qualified "AKwan" to run the new state in the entire armed forces?

Regarding former Governor Ogburn's intention to obtain a loan from EEC, the idea should be dropped. Akwa Ibom is endowed with abundant crude oil and other natural resources. The new governor should use the money from the sale of these natural resources to provide the infrastructures.

Giving the people houses, palm industries, water and good road alone is not enough to industrialize and attract investors to the state. Stability of electricity supply must be guaranteed and solid communications network be put in place where one could dial from Uyo to any part of the world.

*Okan Eyo Akpalom
Austin, Texas, USA*

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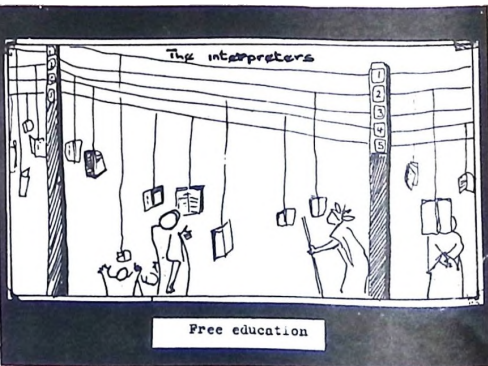
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It now seems that a report of inquiry was already seated as the National NEC was subcommittee of the unit Sam, with soon got in which, as it was not an eventances now, sed

He is however, of the opi. of impropriety on the part of mili. administration are more involved in . succeed than in amassing personal wealth. normally unaudited security votes, no gov. proper documentation to the federal government.

And the Chief of General Staff, however, had "newbreed" politicians. If they could not perform a project themselves without being under the umbrella of ba. advised they should leave the stage. Using he example of t. Admiral Aikhomu said the present administration, though quite retired generals, was not being teleguided by past military administration. wondered why the newbreed would not follow this example: "What w saying with the ban is that we do not believe that without some category Nigerians, who have had their chance in the past, we can't move forward." This apparently is another myth the Chief of General Staff was out to shatter.

This was not the only revealing insight the Chief of General Staff made on Friday. Shedding light on the contingency plans of government against the fluctuating crude oil prices, Vice Admiral Aikhomu said that this year's budget was worked out with three premises borne in mind: the assumption of earning \$ from crude oil at \$16 per barrel; of earnings at \$15 per barrel and on the yardstick of earnings at \$13 per barrel. For now, the country has been operating on the scenario of \$16 per barrel of crude and he adds: "If we are forced to change to another scenario, it would be that of \$15 or \$13 per barrel of crude oil."



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The crisis yet to come

In the short run, the 'arrogant' nuclear physicist, who as chairman of the Enugu Local Government Council was reportedly a flaming torrent to Governor Akonobi, has been taught a lesson.

Elsewhere, Ogun State's Governor Lawal is smiling about how right he always was, concerning the disciplinary powers which state Chief Executives must wield over Local Government bosses, elected or not. And in Cross Rivers, where the Calabar Chairman, the fiery Bassey Ekpo Bassey has been litigating on the constitutional rights of Local Governments, Navy Captain Ibim Princewill is only slightly amused.

Dodan Barracks explanation of the event was typical; Orji's removal was in the interest of a smooth transition process. Erudite political scientist, NEC's Chairman Professor Eme Awa who had quite competently said only a week before, that councillors were not at the whimsical pleasure of Governors was suddenly thrown into a prattle-prattle and a stretched contextual justification of what clearly amounted to a simple "shut-up" order from above.

As usual, national interest has been the convenient excuse. But, it always was known that democracy has the potential for jolting the serenity of the political firmament, paradoxically, this in-built tendency is the crux of its dynamic wholesomeness on which ultimately is built a more comprehensive safety profile for the union. When we stultify opposition and criticism, we only succeed in achieving farcical peace, beneath which there may be a raging fire. We could also develop an invidious proclivity which, as food for fascism, is security's greatest foe.

What has happened to Dr. Orji, may, therefore, in the long run be more injurious to democratic ethos and a constitutional psyche envisaged in the transition process than is now realised. And purely at that essential level, there are similarities to be drawn between Orji and Balarabe Musa, Second Republic's impeached Governor of Kaduna State, in terms of

the possibilities that exist for the underdog to be quite expediently cast aside.

Perhaps, we are dealing with an especially difficult character. It is easy to piece together from accounts in newspapers and "privileged hearings" that Sam Orji, brilliant and effervescent, may in few instances be overly obtrusive.

In the specific case of relations with Governor Akonobi, it is suspected that Sam may have acted more from a pre-disposition informed by parochial power calculations of a hackneyed North-South dichotomy, than from

"In the specific case of relations with Governor Akonobi, it is suspected that Sam may have acted more from a pre-disposition informed by parochial power calculations of a hackneyed North-South dichotomy, than from any genuine concern for his council's autonomy. The man is said to be such a rabid Northern Anambra 'patriot' he would on that basis alone be frigid with the young Colonel, whose homeland is somewhere south of Oji River."

any genuine concern for his council's autonomy. The man is said to be such a rabid Northern Anambra 'patriot' he would on that basis alone be frigid with the young Colonel, whose homeland is somewhere south of the Oji River.

But, there has been something else to the bitterness Dr. Orji left as Chairman of the Anambra Vegetable Oil Products (AVOP) late last year, to contest the Local election. Apparently, the former Governor, Air Commodore Omeruah had not been exactly pleased with everything at AVOP and he did in fact moot the idea of a probe which was not to be before he was re-assigned. Colonel Akonobi's attention was, of course, drawn to his predecessor's ill-fated intention. Well, he had a choice to let it lie, but preferred, and I am told, innocently, to see if indeed there were any cans of worms

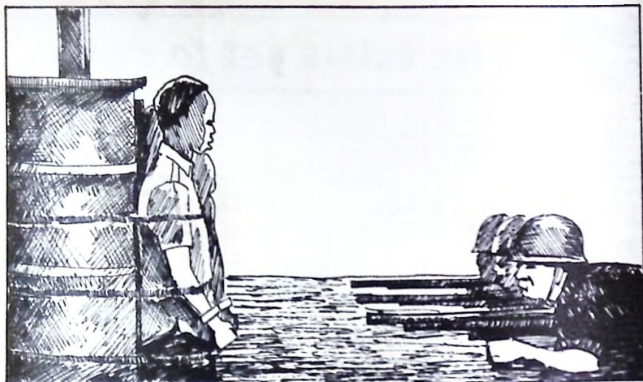
in the place.

By the time the report of inquiry was out, Sam Orji was already seated as Enugu Council boss. The National Electoral Commission, NEC, was subsequently apprised of some of the uncomely findings against Sam, with whom, reportedly, NEC soon got in touch, for clarifications which, as it seemed, might not have saved the man's seat, in any case. Yet, it was not NEC that had to kick him out eventually, and the smoky circumstances leading to the suspension tend, now, to suggest that we may have witnessed unjustifiable strong-arm tactics.

However, a crisis of legitimacy (alluded to on this page in our June 13 1988 Edition) does not yet exist because the Local Government elections of December 12, 1987 were for all practical purposes conducted under an administrative fiat. The Federal Government drew up a transition programme, and merely contrived the election held on a non-party basis, as part of its process towards constitutional government.

A real crisis would have ensued if the incident occurred (and this is a major fear) after 1990, when the constitution would have been in place only for States and Local governments, but not yet for Dodan Barracks. Because then, an order from the office of the Chief of General Staff, as in this case, to suspend a duly elected Local Government Chief, would be perceived by the civilised world as not only a reprehensible disregard for the sensitivities and rights of the electors but also as an uncouth assault on the constitution itself.

My argument of June 13, 1988 bears repetition here. There is no compulsive need to 'promulgate' the constitution before this Military Administration finally terminates in 1992. In the meantime, it is absolutely instructive for all concerned with the husbandry to adapt their "fins" to the appropriate level of civility and subtlety required to reinforce faith in the vaunted trustworthiness of the march towards the Third Republic.



Street kids

Concerned citizens seek a solution to increasing number of delinquents

BOLA, 28, is not exactly used to being on the road once it is dark. This is partly due to her upbringing. A well-bred child, her mother always says, does not go about in the dark. More importantly, her car, a Honda Prelude, is only eight months old and she has never thought it safe to drive around in the sleek automobile anytime after 7 p.m.

Today's exception however is worthwhile. Her elder sister had been married for eight years without a child. It had been one miscarriage after the other until nine months ago, when the woman got pregnant again. Even then, the family was sceptical. The feeling had been: this one too will go the usual way. But somehow, it never did.

It is 7.45p.m. when a caller tells Bola that her sister has been delivered of a baby boy. She jumps for joy, grabs her keys, and dashes into the car. As she cruises along the road from Lawanson to Oju-Elegba, Don Williams' *Till The Rivers All Run Dry* filters from the car stereo. At the Ogunlana Drive Junction, the traffic light halts the Honda Prelude. Ordinarily, this would have in-

flamed Bola but tonight, she is too happy to be annoyed by anything. She's about to recline on her seat while waiting for the green light for go-ahead when a shadow falls on her.

In no time, the car's door on her side, is opened and a scrawny hand holds a pen-knife against her throat. "Aunty, e ma move o" (Aunty, don't move), a faint voice tells her. Another pair of hands removes her ignition key, eyeglasses, wristwatch, handbag and the trinkets she was wearing. All this has taken place in less than three minutes. The green light comes on and later goes off, but since no other vehicle appears on the road, nothing seems unusual.

Bola takes a look at her assailants and is surprised they cannot be more than 16 or 17 years old. They could even be younger, but for the hungry looks on their faces. She is tempted by their apparently innocent looks and attempts to scream. But the grip that tightens on her throat is vice-like and the looks deadlier. After hesitating for a while, the one holding the ignition key drops it and the boys vanish into the darkness. The macabre drama ends in one flashing



moment.

Bola's experience is only an example of a plague in Nigeria today: Children committing what is presumably the sin of the fathers or elders. From pilfering through shop lifting and mugging to armed robbery, many Nigerian kids, especially in their early and mid-teens, have arrived in the world of crime full-blown.

Many reasons are often claimed for this metamorphosis. Child abuse and parental neglect are cited as factors driving many children from home and thereby into the mainstream of the larger society. Some experts also contend that it is the child's exposure to places of high criminal proclivity that ultimately lures him from home and ensures his graduation from innocence to criminality.

A typical setting, it is believed, ar

the city bus-stops, and motor parks harbouring all forms of shady characters. These people in turn serve as the role models to the impressionable minds of youngsters who may have taken to the streets in the first place only to search for a means of livelihood. Poor and lacking parental care, the child sets out to be a bus conductor, a pool-house assistant, or hawk some petty wares. With this, the initiation process begins. The lure of money becomes stronger as extravagant tastes for food and clothing are developed and the street, where he is exposed to old hands, becomes a veritable training ground.

PROTOTYPICAL of this breed of juveniles is Bolaji, a teenager who recently confessed to his association with a car-snatching gang of armed robbers. When he was 10, his father had stroke and was paralysed. Feeding became difficult for the family as none of the four older children had a job. "After a few years," says Bolaji, "my friends told me I could find one or two things to do at the motor park or bus stop." And since the family lived on Ogunlana Drive, the nearby Lawanson Bus-Stop was the natural port of call.

Once there, he got help from his friends. He was well-fed from their pockets, but at the same time, taught how he could be self-reliant. Bolaji started by picking pockets at the bus stop. In no time, his lust for money grew. And to satisfy this lust, he became more daring and ruthless in his exploits. The aimless teenager soon learnt the use to which he could put a pen-knife and ultimately the gun. He also had his ambition: to become a gang leader at 20. Unfortunately for him, this ambition was stalled by an unsuccessful car-snatching operation in which he was caught and remanded at Ikoyi Prisons' Awaitin'-Trial cells. Before this, he had been detained at various times in police cells where, he admits, he came into contact with more hardened drifters and learnt a few more tricks.

As he advanced in crime and got more toughened by each detention or other hazards of the trade, Bolaji's body suffered. He lost his sturdy handsome physique. And in place of the good-looking lad of old is a skeletal frame covered by a crusty skin which itself bears various scars of matchet and knife cuts. Bolaji is just one in a myriad of cases of kids who have pitched tents on the other side of the law. And as their families grieve over their loss to the world of crime, so does the society on the receiving end of their terror.

There is Sampson Friday Akpan, a 16 year-old whose case was handled by the Alakara Police Station. Currently at Ikeja Juvenile Prisons, Sampson was found guilty of stealing clothes and the sum of N350 from one Innocent Akpan of Navy Estate, Airport Road, Ikeja.

Abiodun Oluwale, 17, began his own exploits from home. He once stole his grandmother's radio and cassette player, five wrist watches belonging to members of his family and another cassette player belonging to his brother. All these he sold at give-away prices and gambled with the returns. Once he was through with this, Abiodun, who lived at 20 Oko-Baba Street, Ebute Metta

criminals still testing the ground. Yet, they are worth mentioning when it is considered that in crime, the advancement can take literally, the speed of light.

In the oil town of Warri in Bendel State, an alarming wave of violent muggings by youngsters has been raging for over a year, thus, sending shivers down the spines of residents, especially those who like to enjoy the town's night life.

"Tie-neck" is what residents call this violent mugging by the young criminals and if anything, the deadly tactics they employ on their victims cannot be better captured.

The crux of it is an element of surprise



Children hawking wares in the motor parks: A fertile ground for acquiring bad habits

turned the heat on his father and stole his N1,260. The bulk of the money went the usual way — down the gaming machine.

At the age of 12, Micheal Akerelle of 39, Ogdengbe Street, Agege, looks as innocent as any other kid of his age. But he is everything, but innocent. Michael is as fleet-fingered as any thief can be. Last May, he, along with another boy, Tunde Ayodele broke into Jebacco Cinema Hall in Agege and carted away almost all the wares belonging to Lamidi Adeyanju, a trader of 23, Lawoyin Street, Agege. If many residents were surprised at the give-away prices at which the wares were sold, they were no less so by the skill displayed by the kids in breaking into the house under lock and key.

In reformatories all over the country, there are many children whose conducts are similar to this. These of course are small-time jobs executed by budding

which can be fatal for the unwary. A member of the wandering gang of muggers (ever lurking in the dark) rushes at the victim from behind and vice-grips him on the neck. As he struggles for breath, other members of the gang would frisk him and relieve him of every valuable before disappearing into the darkness.

At the peak of this reign of terror, nightlife in Warri, an otherwise bubbling town, was almost non-existent. Residents scurried into their houses as early as 7.00 p.m. while those who were bold enough to venture out in the night did so with a palpable fear of the gangsters. So slippery were the criminals that in most cases, they got away with their harvest, eluding even the law enforcement agents. "It is terrible", says Joel Edebor, a staff of Delta Steel Complex, Aladja who lives at No. 20, Obodo Street, Okumagba Layout, "Those kids have rammed the fear of the devil him-



Avrie, with pleadings from sympathisers however, never reported the incident to the police. For, as he explains: "The matter will not be resolved on time by the policemen. They will only keep on asking us to come back all the time. And one would end up losing much more to the case than the original loss had the criminals even escaped." Interesting and naive as this argument sounds, Avrie's other reason for keeping the matter away from the law is more instructive. Says he: "The child, more importantly, will certainly be detained if one had reported and nothing would be done to him. In the end, he would suffer more than enough for the crime he has committed. And instead of

court, there was not sufficient ground for the boys to be proclaimed guilty. For one of them, John Alli, who was a house-boy to the Odusanya family told the court that he was actually taken to a naylor park where he was forced to point at some people as the armed robbers. And more importantly, there was a mysterious abrupt adjournment of the court proceedings when one of the prosecution witnesses had started giving evidence in favour of the convicts. By the time proceedings resumed, he was singing a different tune.

Mind-boggling as these irregularities are, the strongest case against the boys conviction however, is the fact that their ages range from 16 to 18 years, which brings them under the protection of the Criminal Procedure Law that excludes people of their age from death sentences.

Amnesty International the London-based human rights body and individuals from far and near have written protest letters to the Lagos State governor and State Attorney General to commute the boys' sentences. It is argued that killing the boys would amount to what Jimmy Alara and Kwame Asiedu, counsel to the convicts call "a travesty of justice and an unnecessary spillage of innocent blood." According to the lawyers, in their protest letter to Lagos State governor, the boys would be discharged and acquitted if they could appeal.

As one of the pivots around which the argument for the quashing of the sentence revolves, Section 30 of the Criminal Code states that a person under the age of 12 is not criminally liable for any act or omission. And Chap. 26 Section 11 of the Young Persons Law of Lagos State defines young persons as those who have attained the age of 14 years, but under 17 years. It further points out that no child shall be ordered to be imprisoned while a young person imprisoned should not be allowed to associate with adult prisoners.

Section 12 says that "sentence of death shall not be pronounced or recorded against any offender who had not attained the age of 17 years at the time the offence was committed", but in lieu thereof, the court shall order such offender to be detained as the military governor pleases. And (13) says, if a child or young person is found guilty of attempted murder or manslaughter, the court may order the offender to be detained for such a period as may be specified in the order. Section 16 holds that the words "conviction" and "sentence" shall cease to be used in relation to child



• Inmates at a remand home: Trained to become useful citizens.

self down our throats." As the situation worsened, however, people started fighting back, especially when they realised that the gangsters are usually unarmed teenagers.

Last April 8, nemesis caught up with a gang that attacked Larry Avrie. Though he was eventually overpowered by the gang, Avrie had put up a good fight and was able to identify one of the young lads. As soon as he overcame the dizzy spell cast on him by the attack, he made for the boy's home in company of some sympathisers. The parents, never aware of their child's escapades promptly, proclaimed his innocence. Their boy, a 15-year-old, they claimed had been in all day. On further pressure, however, he confessed to the chagrin of the parents and named his cohorts. Along with the sum of 30 naira (his own share of the money stolen from Avrie), a wrist watch, a gold chain and a razor-sharp knife were recovered from him.

being reformed, he is likely to be more hardened against the society." This reasoning is an interesting line to the age-long controversy over how juvenile delinquents should be punished under the law.

Last June, Mr. Justice Mookhood Oluhanti's Armed Robbery and Firearms Tribunal sitting at Court 13 at Ikeja sentenced 12 young boys to death by firing squad. They were found guilty of robbing one Alhaja Latifatu Odusanya and her two sons, Afolami and Layiwala on September 4, 1984, in their home at Ikorodu. Items and money allegedly stolen by the 12 boys were put at ₦561,770.

No sooner was the death sentence announced than protests greeted it from within Nigeria and abroad. Most of the convicted boys were shoe shiners, hawkers and bus conductors. And part of the argument against their sentence is that, according to the evidence given in

dren and young persons dealt with in juvenile court.

To buttress these points, a lawyer who spoke to *The African Guardian* recalled the discharge and acquittal of a 11-year-old boy who in 1984 allegedly killed a teenager — Lawrence Ovirhabor. Justice J.W. Ohiwerie of a Benin High Court set him free in 1986 by virtue of the above stated section 30 of the criminal code.

