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JUSTICE

OKADIGBO

judicial terrorist

victim?

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LEKWOT is ill
....in Port Harcourt
prison

A scenic view of a stone bridge over a river at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. The bridge has several arches, and the water reflects the light. In the foreground, a pack of Benson & Hedges cigarettes is visible, with several cigarettes protruding from the top. The pack is white with gold accents and features the Benson & Hedges logo and the words "Special Filter" and "BENSON & HEDGES".

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COVER: The chips are down now but may be up again. But things will never change for Benedict Okadigbo after heading the Zango-Kataf Tribunal. What is it about this man? **TSM**, as always serves him just bare — all you never knew about the man.

From Port Harcourt Central Prison where Zamani Lekwat is waiting for the hangman, or maybe the mighty hand of state mercy, **TSM** beams to your home or office bit by bit of an eyewitness account of what has happened to the man since his arrival there.



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IT hasn't been particularly good for Nigerians this 1993. The year is only two months old, and it's been so bad.

We have learnt to live with strikes and counter-strikes from every sector. So much so that it has become an aberration to get home and find out that your child, husband or wife has gone to school or work. Everything seems to be at a stand still. Nobody is sure of anything except that, thank God, we still have a country, and yes, thank God again, we wake up everyday and find out that we are still breathing.

But not all of us have been that lucky. In the past three weeks, over one hundred people have died in motor accidents, particularly in Lagos, courtesy of the dreaded but indispensable **molue** bus. **Molue's** accidents have become a daily occurrence. Which is why as soon as one wakes up in the morning, one yawns and asks quizzically, "Did you listen to the news, has there been a **molue** accident today?"

But threatening to become an everyday discourse, more than the molue accidents, is the death sentence hanging on the neck of Zamani Lekwot and others. Nigerians, and that's unlike us, have refused to forget the sentence.

But threatening to become an everyday discourse, more than the **molue** accidents, is the death sentence hanging on the neck of Zamani Lekwot and others. Nigerians, and that's unlike us, have refused to forget the sentence.

Benedict Okadigbo, the retired High Court Judge whose lot it was to sentence Lekwot to death has come under severe criticisms, even from his constituency. He has been called names: Temperamental, emotional, a stooge, a guinea pig, ill tempered, irrational and more.

Okadigbo isn't in a position to reply. And so, we went digging into his background, into other cases he had handled to establish what kind

of man he is, his antecedents and his manner of justice.

Senior Assistant Editor, **Steve Raymond Okakwe** who went to Enugu to ferret out other cases handled by Okadigbo came back with a gold mine. Steve's findings form our cover story this week.

In Lagos, we spoke with somebody close to Okadigbo who gave us a low-down on Okadigbo's present state of mind. You'll find this interesting. And there is a coincidence here. Lekwot, now in the Port Harcourt Central Prisons, is ill and has visited the UPTH. What was wrong with him? This week is a week of beautiful stories, written in beautiful prose.

TSM, we give you the best every Sunday. Have a beautiful week.

Comfort Obi

YOUR write-up on the Zamani Lekwot issue is a very interesting piece reading through it one wonders whether the old coward called Okadigbo is a human being or a robot to have been toyed into hanging justice. He is a betrayer and a shame to the legal profession. Rather than call him Justice Okadigbo, he should be called Injustice Okadigbo!

B.A. Gabakau
Malduguri

I WAS dismayed by your report concerning the convicted Katsaf. The whole report was biased and unfair. The reporters clearly showed their support for Zamani Lekwot and co up to even wanting them to be free! What irritated me most is how the reporters forgot the atrocities committed by these few people to the innocent unarmed Hausas and Fulanis. Why don't they investigate how many women were made widows, how many children were made orphans, how many people were made homeless.

For the interest of peace, let the Govt speed up the execution of these men. So that it will serve as an example that nobody is above the law.

A.A. Ibrahim
Gusau, Sokoto State

I FEEL very much compelled to put my pen to paper and write about this injustice perpetrated on minority tribes and Christians in this north. In fact the trial of Gen Lekwot (rtid) and Co., is an example to Nigerians especially those in the north that we live in a hostile environment where the Hausa-Fulani (muslim) northerner thinks himself a superior human being.

We are oppressed. We are forced to worship in fear. We live, sleep and eat in fear. Our properties are not spared. Our children are denied their rights. Employment is another area our youths are denied. Are we not citizens of this great country? Are we not supposed to be given fair hearing? Are we not supposed to be given equal opportunities? Is there any law in this country that states any ethnic group, religion, or persons are superior to the others?

Comrade Victor Gad
Kaduna

ANY person that insults Ojukwu insults the Igbos. Any organisation that goes by whatever name, that disqualifies Ojukwu from seeking the office of President of this country is bound to fail. They may think they have got success but failure they will see after. They may think they have got with the Ikemba. Please I wish to beg you and

your friends in the news distribution industry to tell our head of Lekwot others if he refuses and approves that country will burn to ashes. Nothing happens to Lekwot and others.

Humphrey Nwanaku
Zaria.

ERRATA

THIS is to correct an error contained on Page 10 of TSM Vol. 6 No. 23 concerning the story titled The Return of Akinloye Azeze Alao Arisekola who was mistakenly referred to as former deputy legal adviser to the NPN and not a national chairmanship aspirant in the NRC instead of Ahmed Kusamot Arisekola is a businessman and resigned leader and not a politician. We sincerely regret this error.

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more...



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Speakout



On Zamani Lekwot: Should he be hanged?

I HAVE just this moment read your cover story on Zamani Lekwot. It made a very sad reading.

I don't think he should be hanged. IBB should please temper justice with mercy. I also like the way Comfort Obi writes. She has fire in her stomach.

We are missing Ely Obasi's *Tapes*

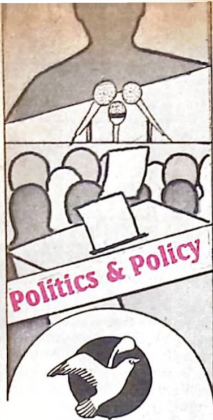
Oluwole Adeboye,
Ilorin.

THE lead story of your magazine Vol. 6 No. 21 was quite interesting, especially because no other magazine in this country has gone deep and brought out the actual facts on the Zang-Katsaf riot and the trial of (Rtd) Gen Lekwot and others arraigned before the special tribunal.

As the tribunal has already passed its judgement on Gen. Lekwot and others — death by hanging, subject to the decision of the NDSC, I wish to emphatically advise that the NDSC should critically look into how the judgement was arrived by the tribunal because if the NDSC hurriedly endorses the verdict of the tribunal it is really going to plunge this country into a very disastrous and chaotic situation viz a viz religion and tribal war. The Zango Katsaf riot could not be an exception because it is similar to the ones of Bauchi, Funtua, Taraba where the government didn't institute a panel more or less a tribunal to try those that perpetrated the riot.

Usman Garba
Adamauwa State

In the peoples court



For months, he's been on the firing line. Now, see what he has been reduced to.

By Comfort Obi

BENEDICT

Okadigbo is an old man. He is a retired High Court Judge. In Nigeria, Judges retire at age 65. Okadigbo has retired since. He is about all of 70 years.

Okadigbo looks his age. When you see him, you see all of 70 years. Not many people, and you won't believe this, even lawyers, and particularly Senior Advocates of Nigeria, SAN, in Lagos know Okadigbo. When you get to see them to ask questions about the retired High Court Judge, they simply tell you, "yes, we've heard the name. We've followed his recent case, but don't really know him." For example, Priscilla Kuye (Ex?) president of the Nigerian Bar Association, NBA. For another example, Onyebor Obi, renowned lawyer and a second Republic Senator. He told us, "I haven't even heard his name before now. The only Okadigbo I know is Senator Chuba Okadigbo." For example, Zik Obi and Eze Obi, both lawyers whose offices are in the Western House in the heart of Lagos.

The above may actually mean two things. The first may be that Okadigbo is a quiet one. He does not make too much noise. He is not controversial and therefore does not draw too much

attention to himself. The second may be that he is unpopular. So unpopular that nobody is keen enough to know him.

While we are not in a position to discuss the popularity or otherwise of Okadigbo before he was forcibly thrown into national limelight, courtesy of the Zango-Kataf disturbances, fact now is, only very few Nigerians can honestly say, "We don't know

Okadigbo." Of course, they may not know him physically, but Okadigbo's name has been in the news since May, 1992 when the Tribunal on the Zango-Kataf disturbances was set up and more particularly since February 2, when he sentenced seven Katafs, including a retired army Major General, Zamani Lekwot to death by hanging for their roles in the Zango-Kataf disturbances of 1992.

Okadigbo: Being threatened



The way Okadigbo's name was thrust into national discourse, you'd think his was the only Tribunal set up on the Zango-Kataf disturbances. Not many people, and you won't believe this, even journalists, know the name of the other retired Judge Emmanuel Adegbite who is presiding over the second Zango-Kataf Tribunal. Adegbite has, within the past two weeks, sentenced six people to death, by hanging, among them, two Muslims. No words were heard, for or against. Okadigbo sentenced seven people to death and since then, life has not been the same for him.

Okadigbo's ill luck stems from the fact that the big fish (Lekwot) was brought before his own Tribunal. The big fish equally hired an array of big fishes, (defending lawyers) led by one of Nigeria's foremost lawyers, G.O.K. Ajayi.

Even though Okadigbo is no newcomer to legal controversy, the reaction of some members of the public to the Lekwot judgement has been a little overwhelming. He's been described as harsh, emotional, a judge who has a tendency for long sentences (this by a lawyer from his town) and the most ridiculous, incompetent.

Okadigbo's first controversy was during the Second Republic in the then Anambra State. Jim Nwobodo was the governor then and there was this case before an electoral tribunal where Okadigbo was Chairman. He ordered the then Anambra State Police Commissioner, Bishop Eytene, to appear before his tribunal to give evidence. But Okadigbo was to learn later the hard way, that even though Eytene's first name was Bishop, the man was in no mood to behave like a church Bishop.

Okadigbo ordered him to appear six times, and for the six times, the CP refused to appear. When the state government wanted to intervene, Eytene let it be known that he is responsible to the Inspector General of Police (Sunday Adewusi, then) and not the state Governor, Nwobodo. Eytene proceeded to do the unprecedented. He withdrew Okadigbo's police order!

So, the poor judge lost on all fronts! Speculations have been rife as to why Okadigbo was picked to preside over the first Zango-Kataf Tribunal. They have ranged from the absurd to the ridiculous. While some people think that the government picked him because they wanted a stooge, others say the most ridiculous, "He was picked because the government wanted someone who has an axe to grind with Lekwot." And they have an interesting, if not ridiculous story to back this up. "During the Nigeria civil war, Lekwot played a leading role in the Nigerian Army's capture of Onitsha sector then under the Divisional command of late Murtala Muhammed. Okadigbo is from razed down by the Nigerian army — under Lekwot's command. Okadigbo has never forgiven Lekwot. When the government found out about him, they quickly made him chairman of the Tribunal so as to even the score." *TSM* heard this story in Kaduna from a retired army officer a day after Lekwot was condemned to death.

The picture many Nigerians have of Okadigbo since the historic judgement is that of a stooge, a corrupt man, hard-hearted, emotional and worse. A few people have stopped short of calling him a murderer.

Almost everyone has had a field day calling Okadigbo names. This includes a member of the Tribunal, Godwin Graham-Douglas (SAN) who resigned his membership of the Tribunal, over



Lekwot: Okadigbo's Waterloo?

the conviction that the whole thing smacked heavily of injustice towards Lekwot and his tribesmen.

Only Okadigbo has not been heard from. *TSM* went looking for him to talk. To hear his own side of the story.

To find out from whether he made those personal emotional outbursts attributed to him in

the press. To find out how he is. To find out how he is taking all the bashing. To find out what difference in his life and attitude the judgement has maybe. In sum, the difference between Okadigbo before May 1992 and after February 2, 1993.

Okadigbo wouldn't talk. For obvious reasons. First, the Tribunal which he is heading has not been dissolved. Second, the National Defence and Security Council NDSC has not sat to take a decision on the judgement. We got stuck. But not entirely. We got hold of a very close relation of Okadigbo who under a pledge that his name be not used spoke to us on the life and feelings of Okadigbo since the Lekwot judgement.

His words: "I am surprised at the names given to my brother since he began to preside over the Tribunal on Zango-Kataf. The newest in the vocabulary is the one you added now, emotional. Benedict is not an emotional man. He is not wicked either. But the press, especially the Lagos press has so painted him black that at home, we've been wondering if he is the same Benedict that we know!"

"Ever since Benedict took up the chairmanship of the Tribunal he has been living under tension, under intense pressure. Many people, even the Igbos in Kaduna tried to get at him to ask him to resign his chairmanship of the Tribunal to save his life.

"He didn't see why he should resign. We asked him and he said there was no point for him to resign. He admitted that he had been under intense provo-

Ever since Benedict took up the chairmanship of the Tribunal, he has been living under tension, under intense pressure. Many people, even the Igbos in Kaduna tried to get at him to ask him to resign his chairmanship of the Tribunal to save his life.

cation but that he had tried to get a hold on himself.

"Since after the judgement, Benedict has not been himself. He has had to bear with great calm all the names being called him in the press. He has had to bear the criticism. But worse is that he has had to bear the threats on his person and to his life. What all these mean is that he has had to endure a lot of security around him.

"So, in his father land, because he is patriotic, he is a straight forward man, he didn't bend justice, he didn't bend rules, he didn't regard anybody as a sacred cow, he has become a fugitive. All people want is for him to fear his own shadow. For what?

"He doesn't know who to trust anymore. A southerner or a northerner? A

christian or a muslim? But he wasn't brought up that way. In our family we don't discriminate. As far as he is concerned, we are all Nigerians. No one man is greater than others.

"People say he is a southerner. But if you look at it, the southerners have been harder on him than the northerners. The southern press has been more ruthless in its condemnation of the verdict than the northern press. But what facts of the case do they have? How many of them were at the Tribunal from day one to the last day? In their effort to crucify him, words have been put in his mouth. A lot of stories have been fabricated.

"Benedict has had his reputation almost damaged. And for what? Because he accepted to serve his fatherland. Did

he do wrong? What would he gain in denting his image at his age, after seeing his fatherland for years so cruelly? Go and look at his records. He was a fearless judge. He is a fearless judge.

"But now, he has been reduced to an outcast in his fatherland, particularly in the south. We know of the plan to destroy him. But the plan will not work out. If he is made an outcast for standing by the truth, as he saw it, so be it.

"We have told him, if this is what it takes to serve one's fatherland, we will never let him accept to head any Tribunal again. His experience has been very traumatic. And I can tell you, it has affected his health and his whole outlook about this country.

Thank you."

Two down, two more to go

...after Ward and Local government congresses of the parties, the transition programme inches forward to possible extinction.

"Under our form of government the entire structure rests upon the nomination of candidates for office. This is the foundation of representative system.

— Robert LaFollette

By Yusuph Olaniyonu

THE setting had a lot in common with that of the classroom. Hedged in a four wall, the men and women sat with their heads buried in a paper. Their bios drawn like unsheathed daggers, they were all busy

writing. Except for the enthusiastic murmurs and the untidy seating arrangements, one would have thought the Allmosho local government secretariat of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) was an examination hall last Saturday.

But far from it, the people at the conference hall were only executing the partisan responsibility trusted upon them by their people as elected delegates. And as they set to fill in the ballot papers names of their preferred candidates for national delegates and local government executive positions, it was

Delegates — Fulfilling a partisan role



clear that the SDP may never recover from the quandary of factional politics. Each of the delegates had one of two prevalent photocopied lists of candidates depending on his or her loyalties.

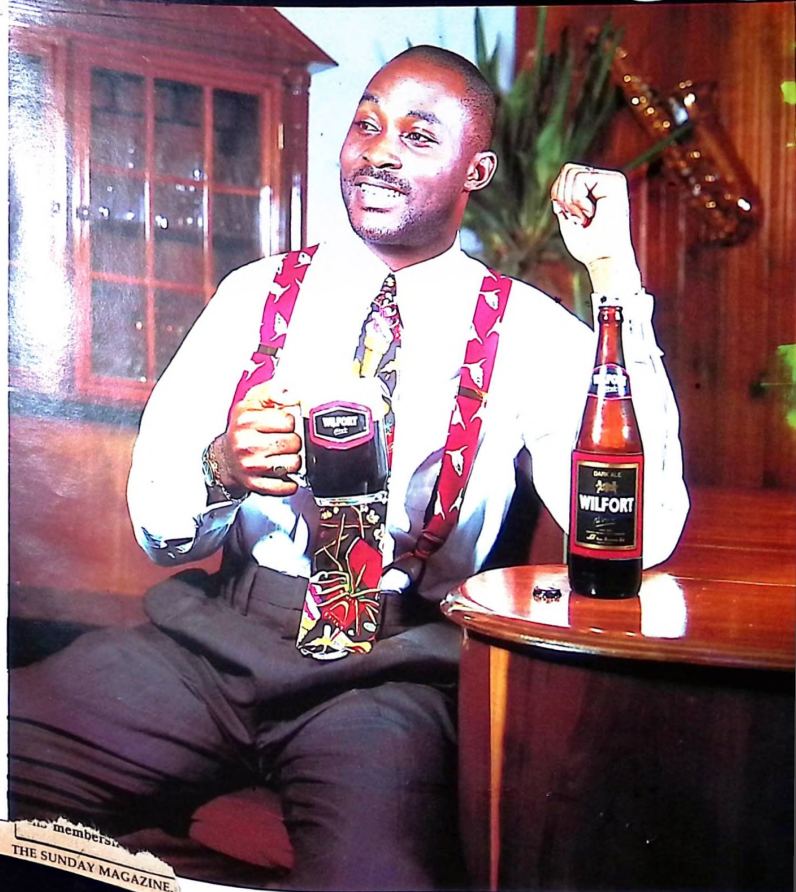
The rivalry was between the Jakande-Agbalajobi group and the Sarumi-Yaa Adua group. Delegates loyal to the former group had a list titled "Committee of Friends candidates" containing names of people the group would want to fill vacant LGA and national delegates posts. The Sarumi ideologues equally — had a list titled "Unification Team Candidates."

WILFORT

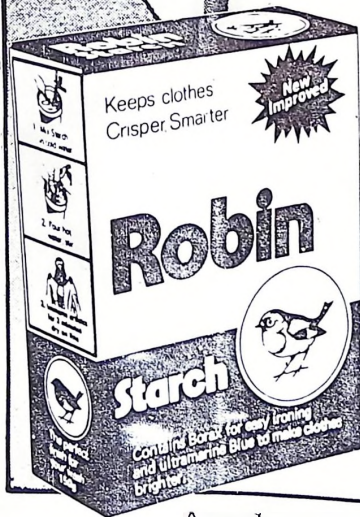
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The contest between the two factions which Bola Bangbose, one of the delegates — from Ward G1 referred to as "battle of superiority" had last year cost the party the local government council. In the same way it enthroned an NRC governor to work with an SDP controlled legislature. Due to intra party feud, the National and Republican Convention (NRC) candidate for chairman won in the newly created LGA which hitherto was a part of Agege LGA controlled by the SDP.