Mrs. Margaret Amiduro, a Superintendent of Police and the officer-in-charge of the Juvenile Welfare Centre of the Nigerian Police at Alakara Police Station, lends weight to this legal view by emphasising the need to differentiate between crimes committed by adults and children. Says she: "Offences committed by children beyond parental control and those in need of care or protection should be differentiated from the criminal cases of adults."

She further classified people according to their age to determine where each group should belong. One to seven year-olds are infants, seven to 14-year-olds are known as children, 14 to 17 are juveniles, while 18 to 20-year-olds are young persons. Any person above 20 is an adult.

The 12 kids now on death row are certainly young persons for whom the clamour for mercy is further strengthened by the irregularities in their trial. Indeed, it has been speculated that the sentences may be commuted, especially because even lawyers in the Lagos State Ministry of Justice are reported to have pointed out that "the whole trial was full of procedural irregularities and overt bias against the convicts."

But Eniola Fadayomi, the State Attorney General would rather the matter, over which the State Governor has the final say, be left alone for now. As many young defiants perfect their criminal acts to deadly proportions, however, the law which emphasises reformation as opposed to punishment has come under the searchlight.

Not a few people still believe that whatever the case, the reformatory process should be the most important way of dealing with kids in crime. According to the reformatory programme, when a child is convicted, the first thing the principal of the reformatory school does is to study the post-trial report. The subsequent rehabilitation is then planned with emphasis on the child's character and personality growth contained in the report. There are two levels of the rehabilitation scheme: occupational and educational — for inmates. The former, according to a principal of one of the

schools, Mr. F.B. Ige, ensures the training of children in trades they can practise upon graduation, while the latter ensures that kids who were in school before conviction continue with their studies during the reformatory years.

Extreme cases of defiance by children under the age of 18 are however, referred to a Borstal Institution in Kaduna. The Borstal Institution which is affiliated to the Nigerian Prisons Authority administers a more rigid reformatory treatment and inmates are given the Nigerian Prisons Authority certificate upon graduation.

However, the argument also abounds that some of the kids are equally deadly, if not more than the adults in crime and should pay commensurate price for their exploits. This school of thought has the dictum: If a kid is smart enough to handle the gun or any weapon and use it to serve his purpose, let him die by it. And this same school of thought often refers to the fact that after the so-called reformatory process, some of the young inmates do return to the society unreformed, if not more hardened.

Divided as opinions are on how young criminals should be dealt with, there is also the problem of inadequacy of facilities for child reformation. For example, the only teacher in the Sapele Remand Home was transferred from the place two months ago. This has led to a total disruption of whatever little orderliness or reformation the kids may have imbibed. More importantly it is believed that the society capitalises on the child's impressionable mind and produces its juvenile delinquent.

As Mr. I.O. Okulaja, Lagos State

Chief Welfare Officer states, children can be categorised into two biological extremes: the highly gifted and the poorly gifted. Children in the former category need a conducive environment and good parentage for their potentials to be fully harnessed. Once these are lacking, the child's curiosity, he says, "lacks proper articulation" and he is soon overcome by a sense of adventure that leads him to applying his intelligence the wrong way. The other extreme has children with low level of intelligence and will-power. They can be easily misled. And the race to delinquency for children in both categories is accelerated once they are exposed to poverty and forums for satisfying their needs: motor parks, markets, bus-stops, or night-clubs.

From all indications, the Nigerian society is currently breeding these delinquents in large numbers. Statistics from the Lagos State Ministry of Social Welfare shows a yearly increase in the number of children involved in crime. From 315 in 1985, it increased to 366 the following year and 455 in 1987. Yet, these figures are merely illustrative rather than comprehensive. For many cases of violence unleashed by these kids are often unreported. Even with these statistics, when their ruthlessness and the fact that their victims do get maimed or even killed are considered, it is not exactly a false alarm to shout: Take Cover, The Terror Kids Are Coming!

By Debo Adesina with reports from Sunny Blaghere, Chukwuemeka Onyedikam, Abraham Ogbodo and Humphrey Bekaren (in Warri and Sapele)



• A child hawking for a living: Can society exonerate itself from the rash of delinquency?

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Candies without sugar

Airfares increase sparks off snickers smiles and frowns

BARELY 11 months after the fares swung up 100 per cent on the domestic routes and 20 per cent on the international, there are strong indications that air fares for international routes will again take a leap by between 40 to 60 per cent. The new proposal has triggered off a chain reaction while raising doubts as to whether it would solve aviation problems after all.

Three weeks ago, when members of the Board of Airline Representative (BAR) called on the Aviation Minister, Air Marshall Anthony Okpere to intimate him with desire to increase fares by 100 per cent, a wary minister had warned of a snowball effect which would result in the airline industry being priced out of the market.

The minister's reply was only a balm on a festering sore. The airlines argument for increase was against the 400 per cent hike in aviation fuel. They maintain also that they were in the same free market as other international carriers and had to buy spares and carry out maintenance in dollars and added that even where they did not have to pay their parking fee in hard currency, they still had to pay its equivalent in naira. It

seemed they would not mind if tickets for international routes were to be paid for in hard currency.

While these arguments were being considered by government, it did appear that in a bid to stem rising operational costs, airlines have begun to play hard to get and would rather pick last minute passengers with hard currency tickets than talk business with confirmed naira ticket holders. Ken Saro Wiwa, producer of the television comedy, *Basi and Company*, recounted how he lost his seat on a Swiss Air flight because he purchased his ticket in naira.

Reacting to the allegation, the General Manager of the Swiss Air, Peter Morizzo, said the issue of stranded passengers was a delicate one, and unless one understood the details, there were likely to be bitter feelings. He held that it was against his airline's principles to "dump" anybody because his ticket was paid for in naira.

That, however, hardly applies to all airlines. On Thursday last week, a passenger who had been on the waiting list for four days stood horrified as another intending passenger moved to the counter of British Airways and flashed an

American Express gold credit card. He instantly got a ticket and a boarding pass. In a similar fashion, an intending traveller who was turned back from another foreign airline counter when he presented a naira ticket from his pocket, received a smile for his troubles when he returned two days later with a ticket paid for in pounds sterling. With the new craze for hard currency, a new class code named the *J-class*, has emerged for dollar-flashing passengers.

In the bedlam that follows each announcement of the arrival of an aircraft, boarding passes have become a highly priced commodity and more often than not, crisp notes exchange hands. An aggrieved passenger who says he has been constantly disappointed on three occasions by Nigeria Airways, accuses airline officials of colluding with touts to relieve stranded passengers of their monies. He says for the economy class, the demand is as high as N300 while N500 will guarantee a seat on the business class.

While overcrowding is believed to have sprung from the devalued naira which makes Nigeria the cheapest take-off point in the world observers suspect that airlines deliberately reschedule their flights and send smaller aircraft to Nigeria because the route is not lucrative. Foreign airlines insist that specification for the kind of plane and the number of flights, are dictated by the national carrier.

With the traffic situation getting almost out of control, doubts are being raised as to whether the proposed increase would solve the problem. Said Oye Onabanjo, sales manager of Sabena Airlines: "This is not an increase, it is only an adjustment." For KLM Financial Controller, William Molenaar: "All we are asking is the same thing in fares as we do for landing fees — pay the dollar equivalent in naira". Only Nigeria Airways sounded a different note. According to its Deputy Public Relations Manager, Mr. Bisi Toba, "We are aware that passengers are already over taxed. All we are asking is a relief in fuel prices."

In the aviation world, however, there are worries whether in the long run the proposed 40 per cent increase will ultimately solve the problems. Expressing some fears, a top official of a foreign airline says "For us, any increase is welcomed. But whether it solves the problem or not, is a different story."

By Josephine Akuru



• Okpere (left) Toba. Unending air travel problems

Revving for action

Alleged assault on their chairman puts Lagos teachers on the war path

COL. Raji Alagbe Rasaki, easily reputed as a toughie, may soon face his first test in labour crisis management as the eighth governor of Lagos state and this is because the 36,000 strong members of the state wing of the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT), are reviving for a strike action. The teachers are not rising against the proverbial non-payment of salaries. Rather, they will be staging a walk-out of the classrooms in protest against alleged assault on their chairman, Mr. Adelano Ibrahim Modupe Akinsanya, by the Education Commissioner, Professor Ajato Gandonu.

It was 9.00a.m., August 26. Hundreds of secondary school teachers were assembled at St. Gregory College, Lagos for their pay. According to a directive from Rasaki, teachers will be paid at public places beginning from last month. Dubbed "pay-at-sight" system, the rationale was to identify fictitious teachers and beyond this, to stem the high teachers salary bill, which stands at N19 million monthly.

Akinsanya's account of the encounter between him and Gandonu, is symbolic of a street fray. "Gandonu slapped me twice" claimed Akinsanya. The NUT boss said Gandonu arrived St. Gregory's College, pay point 14, (the point where teachers from King Ado High School were to be paid), minutes after the teachers queued up to receive their pay. Then, the following dialogue ensued:

Gandonu: Who is the principal of this school?

Akinsanya: I am here, sir.

Gandonu: What are you doing here?

Akinsanya: I am here as the principal of King Ado High School.

Gandonu: Don't you know that you have been transferred?

Akinsanya: But sir, you have not given me any letter of transfer.

Gandonu: Am I supposed to give you the letter?

According to Akinsanya, the commissioner then "gripped my hands and slapped me twice on the cheek."

For one thing, the commissioner agreed that he was at St. Gregory's College, August 26 to inform teachers from King Ado High School and Methodist Boys High School, Lagos, that they will

not get their pay that day, because the officer who was supposed to sign their cheques was away to London for medical treatment, and was expected in Lagos in the evening of the pay day.

Again, the commissioner admitted that he questioned Akinsanya why he was at the point where King Ado High School teachers queued up for their pay. But he denied slapping him "When did I become a puglist?" he queried.

If Gandonu had been tried at seeing



Gandonu (left) Akinsanya. Power 8/26

Akinsanya among the teachers from King Ado High School, it borrows from the ministry's letter on July 27, stripping Akinsanya of his headship of the school and posting him to St. Finbarrs College Akoka, Lagos as vice principal. Akinsanya claimed that the posting was released when he was attending a meeting of the World Confederation of Teaching Profession, in Melbourne Australia. Last Friday, Akinsanya said the letter was yet to come. He was yet to get his August pay, though the other teachers have been paid.

Akinsanya's transfer and demotion appears punitive. Ado High School was

gutted by fire last year, and the state government sunk 800 million into building another school in a virgin land.

Asked Gandonu, "after the fire incident, do you expect me to retain him in the same school?"

For two years running, the relationship between Gandonu and Lagos teachers had been to say the least, cold. The teachers have repeatedly accused him of muddling the state's education system; for stalling their promotion and for usurping the functions of the School Management Board (SMB).

The Executive council of the NUT met August 31 to deliberate on the slapping saga, and in a protest letter sent to Rasaki, the teachers asked him to "take immediate action on this never-heard



of-incident." Though Sunny Oduwo, press secretary to the governor said he was yet to be officially informed about the incident involving the commissioner and Akinsanya, the governor was said to be highly piqued on hearing about the executive brawl, and has asked Gandonu for an explanation.

For now, the teachers think the only option left for the government is to remove Gandonu. But the commissioner seems unperturbed. "If I am removed," he said, "I have nothing to lose, rather, the society loses."

By Mike Ubani

Okolie's tale of woes

Newbreed publisher narrates ordeals in the hands of security agents

FOR those with an eye for comparisons, Chief Chris Midu-Abrochukwu Okolie, editor-in-chief and publisher of *Newbreed*, and the late Dele Giwa, founding editor-in-chief and chief executive of *Newsweek* would have cut the distinct similarity of two peas in a pod. Until he died on October 19, 1986, the debonair Giwa, like Okolie, often turned out in impeccably well-cut suits. More than this, the two middle-aged men had a fiery passion for journalism, a profession whose pinnacle they attained quite early in life, and were generously endowed with guts to publish and be damned.

For Chief Okolie, however, outward and professional similarities may not be enough. He fears that he may end up the way Giwa did... through assassination by parcel-bomb or such similar contrivance. At a news conference to alert the public on Wednesday, Chris Okolie based his premonition on encounters, he said, he had had with security officials, as well as threats and assaults, he and his editor had received from unknown persons. The normally ebullient Okolie who looked dour and disconcerted at the conference told the 30 odd journalists, huddled in the tiny newsroom of the *Newbreed* at its Surulere office, Lagos, that when he resuscitated the magazine which was banned in 1978, barely three months ago, he was not even allowed the benefit of a "honeymoon with the administration" before security hawks moved in.

In an articulate but far from his accustomed vibrant voice, Chief Okolie said he started to receive subtle threats from October last year when he began to publish the editorial policy of the magazine. But it was not until November 2, 1987 that he physically came across officials of the State Security Service (SSS). On that occasion, he said he was whisked off by the securitymen from the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja like "a common criminal," to the SSS headquarters on Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos, and dispossessed of his passport.

When he came back to the SSS headquarters the following day as instructed, and requested to know his crimes, he said he was informed by the security agents that he had been involved in gun running between Nigeria and Geneva, a

place where Okolie schooled between 1975 and 1976 and had not returned to ever since. He said he wondered why a crime he was accused of having committed as far back as 1986 was just being investigated now. Whereupon, he was told to explain his whereabouts between January and November, 1986. According to Okolie, when he reminded the SSS men that he was at the Nigeria Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos, an institute whose attendance requires clearance from the SSS at the material time, they then apologised, saying it was a case of mistaken identity. The "Chief Chris Okolie" they were looking for, the security men said, was still in Sweden.



• Okolie: Frightening experience

• Aikhomu: "It has not been brought to our knowledge"



Dissatisfied with this explanation, Chief Okolie on December 21, 1987 wrote to President Ibrahim Babangida protesting the violation of his "freedom of movement and human dignity." More than this, he expressed alarm that "a story was concocted which was similar to the allegation made against Dele Giwa." It is partly on the basis of this allegation of gun running that Okolie draws the fatal allusion to Dele Giwa.

Even so, he was to meet more harassments and assaults, not necessarily from security officials, but from unknown persons. The most visible attempt on his life according to him, occurred on August 15 this year. In order to meet production deadline, Chief Okolie said he was returning to the office around midnight on this particular day when he suspected that the car behind was tailing him. When he accelerated, the car did same. Not only that, the car kept flashing its lights, apparently signalling Okolie to stop. With this development, he increased his speed terribly, with the car behind doing same. For Okolie, it became a chase. Luckily, however, he ran into a police check point by the National Stadium, Surulere where he stopped to inform the policemen that the incoming car had been chasing him. The driver of the car, halted by the police and, confronted with Okolie's allegation, flew into a rage, pounding away at Okolie's chest. He was said to have boasted that he was a naval officer, and his car marked LA1018KH was said to have actually carried a naval emblem.

He was reported to have asked Okolie in Yoruba: "Why write what you write. We don't want this government to fail." Thereafter, he arranged for Okolie to meet with a senior naval officer at the Federal Palace Hotel in Victoria Island, Lagos on August 20 to discuss the matter.

To all this, the Chief of General Staff (CGS), Vice Admiral Augustus Aikhomu has an unambiguous answer, when Okolie raised the issue at a press dialogue with him on Friday. Said he: "It has not been brought to our knowledge that these incidents happened to you. If you have any problem with any other Nigerian, that is your problem with the Nigerian and not the government. It is true that people are attacked in Nigeria and people can also readily attribute assassination attempts to Government. This administration has no case with you."

By Godwin Agbroko

Okpere wields the cudgel

THE celebrations marking the Nigerian Airports Authority's (NAA) tenth year in business was lacklustre. Aviation Minister Air Vice Marshal Anthony Okpere, is no doubt aware of this, and showed his displeasure, through the authority's managing director, Air Commodore Ndako Adama, who last week ordered the accounts department of the NAA to deduct two weeks pay from the salaries of over 50 NAA



• Okpere: Disappointed

chiefs, including directors, controllers, managers and department heads. Two heads of the anniversary committee which had nine solid months to put together an impressive package will forfeit a month's pay.

Okpere's anger was sparked off by the poor turn out of NAA chiefs during the anniversary seminar held on August 25 at the Nigerian Institute for International Affairs (NIIA) Lagos. When Okpere arrived at the seminar venue 9.00 a.m., as scheduled, he was chagrined to meet fewer than 20 of the nearly 500 dignitaries and NAA chiefs invited for the seminar.

Load shedding at NLC

BY the time the Sole Administrator of the Nigerian



• Ogunkoya: Industrial unions to be merged

Labour Congress (NLC), Mr Michael Ogunkoya, bows out in December, the number of industrial unions affiliated to the NLC would have been reduced from 42 to 15. Ogunkoya told a meeting of labour leaders last Thursday that a nine-man tripartite technical committee would soon be set up to prune the apparently unwieldy 42 industrial unions.

However, labour leaders have reacted to the imminent restructuring of the NLC with mixed feelings. Mr. Moses Olabode, general secretary, National Association of Nurses and Midwives, said of the proposed remodelling of the NLC: "It is not for union presidents and general secretaries to write off the autonomy of their unions. The relevant organs of the unions will have to be consulted on the government's proposal."

A thumb up for the proposed pruning of the membership of the NLC came from Mr. Abdulkadir Salam of the National Union of Local Government Employees who said the proposed new look of the NLC "will solve the problem of poaching among unions."

Ogunkoya became the Sole Administrator of the NLC after the botched February convention of the Congress in Benin City, and its subse-



• Gen. Mukhtar: Rumbings with

quent dissolution.

Mob attack on governor

KADUNA State Governor, Colonel Abdulahi Mukhtar is a man who cares about details to the extent of worrying about the polish on his shoes. On Thursday morning last week, there was no time for such fastidiousness as he and his convoy became targets of stone missile throwing youths.

The governor and his entourage were on their way to the ancient town of Zaria to assess the degree of damage to crops and property by flood. As they approached the mosque, some stick-wielding youngsters began hurling sticks and broken bottles at him amidst shouts of *barawa, barawa, barawa* and *ba musonku*. (Hausa for "thief we don't want you").

During the tour, another mishap which almost marred proceedings was the close shave the government house chief protocol officer, Alhaji Muhammed Shaibu, had with death as he narrowly missed falling headlong from a moving vehicle.

President Ibrahim Babangida was stoned and booed in the same area, June 3, when he went to the mosque

to offer Jumat prayer during a one day official visit to Kaduna.

Sharia Shakes Assembly

THE question of whether the controversial Sharia law should be retained in the draft constitution, neatly tore the Constituent Assembly State Judiciary Committee into shreds last week as members were divided into two religious camps on the issue.

While Muslims advocated the retention of Sharia law Christians swore to forestall any attempt to accommodate the Islamic code in the draft constitution.

After hours of heated argument, committee chairman, Mr Justice Umaru Kalgo ruled that the matter be referred to the committee of the whole house.