Reports from around Lagos State indicated the local government congress of the SDP was a re-incarnation of past rivalry and chicanery between the two factions of the SDP. In this cut-throat competition undecided delegates were lured into camps with money.

But more than intra party hanky panky, the LGA congress afforded delegates across the nation to once again decide on who and who are fit to be presidential flagbearers of the two parties in anticipation of the presidential elections scheduled for June.

In Zaria LGA where the representative of the Tukur-Tukur wards, former head of state, Yakubu Jack Gowon slugged it out with a personal physician of former President Shehu Shagari, Dalhatu Tafida, the people gave a verdict which sent a reverberating clang around the country. Of the 194 NRC delegates who cast their votes at the LGA only 29 felt the man who ruled Nigeria for nine years and prosecuted a 30-month civil war is fit to rule the country again. 165 of the voters eventually gave the nod for Tafida to proceed to the state congress in furtherance of his ambition to rule the country.

The defeat of Gowon, who hailed from Fankshin Local Government area in Plateau State, eventually eliminated the memory of the civil war evoked by the disqualification of his antagonist, Emeka Ojukwu, by the National Electoral Commission (NEC). The two men can now be assured that the nation will only need them as elder statesmen not as executive president. At least, not now.

In Borno State, former SDP leader, Baba Gana Kingibe, formally became the only presidential aspirant from the state. Kingibe defeated Ibrahim Ali by 257 votes to 188 for the Maiduguri metropolitan council mandate. The other SDP aspirant from the state, Shefeta Mustapha was disqualified by NEC on the eve of the congress. The ex-SDP chairman will now run against himself at the party state congress on March 6.

In Ogun State, newspaper baron, Moshood Abiola was also endorsed by 383 of the available 386 votes to become the choice of SDP in Abeokuta North local government area for the presidency.



IBB — Countdown to August 27

Former external affairs minister Bolaji Akinyemi once again got the unanimous votes of his people of Atakumosa local government area of Osun state as their candidate for the presidency. Akinyemi will now contest with Dosu Oladipo former gubernatorial aspirant from Ikirun for the mandate to proceed to the national convention of the SDP as Osun State representative.

Another old member of the Babangida administration, Ismailo Mamman scaled through the LGA congress hurdle as he got 205 of the available 206 votes in his bid for the presidency. Mamman contested at the Kurfi LGA congress of the NRC. NRC members in Yola LGA of Adamawa State also sanctioned the candidacy of former federal permanent secretary, Ahmed Joda with 182 votes. Only three votes were cast against him.

In the same manner, Abubakar Atiku got the necessary support of the Jada LGA wing of SDP for him to continue his presidential campaigns at the state level.

Bashir Tofa, one of the towering candidates in the NRC effortlessly passed the Kano Municipal local government congress test for his candidacy. Tofa secured the votes of all the 258 delegates in the congress in which three co-aspirants, Hamza Darma, Mohammed Tudun Wada and Bashir Laberan withdrew without any official reason. The withdrawals were said to be their measure of support for Tofa.

Other successful presidential aspirants are Raymond Dokpesi, NRC Edo State, Yomi Ademefun, Abeokuta North NRC, Francis Ebong, SDP Uyo, Oluwadaré Bada of NRC Akure, Joe Nwodo,

Igbo Etiti NRC, Hyde Onuaguluchi, Oji River NRC, Chinedum Ezebuoro, Ehinhitte-Mbaise SDP and Walter Ofonagoro of Nkwere NRC.

Others who fell into the ex-aspirant camp alongside Gowon are Samuel Kalejaiye of the NRC, Ikeja LGA, M.J Iginla of SDP, Ojo LGA and Albert Ogun-sola, Ifelodun NRC.

It was not all a presidential success and failure. Big names went down in their bid to become national delegates.

In Lagos State, two political heavyweights failed. Bose Oshinowo, former Lagos State NRC chairman and Rasheed Williams for NRC Lagos State Sole Administrator, who is bidding to be the new National Chairman, were defeated. This has virtually put paid to his ambition of occupying the National chairmanship.

In Rivers State, Matthew Mamah, former SDP chairman of the state, who resigned his position in January 1992 and joined the NRC was voted in as a National Delegate in his Yenegoa LGA. But not so F.K. Agara, former NRC governorship aspirant who failed in the same LGA.

Meanwhile, in spite of the seemingly peaceful atmosphere which pervaded in all the 589 LGA nationwide, there was alleged murder in the NRC camp in the Orlu LGA Imo State, the Secretary of the NRC in the LGA was allegedly murdered by a contestant to the National delegateship. There was arson thereafter which led to the postponement of the party's LGA congress till the next day.

While some politicians have described the success of the LGA congress as a big plus for Option A4, our reporters who covered the congress nationwide describe the modified Open Ballot system as worse than the Open Secret Ballot system. It is fraud prone.

For in stance in one of the LGA's we visited, contestants to the National delegateship took the ballot papers from delegates and filled their names by themselves. The result? The faster you can write, the better for you. Worse, a good number of the delegates were openly asking for money from the contestants. Such delegates held unto their ballot papers while bargaining for money until when it was too late for them to put them in the ballot boxes. These happened before NEC officials, the police and other security operatives.

With the Ward and LGA congresses completed amidst negligible hitches, the process of selecting presidential candidates of the two parties gently slides into the more crucial levels. And between now and March 29 when the two candidates are expected to emerge, the state of the presidential primaries will definitely be at its highest level.

The judicial terrorist?

Any person who accepts to be a judge, has accepted to be judged as it is written in the bible: Judge not, that you may not be judged."

— Nze Agwunobi

By Steve Raymond Ohakwe
In Enugu

SIIZII Agwunobi, a solicitor and advocate of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, has many years of experience. But the mental trauma he is going through because of a sad experience he had before Benedict Okadigbo, a retired justice a few years ago, has continued to haunt him. And so when TSM called at his chambers late Tuesday night for an assessment of the chairman of the Civil Disturbances Tribunal on the Zango-Kataf crisis after the sentence on Zamani Lekwot and six others. He quickly replied "I am not surprised at what he did."

Agwunobi went on to narrate how Okadigbo was allegedly terrorising lawyers before his court in Enugu whose only offences were that they appeared to defend their clients as their professional duty and officers of the court. And on many occasions he had thrown the lawyers into prison for alleged contempt. Journalists who covered his court also had bitter tales to his credit.

Okadigbo thrives on controversy and his close associates believe that should be his middle name. The mere mention of the name, Okadigbo, evokes terror in the spines of some in the coal city of Enugu, the capital of former Anambra State, where he practised as a prosecutor and a Justice of the High Court. And even as a retired judge, his name could be fairly said to loom large in the city. Many people in socio-political circles and even lawyers would only accept to discuss Okadigbo on one condition and that is that the chat be held behind close doors.

To those who consider themselves victims of his kind of Justice, Okadigbo is a "terror" but to others, mostly senior professional colleagues, he is a man



Clement Akpamgbo...Drafted Okadigbo to Zango-Kataf tribunal

very firm and uneasy to sway when it comes to interpretation of the law. And so when the issue of his professional integrity became a subject of public discourse in the wake of Zango-Kataf religious communal disturbances resulting on the death sentence passed by Okadigbo's tribunal on Zamani Lekwot, a retired Mahor General in Kaduna, they were not surprised he could take such decision.

The man, Okadigbo, means a lot to different people in his home state but one recurring decimal in their assessment of him was that "he is given to sternness on the bench."

His name came to national limelight in 1982 when he issued a bench warrant ordering the then former Anambra State Commissioner of Police, Bishop Eytene, to appear physically before his court to answer charges brought against the police boss by the state Attorney General. Eytene refused to appear in court and ironically, Okadigbo had to vent his anger on the two journalists that reported the news by throwing them into prison in Enugu.

Emeka Ugwuoke, then judicial correspondent of *Saturday* newspapers and

Inow News Editor of *Daily Star* newspaper Enugu, was the first to narrate his ordeal at the hands of Okadigbo in 1982 when he made the ill-fated order. Emeka said that he was covering the beat with Godwin Anyanwu, also a judicial correspondent of *Daily Star*, when then Attorney General, Rob Iweka filed a complaint before Okadigbo's court that the police boss, Eytene, and four other police officers insulted the then state chairman of defunct Nigerian People's Party (NPP), Guy Ikokwu and state chairman of the party's youth wing, Anike Nwoga, at Enugu airport on April 23, 1982 during the visit of Robert Runcie, an archbishop and the Head of Anglican Communion, to Anambra State.

Okadigbo ordered a bench warrant to be served on the police commissioner in his chambers. The two reporters scooped the information and went to town with the story. Two days later, the journalists were in court to cover the story which had become a hot cake in view of the political acrimony that existed between the state government of Jim Nwobodo and the state police

ommand. Eytene flouted the court order. He did not appear. Okadigbo inquired in court whether the two journalists that scooped the story were in court. They were there bubbling with zeal to file the story of court contempt by the police boss. The judge called them up to explain how they got the story as the order on the police boss was issued in his chambers. The journalists, Ugwoke and Anyanwu, refused to disclose their source of information on grounds of professional ethics. Okadigbo got infuriated and threw them into prison. It took the intervention of then state governor Jim Nwobodo to rescue them from behind the bars.

A close associate of Okadigbo is former Anambra State Ministry of Justice, when he was a prosecutor, also recalled the raw deal Okadigbo gave to Ilochi Okafor, a doctor, and former attorney-general and now law lecturer at the University of Nigeria Nsukka. Okadigbo was reported to have described Ilochi's doctorate degree in law in court as "PHD my foot. Thank God none of my children will be a lawyer."