Harvest of disaster

IT has been a period of catastrophe. Firstly, the collapse of the \$600 million Baguuda Dam in Kano State, and the subsequent flooding of the city, which resulted in the destruction of 18 houses, killing of 35 persons and rendering over 16,000 persons homeless; and secondly, the flood disaster which ravaged the garden city of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, rendering thousands of people homeless and destroying property worth several millions of naira.

Again last week, flood came knocking at the doors of the largest West African city of Ibadan, and at the end of the day, three persons including a nursing mother and her 9 month old baby were reportedly killed.

The flood which was ignited by a five-hour torrential rain, swept away property worth thousands of naira.

In the last two months, about 10 states have been hit by heavy rainfalls with accompanying severe rains.

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UNITED STATES

Running scared

Dukakis mounts new campaign to stop dwindling fortunes

ALL was ready. Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis, was set to hit the road again with a better look and a tougher message, as an attempt to regain the initiative lost to George Bush in weeks of serious mudslinging from the Republican candidate. But, as he kicked off the big comeback move last week in Philadelphia, it became clear that his entire campaign is in a bind.

His opening gambit even ran into unexpected trouble. A major speech at an engagement in the city, meant to show him on prime time television, hacking away at Reagan's economic policies, was virtually blanked out by heckling right-to-life demonstrators, protesting his support for legal abortions. By week end, it was clear that the comeback bid did not touch off the expected momentum. And the Republican candidate, at any rate, continued to outclimb him in poll ratings.

Time is definitely against the Dukakis campaign. Bush has managed, in these past weeks, to not only maintain his lead in national polls, but to also surge ahead in most of the state polls. It was even found, a fortnight ago, that he is neck and neck with the Democratic candidate in his (that is, Dukakis') state of Massachusetts.

It is believed that the Democrats wasted valuable time on account of refraining from serious campaign, from the end of their convention in Atlanta in July until quite recently. Dukakis, at one point, even went on recess, spending a whole 20 days in his state presumably to attend to the business of governing. In short, he was out of the news for too long.

Bush, on the other hand, has consistently kept in the news — all the way from his surprisingly powerful acceptance speech in New Orleans. When the Quayle scandal broke, the media almost completely lost track of what was happening in the Democratic campaign. Besides, the Democrats themselves, on advice from the extremely cautious Paul Brontas (campaign chairman), took the high road of not wanting to be seen rejoicing over the political mishap and failed completely to take advantage of the situation. So naive, indeed, was the

entire Democratic response to the scandal that a Bush campaign that had no effective rival on the issue easily managed to turn it into an advantage; by simply selling it as a snare laid by Washington people (the press) to harm

scandal would shatter his campaign irretrievably.

Unfortunately for them, the inverse of all this is what eventually happened. Bush has shown himself to be quite good in understanding and using symbols, nuances and emotions that easily find a resonant chord in the minds of ordinary voters. In fact, in running a campaign that has been totally devoid of lawyerly arguments and references to lifeless statistical data (the very bases — conversely enough — of the Dukakis campaign), he may have been com-



• Dukakis' Set for a comeback bid?

a young man (vice presidential candidate Dan Quayle) that committed no crime whatsoever in technically evading the Vietnam draft and in having lust in his mind for a *Playboy* model. In fact, in fighting the Quayle scandal, Bush was able to dispel a great deal of the impression that he is a weak man. He came

out of it looking really gutsy and was able to divert attention from the earlier negative impression that he is a shadow of President Reagan.

It is clear that the Democrats seriously underrated the Republican presidential candidate. They judged inaccurately (given Dukakis' relative obscurity before his nomination) that his pre- and post-convention lead over Bush was irreversible, that the Republican's "wimp" character was a negative he can do nothing about, and that the Quayle

ing across like the candidate with more personal warmth and sense of fellow-feeling. His, in short, has been a campaign effectively anchored on notions that easily get the emotions working.

It explains the potency of his attack on Dukakis for not supporting the idea of a prayer to God and flag in primary schools. Thus although the law prohibits the practice, the furor generated by the controversy has had the impact of making Dukakis look a bit unpatriotic.

A different strategy has been that of labeling. It is believed that to consistently label a candidate negatively, is to cause him perceived negatively by voters. Thus, the Bush people have not let up on the game of calling Dukakis a liberal (the idea being to imply that he will support government intrusion into every aspect of life); on suggesting that he is "soft" on crime and communism;

and on hinting that he is not patriotic enough.

Undoubtedly, the whole mudslinging has worked — to the extent of making the Dukakis campaign appear confused, and in need of having to fight its way out of a tight corner. It is also widely believed that he now has an image problem, precisely on account of the various negative labels the Bush people put on him and for reason of mishandling his own campaign.

The new Dukakis campaign is expected to be more forceful. Already, former campaign chairman, John Sasso — widely acknowledged to be a skilful "practitioner of dirty tricks" — is back as the new vice chairman. From this position, he is expected to direct the entire campaign.

The Dukakis' issues are also expected to become sharper. He will portray Bush as the same old George who has never been his own man, and who has remained part of everything that has been wrong with the Reagan presidency. He will also try to put a lot of distance between himself and Bush on the question of competence, while doing everything to project a moderate image for himself.

A different issue on which the comeback bid will be based is the question of whether or not Americans actually enjoyed economic justice under Reagan. Dukakis' last week's campaign in New Jersey, to mark the official opening of this year's presidential race last Tuesday, following the traditional Labour Day holiday (September 5), focussed almost completely on this theme. He said his campaign is all about a war to bring about economic justice and patriotism, adding that Bush was there but did nothing while, according to him, the rich got richer and the poor poorer.

Observers believe that Dukakis may yet manage to climb back to the top. Some polls found that he and Bush are neck and neck in the ratings. In fact, if anything, it is the likelihood that the Republican candidate may have peaked rather early. Democrats expect that he will run out of bravado and combative rhetoric at some point. In addition, it is believed that the current underdog image is good for their candidate in the sense of helping to bring out the fire in him. They are also hoping that as voters, who gave his earlier leads in the ratings, are reassured on account of his new campaign, he will climb back to the top of the polls.

Less sentimental observers, however, project a race (the election comes up November 8) that will be as close as the



• Bush: Overcoming the "wimp" image



• Reagan: Still influential

1948 contest between late President Harry Truman and Republican candidate Thomas Dewey. Truman came from behind to take it from Dewey that year. Likewise, observers are expecting this year's race to go into something like a sudden-death shoot-out. It will get very dirty, they say.

By Chukwuemeka Gahla.

In turmoil

Burma's creeping revolution gathers steam

Burma's nearly one-year-long political turmoil came to a head last Friday with the declaration, by the protesting civilians, of a separate, provisional government in Rangoon. Headed by the 81-year-old Prime Minister U Nu, who was toppled in 1962 by former dictator, Gen. Ne Win, the interim government has announced general, multi-party elections for October 9 — just what the protesters have been asking for.

This development further compounds the problem of Burma's *de Facto* president, Maung Maung, whose barely three-week-old regime has been at pains to stem the tide of the popular uprising which swept his two predecessors out of power and has cost well over a thousand lives. First was Gen. Ne Win, the nation's 77-year-old dictator for 26 years, who resigned, July 23, after months of sporadic student-led riots against growing poverty seen as the result of his rigid, socialist policies. Sein Win, a British-trained lawyer, who took over from Ne Win, also stepped down barely a month after, paving way for the present leader, Maung Maung, sworn in August 19.

Now, the formation of an alternative government by the opposition seems to have cancelled out the possible outcome of the proposed emergency parliamentary session to meet today. (Monday, September 12) to discuss the nation's deepening political crisis. In fact, analysts suspect that the move by the opposition, as well as the nationwide industrial action embarked on by many of the trade unions, were indeed attempts to pre-empt the parliament's decision on their demand that Maung Maung resign and a provisional government be set up to supervise democratic elections.

As it is, the support of the military appears to be the decisive factor in the apparent political stalemate between Maung Maung and the opposition camp. Although Maung Maung's government (being the extension of Gen. Ne Win's dictatorial regime) has enjoyed support of the army top-brass, reports towards the weekend were that several military forces, on the first sign of dissension with the army, were openly switching support to the demonstrators.

By Emenike Okorie

THE GULF

Dogs of war

Iran, Iraq now face internal enemies

WHATEVER else Teheran and Baghdad are doing with opportunities made available by the United Nations-sponsored truce in the Gulf, they are certainly not using them to begin moves aimed at reconstructing their devastated economies. Rather, their immediate concern appears to be the prosecution of war against their old enemies—the rebel groups in both nations.

In Iraq, there are the rag-tag armies of Kurdish separatists who took advantage of the eight-year-long Gulf conflict to carve out for themselves a *de facto* autonomous area in the northern province. While the eight-year-long blood-bath raged on, the rebels were able to keep at bay the weakened Iraqi forces who were preoccupied with fighting off the Iranians. But, with the danger of Iranian attacks now considerably reduced by the ongoing peace talks, Baghdad has reportedly dispatched the toughest of its estimated 700,000 troops in the north to root out the guerrillas.

To watchers of the Iraqi political scene, however, this did not come as a surprise. In fact, it became clear that the lives of the estimated 20 million Kurds in Iraq were in danger last March when some 4,000 Kurdish inhabitants of Halabja, near the Iranian-Iraqi frontier were gassed to death by the Iraqi air force. Late last month, an unknown number of Kurdish men, women and children, estimated to be well over 1,000, were again slaughtered by the Iraqi soldiers, and buried in mass graves. And like the case of the Halabja massacre, wide-scale use of chemical weapons, though denied by President Saddam Hussein, was reported

Similar accounts of single-minded, ruthless attempts to stamp out, by any means, Kurdish separatism has been filtering in from north-eastern Iraq since the Iraqi troops began their push to "liberate" the over 4,000 square-miles of Kurdish territory a fortnight ago. Towards the weekend, some 43,000 Kurds, mostly women with small children, were said to have been trapped in the mountains as the Iraqi army pushed ferociously towards them. Sick, starving and most of them wounded by chemical weapons, they had been cut-off from joining another 100,000 re-



• Khomeini (left) Hussein: The heat is now turned on internal foes

fugees who had escaped, trekking over 200 miles along the mountains border into Turkey.

As Kurdish guerrillas from Syria, Turkey, Jordan and even Europe are reportedly re-grouping (infiltrating Iraq through Iran in a desperate bid to halt the Iraqi offensive), all have not been quiet in the Iranian front either. In fact, since the cease-fire announcement, August 20, Iranian troops have had no respite in their attempt to beat back sporadic attacks by the Iraqi-based rebel National Liberation Army (NLA), the military wing of the People's Mujahedin led by Masoud Rajavi. The Mujahedin, as the first step towards the overthrow

of the Iranian clerical regime, has vowed to take its struggle "to the streets of Tehran" as it did in the late 1970s and early 1980s. But this the authorities seem determined to block even if it entails the postponement of reconstruction efforts in the country.

It is clear, therefore, that Iraqis and Iranians are yet to fully reap the rewards of the cease-fire agreements. But if there are nations that have cause for jubilation over the developments in Baghdad and Teheran since the UN-brokered truce began, they are China and France which have allegedly enjoyed booming arms-supply trade with the warring neighbours. Reports from Paris at the onset of the cease-fire were that the French authorities which supply over one third of Iraq's arms mainly on credit were disturbed by the possibility of a slump in the trade. Now, their worries seem to be all over as the raging campaign against the Kurds promises to turn even bloodier with the involvement of Kurdish guerrillas from Turkey, Syria and other neighbouring countries.

The Chinese, allegedly the largest arms supplier to Iran, also appear to have been reassured by the present need of the Iranian soldiers to keep at bay the Mujahedin rebels. This implies uninterrupted flow of arms from Beijing to Teheran.

The Chinese defence authorities did as much early last week in their denial of the allegation (by the U.S. Defence Secretary, Frank Carlucci) of increasing Chinese involvement in international arms running. Beijing had not only defended what it called its "non-nuclear arms" trade, but pointed out that China, as a developing nation needed the revenue from the trade. Besides, the Chinese defence ministry had in turn also pointed accusing fingers at the U.S. and the Soviet Union who, it said, were the real brain behind international arm sales.

By Emnake Okorie



Fresh moves at Fevrier

West African leaders for peace between Liberia and Sierra Leone

LAST week, Togolese President Gnassingbe Eyadema sought the diplomatic stage and invited both the Sierra Leonean and Liberian leaders Joseph Momoh and Samuel Doe to soothe a tensed situation between the two neighbouring states. The latest friction was triggered off when Liberia expelled some 60 Sierra Leoneans following a bar brawl which the Liberian authorities said resulted in the death of a Liberian soldier. Since then, several diplomatic shuttlings by both Freetown and Monrovia have been made but they seemed to have achieved very little success. It is against this background that Eyadema initiated the intermediary move "to solve the problem once and for all."

There are speculations that Eyadema's intervention is informed by the fact that the story runs deeper than is already known. Sources close to State House in Freetown told *The African Guardian* that at the moment two top military and paramilitary officials have been dismissed from the force for



▲ Eyadema: Waving the olive branch

reasons not unconnected with the Liberia issue.

The source said that the two officials, Brigadier Y. Toronka (the army's second in command) and Marson Dumbuya (head of the paramilitary, Special Security Division, SSD) were dismissed for allegedly receiving huge sums of money from Liberian dissidents to train guerrillas to invade Liberia. Piqued by this, President Momoh, the source added, acted promptly by ordering their dismissal. In the case of the deputy military chief, he was sent on terminal leave. The source did not indicate, however, where and how the dissidents were to have been trained.

Both countries had had mutual suspicion, especially during the Siaka Stevens era in Sierra Leone. In November, 1986, Liberia accused Sierra Leone of complicity in the Thomas Quiwonkpa — led attempted coup d'état. It followed that up with sealing its borders with Sierra Leone, but Freetown did not reciprocate. In February this year, the two countries signed a non aggression pact.

This week's talk, expected to hold at Lome's Hotel 2 Fevrier on Friday, would be the third such meeting between the two soldiers — turned-civilian heads of state since Momoh came to power nearly three years ago. Guinea's President Lansana Conte acted as an arbiter early 1987 following the 1986 attempt in Liberia, in the spirit of the tripartite economic Mano River Union (MRU) to which all three countries belong. In June that same year, the two leaders met with President Ibrahim Babangida when they were in Nigeria for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) summit at Abuja. Nigeria has again been invited to this week's talks in its capacity as the outgoing Chairman of the ECOWAS.

Momoh had earlier despatched his Foreign, Justice and Economic Development Ministers to Liberia, Guinea, Togo, Nigeria, the Gambia and Mali to lodge a bitter complaint on the issue. In return, Togo, Nigeria and The Gambia sent special messages to both leaders. There were reports also that Liberia sent its Foreign Minister to Freetown, but the reception was rather cold. This, analysts say, may have prompted Eyadema's fresh moves. There are indications that this week's agenda will include a review of the defence and non-aggression pacts among the MRU countries.

By George Ols-Davies

CHILE

Bitter chill visits Chile

Protesters challenge Pinochet's extended mandate

JUST having Augusto Pinochet around as their dictator for 15 years has been enough trouble for Chileans, particularly given the large scale repressions of his era. Not surprisingly, when the ruling military junta went ahead last week to announce that it has asked him to seek another eight-year term (in other words, to rule until 1997), the veins of the protest against the move easily gave way to violent confrontations.

In all, police sources in Santiago, the capital city, say a total of nine persons were injured and over 262 arrested when 60,000 disenchanted citizens took to the streets. The demonstration was apparently organised by the National Opposition coalition of leftist, moderate and rightist groups lobbying Chileans to vote against General Pinochet, the only candidate in the October 5 plebiscite. Similar protests, and clashes with riot police across Chile were also reported in scores of other cities. More protests are expected in the troubled



• Chileans: Victims of Pinochet's dictatorship

city if no civilian rival is nominated to contest along with Pinochet. Pinochet suffered an assassination attempt in April 1986.

The General who ousted the socialist president, Salvador Allende in a bloody coup d'etat in September 1973 incurred the wrath of Chileans because of his dictatorial rule. In 1980, he decreed that a mandate be given to him to contest for

a yes — or — no plebiscite in 1988, which, if he wins, will give him a fresh mandate to rule the country for another eight years. However, should the result prove otherwise, he will still hold on to power till 1990 and then conduct fresh polls based on a multi-party system. There would also be election into the legislative assembly.

The Chilean strongman, who no longer appears in the over decorated grey general's uniform with which he was identified for over 15 years, now wears a civilian blue suit so as to identify himself with the civilians. He gave a general amnesty to over 430 exiled Chilean leaders to return and is now calling on all Chileans to support him in the October ballot.

Chileans appear hardly mollified. Part of the reason is that the 430 pardoned amount to an insignificant number compared to the 150,000 Chileans who have gone into exile since the 1973 coup. There is in fact little faith that the additional eight years will do much good. More troubling is the fact that the Chilean leader will be clocking 81 years by the time the fresh eight-year term expires.

By Augustine Anyanwu

MAURITANIA

Fear of civil unrest

Death of political prisoners heightens tension

FOR criticising the Moorish-dominated regime in Mauritania, Tene Yousof Gueye, 60, a leading opposition figure, was sentenced to jail for four years in September 1986. But Gueye could not complete the prison sentence, as he died in his Walata prison on September 2 after spending only half of his jail term. Gueye, opposed to the Lt. Col. Mohammed oul Haidala regime, was arrested after the appearance of a "Manifesto of the oppressed Mauritanian Negro," in the capital Nouakchott early 1986.

Gueye's death has so far attracted no official comments from Nouakchott, although the rumour in the capital is rife. The lid was blown open by the clandestine *Movement African Liberation Forces in Mauritania (FLAM)* in a statement it issued from its base in Dakar last Wednesday (September 3). The organisation also claimed that

another political prisoner, Regimental Sergeant-Major, Alastane Oumar Ba, had also died in prison but that the country's authorities were keeping quiet for fear of the popular uprising that will greet such news in an already tensed-up country, quietly but strongly crying for a change of government. Ba was among 18 alleged plotters jailed for life with hard labour last December. Three Black officers were executed then.

On his part, Gueye had served as the country's first Customs Commissioner after independence from France in 1960, Permanent Secretary in the Finance Ministry, Director-General of Tourism and Permanent Representative at the United Nations. He was also a prominent author.

His battle for equality in the country never waned. Many people believed the numerous pleas for his release were

played down because of the imminent threat he would have posed for the oul Haidala administration. Gueye was for long tipped as one of the leaders of a strong political party to emerge when the ban on political activities, slammed on the country since the military coup in 1981, is finally lifted.

His death, analysts say, may well precipitate more civil unrest in the country.

George Ota-Davies



• Haidala: Raw deal for opponents



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Babangida's defence of Decree 2

PRESIDENT Ibrahim Babangida's address to the country's judges in Abuja last week is significant for its bold statement on a number of issues. But the president's speech is perhaps most remarkable for his spirited defence of the State Security (Detention of Persons) Decree No. 2 of 1984 as amended. In simple terms, Babangida argued that there was still much work for the decree in safeguarding national security and 'to ensure the security of life for everybody in an era characterised by crimes of violence at a rate unprecedented in the country's history.'