Perhaps, the traumatic experience of Okoli Enewereji, a junior counsel in Agwunobi's Chambers shortly before Okadigbo's retirement as Justice of the High Court is more dramatic. Asuzu Agwunobi told TSM that he wrote a letter to Okadigbo's court excusing himself that he would not be in court. He mandated his junior, Okoli Enewereji, to take a date when his matter is called up in court. He said, "I wrote the letter excusing myself for not attending because we got information that Okadigbo was retiring and was trying to rush the case. My client, therefore, wanted us to delay the case so that Okadigbo would not try it. So I gave Okoli the letter to plead with the court to adjourn the case. Okadigbo refused and told Okoli that he would detain him in prison until I came. We thought it was a joke but he meant it and threw my junior into prison just because I was not in court. It took the intervention of very senior colleagues for the court to release Okoli on bail. My story is not the only one. In fact he has locked up many lawyers in Enugu."

Against this background, TSM sought assessment of Okadigbo, from lawyers who have appeared before him in Enugu, in relation to the Zango-Kataf trials which had drawn national and international attention and has threatened the corporate existence of Nigeria.

Ukpabi Ukpabi, a senior lawyer in Enugu, told TSM, "Retired Justice Okadigbo is a very firm judge who believes in what he gives as his judgement. He is on a strict side, a no-nonsense judge. He is strict even with

There was also the case of a boy who was expelled from a school in Enugu for some misdemeanour. The boy filed a complaint against the school, and before the Reverend Father in charge of the school knew what was happening, he received an order from Okadigbo that the boy should be reinstated. The Rev. Father had no alternative than to comply.

lawyers. He is hard with lawyers in his court. I know he had problems with Ilochi Okafor and Eddy Ibe. Once he decides to go any way, he goes there even if heaven is falling. He won't be bor-

dered by your popularity or religion." Asuzu Agwunobi, based his assessment of Okadigbo on a Biblical injunction that has accepted to be a judge "that you may not be judged." Judge not, "from my personal assessment of him. I am not surprised at what he did at the Zango-Kataf Tribunal. I know that he is fearless, he is intimidatory in his approach and he uses the judicial power very sternly. The greatest quality of a good judge is patience. But Okadigbo is not patient. He does not trifle with time. At times, it is his temperament, but when he finds that the lawyer is a freshman, he mellows."

Jerry Okolo, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, who had had several raw deals from Okadigbo in Enugu and is now counsel to Judicial Tribunal on Civil and Communal Disturbances in Kaduna agreed that Okadigbo is intimidatory, but said "even where charges of being hostile could be fairly made against him as in the case of any other judge, I have always known him to base his decisions on the law to the best of his understanding."

However, the Nigerian Bar Association, Enugu, seems to disagree on this point. A statement signed by association's chairman in Enugu, L.M.E. Ezeofor, a Chief, condemned Okadigbo's tribunal for not acting according to the rule of law. He said, "the stand of NBA, Enugu, is that since a

Zamani Lekuot....Sentenced to death by Justice Okadigbo



...allegation of bias has been against the Tribunal and all coun- appearing for the accused per- withdrew from the proceed- on allegations of lack of fair hear- the Tribunal should have refused continue with the case." ct, the issue of Okadigbo's tribunal become a major cause for concern ss the Niger. And the question was y did the military government draft adigbo to the job?" The suggestions Enugu were that the federal attor- y-general, Clement Akpamgbo knew adigbo in Enugu. And so when the ngo-Kataf "job" came, adigbo was the man with the right cre- nentials to deal with them.

Agwunobi told TSM, "Justice Okadigbo ted the agent in the Kataf case, and eople should see him in that light, be- cause the Kataf case is not the first in ecent past. There were religious/com- munal strifes in Bauchi, Kano, Kafan- han and the Tivs/Wukari (Jukun) here the only woman member of araba House of Assembly was killed. What did the government do? Why was he Zango-Kataf tribunal set up and Okadigbo used as guinea pig? It is to say that Okadigbo sentenced them. He is fearless and always prepared to take controversial cases. I think they were looking for a very stern, merciless judge, who once he makes up his mind, nothing can deter him."

This explanation of the disposition of Okadigbo to cases were buttressed in several quarters with the litany of controversial cases he handled in Enugu. One of such cited cases was the case of Miriam Ikejiani, former wife of Chuba Okadigbo, a senator, and a lecturer at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The univer- sity had wanted her to quit her official quarters on the campus when she was no longer in their service. But Okadigbo felt that beautiful Miriam, a doctor, now the Chairman of Anambra caretaker Committee of Social Democ- ratic Party (SDP), should not be re- spected homeless and dismissed the case against her.

There was also the case of a boy who was expelled from a school in Enugu for some misdemeanour. The boy filed complaint against the school, and before the Reverend Father in charge of the school knew what was happening, he received an order from Okadigbo that the boy should be reinstated. The Rev. Father had no alternative than to comply.

Legal luminaries believe that Okadigbo's sense of justice is a novelty. And this is aptly illustrated the most celebrated landmark judge- ment he delivered in a political case the transition period between the im- pendent chairman of Enugu North



Bishop Egitene...Flouted Okadigbo's court order nine times

Local Government, Gabrielina Onoh of the National Republican Convention (NRC) and Vitalis Ndu of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) at Enugu in 1991.

The facts of the case, as confirmed by now Okadigbo's counsel, J.H.C Okolo, [SAN], were that during the local government election, the military government came out with a decree that all candidates contesting the chair- manship of local governments must be nominated along with their running mates by the party. Onoh was nomi- nated by his party, NRC, along with Maureen Nosike, as his running mate. After accepting to run for the local government chairmanship with her, he later changed his mind, dropped her and chose Julius Okolo to run with him as vice chairman.

Onoh won the election, but Ndu filed a protest before Okadigbo's Tribunal in Enugu, on the ground that since Onoh did not run the election with Maureen Nosike as stipulated in the decree, the Tribunal should disqualify him for not being properly nominated by his party, as the running mate was not sponsored by the party.

Okadigbo disqualified Onoh and de- clared Ndu the winner of the election. Legal questions were therefore raised as to whether a court can award a petitioner what he did not plead, be- cause Ndu did not ask Okadigbo to de- clare him the winner. He simply pointed out the discrepancies in Onoh's nomination and asked the Tri-

bunal to disqualify him. Onoh went on appeal against Okadigbo's ruling.

Ukpabi Ukpabi, a senior lawyer in Enugu, told TSM, "Retired Justice Okadigbo is a very firm judge who believes in what he gives as his judgement. He is on a strict side, a non-nonsense judge. He is strict even with lawyers. He is hard with lawyers in his court.

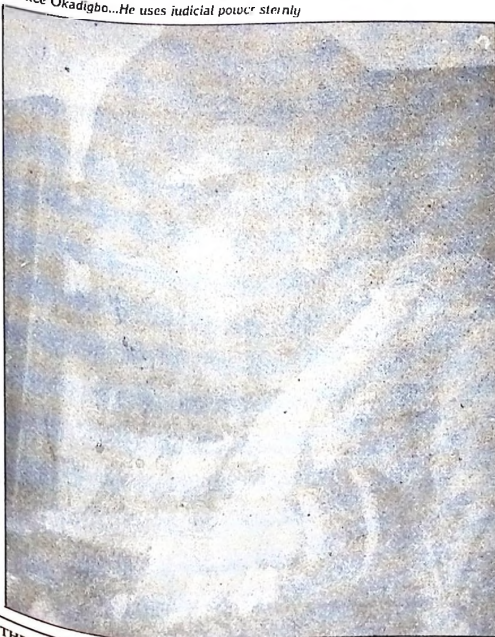
I know he had problems with Ilochi Okafor and Eddy Ibe. Once he decides to go anyway, he goes there even if heaven is falling. He won't bordered by your popularity or religion.

Eugene Chukwumeka Ubaezonu now a judge, of the Court of Appeal, Lagos, reviewed the case and ruled that Okadigbo "over-killed" by declaring Ndu the winner of the local government election when he did not even plead to be declared elected in an election he failed. He allowed the appeal and restored Onoh as the elected local government chairman.

Watchers of Okadigbo's judicial trials are actually hard put to define Okadigbo's sense of legal justice. But against the background of the Zango-Kataf trials, Yohana Madaki, a retired colonel and former attorney to Zamani Lekwot said "A man like Okadigbo who had been director of public prosecutions, a man who confessed that he had handled 500 murder cases in Abakaliki, would see anybody before him as already guilty. Okadigbo in his stay in the judiciary was, first, a prosecutor and later a judge. He is more like a riot policeman, anybody found at the scene is considered guilty."

Agwunobi contended that Okadigbo

Justice Okadigbo...He uses judicial power sternly



sentenced the accused persons in the Zango-Kataf case with truncated evidence before him. He argued that when counsels to the accused person withdrew from the proceedings, the federal government should have reconstituted the Tribunal, adding that assigning lawyers to them for defence was a weak attempt to manage the wrong already done.

But Okolo, when contacted to assess Okadigbo's sense of legal justice taried awhile. He said, "the press would be careful not to be carried away by attacking the character or person of a judge in apparent attempt to discuss the appropriateness of his judgements. If they engage in such conduct, that may well amount to 'scandalising' the court, because they would have been talking about the person of the judge, who is not in a position to reply even if he had the opportunity, because in most cases he would not be given opportunity to know the charges levelled against him."

He is of the view that discussions on judgement should be made to serve the appropriate purposes for the growth of the law, as against using that instrument — to establish whether a judge sustained the level of integrity expected of him in that office.