Faced with this admittedly cheerless scenario, the president proclaims by implication, that Decree 2 is a beloved decree in which he is well pleased. We must suppose, or, at any rate, hope, that Babangida's decision to pronounce on the matter, at all, represents a response to recent expressions of anxiety over the recession of his human rights credentials. If this is indeed the case, then the president may be moving away, happily, from the ill-advised posture of ignoring the critical strictures of the public, and we may be on a return journey to the dialogue of the early days.

But beyond speculating on the symbolic significance of the speech, it is imperative to examine the quality of defence the president makes for Decree 2. It ought to be conceded that even politically developed nations with settled democratic practice often have laws resembling Decree 2 which enable them to address emergency situations that may arise from time to time.

Besides, the decree is almost a natural consequence of military rule which, by definition, implies an emergency. But this, we are afraid, is as far as one can go in accommodating the decree. Beyond this point, apprehensions stare us in the face. Military rule, it has been said, is an aberration, but one, nevertheless, which seeks — or ought — to restore a sense of normalcy, a return to civilized norms. So, we must never be invited to feel at home with a decree whose application permits a disquieting degree of arbitrariness. A decree of the nature of Decree 2 ought to be used only sparingly, and as observably the last resort, to address problems which, for security reasons, cannot be treated under any other existing law. If this principle were followed, then the decree will need to be called in only on special assignments.

This, however, has hardly been the case. Especially during the Buhari — Idiagbon regime, Decree 2 was applied in a way that left Nigerians darkly apprehensive of the future of their country. People were routinely arrested and detained, sometimes on forged warrants, and often with their families not knowing where they were. That era showed us, in graphic terms, how a law, however well intentioned, could develop a life of its own and become one massive gnomonic machine.

One lesson from the decree's discredited past is that it is open to dangerous abuse. And so, to minimise the danger, the government should make it mandatory that proper arrest warrants are issued, and that there should always be a witness when somebody is to be picked up. Apart from measuring, to some degree, to civilized requirement, this is sure to check kidnapers, assassins and other criminal elements who could, in future, want to exploit the fluid situation.

What constitutes a threat to national security is often narrowly, even parochially, defined by those in government. The quite personal interest of individuals in government is often masked as the interest of the whole nation. The way out is to insist that the nation be briefed on how a detainee's acts of commission or omission amount to a threat to national security.

The country is plodding on with a transition programme. In this transition process, the current administration, though military, must recognise the need to develop reflexes which promote a democratic culture. Clearly, Decree 2 is disruptive of this democratic spirit of which the country today stands in dire need.

Babangida's Abuja speech contained an unwitting self-indictment. When he spoke of the unprecedented rate of crime, he was, perhaps without knowing it, also admitting that some of his government's policies have resulted in an unprecedented level of hardship in the land. A great deal of the crimes he talked about arises, we suspect, from the deep and deepening desperation which the economic situation has made most Nigerians heir to.

And here is certainly no place to ask Decree 2 to move in and work. The solution lies elsewhere, lies, indeed, in a humane disposition which takes into account the impossible burden Nigerians have had, and continue, to bear.

The resilient Olympic spirit



"Let there be boycotts, let the Hitlers withhold a handshake from the Jesse Owens, let there be threats to lives of participants, let there be lots more. All these go to pump the fuel of life into the Olympic spirit!"

BY EKPEIN APPAH

THEY will heave, hike, drive, ride, sprint, and shoot. Yes, even a lot more will they do: these representatives of nations gathered together with one massive objective to participate and be part of this centuries-old game — the Olympic Games.

To modern minds, the games may be perceived as just sports. False. The Olympics has never been sports per se; there were, from its birth, other ingredients with which it intermingled, especially religion and politics. But is that strange? It should not be; our progenitors in sports were as fanatically patriotic as they were humbly pious.

Being ancient Greeks, noted for their strong panhellenic spirit, so loved their *polis* (contemporarily translated as "city state") that they would prefer dying in a *polis* prison to being free outside the *polis*, as demonstrated by that immortal thinker, Socrates, who turned down a secret plan by his friends to smuggle him out of an Athenian prison to safety elsewhere.

For the love of their *polis* environment they created numerous devices to build the body and rejuvenate the mind, hence their love of games and symposia (discussion sessions at which wine was served).

But, the Greek world was small. Clustered in small city-states and cut off from one another by ranges of mountains, the ancient Greeks, in spite of their famed scholarship and intense desire to learn, never thought of another world out-side the small *polis* in which their entire life and existence were firmly rooted. Even Aristotle with his high intellect, could not but fall to the surging waves of panhellenism. To him, only Greeks were carved to rule; other mortals were moulded to be slaves.

And so when the Olympic Games were held in honour of the Greek chief deity, Zeus, only Greeks participated. All others were barred. This is perhaps "Classical Apartheid." But because it was seen then as a purely religious festival in honour of a native deity, other citizens of the world, with their own religious festivals, needed not to raise

objections. Why would they? Was it not, after all, a religious affair which principally concerned the Greek pantheon, in their exalted domain on Mount Olympus? But it ought to be noted that by opting to restrict the Games to only Greeks a stubborn political virus had been infused into the blood of the Olympic spirit. It was only waiting to mature and cause havoc later.

Well, again, the Olympics came under political sledgehammer in 393 AD when Emperor Theodosius I of ancient Rome, finding that the Olympic spirit and christian spirit could not co-exist, abolished the Olympic games. The high and glorious point of note, however, is that the Olympic spirit is irrepressible. Resilient as ever, it was not suffocated to death even by the imperial decree of 393 AD; but resurrected in 1896 on a grander scale. This is a pointer that the Games shall continue to be the world's most important sporting event.

Why, therefore, must the blood pressure of the 20th century citizen run riot because one or a group of nations wish to stay away from an event that has survived the ravages of centuries? The Olympics have, from birth, been badly rocked by politics. In fact, without the political fever that accompanies the games, the Olympics would not be as significant as they are today. Let there be boycotts, let the Hitlers withhold a handshake from the Jesse Owens, let there be threats to lives of participants, let there be lots more. All these go to pump the fuel of life into the Olympic spirit.

Need we be reminded that side by side with the political tension are Olympic friendships, Olympic marriages, and Olympic business booms? Didn't Myrtales marry the Macedonian ruler, Philip II, and change her name to Olympia because Philip won an Olympic recognition in the games of 356 AD? Didn't that marriage produce Alexander the Great, one of history's youngest, greatest and most fiery rulers who mooted the idea of a global government — something akin to our modern day United Nations?

SHOULD they have a device of peeping into Seoul, the ancients would indeed marvel at the glamour and grace of today's Olympics. Didn't they, clad in loin cloth, partake in just one single event, the short race? Didn't they run stark naked in the long distance races? Oh! the Olympics. Even Zeus, "the gracious" and his family of gods from their Olympian height would want to invite the Muses to supply good soothing music for this generation of athletes from 161 nations.

Let it hold inside Dodan Barracks, in the Kremlin, the White House or 10 Downing Street, the lure of the games is bound to remain as powerful, powerful enough to make the boycott campaigners red with regret for keeping away. For now, may the XXIV Olympiad participants dedicate their medals to that first ever recorded victor of the then one-event Olympic Games — Coraebus!

"Men are led by toys", so said Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte of France, while creating the service medal awards, the *Legion d'Honneur*, in his empire. So let it be with the diminutive emperor. But the Olympic Spirit tells me that to play with harmless "toys" provides mankind with more joy and sounder sleep than the mere mention of "GRENADE", or, more hideous, of Star (or, is it celestial?) Wars. Viva Olympia!

SEOUL



OLYMPICS

Go, man, go!

THE Olympics...

Like other phenomena that man can't readily explain, the Olympics attract clichés the same way a mongrel attracts fleas. Sportswriters have always been renowned for their let-it-all-hang-out approach to language, their lack of linguistic restraint. But in describing the Olympics, they out-do themselves.

The world's greatest sporting event. The sports meet of the world's best. An extravaganza of world records.

Like the different accounts of the ten blind men who came into contact with different portions of an elephant's anatomy, they are all accurate; very accurate and very limited impressions.

The world may be a stage, as Shakespeare says. But the lights do not get to all parts of the stage in equal measure. The Olympics — at least for the two weeks it will last — will have the stage-lights gloriously turned on sports. That explains why showmanship is sometimes more important than sportsmanship. That explains the punk hair-style of a Carl Lewis, the out-of-space track suit and shockingly long fingernails of a Griffith-Joyner and the sudden dreadlocks sprouted by a Sam Okwaraji.



• Okwaraji:
Spotting
dreadlocks



HODORI

THE Olympics...

are leap-year miracles, almost inexplicable events that occur every 1461 days. A competition which pits man against the wind, the sun, the deep, the heights. And the mind. Like most complex things, the rationale is simple, deceptively so. Net in so many words, it says: "This is the greatest man has ever gone to this event, your mission is to go further than that. Your incentive is the field of men lined up against you. Your adversaries are the records, and your rivals. Go on, beat it, beat them!"

Until recently, the weapons were simple and well known. On the blocks, in the field, they were the same: brain, brawn and determination. Of course, there were others too — hope and awe and trepidation. Now, another weapon has been added, potentially the greatest assault yet on the Olympic ideal and spirit, those intangibles that have survived the turbulence of war and politics.

DRUGS. That athlete over there who has laid such a successful ambush on the record is not applying Queenberry Rules; his cells are doped with steroids, hormones or whatever.

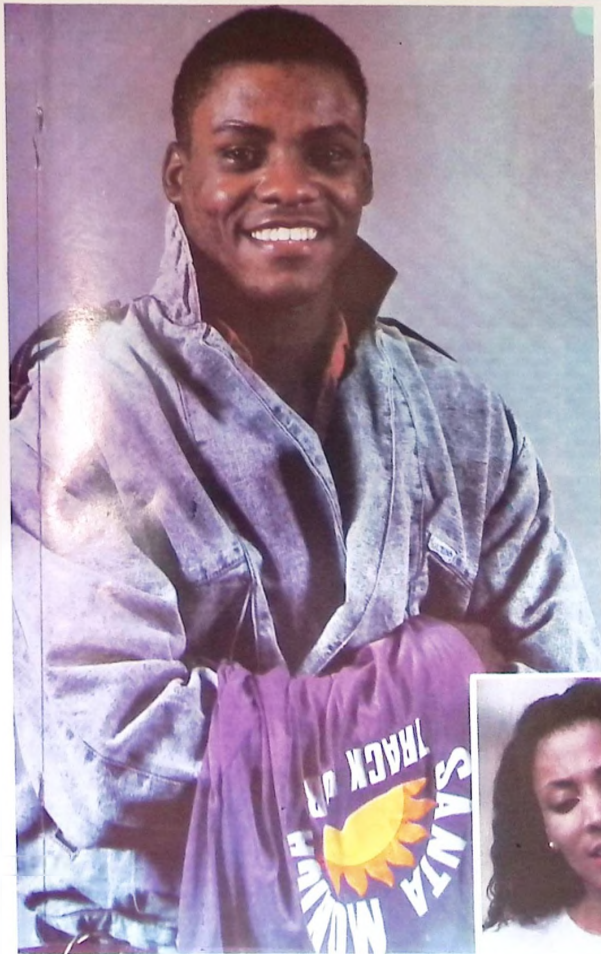
No matter. These Olympics are ever more of a miracle than most. For the first time in 12 years, the east and west have sneated their ideologies and nuclear weapons and will be there. Africa will be there, to give the Carl Lewises, Ben Johnsons, Griffith Joyners a run for their records. From Egbunike to Aouita; Imoh to Onyali, the message is the same: Go on, beat it, beat them!

The souls of the show

It is common to talk about the Olympic ideal, the joy of taking part which is supposedly more important than mere victory. It is more worthy to sweat it out in the best traditions of the brotherhood of man. At least so the theory goes. Few people pay any attention to this dog-eared, musty sentiment. Except of course the victorious. It is easy to be magnanimous and idealistic in victory. The truth is that the blessings of competition are a poor substitute for the exhilaration of victory. More than anything else, rivalry in Greek mythology, will hold sway in Seoul. Here is a low-down of some of the more visible rivalries. They are the souls of the show.

CARL Lewis and Ben Johnson were born in the same year 1961, five months apart. Carl on July 1st and Ben on December 30. Carl is tall, almost willowy, a sprinter who makes running seem effortless. Ben is stocky, intense, and looks like he is always charged with electricity. Carl is American, Ben a naturalised Canadian, though both are Black. They are also two of the most talented sprinters the world has ever seen, two men who run the 100 metres as if it is the 50 metres.

In the 1984 Olympics, Carl got a gold, Ben a bronze. Since then, Carl has done consistently better, returning sub-10 second times routinely. But Ben has had the last laugh. Last year in Rome, Ben whose controversial split-second start has earned him the sobriquets "Bublet", "Rocket" among others, lowered Calvin Smith's world record of 9.93 sec. by an incredible 0.10 second. In the



For Gold and Glory

For sprinter and long jumper 'King' Carl Frederick Lewis (left), the Olympic Games is a plank to glory. Four golds at the 1984 Games (100m, 200m, Long jump and the 4x100m relay) and the lure to run and win remains the same for the 27-year-old American.

Why not? More than a golden hat trick and yet no marks for the book of records.

It is not only the amazing Carl that the clatter of gold and a shot at the records is an enduring charm. There is also the bewitching cheetah of the tracks, Florence Griffith Joyner (inset). A former bank clerk who runs faster than most men, and is prettier than most women. At 28, it may well be her last Olympics. Perhaps Barcelona 1992. Perhaps!





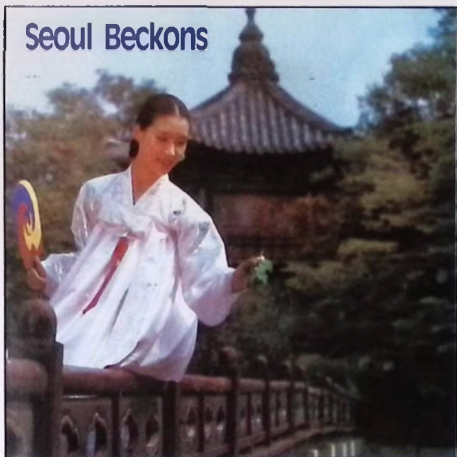
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'Profit is not the objective'

Ambassador Oh says South Korea is hosting the Olympics to promote peace.

SOUTH Korea is a peninsula — a piece of land that is not quite an island. This is not only a geographical fact, it is also a very apt metaphor for this country of about 41 million people. She shares boundaries with China, Japan and the Soviet Union — three of the world's most influential nations — yet she is not quite Chinese, Japanese nor Russian. She has managed to retain a distinct culture and way of life. The South Korean Ambassador to Nigeria, Chai Ki Oh spoke to *The African Guardian's* Paul Nwabuiwu about his country, her peoples, relations with Nigeria and the hosting of the of the XXIVth Olympiad. Excerpts:

On what the government is doing about student demonstrations allegedly incited by North Korea:

Last month, a small number of students resorted to violence in their demonstrations. They asserted that they should be allowed to meet North Korean students at the border to discuss reunification. Reunification is our national aspiration, shared by all Korean people and the government understands the yearning of the students. However, dialogue with North Korea should be conducted through unified channels of the government. There was no public support for the demonstrating students and not much problem is foreseen on this question.

On the prospects for a united Korean nation:

South Korea has continuously sought dialogue with North Korea since the early 1970s with a view to relaxing tension, promoting exchanges and co-operation leading to ultimate peaceful reunification. Substantive breakthrough is not yet in sight in the dialogue but South Korea will not relent its efforts. As recently as July of this year, President Roh made a six-point Special Declaration calling for a wide range of exchange between the south and the north, ending of counterproductive competition and confrontation in diplomacy. South Korea is firmly committed to reunification by peaceful means, embodying the free will of the 60 million Korean people.

On expenditure in and expected profits from the games:

Total expenditure for the Seoul Olympics is estimated at US\$3.1 billion. Of this, 1.4 billion dollars was spent on Olympic-related indirect projects like Han River Development Project. The remaining 1.7 billion dollars was spent directly on Olympic facilities including 112 competition, training and support facilities. I do not know if it will bring any profit. Profit is not the objective. \$800 million of the direct costs was covered by private investment and the remaining 900 million dollars will be recovered from the sales of TV rights, licenses, fees to use the emblem and mascot, admission tickets etc.



• Chai Ki Oh

What the country will gain in other areas:
Korea, war-devastated, one of the poorest countries of the world not too long ago, will be demonstrating to the world as a responsible member of the international community its willingness and capability to contribute to world peace and harmony by hosting the games successfully. It will create greater interest in Korea and promote exchanges between Korea and the participating countries.

On language problems:

It is true that we have a language problem in Korea. Korean children study English from 12 years. But English is a difficult language especially to we Asians. But most Koreans can read English though they cannot speak English very well. My government has recruited a great number of English speaking people including Koreans. They are attached to the International Olympic Committee. Our information coach, Mr. Yun Ha Kun, has gone back to Korea. He will be exclusively taking care of Nigerians at Seoul.

On Korean-Nigerian relationship:

This has rapidly increased since diplomatic relations were established in 1980. The trade between the two countries amounts to about 60 million dollars yearly, mainly in automobile, electronic and other machinery. Though Nigeria sells little to Korea, Korea will step up its efforts to buy from Nigeria. There are 14 Korean joint ventures in Nigeria, including Samsung and Daewoo, which are engaged in electronics, construction work, fisheries and so on. There are approximately 100 Nigerians on technical training in Korea. Recently, the Korean government decided to extend a loan of 10 million dollars for Nigeria's rail road project.

On what lessons the Korean hosting of the Olympics has for the world:

The successful hosting of the 24th Olympiad in Seoul will demonstrate to the world what a developing country can do — an example to other developing nations. It will also demonstrate the strong desire of Korean people for world peace and harmony.



• The Korean tiger

fastest relays. The new African record of 38.59 sec posted by the quartet of Imoh, Isiaq Adeyanju, Olapade Adenekan and Davidson Ezenwa attest to this. It is the fourth fastest time this year in the world. The Nigerian feat is doubly encouraging because the previous record of 38.73 sec. was set in the high altitude of Mexico city in 1979. The inclusion of Victor Edet (10.22 sec.) could help the Nigerians to another African record, and a Seoul medal.

4 x 400 metres relay (men)

The United States has in 80 years, taken home the gold 14 times in 18 Olympics. If the portents are right, they will repeat the feat. The statistics in favour of a US victory are compelling. Butch Reynolds (world record 43.29 sec.), Danny Everett (44.20 sec.), Steve Lewis (44.26 sec.), three of the world's best, provide pretty convincing evidence. The altitude-aided world record of 2 mins 56.1 sec which the US team set at the Mexico Olympics in 1968 still stands, 20 years after.