He said, "this should be left to the Judicial Service Commission, if the judiciary is to have its respect. And one is alarmed that our colleagues at the Bar do not seem to appreciate the danger signal presented by the present trends of freedom of criticising judgement of a judge through the analysis of his person."

However, the Nigerian Bar Association saw a different danger signal. Ezeofor, the Enugu chairman of the association said "We are emboldened in our stand because of the age-long principle that justice must not only be done but must be seen to be done. The independence and apparent impartiality of a court of justice or tribunal cannot be compromised."

He stressed that the bar association felt bad that while the issue of bias and transfer of the case from the Okadigbo Tribunal was being canvassed in the High Court and Appeal Court, the Federal Government promulgated Decree No. 55 nullifying the decision of the High Court and ousting the jurisdiction of Court of Appeal from listening to or entertaining the appeal.

TSM, discovered of the day Decree No. 55 of 1992 was promulgated, ruled that it was incompetent to adjudicate on the application by G.O.K Ajayi seeking to enforce the fundamental rights of his of his client, Zamani Lekwot, in view of the Decree under which he was being charged at the tribunal.

Uthman Mohammed, Justice of Court of Appeal delivering the ruling — December 1, 1992, observed, "the military Government, which ironically Major General Zamani Lekwot once participated in, specialises in enacting these ouster clauses which block Nigerians from challenging their decisions in regular courts. It is a drastic decree, but as his lordship Nnaemeka-Agu, JSC, said, we are all bound to give effect to the legislative intention, if there is no escape route."

Unfortunately Okadigbo also has no escape route in the current judicial "scandal" that — has rocked the nation's polity — and even threatening the stability of the country. Okadigbo may have fallen into a guinea-pig trap — and could be sacrificed like Justice Okoro-Okogwu in the case of Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, in the infamous "E-don-beg-me scandal" which ruined the credibility of the judge after the Buhar regime had used him to settle scores with Fela in 1984.

Life in Port Harcourt prisons

- Taken to Teaching Hospital for stomach upset.
- Gets code of conduct from prisons controller
- Kept in special cell
- Does not wear condemned men uniform.

By Comfort Obi

THE first day he stepped out of the special cell where he is being kept at the Port Harcourt Central Prisons was on *Love's Day*, February 14, 1993. But he wasn't thinking of love at all. He may have remembered his wife and children and mother lovingly, but not in any manner connected with Valentine's day. Come to think of it, he may not have remembered it was Valentine's day.

That day is meant for those who have no problems. It is meant for the "free" heart. To think about love, you have to have a relaxed mind. You don't think about love when you are on the death row.

So, for this day, Zamani Lekwot, a retired major general, former Governor of Rivers State, former Nigerian Ambassador to some three countries and now an inmate of the condemned-to-death wing of the Port Harcourt Prisons, stepped out to keep an unscheduled appointment. Nobody had told him before that morning that he had an appointment, a thing that was enough to earn somebody a query when Lekwot was the governor of Rivers State in 1975.

The appointment was scheduled between the Deputy Controller of Prisons and Warders. The instruction was to bring the condemned men for briefing.

So, Lekwot and the five other men on death row stepped out for a briefing. He walked out gingerly. Not in a black or cream-coloured prison uniform with **CONDEMNED** written at the back, but in a deep-blue kaftan. That was the dress he wore on February 2, the day he was condemned to death in Kaduna by the Okadigbo Tribunal on the Zangon-ataf disturbances.

As he walked down gingerly to the office of the Deputy Controller of Prisons, the other five condemned men followed.

The men were closely followed by the warders and security agents. The Security Agents followed, not to protect him

as was the case in his governorship days, but to make sure that he didn't do a Ben-Johnson or a Carl Lewis to scale over the walls for safety. They walked on in silence. A very reliable eye witness told *TSM* that Lekwot, even in his brisk steps, appeared tired. That may not be surprising. On Friday, February 12, 1993, Lekwot and other condemned men were on the road — from Kaduna Prisons to Port Harcourt Prisons. They were brought in a *Black Maria*, heavily guarded by security men. The journey took well over 12 hours. They arrived the Port Harcourt Prisons at about 8 p.m.

His tired looks could be as a result of the long journey. Travelling in a *Black Maria* from Kaduna to Port Harcourt, may not be the most comfortable

means of transportation. Which was why, *TSM* gathered, Lekwot protested when he was asked to climb into the *Black Maria* for the long journey. If he wasn't going to be air-lifted, we gathered he said, a car or a good bus would be okay.

So, he got to the office of the Controller for his appointment. No chairs were kept for them. They just stood, with hands firmly placed at the back while they got their briefing. It was a welcome speech. The Controller simply wanted to read out to them a code of conduct for condemned men. It was brief. It lasted for nine minutes. And then it was over. They went back to their cells.

But Lekwot was to step out again the following day, Monday, February 15. This time, not to the office of the Controller of Prisons but to the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, UPTH. He was ill, and had to be rushed to the hospital.

Authoritative sources both at the Port Harcourt Central Prisons and UPTH confirmed this to *TSM* in the past week. We gathered from some prison officials and inmates that Lekwot had a serious stomach upset on the night



Lekwot: The other side of life

of February 14. Confided an official, "he had a running stomach all through the night. He walked weak and we considered his situation serious enough to seek for clearance to take him to the hospital. We don't want anything happening to him here."

At the UPTH, a hospital source told us that Lekwot was brought to the hospital Monday, February 15, for treatment. Said the very reliable source which pleaded for anonymity, "when he was brought in we considered his situation serious enough to have given him a bed but we were asked to just give him the essential drugs and allow him go back to the prisons. From our diagnosis, he was suffering from *gastro-enteritis* (an illness which causes inflammation of the intestines and very frequent emptying of the bowels). We treated him accordingly and he left the same day. He didn't sleep here."

Asked what he thought could be responsible for the *gastro enteritis* in Lekwot's case, he said, "well, his may have been as a result of food, bad water or sincerely speaking a sign of depression and nervousness."

Our source confirmed that Lekwot looked a little unsettled and was deeply depressed when he was brought.

Very few people in Rivers State know that Lekwot has been transferred from Kaduna Prisons to Port Harcourt Prisons. In fact, not all the inmates know, even though a warder told us that a few of them had been asking questions about the unusually high activities of securitymen in and around the prison premises.

Nobody knows exactly why Lekwot and the other condemned men were transferred to Port Harcourt from Kaduna. Speculation however, is that they were transferred for two reasons—security and protection.

Officials and inmates of the Kaduna Prisons were said to have complained about Lekwot's presence in the prisons after his condemnation and the resultant verbal and physical protest, especially by some Christian women in Kaduna who took to the streets waving Bibles and green leaves.

The fear in Kaduna was that rioters could break into the prisons and harm the inmates and officials in a bid to release Lekwot and the other condemned men.

If that had happened, it wouldn't have been something new. Nigeria has a history of rioters storming prisons to release prisoners. It has happened in Maiduguri, Kano, Kaduna, even in Lagos.

Nobody has been able to explain why the Federal Government chose Port Harcourt in particular, as the best place to keep Lekwot. Opinions are divided. While some people think Port Harcourt



Okadigbo: In the people's court

was chosen to protect Lekwot and give him a little sense of security and peace of mind, some others think it was a move calculated to ridicule him.

Those who hold the former opinion point out that the East is a lot more quieter than the North when it comes to riots, they point out that there are no religious fanatics in the East as such. What they actually mean is that with the reactions on the Okadigbo judgment so far, the North is more vulnerable than the South.

They also point out that Lekwot is more likely to be more comfortable away from the Kaduna State environment where the disturbances and his consequent trial and condemnation took place. Said one lecturer from the university of Port Harcourt, "If he stays in Kaduna Prisons, he is more likely to remember the circumstances of the disturbance, the arrest, the trial and the judgment than in Kaduna. He needs an environment away from Kaduna where he can concentrate and pray definitely not an environment which reminds him of the whole affair."

Another lecturer told TSM that Lekwot should actually thank the government for sending him to Port Harcourt. His reason? "Having been the governor of Rivers State before, he has a lot of friends here who have his interest at heart. There are people who still have a lot of respect for him here, regardless of whether he is a condemned man or not. A lot of people are still likely to look up to him as their former governor. That is why some Rivers State have

appealed to the Federal Government not to hang Lekwot."

Perhaps, there is a little truth in the lecturer's claim, considering that as we pointed out earlier on, Lekwot is not yet wearing the condemned men uniform in Port Harcourt.

A day after he was condemned to death by hanging, his wife, Angelina, told TSM in Kaduna that her husband had been moved to the condemned people's cell and was already wearing a uniform marked "condemned" at the back.

However, those that think that bringing him to Port Harcourt is a humiliation paint a human interest story.

One of his Commissioners in 1975 put it this way to us: "It is an irony, isn't it, that Lekwot is in Port Harcourt Prisons as a condemned inmate. In 1975 when he was assigned to Rivers State as the military governor, he was flown down to Port Harcourt International Airport from Lages in a military jet. From the airport, he was treated to a red carpet reception, driven out of the airport in a motorcade with sirens blaring away.

"In 1993, he was back to Port Harcourt not even in a civilian aircraft but in a Black Maria all the way from Kaduna. There was no red carpet reception. There were no siren blasting motorcycles. There were no securitymen or protocol people shielding him from the common people. He was sneaked in in the night as a condemned man. Instead of the Government House, his destination was the Prisons, not to take a look at the inmates but as an inmate, with a death sentence hanging on his neck. The import is that in a state where he was the chief executive, he has come back as the Chief Prisoner, on a death row. I remember in 1975 when I visited the Port Harcourt Prisons with him. Never would it have crossed his mind that he would one day be an inmate. Any other state in the East could've served the same purpose as Rivers State. Bringing him here was meant to humiliate him. But that is the irony of life."

At the time of writing this story, the National Security Defence Council NDSC, was yet to sit to deliberate on Lekwot's case. But the Attorney General of the Federation, Clement Akpangbo who first told the press that Lekwot's case would go to the NDSC for consideration, told reporters last week that the body would base its deliberation on the proceedings of the tribunal.

If the NDSC endorses the Tribunal's judgment, Lekwot would likely be hanged in Port Harcourt Central Prisons, a prison situated in the capital of a state where he "reigned" as Military Governor.

Our universities, caught up in a cob-web of problems, seem to have lost the compass.

Civil wars in Ivory Towers

"He who opens a school door, closes a prison"
— Victor Hugo

By Akaninyene Esiere

THE Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English defines a university as "an institution for the promotion and dissemination of advanced learning, conferring degrees and engaging in academic research." Were the authors of that dictionary to visit Nigeria today, it is doubtful if they would not be compelled to redefine the word, "university." For, close to twelve months running our universities have been busily engaged in everything but promotion of advanced learning and academic research.

The situation in our university campuses came to a head about a month

ago when the Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU) called its members to down tools until a pay parity with its academic brethren was granted. Since then the universities have been swinging from one problem to another like a yo-yo. Demonstrations, boycott of lectures, outright closures and total seizure of essential services have come to characterise almost all the university campuses nationwide.

The situation at the university of Lagos, Akoka, best explains the confused state of things at our supposedly citadel of academic excellence. At best law and order have been floating on the campus sequel to the strike action embarked upon by the university's non-teaching staff. Things came to a state of lawlessness on the campus on Thursday, February 18 when NASU members realised that their industrial action had not had any impact on the campus as lectures were still going on smoothly. They decided to go a step further by cutting off water and power supply and barricaded entrances to the campus thus holding residents, especially students hostage.

Irrked by the action of the striking workers, students, who have already acquired the unenviable tag of veterans in confrontation, decided to take on the NASU members and free themselves from the "forced arrest." The students, not wanting to be in darkness decided to hire a technician to activate the university power plant. NASU officials hurriedly called an emergency meeting to discuss the restoration of electricity on the campus. At the meeting they wrongly pointed accusing fingers at the university's chief maintenance officer, one Ikumapayi, a member of the Senior Staff Association of Universities, Teaching Hospitals, Research Institutes and Allied Institutions (SSAUTHRIAI)-Unilag branch, for allegedly activating the plant without NASU's approval.

The accusation led to an attack on the SSAUTHRIAI Secretariat by NASU members on Friday the following day. In the fracas that ensued, the secretary general of NASU was injured. But TSM was able to gather that it was not Ikumapayi who restored electricity. The president of Unilag Students Union, Omoyele Sowore, confirmed to

Students on demonstration...when will this end?



our reporter that the students actually hired a technician from town to do it. The attack even forced some students to flee the campus.

Same Friday, the students held a rally where it was decided that further lectures be suspended, while they embarked on a three-day sanitation exercise to clean up the mess on the campus as it had become obvious that an imminent outbreak of epidemic occasioned by stinking toilets and piled up refuse would soon visit the students. Again, since all administrative activities had been paralysed, as members of the hitherto passive Junior Staff Association of Universities (JSAU) joined their senior colleagues in the nation-wide industrial show down, it became obvious that genuine academic activities could not be guaranteed. Sowore, while addressing the press on Tuesday, February 23, conceded that much. He told reporters that a situation where laboratories and libraries were locked, classrooms unkempt and students found it impossible to take their baths was not conducive for academic learning.

At the Friday rally, the students body also resolved to support the striking NASU members in pressing home their demand on government to effect a pay parity within the university system. Throughout that weekend there was a least uneasy calm on the campus; and power supply and electricity and power supply were restored. But matters took a dramatic turn last Monday morning as the students who were embarking on the planned environmental sanitation exercise were rewarded with a surprise violent attack by members of the Non-Academic Staff Union, the same people the students allegedly resolved to support in their course. The NASU members also visited what the national Electric Power PLC is doing to the rest of Nigerians. As at the time of filing this report, the university was still in darkness, while drinking water and hygiene were simply not there. ISM gathered that the attack on students by NASU members who were said to have been armed with dangerous bows and arrows, matchets and ever charms led to the stabbing of two students, one whose name was given as Stephen is the president of Environmental Science Students Association and the other, a Philosophy student. The attack by NASU provoked the students to no end. With their numerical strength, ISM gathered that the NASU members were chased to as far as Bariga, neighbouring suburb. Our reporter could not ascertain if any NASU member was wounded, as it was difficult to track down any of its officials. But the students union



Fajunwa...he left behind a tasteless reputation

president sounded academic, rather, like the police, when contacted. He told our reporter in his room at Jaja Hall that he would not know if any NASU official was injured, adding that if it actually happened, they might have been injured by their (NASU) members whom he sarcastically described as hoodlums.

Not satisfied with the push they gave the NASU officials, the students who were still searching for a tonic to spur them to end their personal vendetta on the executive governor of Lagos State, Michael Otedola, a knight, spilled over to the nearby streets adjoining the university and harassing motorists in the process. The few who were bold enough to reach Yaba Bus-stop returned to the campus with a booty — a 33 seater "Jubilee Line" bus belonging to the Lagos State Government. The students had overpowered the bus driver, forced its human cargo to disembark before driving it to the university.

By 10 a.m on Monday the main gate to the university was agog with war songs by the students. Their president who stood atop the gate platform to address them, said the students were only taking "delivery" of one of the few buses promised them by Governor Otedola. He promised that the second bus would soon be "delivered" to them. Our reporter who witnessed it all later enjoyed a free ride to the main campus

via the seized bus. In an interview later, the students union president stated that the state governor had, in November last year, promised to give the students two 35 seater buses to alleviate the transportation problem on the campus. The president warned that government should make no attempt to come for the bus as such would be stoutly resisted.

There is no doubt that the students are ready for a sustained showdown. Jaja Hall, one of the male hostels, our reporter spotted one of the students proudly displaying a police hand cuffed and two cans of unused tear-gas canisters. ISM discovered that the student is also a policeman. Evidence sweat-soaked shirt showed that student-cum policeman might have actively participated in the attack NASU officials.

But why the alleged sudden attack on students by the NASU mem whom the former initially opted to port? How would NASU confront dents who are not remotely involved their present face off with the government and especially, students who decided to do the cleaning of the campus themselves? ISM was a gleam two versions as to the reas the attack. The first was that members felt the restoration of services (especially electricity) sweeping the classrooms would

lecturers, who had already been fatigued by the dirty environment, to continue with lectures. NASU felt if lectures were to continue, the effect of their strike would not be felt, and this might send wrong signals to the authorities (government) that NASU members were not so essential to the smooth operation of the university system. This, our sources said, might puncture their water-tight argument for pay parity thus forcing government to renege on its promise and call the bluff of NASU. This reasoning, according to our source, led to the attack on students on Monday morning. At least, it succeeded to some extent. Lectures have been called off indefinitely, electricity and water supply cut off, the three day environmental sanitation exercise suspended while a thick cloud of uncertainty hangs just above the university sky.

The second version of the story as canvassed by the students is even more weighty. Omoyele Sowore, their president alleged that the attack on the students was sponsored by the federal government. He alleged that students body had received "intelligence" information that government in a desperate bid to remove the subsidy on petroleum products, wants to ensure that all higher institutions were closed down so as not to witness any violent resistance, the type the nation was visited with any time the so-called subsidy was removed, which led to the shedding of blood.

Sowore told TSM that government had penetrated NASU in order to use its members to attack students to clear the ground for the university to be closed down. At the press conference, the president stated that the plan by the military government to close down all higher institutions was to "perpetuate itself in office and at the same time remove the 'oil subsidy,' adding that the students had resolved to resist any attempt to close down their campus. The statement also issued a threat to the government saying "we equally warn the federal government against any attempt to removed the oil subsidy as it will draw the wrath of the already angry Nigerians."

But if that is the plan of the government, victory appears won. As at last count no fewer than seven universities and other higher institutions were out of session. And even if the university of Lagos students decided to "resist attempt to close down our campus," chances are that the resistance will only be ephemeral. With lectures boycotted, electricity and water supply non-existent, access to recreational facilities not in sight and accommodation problem biting harder (many returning and fresh students have not been registered and provided with ac-



Nuwabueze...In for crisis management

commodate because the Students Affairs Division Officials directly involved with this exercise are affected by the strike), there is no doubt that boredom, amongst others, will be their mercy killer, forcing them to embark on a Willy-nilly closure of their institution. This may then clear the coast for government to carry out its alleged plan without "hurting a fly."

The Unilag students were merely reechoing the stand of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS). At a press conference held in Lagos a fortnight ago, the body threatened that it would "stoutly resist any attempt to once more provoke Nigerian students and citizens over the question of subsidy on petroleum products." It reminded government that Nigerian students and citizens had shed enough blood over the oil subsidy in 1988, 1989 and last May. NANS, through its newly elected president, Nasir Kura, also argued that "as citizens of an abundantly oil blessed country, we deserved, by right, the benefit of the cheapest possible pricing policy."

The University of Lagos is not the only theatre of confusion in the ivory tower. Ditto for the premier university at Ibadan, University of Calabar and Bayero University, Kano. Others also engulfed in the wars include the University of Uyo, Lagos State University, Ojo, Ogun State University, Ago-Iwoye, University of Nigeria, Nsukka amongst

others, but with varying degrees of pesky issues.