Nigeria is Africa's best hope in the event. In 1984, the Nigerian team got a



From left, Omyeali Otondo, Ogunkoya and Ineagwan

bronze, behind Britain, whose anchor Phil Brown overtook Egbunike just before the finishing line. Britain brings impressive credentials to Seoul: the country has been in the top three 10 times in 16 Olympics. Kenya got a silver

in 1968, in the process setting an African record of 2 mins 59.6 sec. In Munich four years later, she picked a gold, Africa's best ever in the event.

Egbunike, undaunted by his recent miserable showing, remains the beacon for Africa's quest. The other members of the 1984 bronze quartet seem resigned to sub-45 sec. outings. In Seoul, Africa has as good a chance as any competing team. Which is not saying much.

Boxing

The sweet science will lose some of its flavour with the Cubans staying away. The Cubans have some of the best amateur boxers in the world, pound for pound. During their last Olympic outing (1980 Moscow), the Cubans took home 4 gold (from 11 gold at stake) and a silver. At Seoul, it will be a straight fight between the Americans and the East Europeans. In Los Angeles, there were blatantly unfair home boy decisions as the Americans, without decent challenge, bullied their way to victory. The Asians, especially the Koreans and the Thais, have good prospects in the lighter weight categories.

Africa's chances do not look very bright. The Nigerians got a silver in the featherweight through Peter Konyegwachie in 1984. But the country's contingent to the All African Games last year did not even have a lowly bronze to show for its efforts. Kenya's "hit squad" is Africa's best bet.

Steffi Graf: Tennis

In 1984, Steffi Graf, then 15 years old, won the exhibition tournament at the Los Angeles Olympics. Four years later, Graf is world number one and tennis is a full-fledged Olympic sport. It is not likely that anyone can stop this West

Said Aouita: The Moroccan magician

Said Aouita has a problem many a long distance athlete would enjoy: loneliness or more appropriately, lack of companionship. That's what you get when you are way ahead of the pack in an event like the 5,000 metres. In Los Angeles, he was numero uno. Either to avoid loneliness or because of adventure, Aouita has switched events. He is currently tops on the world lists in both the 800 and 1,500 metres. This has brought to the fore an unusual dilemma: what event to effortlessly pick a gold in. Should he defend his 5,000 metres gold or launch an assault on Sebastian Coe's 800 metres record, for example? He has already beaten the US best in the 800

metres this season: Johnny Gray. Whatever he decides on, Africa's best medal hope in the Olympics is on a song.

So world champion

in the 800 metres. Abdi Bile of Somalia who has done little running this season, apparently a ploy to remain fresh enough to beat Britain's Steve Cram.



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• Odize (left) in action

German favours anytime soon

Among the men are four world-ranked players — Swedens Stefan Edberg and Mats Wilander, West Germany's Boris Becker and Frenchman Henri Leconte who will attempt to add a gold ring to the cike of their achievements. Nigeria's Ndika Odu'or, Tony Mmoh and Sa'ad Abdullahi will try to upset the favourites.

400 metres hurdles (men)

Edwin Moses (17.84 sec.) looks set for an unprecedented third Olympic gold. But in the Rome World championships, he might need a photo-finish to beat compatriot Andre Philips and West German rival, Harold Schmid. Nigeria's Henry Amike is some kind of outsider here, but he has a chance of making the finals.

Soccer

The tightly knit, extremely co-ordinated soccer team of the Soviet Union (dubbed the "red orchestra", finalists at the European championships) are favourites. From Brazil are the latest generation of "Samba" players and also a brilliant Yugoslav team built around the world under-21 champions of last year and the remnant of the bronze winning '84 squad, could also win the title.

As Nigeria's coach, Manfred Hoener said, "qualifying for the second round will only open another door to more problems."

Javelin, women

Is going to be a direct confrontation between East German world record holder Petra Reike and Britain's muscle



• Egbunike: Great expectations

woman, ex-world record holder and world champion Fatima Whitbread.

Long Jump

A triangular face off between joint ex-world record holders, American Jackie Joyner-Kersey and East German Heike Dreschler with the Russian woman who took their record, Galina Chistyakova trying to be a spoiler.

400 metres, men

A Butch Reynolds affair. Competition will come from fellow American Danny Everett and Steve Lewis as well as world champion and runner, German Thomas Schofenleha and Nigerian Innocent Egbunike.

Table Tennis

Chinese world number one, Jian Jialing will square off with "555" world champion, Polish veteran Andre Grubba. The Nigerian Atanda Musa is a world class competitor and could get into the quarter or semi finals of the singles event.

Featherweight boxing

American Keltie Banks seems to have the world at his feet but Nigerian Konyegwachie, whose brother won the silver in the same category at the last games, says he wants the title.

Pole vault

The big Russian sportman Sergei Bubka has made his name synonymous with the event. Recently however, he was beaten by fellow countryman Rand Gatanlin and with Frenchman Pierre Quinou, it might not all be smooth sailing for the world record holder.

By Paul Nwabukwu with Joseph Okujeni and Oia Sheyin



• Britain's John Akpan (left) in a pre-Olympic hurdle

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• Britain's Christie and Nigeria's Imoh: Sur-prize gallop.

same race, Lewis equalled Smith's time.

Predictably, the Rome miracle also fuelled the fires of athletics' most visible rivalry. Sometimes it had become decidedly dirty and un-sportsmanlike. Lewis has all but implied that Johnson's prowess is attributable to drugs. Johnson has gleefully suggested that Lewis has no chance of ever equalling his record.

But the portents are that the gazelle and the buller will make athletic history. Already, Lewis had posted the fastest time ever in the event (9.78 sec.) though it was wind-aided. Johnson's time has been a more modest, altitude-aided 9.98 sec.

Lewis has already equaled his best mark, also Smith's former world record (9.93 sec.) in his first confrontation after the instant-making race at Zurich. Johnson was out the blocks first but Lewis was in devastating form, catching up 40 metres to go, his hands doing treadmills as he wheeled away. Calvin Smith, perhaps the most unappreciated of the world's best in this event, also managed to get in front of Johnson, in the process making his second best time ever, 9.97 seconds.

Smith is in spectacular form. So is Nigeria's Chibinkwa whose 10.09 is the African record. Imoh is among the very best in the world; he has beaten Johnson before. But a self-confessed habit of getting nervous while running with the big names may prove fatal. Britain's European champion, Linford Christie could spring a surprise. The signs are that a full-scale war which has been brewing since Carl's gold and Ben's bronze in Los Angeles, will erupt at the

100 metres final, September 24. And it may not be as two-sided as many think.

100 metres, women:

If the American Florence Griffith:

Joyner had been at the 1986 Olympics, she would have been in the finals of the 100 metres. For men, that is, only five men in Nigeria can run faster than her. About the same number of sprinters from the British Isles can do better. Until she did it during the US Olympics trials in Indianapolis, it was considered impossible. Many thought women had no business running 10.62 sec. (Johnson's 1980 best). Griffith-Joyner did 10.49 sec. Both Nigeria's Mary Onyiah and Ben Johnson have darkly suggested that Joyner's feat is not just a triumph of practice and spirit. Joyner has a more romantic explanation. "Sometimes I have dreams that I can fly. I'm so disappointed to wake up and find that I



Daley Thompson: Eyes on a hat trick

DALEY Thompson has three things going for him. He's big. He's handsome and he has a dream. His dream needs no explanation from any interpreter. Thompson wants to be the first man ever to win gold in the Olympics' toughest event — the decathlon — THREE times.

Daley has in three decades got all three from the decathlon: the world championship, two European championships, three Commonwealth gold medals — and two Olympics titles. Now he has his eyes on an Olympic hat-trick.

The task is by no means simple. His perennial rival, West German Jaergen Hingsen will be in Seoul to reply their mostly one-sided contest. Before the Los Angeles Games, Hingsen bat-

tered Daley's world record (8774 points) by 24 points, then cockily declared his intention to give Thompson a drubbing. Thompson's reply was a study in cocky confidence. "The only way Hingsen will go home with a gold medal will be if he steals mine or switches to another event." Then he promptly went ahead to prove it, beating Hingsen, and setting a new Olympic record.

But like Achilles, Thompson can be beaten. Last year, he

• Daley Thompson

was beaten at the World Championships in Rome, the first time in nine years. Because of injury, as the excuses went, he did not even get a medal. Thompson was far from chastened. This rare defeat was palling. "You'd better enjoy the sight of me losing," he warned his rivals, "because you'll never see it happen again."

Big, handsome Daley will be at Seoul Clutching his dream and trying to make it real.



can't. But I guess the 10.49 is just my way of flying."

Onyah (11.09 sec.), ex-record holder Evelyn Ashford (10.76 sec.) will be in Seoul, trying to prove that Griffith-Joyner has no patent on flying. Also on hand would be East Germany's Marliesa Gohr (10.89 sec.), Heike Dreschler (10.89 sec.) and the USA's Gwendilyn Torrence whose wind-aided 10.78 sec. at Indianapolis is definitely fantastic. And there is the other East German, Silke Gladisch (10.86 sec.) who beat Joyner at Dreschler in 1987 world championship.

400 metres, men

For 20 years, Lee Evans' 43.86 sec. record was one of the legends of modern athletics history. Set at high altitude at the 1968 Mexico Olympics, many thought it would outlive this century. After all, it will take some time before an Olympics is held in a country with a terrain that offers the least air resistance.

Then Harry "Butch" Reynolds came along at Zurich, last month, yanking an incredible 0.57 seconds off Evans' immortal record. Unlike Evans who was reluctant to even run the race, Reynolds willingly made his successful assault on history. Nigeria's Innocent Egbunike set a blistering pace, leading the pack by five metres in the first half of the race. "After seeing Innocent (Egbunike) go off that fast, I knew it was a world record pace", Reynolds said afterwards. Together with compatriots Danny Everett (44.20 sec.) and Steve Lewis (44.26) they bore down on the fast tiring Egbunike, sweeping past him on the home stretch. It is still a matter of speculation whether or not Egbunike merely paced Reynolds, considering the jerry-curling Nigerian's rather unwise, breakneck spar speed off the starting blocks.

Whether true or false, Egbunike, the 4th best ever in the event, will try to prove that "Butch" is not invincible. Thomas Schoenlebe (44.33) East German sprinter who had an upset win at the expense of Egbunike at Rome last year, Britain's Redmond (44.50 sec.) are also medal hopefuls.

200 metres, men:

The United States looks good enough for a 1-2-3 sweep with Carl Lewis taking his second gold — that is if he runs in the



● Koch (212) overtaking Jamaica's Otley (206) in a 200m Women's Final

event. It is common knowledge that Carl Lewis is incomparable in the half-lap despite his loss to Joe DeLoach at the United States trials. His 19.82 sec. world best time run in Sistertese, Italy, in August amply demonstrates this. DeLoach has been consistent this year. Before defeating Lewis (19.96-20.03 sec.) at the trials, he had screamed to 19.95 sec. in Austin, Texas to indicate his intention to dominate the 200 this year. But a well-rested Lewis is untouchable in this event. Expected foreign opposition will be led by Canadian Commonwealth champion Atle Mahorn who has run a 20.20 sec. this year as well as Brazilian Robson Da Silva (20.30 sec.).

But still expect "dark horses" to spring up overnight in the rush for silver and bronze. Especially if one remembers that both Gilles Quenheve of France and John Regis of Britain were not serious contenders last year until they both picked silver and bronze respectively at the world championship. Chidi Imoh may not make the finals even if he decides to run this in addition to the 100. Only consistent sub-20.40 sec. performers stand any chance here.

200 metres, women:

Griffith-Joyner paces the world in this event right now with 21.71, sec. and taken that this is supposed to be her favourite event, she might be difficult to

beat with her "one-leggers" and athletic negligee costumes. A strong Eastern bloc opposition is expected here, especially with the decision by Evelyn Ashford not to compete in the half-lap.

Multi-talented Heike Dreschler, co-holder of 21.71 sec. world record, has ducked under 21.90 sec. with ease this season and alongside the swift Silke Gladisch who ran a memorable 21.74 sec. to win the world champion-hips last year.

4 x 100 metres relay (men)

The United States has dominated the 4 x 100 metres since the event made its debut in 1912; she has carried the gold away 13 out of 16 times. In the Olympics, Carl Lewis anchored the US team to a world record of 37.83 sec. His contribution to the victory was a heart-stopping 8.64 sec. — the fastest time ever. However, Lewis' participation in this year's games is doubtful. The main problem is Lewis' insistence that his friend Joe DeLoach be included in the relay team. The US coach thinks differently. The US line-up is likely to include Lewis and DeLoach as well as Calvin Smith and Dennis Mitchell.

Jamaica (silver—84) and Canada (bronze—85) which count world stars Ben Johnson and Desai Williams, are among traditional favourites in this event. Speed, of course, is the greatest weapon in the arsenal of any participating team. But it is certainly not the only one. Efficient baton exchange could make or mar any team. This is certainly not Nigeria's strongest point.

Nigeria is the best in Africa in the

SEOUL



OLYMPICS



Apprehensive but determined: Nigeria's 23-man team about to take off

Tough one for Nigeria

Big charge, new hopes and old-time wishes

IN this year's Olympics, Nigeria wants more than the sheer joy of participating. When the nation's contingent, 75 people in all, left Lagos in search of honours in Seoul last Wednesday, the mandate could not but bear presidential emphasis (through the Chief of General Staff, Augustus Aikhomu): Be good ambassadors, live up to the Olympic spirit and, of course, bring back the medals.

Nigeria will participate in seven events, namely soccer, athletics, table tennis, wrestling, weightlifting, lawn tennis and boxing.

SOCCER:

The nation's previous appearances in

Olympic soccer are instructive. In 1964, a 3-0 margin lead over Brazil was closed and the match ended a draw. Nigeria boycotted the games in 1976 even though it had a very good team that had survived the regional elimination in blistering form. In 1980 she played 1-1 draw with Czechoslovakia, the eventual winners. The Green Eagles representing Nigeria in Seoul is a surprise squad devoid of many of the much expected big names. Even the pattern of play evolved later in the day appears strange and makes the most avid patriot nervous. But the players themselves think they have never been as fit (fitter and better than the team that won the Na-



tions Cup silver in Morocco). Their trainers argue that the new pattern is consistent with world-wide trend. Their chances against teams like Brazil, Australia and Yugoslavia with which they will play in the qualifying matches is, to be less abrasive, as thin as a thread line.

ATHLETICS:

Nigeria is presenting a number of world-class athletes whose medal-winning chances are well above average. This, however, is hardly enough against the intimidating presence of world stars. Among the home pack are Innocent Egbunike (400m) and Chidi Imoh (100m).

LAWN TENNIS:

Nduka Odizor is the best-rated player in the team but he is not even among the first hundred seeds. Against the world's best in Seoul the team hardly stands any chance.

TABLE TENNIS:

This is the first ever table tennis competition. With Atanda Musa who has participated in many international championships, Nigeria can hope to put up a good performance.

BOXING:

Boxing has brought the highest number of Olympic medals, three in all, to Nigeria. The Seoul-bound team is new but it is hoped that the old trend would continue if not improved upon.

WRESTLING:

The representatives are African champions. Whether their 35-day training stint in Bulgaria will help their performance against wrestlers from the Eastern bloc is a riddle only the competition itself will unravel.

WEIGHTLIFTING:

Nigeria and indeed Africa's performance in this event has always been dwarfed by that of athletes from the eastern bloc.

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Wishing the Nigerian Contingent best of luck.

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Stars away from Seoul

FOR reasons ranging from ill-health, ill-luck or plain providence, several of the known names will not be in Seoul as competitors. Absence at the Olympics is one of the most painful things that can happen to an otherwise eligible competitor. It is heart-rending. Here are some of those who will be absent:

BURUNDI: '87 African games bronze medalist Dieudonne Kwezira will not be able to run his part distance, the 800 metres, in the Olympics simply because his country does not have an Olympic committee.

ETHIOPIAN MARATHONERS: Ahmed Salah, Jcdebe Balcha and Belaine Etenissamo, whose statistics and victory at the world marathon championships reveal as the world's best — out through boycott.

KENYA: World 800 metres champion Billy Konchellah and team mate Sammy Koskei — out through injury.

AUSTRALIA: Michael Hilliard, eight times Australian 1,500 metres champion out through injury.

CUBA: The entire cast of Cuban boxers, world and Pan American champions. Runners: Ana Quirot (400m, 800m women) and Roberto

Hernandez (400m men) as well as Jaime Jefferson (long jump) and uncrowned Javier Sotomayor, the 20-year-old high jumper (2.34m) who holds the world record — out through boycott.

BRITAIN: Double Olympic gold medalist Sebastian Coe — failed to make British team.

USA: World 100 metres hurdle champion and defending Olympic silver medalist Greg Foster, — injured during Olympic trials. Olympic triple-jump silver medalist Mike Conley — out through controversial ruling at US Olympic trials.

San'ara Farmer-Patrick, 4th best in the women's 400 metres hurdles at 1987's world championships. Had open ticket to Jamaican team, married American hurdler David Patrick, opted for the US team but was disqualified at the trials — for crossing lanes.



• Navratilova



• Mohammad Ali

Tennis Kingspins: Ivan Lendl, Martina Navratilova and John McEnroe. As McEnroe revealed: "It's the Olympics alright for the younger players; I didn't grow up with it."

Angel Myers, 21-year-old American female swimmer had dreams of becoming the water maiden of the Seoul meet. But her competence was her undoing. At the US trials in Austin, Texas, Angel swam an incredible 54.95 secs in the 100 metres free style. It was a new American record, 22 hundredths of a second outside the world record and

it represented an astounding 1.48 seconds improvement on her previous best. Suspicions were aroused not only by her fantastic performance but also by the obvious muscles that seemed to come from nowhere. She failed a drug test, her dreams of getting 5 gold medals down the drain.

NIGERIA: Brilliant Lightweight boxer and former team captain Victor Enyika — joined professional ranks out of frustration.

African games long jump gold medalist Paul Emordi — out through injury

Simple as ABC?

THE achievements of Olympians often get lost, buried under an avalanche of bland statistics. To appreciate what goes into the records and near-records, consider the following:

Carl Lewis's above 8.75m long jump is the equivalent distance of a 504 station wagon and a 504 saloon parked bumper to bumper.

Russian Sergei Bubka's world pole vault record height of 6.07 metres is the equivalent of the height of most two floor buildings.

Most Olympic marathons, cover just under half the

distance of the Lagos-Ibadan expressway in 2 hours.

Swede, Patrick Sjöberg, high jumps over the ceiling of the average residential room (2.42 metres).

Innocent Egbunike's great first 300 metres run in his sensational loss to new 400 metres world record holder Butch Reynolds is the fastest any human has ever gone

over the first three quarters of the one lap. Intact, the Nigerian was so fast that his first 100 metres (10.28), 200 metres (20.60) would have won individual medals at the recently concluded African Championships.

American Triple Jump world record holder Bob Beamon has jumped a wind aided 18.20 metres this season — almost four 504 station wagons parked bumper to bumper.

Running 10 seconds flat for the 100 metres logically breaks down to covering 10 metres in a second.