The situation at the Bayero University, Kano degenerated to a sectarian violence. What sparked off the attack was the NANS annual national convention which our reporter gathered was to be hosted by the university. On the eve of the convention on February 5, TSM learnt that a section of the university students belonging to the (Ummah [muslim community] who would not see the presence of a strong students union at BUK decided to attack convention delegates. For two days the anti-unionism students allegedly launched three attacks on the delegates and the convention had to be aborted mid-way. Before the delegates moved over to the nearby Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for a continuation of their meet, 12 of their members had been allegedly injured.

Isiaka Sheidu, student of BUK who attended the NANS press conference held in Lagos a fortnight ago, stormed into the TSM newsroom with a plastered head, and alleged, in a chat with our reporter, that the attack was sponsored by the government, in connivance with the university authorities.

The university of Uyo did not fare better. The industrial action by the non-teaching staff of the university took a toll on water supply on the campus. By Tuesday February 16 the students could no longer bear it and decided to spend their anger on public utilities and monuments on the streets of Uyo. The demonstration was a costly one as the police responded by allegedly killing one of the students. Thirty more students were arrested and detained. In a statement on the role of the police in quelling the violent demonstration the state police commissioner however denied that the student, who was shot in the head by a stray bullet, was actually killed by the police. He however did not solve the festering puzzle: Who killed the student? The university authorities, sensing that the already messy situation might deteriorate, took the customary step of closing down the institution and asked the students to proceed on holidays.

The Ago-Iwoye based Ogun State University did not bargain for the trouble it has found itself in. For close to one year now the school has been out of session. The long holiday started in May last year when the local wing of the proscribed Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) joined its national body for the nation-wide industrial action. By September 3, same year when the Federal Government conceded to all the demands of the ASUU, fresh problems came to the fore in the state university. The executive governor Segun Osoba, a chief, said he was not obliged to pay the new salary structure

approved by the federal government. The university's ASUU members responded by withdrawing their services in October 1992. Since then, the university has been under lock and key. Hopes that the institution might be reopened soon as government had agreed to pay the new salary structure dimmed last week when Osoba threatened to stop paying teachers their salaries if they failed to call off the strike. He accused the lecturers of engaging in private practice while still refused to stop paying teachers their salaries. He said hence forth government would now treat their matter under the 1976 which stipulates that anyone who refused to work should not be paid. There is a snag, though. Even if the lecturers were to return to their classrooms, lectures would not go on as the impasse between the federal government and NASU has not been resolved. In a few months the university might celebrate its first anniversary of staying out of session.

The Lagos State University, Ojo, shares the same agony with Ogun's. No one can say when last the university had a trouble-free semester. LASU's problem is woven around the outgoing Vice Chancellor, Jadesola Akande (Mrs) professor of law. No constituent unit of the university community, it seems, likes the face of the woman. But a solution is in sight. February 1, the state Governor Otedola announced that she is the main actress. Akande, had written to say "enough is enough". By March 31 when her tenure would have

wound up Otedola will not have any reason to put her up for a second term. LASU students, led by their president commented rather ruefully that her resignation was "a major victory for LASU."

In other universities their authorities have resorted to one tactic or the other. University of Ibadan and its sister in Calabar have already been closed down. At UI, NASU, members decided to visit their anger on their ASUU counterparts blaming the later for the woes while the authorities at Calabar said the paralysed state of social service occasioned by the NASU strike had compelled them to ask the students embark on a two week holiday.

Though the government has already accepted the demands of NASU by abrogating the vexed disparity pay structure, indications last week where that the strike would continue a while. Fresh demands by NASU officials as pre-condition for resumption of duties may lead to a prolonged confusion in our universities. By Wednesday, February 17, NASU officials added a new grudge to their demand by asking for the removal of Idris Abdulkadir, a professor, and executive secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), the umbrella body for all federal universities. The Union alleged that Abdulkadir was "solely responsible for (their) predicament and the current general confusion within the (university) system." It is however dicey if government will remove a man who has been doing its bidding according to the

letter.

But the man to pity is Ben Nwabueze a professor of law and secretary for education. He has the remaining part of the transition period to do just one thing: Crisis management. His predecessor, Babs Fafunwa left behind a tale-tell of woes in the entire educational sector. Throughout his stay in the ministry, Fafunwa impressed no one, except those who put him there. His reign was characterised by "war from all fronts. For close to two years his crisis management skill was put to test and he surprisingly disappointed everyone, knowing that he is an erudite educationist. He sounded the death knell to reasonable crisis management when in the heat of the industrial action by members of ASUU he allowed himself to be used beyond reasonable limit by proscribing the union. But that did not

solve the problem. However, by September 3, last year when government realised that it could not bend the lecturers acceded to its demands which included improved condition of service, increased funding of the university system, academic freedom and autonomy. The first demand was met with a disparity in pay package between the teaching staff and their non-teaching colleagues. The latter picked the

gauntlet from here which has continued to haunt the entire university system till date.

The Nigerian nation has unconsciously conspired to keep our prison doors ajar and shut the schools in order to spite Victor Hugo.

Students on rampage...End not in sight?



States on trial

Nationwide strike leaves telling questions on the ability of governors to govern, a can of blackmail, intimidation and fear for the future of states.

By Ambrose Akor

THEY were bent on beating each other on who picked the glamour throne. They crisscrossed the country in search of publicity to actualize their dreams. Ogbonaya Onu of Abia was either in Kano or heading for Ogun. The same way went Kabiru Gaya of Kano, Abubakar Audu of Kogi, or "Away Governor" Saïdu Barda of Katsina. They all lived their lives to the fullest. They had no worries but the glamour of office.

But that is no more. Those sunny, good days are gone. The 30 state governors do not sleep any more. These are stormy days.

For the past four weeks, whenever they wished to go on jetting, they only boarded flights heading for the dreamland, Abuja, cap in hand.

And if statements by labour leaders are anything to count on, the governors have worse days ahead.

Saïsu Muhammad, head of information department of the Nigerian Labour Congress told TSM: "They ain't seen nothing yet. It is either they pay or see..."

Before two weeks ago the strike was a national problem but with the domineering federal might, the Federal Government announced it was ready to pay the promised 45% increase in wages. A number of local government councils followed suit. But from the states came repeated cries of distress of inability to pay and threats of retrenchment if they must pay.

Along with such cries came allegations of non-consultation by the Federal Government before announcing an across the board increase in wages. More serious than that, last week there were fresh allegations that the military now running the central government wants to throw the states into confusion, portray civilians as unfit to govern and thereby plotting never to end the transition programme.

Those didn't earn them sympathies. The governors have already been warned, in the traditional condescending manner of the military to desist from making provocative statements against the military.

In addition to telling the whole world that states can pay the salary demanded by workers, the federal government has in turn accused the governors of frivolous spending.

NLC's Muhammad told TSM the states have been engaged in "outrageous spending." "The states will go into bankruptcy," he said "because of their financial indiscipline not because of payment of wages."

Labour, TSM found out, is not interested in the "insinuations and name calling" which the governors have resorted to "as a diversionary tactics to run away from implementing" workers' demands.

The case of the governors is not helped by the implementation of the new salary structures for public officers, including those of governors, by the states. A number of states have also

gone ahead to pay arrears on the new scale announced by middle of January but taking effect from June 1, 1992.

If the states will be able to pay this new scale to public officers, the labour leaders argue, what is the justification in denying civil servants such benefits?

In a communique issued after a meeting of leaders of eleven unions involved in the strike, the unions said that "political office holders at the state and local governments and their contractor conduits constitute by far smaller percentage of the population, and yet consume higher percentage of state revenue which often times is derived not from work but from abuses, extravagance, wastages and lifestyle that cannot be justified by the poverty-stricken quality of life of the populace."

Muhammad told TSM that although they have not been able to obtain a schedule of the income of the state, "we have seen how they have been spending especially on the legislators.

They will be condemned to bankruptcy," Muhammad vowed.

But will they?

In reaction to the protests made by governors pressing for a re-ordering of the revenue allocation formula, and an increase in monthly allocation, the Federal Government raised the state



Barda...Bye bye to hey days

Ogunade does not also see any justification in asking all the states to pay the same wage, their resources notwithstanding. He told TSM the governors "have no business meeting with the president or their wives dashing after the first lady."

The unions are sticking to a uniform increase, however. After their Friday meeting, the unions said that it was a positive development that the Lagos State Government, a relatively more buoyant state and Yobe a relatively least buoyant state have both implemented the new interim salary structure."

In view of this, they resolved that the uniform structure "is implementable and can be paid by all states and local governments."

Ogunade also drew the attention of the governors to the non-deregulation of salaries of public officers, and wondered why they did not start up there. "If there is no deregulation in the upper echelon, there can be no deregulation for the workers." Each state governor's say, by his definition, should be determined by the resources of the state not by a fiat by the Federal Government.

Internal revenue accruing to the states, like previously, failed to meet the target and couldn't help alleviate the problem of the states. Taraba State raised N30 million naira internally; Adamawa N47 million; Osun N60 million; Borno 80 million.

A few others like Enugu, Kaduna, Lagos and Kano raised much more than those but still below expectation.

That is why more radical opinions are emerging on how to salvage the states. Dele Peters, a Lagos-based attorney wants not only a re-structuring of the revenue sharing formula but a total revision.

He told TSM "there shouldn't be the need for the states to beg for money, take the suffering riverine states for example."

He, therefore, suggested that in practice of a true federal system, each state should take its revenue and remit part of it to the central government."

If the states were consulted, Peters said, the present crisis wouldn't have arisen. "It is not that the states cannot stay on independently but whatever the central government should do with the revenue of the nation, every component part should be aware of."