To get a better grasp of the

situation, mark out 30 metres, and imagine covering that in 3 seconds! That's what Chidi Inoh has done. 'King' Carl Lewis and Johnson are much faster.

The speedometer needle of a Mercedes Benz 280S car takes a minimum of 10.2 seconds before it gets to the 60km mark from zero point; a Peugeot 505 car will need about 12 seconds for the same process. Ben Jo'anson, Carl Lewis, Calvin Smith and others who do the 100 metres dash in under 10 seconds would be at the end of the track before this process runs out.

Price of the prize

There is much more than a medal in the games for the athletes

Go for Gold! That is the mandate every athlete receives as he leaves to represent his country at the Olympics. In Nigeria, this mandate has a prop to it. The athlete is told to be bold as he goes for the gold at the games. For gold is the symbol of the best. But what end exactly does the gold serve? Or what is golden about an Olympic Games Gold?

The Olympic gold medal, for all the hype and clamour, is nothing more than a piece of metal (which is in fact 92 per cent silver) worth less than 200 dollars or even a thousand of a FEMmed naira. The Olympics' most coveted prize is more so in name than in real contents.

Even then, this is just the face value of the Olympic gold. Its real worth, besides the prestige it confers on the athlete and his country, is almost unquantifiable. It is an exclusive instant vista to greater professional exploits and material affluence for the winner.

Mark Spitz, the outstanding American Swimmer of the 1972 games, tied up endorsements worth 7 million US dollars (1 million for each gold medal he won) and that is regarded as pale in comparison to another white American Olympic winner, Bruce Jenner, whose Decathlon Victory at the 1976 games has made him a millionaire of no small status.

Black sportsmen and women haven't been able to cash in on their Olympic victories as do whites even in an equal setting. This prompted record-setting, ripple gold medalist (1984) Valerie Brisco-Hooks (black) to scream out that Mary Decker (a top white athlete) was receiving much more attention for a fall than she did for winning her olympic medals.

In settings like Africa and the Communist East, the financial rewards can be low, but who says the worth of an Olympic gold is confined to monetary values only.

Trinidadian Hasely Crawford who won the 100 metres dash for men had his country's airline named after him and Morocco's Nawal El Montawakel, the first African woman to win an Olympic gold medal ('84 400 metres hurdles) had the fastest electric train in her country re-christened "Lady Nawal".

The Olympics is a springboard to greater heights. Castus Marcellus Clay

was an 18-year-old schoolboy when he won the 1960 Olympic boxing gold medal in the Light Heavyweight category. Later known as Mohammed Ali, Clay advanced on the Olympics' glory to dominate the world of boxing, winning the heavyweight crown three times and along with it, beady millions. There are the Spinks brothers — Leon and Mike — and Floyd Patterson who won gold medals at the Olympics and emerged later as world heavyweight boxing champions.

Ray Leonard was the smallest American who won the gold in the light welterweight category at the 1976 games.

Tyrell Biggs, Medrick Taylor and Mark Breland who defeated Nigeria's Peter Konyegwache to win the gold in 1984 have all joined the professional boxers' rank, winning titles and making money. Even if the money has not been coming in for Peter Konyegwache (1984 silver medalist) and Isaac

SEOUL



OLYMPICS

Ikhuona, 1972 bronze medalist in boxing, they are nationally acknowledged heroes.

Tawilo Stevenson, the Cuban who won the Olympic heavyweight title a record three times (1972, 1976 and 1980) also won Fidel Castro's admiration. The Cuban President believed so much in Stevenson's ability even as an amateur that he offered him a million dollars to fight Muhammad Ali when the latter was still professional boxing's greatest. Stevenson's regret till date is that he never accepted the offer. In Ethiopia, the late Abebe Bikila remains a legend. The deceased marathoner is immortalised for his exploits at the 1962 Olympics. And members of his family are still living on his reputation.

Michael Jordan, currently one of the world's best basket ball players, made his debut at the 1984 Olympics. Michael Platini was a 21-year-old when he played for France at the 1976 Montreal

At the mercy of politics

Modern Olympics finds a strange bed partner

MODERN Olympics and modern politics are not supposed to mix. This was certainly the dream of the founding fathers of the Olympics, a dream to make the world a small peaceful village through sports. This dream was fatally shattered in 1972 when at the Munich Olympics in West Germany, a group of Palestinians, ominously code named the Black September, stormed the sports village and throttled the world with the massacre of 11 Israeli athletes.

But the games have often been subjected to the whims of national and international politics. Three times the games were cancelled by war—in 1916, 1940 and 1944. In 1948, when steel was created, it was banned from the games ostensibly under the threat of boycott by Arab nations. At the Montreal games in Canada in 1976, member countries of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) refused to participate in the games in protest against the inclusion of New Zealand which then had sporting links with apartheid South



• Smith (1) and Carlos (3), Courageux

Olympics. He has since been captain of the French national team to two World Cup finals. At 18, Hugo Sanchez was one of the goal poachers for Mexico at the 1976 Olympics. Sanchez turned professional there after and was one of the star players in the 1986 World Cup.

Lev Yasin who was goalkeeper for Russia in the 1956 Olympics Soccer competition became the longest-serving goalkeeper for Russia and was recently honoured by FIFA.

When Lawn Tennis was played as an exhibition game in the 1984 Olympics, Stefan Edberg and Steffi Graf (at 15) were top players. They have since become two of the leading professionals in the game.

Grand and expensive as the Olympics are, the games, when they are well managed can be a money-spinning venture. The Los Angeles games provides an insight. Master-minded by Peter V. Ueberoth, a profit of 215 million US dollars was generated in 1984.

A lot of money has been sunk into the Seoul Olympics. And the Koreans claim profit is not the objective of their host-



• The price: Just a bit of it

ing the games. Even then, they are not pretending to host a free concert for the world. From all indications, efforts are being made to ensure, a well balanced book after the games. At the opening and closing ceremonies, a seat may cost the spectator as much as 200 dollars. The cheapest will be taken at 40

dollars. For the events, prices vary from three to 55 dollars depending on the mass appeal of the event.

Even at home, the Nigerian Television Authority has been scouting for sponsors to bankroll its transmission of the games to the Nigerian audience. But the money being charged seems to have kept many away. NTA is asking for N200,000 each for the opening and closing ceremonies. Each of the group football matches involving Nigeria will cost a sponsor N100,000 while the quarter finals can be sponsored at a cost of N120,000. The Semi-final and Third place matches are pegged for sponsorship at N140,000 while the final match will cost a sponsor N160,000. Other matches and the review can be sponsored with N70,000 each.

Nigerians certainly cannot contemplate missing the glamour of the games. But if it comes to that, it is just as well. For participants — athletes, organisations and countries alike — the Olympics are much more than the games. The world's most spectacular event is big business. It has a price tag.

By Debo Adesina



OLYMPICS



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Africa

The admission of a South African contingent into the games now or in the future would result in more than half the world led by Africa, staying away from the games. This would not be the first time the spectre of racism has shown up at the Olympics. In 1936, Adolph Hitler had refused to acknowledge Jesse Owens who won four gold medals and shattered the myth of Aryan supremacy at the Berlin games. Three decades later, amid threat of boycott by Blacks and Black nations, Tommie Smith and John Carlos gave their famous Black power salutes in demonstration against racism in America.

The Olympics has also had more than its fair share of boycott on grounds of ideological differences. Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands withdrew from the game in 1956 to protest the crushing of an Hungarian revolt by the Soviet Union. In the same year, the Chinese waved goodbye to the games when the national flag of Taiwan was raised.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter forbade America's participation in the Moscow games to protest the Soviet

offensive in Afghanistan. Thirty Western nations followed the example of the Americans. In 1984, the Soviets retaliated when they refused to show up at the Los Angeles Olympics. The reasons ranged from "rude violations" of the Olympic charter to "anti-Soviet campaign launched by reactionary circles in the United States". Soviet satellites, including East Germany followed the USSR.

Already, North Korea has pulled out of the Seoul Olympics protesting the allocation of only six of the 25 events of the games to it by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Cuba, Ethiopia, Seychelles and Albania have also withdrawn in sympathy with the North Koreans. As at last week, it was not yet clear whether Madagascar would go for the games or join in the sympathy protest. If it does, only 160 nations will be featuring for this year's Olympics. But as if to echo the words of Avery Brundage in 1972 after the massacre of members of the Israeli contingent, the world insists that "The Games must go on."

By Wale Akin Alna



Korea: A gold already

The host flaunts an impressive sheet of successes

FOR South Korea, hosting the Olympic some day was a kind of manifest destiny. With a dizzying average annual growth rate of 8.8 per cent for the past 20 years and a 1987 Gross Domestic Product of \$119 billion, South Korea was generally acclaimed as the fastest growing economy in the world last year. Even so, the Republic of Korea, ranked 15th among the world's most technologically advanced countries is already pursuing, with a single-mindedness of purpose, its ultimate goal to be grouped among the top ten.

The only serious political drawback, however, was that the Republic was a divided nation. South Korea, happily with its economic clout, overcame this obstacle on September 30, 1981. At the 84th general convention of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Baden-Baden, West-Germany, Seoul, the South Korean capital got an overwhelming vote of 52 to 27 to wrench the hosting of the 24th Olympiad from the Japanese city of Nagoya.

Since then, the South Koreans, whose 41 million citizens, could be regarded along with their Japanese cousins as the busy ants of Asia have put in virtually everything to ensure the success of the games. With 161 out of the 167 member-nations already agreed to attend and a billing of 13,000 athletes and sports officials, the 24th Seoul Olympiad will be the largest in the history of the Games so far. From these countries, some 14,000 journalists and 250,000 tourists are expected to pour into South Korea.

The Republic, however, is one of the first to concede the enormous advantages the Games will bring. Even though it is the wish of South Korea to use the Games "to help build a peaceful world", the Seoul Olympic Committee admitted that among other things, "the Games will stimulate economic development." According to the committee, "the business of planning and producing such a grand event brings with it many demanding precedents that will inspire Korea to produce more and better goods, introducing new technology and improving the old."

As a test case of its ability to host the 1988 Olympiad, Korea had the Seoul Asian Games in 1986: the largest Asian ever, which attracted 4,800 athletes

from 27 countries. The success of that Game bolstered the confidence of South Korea.

With the Olympics coming up this week, Seoul has put its house perfectly in order. Most venues of the Games will either be in Seoul or its vicinity. Competitions in 11 of the 23 official sports will take place either in the Seoul Sports Complex or the Olympic Park, both of which are located in South-eastern Seoul. The mammoth Seoul complex completed in 1984 occupies a land area of 545,000 sq metres. In this complex is the Olympic stadium whose capacity of 100,000 persons will cater for the opening and closing ceremonies. It also has two gymnasiums for basketball and boxing, as well as an indoor swimming pool, basketball park and a warm-up field. The 2,908,200 sq

metre Olympic Park on the other hand, comprises a 6,000-capacity velodrome, three gymnasiums for 26,000 gymnastics, fencing and weightlifting events. In addition, there are an indoor swimming pool, 18 hard tennis courts, alongside athletes and press villages.

Extending from the vast Asian continent to some 200 kilometres, the Korean Peninsula has since 1948 been split into two — the Republic of Korea in the south and the Communist North Korea.

Taken as a whole, the Peninsula because of its scenic mountains and rivers recalled by the Koreans the "land decorated with golden embroidery." If South Korea hosts and successfully closes the 24th Olympiad, October 2, then its imagery of gold would no longer be metaphoric, but a powerful global statement that would add yet another to its economic laurels.



• Korea's skyline: Fallout of technological advance

Bound to violence

Ghetto-boy Tyson can't find a soothing rhythm with success

THE Kid dynamite. The monster. Iron Fist or Iron Mike Tyson. These are just a few of the nicknames Mike Tyson, the heavyweight boxing champion of the world, has garnered from boxing buffs in their bid to get a catch-all description of him.

For someone whose performance in the roped square has prompted so much groping for the right superlatives and who has confessed to having a "very violent nature" Tyson's awesome image is already taking on the air of legend.

He is one boxer for whom fighting in the roped square is an opportunity to give free reign to his violent nature.

Mike Tyson is certainly bound to violence, and he has brutally demonstrated this in all his appearances in the ring against the best in the art.

If the late Cus D'Amato, the sagely boxing trainer, had not taken him out of the Reformatory on Catskill Mountains in New York, Tyson would still have found vent for his violent nature. Indeed, he got into the Reformatory by mugging and robbing on the streets of New York where, as one of the mean guys, he put many souls to grief.

But Tyson has metamorphosed from the pick-pocket into a money-bag, owning multi-million dollar mansions and cars. But all the glamour of the high society notwithstanding, the pull to the streets is for him as strong as ever. Perhaps he has yet to meet a satisfying match in the ring. This may explain why he is still drawn to the streets, why he remains



• Tyson. Still drawn to the streets

loyal to his roots. He has been taken out of the ghetto but the ghetto still thrives in him. And so he has returned from time to time to the familiar turf of street brawls.

On August 28, Tyson exploded on 125th Street against old rival and fellow street thug, Mitch "Blood" Green in what amounted to their second bout. The first had taken place in the ring at New York's Madison Square Garden in 1986. Tyson won the fight on points and Green is today one of the few boxers who have so far gone the distance with the Kid Dynamite. At 4 a.m. in the dimly alleys of New York two weeks ago the rules belonged to the street and after the one-minute brawl, Green had his face battered and his left eye closed while Tyson broke his right arm.

Tongues were still wagging on Tyson's mission at such early hours of the day on a street reputed to be a drug trafficker's den when he drove himself to a crash

on Sunday, September 4. Tyson hit his head against the windshield after his car rammed into a tree near his training camp in New York. Tyson suffered his first "knock-out" as he was picked up unconscious. The accident, it is now confirmed, will affect his scheduled title defence in London against Britain's Frank Bruno in October. Says Terry Lawless, Bruno's manager, of the accident: "It only goes to prove that Tyson is human and can be knocked out even if it took a tree to do it." Tyson's assistant manager, Steven Loll, however believes "the tree also took a 10-count", an apparent reference to Tyson's power and his confidence that the accident would not affect his ward's performance against Bruno. "Mike", he says, "abhors the idea of losing. That would be worse than 100 car crashes humiliation."

There is now a cloud, however, over the October 22 date of the fight in London. Though Tyson went through a precautionary

brain scan in a New York hospital after the accident and was cleared to defend the title, the fight is unlikely to hold for some time given the World Boxing Council's rule that a boxer who is knocked out must have an enforced rest of 60 days. So, if the doctors at Hospital where he was first treated Tyson at Columbia confirm that he was first conscious, the WBC would be compelled to apply the rule and postpone this fight. With an indefinite rest and a trail of violence - perhaps prompted by "inactivity", the question is: Can Tyson wait, or is he capable of bottling, or is an enormous nature which succeeded success which Frank Bruno, who put his head against the tree to face Mike Tyson, is itching for action. Tyson's manager, however, says he is "going to hit Tyson hard, but everything else, I'm but everything else, I'm for Frank anything seems to be going wrong, also, I'm

But Tyson, who has put his head against the tree to face Mike Tyson, is itching for action. Tyson's manager, however, says he is "going to hit Tyson hard, but everything else, I'm but everything else, I'm for Frank anything seems to be going wrong, also, I'm

And observe in sending me destroys my... Hows... member... times... problem... with... to end... last... continue... cords... another... fountain

A dish in the sky

TV viewers soon to savour a rich menu of programmes.

IT may soon become fashionable for more Lagos homes to switch on their television sets, and probably receive the greeting: "Good morning, America." The programme is one, among others, which viewers will have the opportunity of receiving from the US, via satellite transmission. But to be able to receive such programmes requires a satellite antenna, a curved dish-like receptor. At present, only a privileged few can afford a satellite dish which costs a bomb.

Degue Broadcasting Network (DBN), a wholly indigenous media organisation, however, appears set to upstage the elitist club of "dish" owners. A successful wrapping up of a \$4.2 million deal, would give DBN a 2-year franchise to solely distribute the programmes of Cable Network News (CNN), owned by Turner Broadcasting in the United States.

The Atlanta-based CNN is aided in beaming its programmes worldwide by a lease of the US government-owned Armed Forces Radio and Television Satellite (AFRTS). Reception of CNN's programmes in Nigeria by individual dish owners are claimed to be illegal, as this is being done without CNN's authorisation. To protect its franchise, DBN has sounded a warning bell against the continued piracy of CNN's programmes.

Through the technical co-operation of Hero Communications, based in Miami, US, DBN will design and manufacture dishes to suit Nigeria's geographical and climatic re-

quirements. For instance, while Britain uses dishes of 1.5 metre in diameter, Nigeria would need a minimum of 5m.

Prospective dish owners may, however, benefit from DBN's involvement in the assembling of dishes.



• Adun. Prices not high

"Our dishes will sell for as little as between \$50,000 — \$60,000 against the average market price of \$100,000," explains Sanny Adun, DBN's 32-year-old Chief Executive. Adun, who believes that the prices are not high, assures that DBN would not be catering to the tastes of an elite class. "Estate residents who cannot afford individual dishes could collectively own one. Cables would be piped from a central dish into their homes", Adun says.

Doling out \$50,000 for a dish would not, however, grant owners automatic visa entry into the US dominated zone of television's tinsel town. Programmes reception by individuals would become possible only with the pay-



• Degue's dish. Bringing America to Nigeria

ment of an annual \$50,000 service charge fee to DBN. Interested five star hotels such as the Lagos Sheraton and NICON Noga Hilton, Abuja, would receive a tab of \$1 daily per hotel room. Dish owners reluctant to subscribe to DBN would have their reception of CNN's programmes scrambled from the Atlanta Network.

But DBN subscribers would be equipped with a decoder to make reception accessible. If DBN eases this plan of checking piracy into motion, dish owners who want to play the artful dodger, would be knocking their heads against a wall. Their only recourse would be the programmes of other networks.

The satellite dishes trend has, however, been frowned at in some quarters. Mr Shyngle Wigwe, the Director-General of the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA), welcomes the idea of people having a

choice of programmes. But he believes a wide-spread use of dishes portends another dangerous round of colonial experience, albeit remotely controlled. DBN, however, is quick to counter that "We will also regularly package news and activities about Nigeria which CNN would beam worldwide."

To a large extent, DBN appears to be sitting pretty. Before the year's end, the company hopes to secure the rights to 5 other cable channels: Home Box Office (HBO), 24 hours of movies, mostly, Black Entertainment Television (BET), Entertainment Sports Programme Network (ESPN) — 24 hours sports, Sky channel and Show time, a 24-hour movie channel. Apparently, dish owners are in for a swell treat. With America in their living rooms, there can't be much "checking out" to do, Right?

By John Nwab



• Mubatu Satisfied as a successful battery charger

The women are coming

Females take jobs hitherto reserved for men

OLUMAROKUN Street is a busy street in the high density Mushin area of Lagos. The street's narrow gutter-lined stretch is congested with numerous trading shops. In front of some of the huddled houses are displayed various wares, while others have sewing institutes, printing and electronics shops. In the midst of the clutter of machines, frying of plantain and bean cakes, is a little workshop adjoined to a bungalow. The workshop is littered with kegs of acid, vehicle batteries, various hardware tools and engine oil. The soil of the premises is blackened by the spill of engine oil.

A client arrives with a faulty battery seeking to find the workshop's proprietor. But a lady, Muibatadeyemi, comes out clad in an oil-soiled overall to offer assistance. Muibatadeyemi, whose customers fondly call her *Obirin battery* (female battery charger), knows of no other woman in the trade. Fifteen years ago, she had a choice between two occupations — sewing and battery charg-

ing. Reflecting on the choice she eventually made, she says, "Women are commonly found in the sewing business, but my work is new to them".

Muibatadeyemi's workshop is always busy as her customers line up with their batteries. She is satisfied with her success which is because "I work patiently with care on the faulty batteries". Muibatadeyemi, who is married to a draughtsman with whom she has three children, is one of the increasing number of women who are taking to odd jobs — jobs formerly exclusive to men.

Iyabo Dargriola leaves home at 5.30 a.m. everyday and heads for a construction site in Ajegunle where she sweats to earn a living. Once at the site, Iyabo ties her wrapper tightly round her waist, knotting its loose ends. A scarf is bound around her hair. This little ritual signifies the start of work. Says Iyabo: "It is strenuous but I have to survive". A widow with two children, she carries about 100 blocks to earn N10 at the end of the day.



• Conductress on duty: No disguise

Her colleague, Bisi Taidi, dressed similarly, recalls that they were the butt of crude jibes from the male workers in the early days. But the lady bricklayers have come a long way. Bisi points proudly to the four-storey Beverton Hotel, along Okoya street in Ajegunle, to whose construction they contributed. While Adeyemi took to acid and batteries to prove

that what men can do women can too, the bricklayers blame their plodding about in sand and cement on the nation's slumbering economy. "Our present state doesn't permit women to select lazy jobs," says Iyabo. She was retrenched from a bakery where she worked as a pan cleaner. Bus conductress Ngozi Edabor operates between Mile 2 bus stop and Lagos Island. A mother of seven, she admits feeling "odd" in the job but says "It's the only way I can sustain my children".

These women in odd jobs have to cope with varying occupational hazards. Muibatadeyemi's palms have become coarse. She also remembers suffering from blisters during the early years of training. The weight of the batteries have also taken a toll on her shoulders and back. But the days of aching arms and backaches are gone.

Having mastered the rigours of the trade, Adeyemi now has three apprentices learning the trade in her workshop. She

now spends less time handling acid. Her performance has brought other rewards. As secretary of the Lagos State Battery Chargers Cooperative Union, Muibatadeyemi says she has never experienced any form of discrimination from the men. I always take part in decision-making.

The exploring of male-dominated terrains has also extended to sports. During last month's Oba Akran football series, fair-skinned Bright Oranyeli, who is "crazy about football", officiated as a "lineswoman." A member of the Lagos State Referees Society, Oranyeli is a secretary at Guinness Nigeria Limited.

Women newspaper vendors are not a common sight now, but the situation is certainly changing. Considering the strain of the job, many think it's hardly a woman's beat. But Philomina Okafor thinks otherwise. Her itinerary takes her round various parts of Surulere, where she hawks newspapers and magazines. A school certificate holder, Philomina says: "I used to wear trousers and maintain a low hair cut in order to look manly. But I later kept my identity after an encounter with my former school mistress." The teacher advised Philomina not to feel embarrassed about hawking newspapers to earn a living.

By Omolaya Afalola with reports from Chinwe Oluocha

A secret passion

HELLEN Etteh's passion for songs as a young girl earned her the nickname of "Shapiro", after the American singer Helen Shapiro. But unknown to her classmates Helen had another secret passion for designing dresses and beauty care. Though the songs came to a halt, the nick name of "Shapiro" stuck. And so did the zeal to be a beautician. Today Helen's youthful fancy — beauty parlour — goes by the name "Shapiro". Cosmetics apart, Helen says that "smiling" is another recipe for beauty. "Frowning causes wrinkles earlier than they should appear," she notes. Helen is sure Nigerian women can match their European counterparts when it comes to looking after their bodies. But she cautions that "one shouldn't copy another person's mode of dressing because we all don't have the same features."

Helen who likes to describe herself as "an old



• Etteh: More a writer than a beautician

hand in the beauty world," also has three other companies under her wings. Some of her employees are men and she admits that it's not "too easy to run a place where you control so many men." So how does she cope? "One has to work harder than the men, to keep things going," she says. Besides that, Helen adds, "I'm a bull who keeps hitting in reference to her zodiac sign, Taurus."

Unconventional works

HIS 33, Humphrey Ojeifo, is a master of his fate. This explains why he neither believes in luck nor in the stars. On the contrary, he believes in hard work.

But that's not all. He also believes in the philosophy of the absurd. That is why his first set of experimental plays are created to "shock" his audience. And by so doing, the plays "arouse the consciousness against the absurdity."

Since 1983, Ojeifo has been teaching Media Arts at the Auchi Polytechnic. But he does not want to be



• Ojeifo: God in Islam and Christianity

identified as a teacher. "I am more a writer than a teacher," he muses. So far, he has three plays *Parcel for Sacrifice*, *The Missing Dreams* and *One Day next Month* to his credit. His next collection (this time, of poems), *Flames of tears and other poems* is expected on the bookshelves next month.

Like the first set of plays, the poems explore the *avant garde* genre of literature. They all deviate from the conventional patterns. Besides, they are not

PEOPLE

meant for entertainment, but to set the audience thinking.

Switch in faith

CHANGING faith isn't exactly a novelty. But for Nigeria's Albert Aylade Fasina, 49, there's a little extra. Nurtured in a polygamous Islamic home, Fasina's "traumatic" brush with death, led to the transition in his life. And he's gone a step further. Fasina's switch in faith now sees him rising in the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church.

Last Saturday, he was consecrated the co-adjutor bishop of the Ijebu-Ode catholic diocese. He, however, doesn't see his renouncing Islam as a clean break from his parents' religion. To him it's a "continuum because even as a muslim, God was working in my life." And he still gives praises to his late father for providing that "sound religious foundation."

By Omotayo Afolabi and

Dill Ojukwu

• Etteh: Old hand in the beauty world

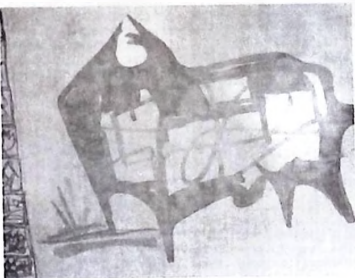
Wasted society in colours

Oguibe joins the attacks on the generation

LIKE the enraptured and lascivious lover, Olu Oguibe's "...unbind me" art exhibition, which opened from August 31 to September 4, at Didi Museum, on Victoria Island, Lagos, beckons seductively to a self-denuded society to be ravished and consummated. But is the title of the exhibition not as deceptive as a generation-old offended lover trying under the cloak of an irresistible temptation at vengeance?

After all, on a closer look, the forty eight art pieces on exhibition are no less forty eight fiery fireballs hauled at a beleaguered generation whose first name has become "waste" following the Soyinka tradition of attack. And like the sweet-tongued infatuated lover bent on mischief, Oguibe's works are finely dressed in the alluring media of water colour, oil, aquatint and line-etching that keeps the hungry eye of the art connoisseur roving from one work to the other.

But what does the eye see? Pictorial metaphors packaged in angry shouts in the manner of the boxer's straight right-hand punches to the psychological jaw of a failing society. Oguibe paints an age burdened by stone-loads of crippling problems. Well-baked in history and reality the array of rocks that abound in Abokuta in Ogun State which Oguibe saw on a visit, become in an untitled oil work dated 1987, a load too heavy to make the neck disappear into the chest cavity. The brush strokes dexterously transform the rough lines into heaves and swells; into angry tides and tre-



• Image of the beast

mors, to record the bloodied themes of the 24-year old artist

Refusing to be tethered by decorum, the artist, feeling too encumbered and engrossed by what he sees in his society, forgets, in his own statement, to run the comb through his hair right from the early eighties. Now, he flaunts a heaving dreadlock reminiscent of rastafarians and hippies who but seek fulfilment in their restless and often times reckless denunciation of humanity.

To present succinctly his state of mind, Oguibe parades at the exhibition, a gamut of foreboding themes like: "First Vision of the Butcherbird," "Mother with a Dead Child," "Waiting for the Unknown," "an Image of the Beast..."

But what best represents the haunted artist's mind is "A Portrait of the Artist," a line etching where an apparently overburdened and overwhelmed artist is caged with only two alternatives. Either he bursts through the bars



• Portrait of the artist

that confine him and be bloodied, or take the way of the hangman, the noose of which beckons overhead.

To Oguibe the theme of an art piece dictates the medium and the call of immediacy and spontaneity of creation dictates the colour. Though this concept sometimes robs the works of titles, it bestows on the reviewer the benefit of unhindered interpretation.

What appears, however, to be a chink in Oguibe's work is his lack of contrariness. He sees his self-

appointed mission, the pictorial and emotional, only on the grimness of depravity. The only ray of hope, a tiny drop of greenery in an overwhelming mass of colours of death and waste, as in "A Speck of Green" becomes the widow's mite proffered by an unwilling hand. Can the "speck of green," a sign of regeneration, survive? This becomes the worry.

Short of any comforting aspect, Oguibe's works are songs of pains and tears. No laughter, no relief of a beautiful countryside, no idealistic relationships, no dreams. The deep metaphors with which he enconces his work must have done him in. His departure from painting the mundane, the expected and the obvious like the beggar on the street corner, the *molue* with overspilling passengers, Ogbete market's recurring fire mishaps, though commendable, is equally inhibiting. The artist's hallowed metaphors become esoteric, bordering instead on evangelistic eccentricism.

This is the point where one begins to think of the patron saint of the exhibition, Christopher Okigbo of evergreen poetic memories whose poem, *Path of Thunder* "...Earth, unbind me; let me be the prodigal..." farms the seminal theme of the celebration. And Okigbo belongs to the subliminal latitudes of only the initiated.

At the end, Alhaji Shehu Musa, Makama Nupe, the American Ambassador to Nigeria, Princeton Lyman, Major General Omu and the throng of other art lovers were not in doubt that Oguibe who lectures fine art at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka has arrived.

By Humphrey Bekaran

The Netherlands/Nigeria: Partners in trade

Haskoning

To the Deputy Managing Director of Haskoning, Nigeria, Professor Ir. Brower, the way consultancy is being practised in Nigeria falls short of high professional standards. Though the Professor's comment came before Bagauda dam disasters, the Professor believes that many consultants in Nigeria are operating only to win contracts: "They (Consultants) are ready to quote below normal rates just to win contract". It is a popular opinion that Nigeria would not have experienced any flood disasters in recent times had it listened to the advice of experts.

Haskoning is one of such experienced firms that have not only advised but analysed and presented papers on such areas that are prone to flood disaster in Nigeria.

Van Leer

With its interests scattered in 30 countries around the world, Van Leer has continued to provide the world with its variety of packaging products. The company's belief in the prospects of packaging industry is one of strong conviction. "In 1987, the group continued with high capital investment profile in its core business and this reflects our belief that prospects in the packaging industry are good". To assist Van Leer achieve its investment last year, a total contribution of 30 million dutch guilders worth of capital was made available by the shareholders and some of its non-core business activities were sold out.

The company's executive director says "the group only helps Van Leer companies in other countries to solve the problem". Van Leer Group's products are steel containers, fibre containers, plastic containers, closures, among others.

Van Leer (Nigeria), one of the Van Leer companies produces steel drums, for local consumption. "We have been in Nigeria for a long time", said Mr. Burg. However, Van Leer in Nigeria is planning to go into manufacturing of plastic containers, so as to complement its core business which has been in continuous decline over the years.

By Tony Arowolo



• Ladan Bako, Nigerian Ambassador to The Netherlands. "I am doing my best to create more awareness among the Dutch about Nigerians and Nigerian products"



• Leon P.J. Metzger, Ambassador of The Netherlands in Nigeria. "I am trying to see the marketability of Nigerian furniture in The Netherlands"

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Win one, lose one

First Bank in a legal tangle

THE banking world is a jungle where only the strong survive — in the long run. But even so, First Bank, Nigeria's biggest bank knows when it has to run for it. Presumably informed by the survival instinct, the bank, few weeks back, went to the public with a splash of conspicuous adverts announcing its victory in Iredia vs First Bank Nigeria Limited in Justice J.A.P. Oki's court in Benin. Perhaps, serving as a notice to other intending litigants, the advertisement subtly hinted, in a euphoric tone that the case has overturned an earlier case involving First Bank and Doyin Investments Nigeria Limited in which the bank lost.

In the advertisements announcing Oki's judgement, First Bank jubilantly informs the public that, "The Honourable Chief Judge who had refused to follow the judgement of a Lagos High Court in the case of Doyin Investments Limited against the same bank, reiterated in his judgement the fact that the delay in obtaining foreign exchange from the Central Bank by First Bank was due to Central Bank's difficulty in procuring foreign exchange in Nigeria."

This, according to the judge, was a difficulty affecting transactions in all banks in Nigeria. Behind this euphoria, however, First Bank may not have given out enough information to the public to understand the Doyin case.

When the Central Bank of Nigeria withdrew over N5.6 billion naira that accumulated in banks as a result of unmet pre-SFEM Foreign Exchange transactions from the banking system, banks were jittery about settling foreign exchange shortfalls. Then the CBN came up with the magic formula that seems to have satisfied all parties: differentials in exchange rates for letters of credit when the naira started sinking would be shared by the CBN, the banks and their customers. Everybody thought that the arrangement was fair and square. Now some technicalities may be making some smart importers look beyond the fine prints of legal contracts binding them and the banks in search of relief.

That is what Doyin Investments Limited did by taking First Bank to court for negligence and not to claim on shortfalls resulting from CBN guidelines. Prince Samuel Adedoyin, Chairman

and Managing Director of the company said: "We did not query the authority of the CBN. We are saying that First Bank was not pipelining our documents within the time specified by the CBN regulations. That is what we challenged and won."

Before a Lagos State High Court Judge,

Justice A. B. Adeniji, it would appear that First Bank did not quite meet its own end of the bargain. For example, a letter of credit for 6.8 million Japanese Yen for which Doyin Investment submitted a bill of entry to First Bank on August 28, 1985 should have reached the CBN 21 days later. The document got to CBN on September 26, 1986, the date SFEM kicked off and 493 days after it was due. By then the fluctuation in foreign exchange rate had meant some N47,227 in additional shortfall caused by the long delay. For a US \$122,086 letter of credit the company raked in some 511 days' delay and N95,650 in charges.

WHEN, however, another customer to the bank, S.A. Iredia, Sole Proprietor of Sadia Fishing Industries, took First Bank to court, he lost. But were both cases identical? Lawyers say no. Chief Adebayo Ogunsanya (SAN), of Ogunsanya and Company, and Doyin's Lawyer said that in the Iredia case, the plaintiff contested the right of First Bank to debit its account with shortfalls under the conditions for opening letters of credit. In his words "this indemnity could be relied upon by the bank against the plaintiff where no negligence is alleged or if alleged is not proved against the bank."

Even as lawyers agree that such cases could be lost or won on technical or other grounds, they also question the wisdom of assuming that a persuasive precedence could be binding on another High Court. For instance, while decisions may be binding on other lower courts, only decisions of Courts of Appeal and the Supreme Court are binding on High Courts.

However, the First Bank advertisement may be aiming for a different audience: its numerous importing customers



• Oluwole Adeosun, MD First Bank's: A dicey affair

during the import licence regime. The Doyin case was a consolidated case involving six companies which in the end might cost the bank a whopping N3 million, plus legal and administrative headaches. The Iredia case was for N410,353.55. If the foul up of Doyin papers was not an isolated case, it would seem that it could open up a Pandora's box — a problem the bank would be hard put to contain.

Chief Ogunsanya says that the advertisement may have been placed to dissuade customers, most of whom have different problems, from taking advantage of Doyin's case to join the bandwagon. They may do so, but perhaps not before Doyin vs First Bank is eventually fully tested at the Supreme Court — a situation that some lawyers say may be inevitable.

Already the parties are on their way. Having applied to the High Court for a break without success, First Bank has gone to the Court of Appeal for a stay of execution until after the case has been heard at the Appeal Court. But even as First Bank fights back, the "elephant" is not making things easier for customers, and the public. Alhaji O. Afuwape, First Bank's Acting Deputy General Manager (Legal) says he does not know the facts of the two cases and so would not comment. Nor would the bank's spokesman.

Be that as it may, there could be far reaching fallout from the Doyin case. For one thing, if the bank is not able to fight its way through, it may face staggering losses. That is, if Doyin is not an isolated case. Also the bank may well lose substantial important customers to other banks. Doyin is believed to have withdrawn its account already. However, not all First Bank customers have Doyin's resources and the "elephant" still commands an enviable financial might.

By Herbert Ojeh

Pains of freshness

Employers go for experienced personnel

GETTING a top paying job in Nigeria is not news anymore. It is however a mirage that continues to recede the more one hunts for it. Too had for new graduates and younger people but a haven created by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), for the experienced near-middle age to middle age executives. For Alfred Hua it was four years of earth crushing trek from one industry to another in search of employment after leaving the University of Calabar. But lack of experience always robbed him of any slim chances until luck came his way with the Nigerian Airports Authority recently.

Given this trend, the future of fresh graduates in the labour market therefore looks bleak, since they enter the employment world with little or no work experience needed by employers. Expert opinion is also suggesting that the trend will continue for a while as those retrenched in the wake of SAP have not been fully absorbed. Hence, firms can easily avail themselves of such experienced personnel.

Again, the manufacturing sector, with 10 percent increase in output last year, are equally in dilemma as consumers' incomes have been eroded by SAP. Thus, manufacturers, desperate more than ever before, to get their wares across to consumers, now place high premium on tested sales managers with successful executive careers and proven record of achievements. For instance, between August 1987 and last March, International Paints employed eight executives, all of who were deployed to sales and marketing-related jobs. The stakes are equally high for financial controllers and chief accountants who industry analysts say are needed to ensure prudent financial management as well as give financial guide to sales personnel in an era of challenging sales strategy and tight credit control.

One notable feature of this trend has been for firms to lure such top flight executives from their existing positions with juicy salaries and benefits should they prove difficult to get. Chief M. Ade Soneye, Managing Director, MAS Management Consulting Limited, in his paper at the Institute of Directors' conference, supported this practice when he said: "In today's enterprises... good results

can only be achieved by managers... who feel good about themselves as well as their jobs... this will be near impossible without the right rewards". Although firms simply refer to salaries offered these executives as attractive, reliable sources have it that chief executives and senior managers in the manufacturing sector are lured with salaries in the region of ₦60,000 and ₦80,000 per annum respectively with an aggregate allowance of about ₦150,000 including company furnished accommodation, among others, while junior managers get between ₦15,000 to ₦30,000 per annum and allowances of about ₦12,000.

If the manufacturing sector is guilty of poaching, the banking sector is worse for it. The advent of so many new banks in the last two years, with no apparent training facilities, now places emphasis on the employment of experienced, trained and tested professional bankers as well as accountants in the established banks by these new banks. Since very senior executives may not easily leave their existing positions, attention had been on the ranks of young assistant general managers and senior managers. For additional inducement it is not strange to find a General Manager who may move across the street to become chief executive of a new, small merchant bank, with remuneration comparing favourably with that of a chief executive of a medium-size bank.

Mr. A. Onitoko, spokesman for National Bank of Nigeria (NBN), agrees, saying that the exercise is not a cheap one as offers could be in excess of most chief executives of established banks. He gave instances of FCB Bank that

■ *Umar: Can his ministry come to the rescue?*



approached him with an offer in excess of his present salary at NBN, but he would not accept it because of what he referred to as non-pecuniary factors usually retarding movement of certain top executives. Although he did not reveal the package FCB Bank offered him it is no secret that most bank executives are lured with salary offers of between ₦80,000 and ₦160,000 per annum which include the 140 per cent salary increase which came into effect last May. They also enjoy several allowances which when quantified could amount to ₦200,000 and above. For instance one of the newest merchant banks recently rented an apartment for over ₦100,000 per annum excluding the furnishing which could also run into thousands of naira for an executive director.

However, this trend of executive employment is yet to interest the petrochemical and oil sectors where emphasis is to recruit young graduates with little or no work experience. The reasons gathered at the Shell headquarters, is to enable these young graduates who should not be more than 35 years to grow with and imbibe the culture of the industry. Secondly, since the industry spends a lot in their training, they are therefore expected to put in considerable number of years in the service of the firm before retirement. Although their staff demand cuts across various disciplines, petroleum and mechanical engineers and exploration personnel are much more favoured.

It is astonishing to note, however, that this sector which produces the wealth that serves the other sectors of the economy, trails behind the banking sector in remunerations. This, observers believe, is due to the lack of competition for personnel within the sector as is the case in the banking sector.

The sector which operates a sort of unified salary regime presently pays its middle level executives and chief executives an annual salary of ₦45,000 and ₦70,000 respectively with a modest increase of 25 per cent recently implemented compared to 14 per cent in the banking sector. But they, however, enjoy almost the same level of benefits with their banking counterparts.

Another group of professionals catching the fancy of employers generally are computer scientists. Although its demand has not reached a crescendo, experts believe that as the economy becomes more complex, more of them would be demanded to resolve certain complex problems.

By Lucky Finkpa.

Politics of pressure

Berlin hosts IMF, World Bank meeting of buoyant and depressed economies

A GAINST a backdrop of uncertainties, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would be holding their annual ritual of meeting to work out financial policies for the coming year. Scheduled for Berlin, the administrative and economic headquarters of West Germany, this year's meeting is expected to roll off the ground in the last two weeks of this month.

One of the major blocks on the way of the meeting is the issue of funding. The United States Government is currently under pressure from its Congress to thin down financial subvention to the two bodies. It is widely believed that a possible loss of influence awaits the US if it yields to congressional pressure. For one, it could lose its veto power in the wake of possible changes in the bank's charter and additions to its executive board of directors, that would normally follow reduction in US subvention to the two world financial institutions.

The World Bank's membership has already approved a capital increase in principle if most of the member countries pay their share and the US does not. The latter's votes, currently standing at 18.7 per cent will dip to around 11.5 per cent. The US requires at least 15 votes to retain its veto power.

Japan may apply its financial clout to assume a leading role, should the US fail to come up with its share of \$75 billion capital increase, by "buying up"

most of Washington's allocation. This could have far reaching implications. One major provision of the articles of the bank which observers are not playing down is that it should be located in the territory of the largest shareholder which should also provide the pres-



• World Bank President Conable: Relax demand on depressed economies

dent. If Japan cashes in on Washington's cold feet, it may not be strange to watch the headquarters of the custodian of world currency move from Washington to Tokyo.

However, there are other issues that

may be equally daunting at the upcoming jamboree. It is almost certain that Africa and developing countries' Finance Ministers would be asking for new money and more investments to bolster their battered economies. They are expected to also ask for some relaxation over the World Bank and IMF's new demands on them as a back-up measure to their painful restructuring efforts.

Other delegates will certainly ask rhetorical questions as to whether the developing nations as to whether the way of private enterprise accepted to go to a centrally planned economy, so, Soviet policies of "glasnost", economic "perestroika", openness would be restructuring minds.

One other probable issue that addressed would be Europe's protectionist policy against goods from the east, with Japan as the main target, and components, electronic goods and vehicles from the South Korea and Hong Kong. Textiles, for example, have been priced Korean competition have been causing well enough concern to the European Common Market to import tax on the goods.

Not to be left out is the US dollar in the presidential election. The outcome many would take issue with. Also, two major reasons for some of the year's meeting in the hard-pressed growth of the world economy promoted by its deliberate growth.

By Chinedu Soro

UBA donates

UNITED Bank for Africa (UBA) has made a donation of N10,000 to the Nigeria America Association towards the launching of a N2-million Nigeria America Research Library Fund. The offer was made on behalf of the bank by its managing director and chief executive, Alhaji S.S. Baffa and re-

• Baffa, UBA's MD

ceived on behalf of the association by its grand patron, Alhaji Ado Bayero, the Emir of Kano.

Loan for flood victims

AFRIBANK/IBWA has donated N50,000 as well as set up a N2 million emergency loan scheme for small scale farmers towards rehabilitating victims of the recent flood disaster in Kano State. The gesture was made on behalf of the bank by the Executive Director of Corporate Management and Development,

Alhaji I.Y. Abdullahi while the state Governor, Colonel Idris Garba received on behalf of victims

Company appeals

THE Calabar Cement Company has asked the Federal Government to write off the accrued N7.8 million interest from the N10.8 million taken in December and to convert the loan to a six per cent redeemable shares to be paid in five equal yearly instalments from 1994 in order to lighten its debt burden put

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STOCK MARKET WATCH

Can it cope?

Major reforms needed to put life in NSE

AFTER three months of lean volumes and even leaner price movements at the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE), the market started showing some signs of recovery in the last few weeks. Traded equities topped 419,000 shares. Even the Federal Government Development bonds, that had remained dormant for some months picked up some nine million naira from investors two weeks ago. The Stock Exchange closed at 218.5 points while *The African Guardian* composite index edged up to 467 points last week.

But current activity level of trading may not be upper-most in the minds of stock brokers and other stock exchange operators. Capital market operators have been edgy in recent weeks in the wake of new developments that would inevitably have some impact on the Exchange.

The recent guidelines on privatisation have brought to focus the relative preparedness of the NSE to cope with impending new issues that could easily dwarf the existing 100 odd shares quoted in the market. Beaming the daily transactions in the market to international capital markets alone may not do the trick. Some market watchers think

that major reforms must take place to put more life into the system. For instance, a few advocate that more exchanges will be needed to ease communication and share transfers apart from the ones existing in Port Harcourt, Lagos and Kaduna. This could be a major worry for an exchange with meagre resources to cope with.

Other fears are being expressed in some quarters also that the present management will not be able to adapt to emerging changes fast enough. Even though the NSE feels otherwise, a case may be made for the observed weaknesses of market operations. The feeling in the financial community is that stocks are generally not allowed to move freely in response to supply and demand. But Mr. Emmanuel Osholi, Managing Director of Rims Securities Limited says that the present price control measure is not bad for the existing market as long as management is responsive, without being rigid to pricing pulses.

However some element of reform is unavoidable and it appears that the NSE has time on its side: privatisation will be a gradual and slow process.

By Herbert Ojeh

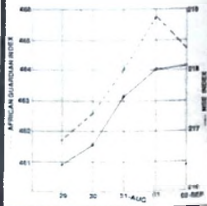
LEADING CONTRIBUTORS TO GUARDIAN INDEX SEPTEMBER 02, 1988

IBM	7.00
MOBILE TELEPHONE	6.00
WATER OIL	6.00
ALUMINIUM	4.00
GLASS	3.00
NEWSPAPERS	2.18
OTHER STOCKS	2.00
TOTAL	34.18



Summary of Supply & Demand Stocks

GUARDIAN & NSE INDICES SEPTEMBER 02, 1988



Warming up for Hi-tech

Body launches fund for technological take-off

NIGERIA could easily be next Korea or Taiwan in five or 10 years. How? By running a race against time to use the same tricks that make these emerging economic powers tick. That was the finding of the Alumni Association of the Petroleum Training Institute, Warri. And they are making a start. The institute has perfected its home-made "clay," a drilling mud that is taking the place of its imported equivalent.

If that seems too sandy, there are greasier innovations coming along. In the Warri Research Laboratory, diesel oil, kerosine and petrol are being squeezed out of waste lubricants. For the home, a gas cooker without a nozzle is available and soon a new device being developed to tell the user to refill his gas cylinder in the time to avoid niccups will

be on display. These are not new technologies but innovations and improvisations of existing systems with local raw materials. It has been made possible through adaptive research.

But the Warri training centre is not about to give NNPC refineries a run for it. However, Felix Obada, President of the National Alumni Association says that they want to use the man, the mind and the material to make these and several other ideas an everyday reality. They have the man, the mind and only part of the material. That missing part is money and the association is doing something about it.

Next month an Adaptive Research Fund will be launched to establish a permanent financial base for the work ahead.

By Herbert Ojeh

Highest traded stocks Week ended Sept 2, 1988

Stock	Shares Traded ('000)	Price (K)	Dividend (K)	Last Div. Date
John Holt	10,373	215	1.00	23/04/87
Ag. Breweries Ltd	45,242	160	1.00	26/05/88
Tug. Bulging	24,524	221*	10.00	26/09/87
Laminates Mfg. Co.	18,400	50	1.00	15/05/87
First Bank	10,164	35*	8.00	12/05/88
First Bank	10,163	154	5.00	12/05/88
First Bank	8,750	80	3.00	12/05/87
First Bank	8,181	100	16.00	29/04/88
IBM	7,763	300	24.00	07/12/87
Laminates Mfg. Ltd	7,185	125*	4.00	24/05/88
LAGN	6,983	116	13.00	19/02/88
Chemical and F&D	4,700	150*	13.00	22/02/88
First	5,799	475	34.00	30/05/88
R.T. Branson	3,816	63	6.50	22/11/81
Carbury	3,467	165	10.00	28/04/88
NTE	3,397	161*	27.00	27/11/87
Laminates	2,867	27*	2.00	05/03/87
John Holt Ltd	2,337	130	28.00	05/03/87
Sevenson Bank	2,262	132	10.00	05/07/88
John Berger	2,200	58*	6.80	15/08/88

'We are Latin Africans'

Cuban Ambassador reaffirms his country's roots in Africa

RECENTLY, racist South Africa announced that it has completed the pull-out of its troops from Southern Angola. This was part of the outcome of the US-brokered peace talks between Pretoria on the one hand, and Cuba and Angola on the other. The other part of the agreement was that Namibia would be granted its independence (by South Africa) after the time table for Cuban withdrawal from Angola has been worked out. Even as negotiations resumed in Brazzaville, Congo, last week, these however, still remain a mirage. The African Guardian's Reporter-Researcher, Emenike Okorie, spoke with the Cuban Ambassador in Lagos, Juan B. Infante Dulu on these and other issues.

The African Guardian: The Cuban leader, Fidel Castro, has often been accused by the West of trying to export revolution to Africa. Is this the hidden reason behind Cuban military presence in Angola?

Ambassador Dulu: Angola already successfully had its revolution and had won its independence from the Portuguese (November 11, 1975) before Cuban troops were sent to the country. What happened was that shortly after the independence, South Africa, with its sophisticated weapons and well-trained army had invaded the young nation. It was an aggression, a fascist aggression. What Cuba did was to go to the aid of Angola — under the invitation of President Augustinho Neto. Cuban troops were only rushed in to rescue Angola from the jaws of South Africa. This is not exporting revolution!

Speculations are that it is actually the Angolan government, not Cuba that foots the bill for the upkeep of the estimated 50,000 Cuban soldiers in Angola.

That's not true. Our commander-in-chief, Fidel Castro, has said this over and over again — that it is the Cuban people who sustain the troops in Angola. Let me also quickly add that our support to Angola is far from being just military. Today, we have over 3,000 Cuban doctors in Angola. We have thousands of teachers, engineers, economists, and so on. And, they all receive their salaries in Cuba.

But Western critics insist that Cuba's past and present involvements in Africa — in Algeria, Ethiopia and now Angola — have only been in times of crisis, often triggering greater bloodshed.

These agents who say these don't really know the role Cuba plays in Africa. Africa and Cuba have many years of peaceful, strong and excellent relations. In fact, we call ourselves Latin Africans because Cuba has very much African roots.



• Dulu

We also have thousands of African students studying in Cuba who have to pay nothing since education in Cuba is completely free. We are willing to contribute even much more. We cannot go back in our support for Africa.

What exactly are the short or long-term profits that Cuba hopes to gain from its involvement in Angola?

Nothing. We don't want to gain anything from helping our brothers in Angola. For you to fully understand why we do what we do (rush to the help of poorer, desperate nations), you have to take a good look at our history, the history of Cuba. In brief, I can say that we have it as an obligation to help poorer, needy countries because when we ourselves desperately needed help, we got it from friendly nations. We have adopted an internationalist

"Africa and Cuba have many years of peaceful, strong and excellent relations. In fact, we call ourselves Latin Africans because Cuba has very much African roots".

attitude because right from the time of our war of independence against the Spanish, up till the revolution, we enjoyed internationalist help from Africans, Indians, Chinese, and so on. For instance, the first man who began to organise resistance against the Spanish in Cuba was an Indian, from the Dominican Republic, not a Cuban. And Ernesto "Che" Guevara, a principal figure in the Cuban

revolution was Argentine, not Cuban... When the US imposed crippling economic blockade on Cuba, it was the Soviet Union and other friendly nations that came to our rescue... This is why we say we are internationalist.

Reports are that South African troops have been withdrawn from Southern Angola. Is there a guarantee that they won't come back? And when will the Cuban troops leave?

Angola, South Africa and Cuba, with the United States as observer, have agreed on a programme of withdrawal of troops. This begins with the evacuation of South African soldiers because it was they (South Africans) who invaded Angola, not Cubans. We were only invited by Angolans for assistance. When they (the Pretoria forces) are gone, then, the Cuban troops will begin to leave. This will be done in stages. This means that withdrawal of Cuban troops will only come when the South African soldiers are gone, and there have disappeared the danger of their returning to Angola. Only then can our troops leave, thereby allowing the MPLA government of President Eduardo Dos Santos to sort out its internal differences with rival UNITA.

A birthday bash

MAYBE in these SAP times, the scenario that occurred recently in Bendel State would not have raised an eyebrow. But then, we are not the ones to judge over which incidents eye-brows should be raised, especially when this particular state used up only N1.3 million to mark its 25th birthday. Ah! these austere times.

But we digress from the scene that occurred at the birthday of one of the "Super rich" of this state, who happens not to have borrowed a leaf or two from the state's penitentiary coffers. This particular money man, we hear, made available private jets for all those who were willing to come as his birthday bash. Anyway, back to the scenario. The rich man killed a cow for all journalists in the state. That was not all, he also gave them N2,000 to buy ingredients to cook the meat, just in case they could not afford it. Well, up to the point the cow was killed and dissected, there was order. But when it came to sharing out the parts, a battle erupted as pressmen fought tooth and nail for the choicest parts of the animal. At the end of the scene, we hear that journalists blooded (from their own blood as well as the cow's) retreated, some smiling over their choice loot, others not quite happy.

It's foul, judge!

It would appear that this is one of those rare cases where one man's freedom becomes another's prison. We don't know exactly what to make of it. But if what we hear is anything to go by, then the Chief Justice of Nigeria, the Federal Attorney-General, the Secretary to the Federal Government, the Plateau State Governor, among others, had better put on their thinking caps ... fast.

The gist is that a penitoner, Ibrahim Musa Jere (we hope he's far real asking those in authority to explain to him whether a High Court Judge in Plateau State has the powers to spring from jail, a prisoner who has been duly tried and convicted by another judge of co-ordinate jurisdiction, without recourse to the state governor and The Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy.

Our penitoner is particularly angered that "A top judge" (whatever that means) of the state judiciary periodically undertakes prison visits ostensibly to decongest the prison of detainees awaiting trial while in actual fact, the exercise is usually stage-managed to free close relations and friends of the top judge or those detainees whose relations approach or have close connections with him."

The aggrieved penitoner is, apparently, not oblivious of the judicial process. He took pains to document, at least one instance of what he considered to be "the abuse of judicial power". The man cited the case of a 21-year-old convict who was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment without an option of fine by a High Court judge on September 17, 1985 for the misappropriation of thousands of naira of his employer. Barely two months into the sentence, our "top judge" was said to have visited the prison and ordered the release of the convict.

Well, as we said earlier, we are not too sure of what to make of the penitoner's crusade. He could merely be what the courts term as *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) who's



only interested in seeing that justice is done. Or, he could be a mere busy-body out to satisfy some unknown motives.

Whatever it is, Ibrahim Musa's petition reminds one of how some Attorneys-General exercised the power of *habeas corpus* in the Second Republic to discontinue cases that were patently in the public and judicial interest to prosecute. Are the Constituent Assembly members listening?

Man's inhumanity

PERHAPS what we hear is happening at the Federal Hospital, Abuja is only a replay of the old-time saying that the sun must shine on those who are standing before its rays get to those who are prostrate.

As it is those who are standing, that is, those who are not only fit, but are able to get employment, have been having a *Mullus* name surviving since the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) that's been sapping away the very life juices of many Nigerians. Which is to say that those who have been made prostrate by illness at the Abuja Hospital and have been abandoned, in the bargain, by sup-



posed relations must have been to nei ... but not back.

We hear that at this imposing hospital where destitute patients are supposed to be catered for as welfare cases, life has been one long stretch of food shortages. We are informed that, at least once in a month, the ugly scenario of starvation is fully enacted for the benefit of the welfare cases. And the period of involuntary fasting could range from a few days to weeks. In July, for example, we are told, the hospital did not cook for two long weeks. And in one of these particularly bad periods, seven of those classified as welfare cases (they are more statistics if you must know) died of an ailment which some of the workers diagnosed as "involuntary hunger strike."

Why? Why no food?, you may ask. The official explanation each time a famine hits the wards is that the hospital authorities are having squabbles with the contractors over the prices of the foodstuff they supply.

That may be so even if it is unexcusable. What we find even more unexcusable is the sadistic attitude of the workers of the hospital who cart away food items on the very few occasions when they are available. On August 24, two of such workers whose robust looks suggest that they could die of obesity at any moment were caught by security officials of this hospital squirreling away choice parts of uncooked beef, mutton, and other food items. We hear that pilfering of foodstuff there could be a more valid explanation for the involuntary fast of those sick, destitute rather than the much vaunted squabbles with contractors. A case of man's inhumanity to man?



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