Ogunade sees such calls for the phasing out of states as ill-informed. He said their phasing out will only lead to a collapse of the nation. "It is only a federation of states that can keep this nation together."

To Peters, phasing out of state is just "impossible." Perhaps that will also depend on how they wriggle out of these cloudy days.



Muhammad... "The Governors ain't seen nothing yet."

monthly statutory funds by N1.2 billion. The governors have already condemned the statutory increment as abysmally below expectation.

A state like Benue will be spending about N37.7 million of about N50 million naira received as allocation from the federation account on payment of wages. That will be N28 million over what it was spending before the new era.

Osun would be paying N10 million more while Kwara will dole out eight million naira more every month.

The governors point at a mountain of debts they inherited from previous administrations and their responsibility — to establish other capital projects as the cause of their obstinacy to budge.

Not every Nigerian is in sympathy with the governors. Delu Ogunade, senior lecturer in Mass communication at Unilag, while speaking to TSM, blamed the governors for creating the state of crisis.

"Their failure to understand and implement federalism is what is at the root of the present crisis," Ogunade said.

While wondering why the governors did not reject the Federal Government ordered pay structure for the governors themselves, he said each state or local government should examine its resources to determine what it is going to pay.

What we are seeing today, according to him, is a failure of years of running the federal system as a unitary state.

More and more...



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— the newsmagazine for the 1990s



craft for the missing link connecting our present with history. But with science came civilization which "threatens" our culture and the society. But there still remain some who have voted not to recognise the existence of civilization and impact of science on man and the society.

The health sector vividly represents the constant struggle between the wonders of medical science and the healing powers of traditional medicine. Orthodox medicine, with all its attendant efficacy, still suffers from lack of total acceptance. There are those who do not patronize it, or if they do must support it with other forms of healing. Such people still prefer "herbal healing" to scientific medicine. Hospitals and medical doctors do not appeal to their taste and with the cost of seeking medical attention flying over our roofs, such people are enjoying greater followership.

This scenario has rubbed off on our expectant mothers. Ante natal, natal and post-natal care — essential medi-

and labour period, there are some who still prefer herbalists and traditional mid-wives. This breed of mid-wives carry out their trade under a very unhygienic environment coupled with unsterilized instrument, thus exposing the mother and the baby to danger.

The threat to health notwithstanding, patronage of traditional midwives has not dimmed. Rather, it is receiving a boom especially amongst the less literate and low income earning expectant mothers. TSM thought it should dig into the reason for the boom and patronage of traditional medicinal practices in the face of growing enlightenment and sophistication of society. Another logjam to be broken was the attendant danger the practice poses to both mother and the baby.

Experts are agreed that traditional medicine preceded medical orthodoxy and that since it is at the root of our culture, many people find it virtually impossible to let go the practice. Olasupo Orimogunje of the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Lagos

Whither Orthodox Me

Cultural loyalties, increased efficacy and cheaper cost of traditional medicine seem to give the lie that orthodox medical practice is a-cure-all therapy.

By Akaninyene Esiere

HABIT takes a lot to peter out. And when it is woven around a tradition or culture the effort becomes even more herculean. In every society there are die-hard traditionalists, those who hope in the past, in a nostalgic survival. They are the inveterate custodians of culture constantly on a collision mission with change, especially revolutionary change, the type whose impact only change itself can predict. It is not as if they fear change, it's the consequence of change that makes them quince back to their shell, not wanting to be ruffled by the wind of change.

And this is natural. They are a people who give meaning to our culture in an age that respects not yesterday. They



LUTH: Gateway to orthodox medicine

call "ingredients," for safe delivery — sound foreign to them. Though many pregnant women do visit hospitals to seek medical advice during pregnancy

University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) does not agree less. The gynaecologist told TSM that "traditional medicine is indigenous to our people" and that

"they have been used to it before modern science came." He maintained that it would take along time before we witness a total break from traditional to orthodox practice, a goal that is near impossible going by recent development in medical circle.

Barring culture, Orimogunje believes that traditional midwifery is still cheaper to obtain than ante-natal and natal care in our modern hospitals. This in effect shows that the economic trend in the country dictates where to seek healthcare. Since the hike in medical charges approved last year, the cost of health care has been astronomical forcing many to go for "alternative healing." Another important reason that lure our pregnant women to herbalists, according to doctor Orimogunje, is that the herbalists have perfected the art of playing on the psychology of their unsuspecting patients. To Orimogunje, herbalists are seemingly friendly, very playful, a skill lacking in some of our orthodox medicine workers. In fact, it is no news that most medical practitioners

Though Orimogunje would not question the rationale behind the patronage of traditional midwifery, he however reeled off deafening dangers that tant mothers who chose unorthodox pregnancy could be magnified "if one midwifery identifies while orthodox problem. He adds that perinatal mortality and mobility could be in the region of 1000 times amongst those who patronize unorthodox midwifery when compared to those who opt for modern maternity care.

Continuing on the peril expectant mothers could be subjected to in the hands of these "quacks", the gynaecologist maintains that mothers are susceptible to infections induced by unsterilized instruments used by such infections may develop to *puerperal sepsis* (severe generalized infection at ally lead to death. Mothers under this condition are also at the mercy of Orimogunje, which, according to the baby or its severe brain damage" thus affecting its intelligence quotient.

There are other health problems that may be associated with this practice. The specialist in child delivery added that where a particular pregnancy added that require caesarian operation before mother is delivered, there is no way a traditional midwife can do that, adding that "traditional healers can handle only straight, forward cases that do not require complications."

Could these mean the supremacy of orthodox medicine over traditional healing? We may not know, but experts in the latter puncture the assertion that theirs is inferior. In fact, a traditional medicine healer who also specialises in midwifery is vehement on the efficacy of this method "Dr" Abayomi Aina of Yinka Memorial Clinic and Traditional Medical Centre, Mushin echoed to *ISM* that "it is a very safe" means of delivery. As far as Aina is concerned, "before *White medicine* (came), pregnant mothers had been delivered safely without any problem."

As if to make the argument by doctor Orimogunje sound hollow, Aina averred that certain herbal medicine are administered on expectant mothers before and after labour. He told *ISM* that a local herb called *epinon* in Yoruba is administered on the mother before delivery to enable the baby along with the placenta come out safely. To keep bacteria and any other infection, particularly *sp* (tetanus) in check, *akusibgo* leaf is ground and mixed with sugar and administered on the mother immediately after delivery. To also keep

the child safe from these infections, Aina, who is interestingly a Councillor in Mushin Local Council, told *ISM* that a portion of the ground *akusibgo* is further mixed with *on* leaf and rubbed on the baby.

Confronted with the statement that many expectant mothers die during labour in the hands of traditional midwives, the councillor-cum-traditional healer, was very stout in saying that the allegation was a fallacy. He added the allegation was a fallacy because of that traditional healers, because of their integrity and *profession* endeavour to prevent such calamity. Doctor Aina told our reporter that once a traditional midwife senses any danger, he or she dives into the realm of the spiritual, the supernatural, invoking incantations to save the situation.

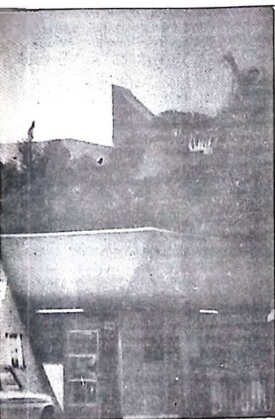
These apart, *ISM* also discovered that there are other instructions that must be adhered to by expectant mothers in order to arrive at safe delivery. A female source that asked for anonymity disclosed to *ISM* that there are things that do not get mentioned in the orthodox circle which a pregnant woman must do. First, our source hinted that pregnant women should not be seen outside at day time to avoid "spirits" that are out to torment the mother and unborn baby. Again, plain and banana (highly recommended for pregnant women in medical circle) are forbidden items at pregnancy. The belief is that banana induces dizziness while plain hurts the forehead of the child in the belly. These observance are evidently antithetical to the culture in scientific medicine.

The question on the efficacy of whether a generality of people believe in the efficacy of traditional medicine is one question that is as good as affirmed. With the tacit recognition of this category of medical "experts" by the government, emphasis seems to be shifting to how to introduce elements of hygiene and elementary orthodox practice into mainstream healthcare. Both Orimogunje and Aina are agreed that this has been going on. Orimogunje informed our reporter that, "what has been done is to encourage traditional practitioners to engage in safe practices such as hygiene, the use of new blade (to cut the umbilical cord), the sterilization of instrument before use and incorporation of immunization programme." He adds that traditional birth attendants are trained in modern practices to avoid problems. Aina concurred by saying that clean environment and instruments are paramount to traditional healers. In fact, many "maternity homes" parade ancillary nurses faintly knowledgeable in child delivery techniques.

Outside pregnancy and child delivery, signals from the health sector

Continued on Page 34

icine!



(nurses inclusive) in our hospitals are in want of patience and compassion—commodities badly needed by patients especially women in labour

SEVEN TOP HEALTH ISSUES ON WOMEN'S MIND

THEY HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED AS THE MOST PERSISTENT AND PROBLEMS NAGGING AT THE MINDS AND BODIES OF WOMEN TODAY. SOME OF THEM HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR AS LONG AS TIME. STILL IGNORANCE AND MISCONCEPTIONS SHROUD THEM. HERE EXPERTS TELL THE BASIC THINGS EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THEM.

1

FIBROIDS: A Racial Disease:

THEY are the most common benign gynaecological complaints. According to Michael Ogunkoya, an MD with specialization in Gynaecology and Obstetrics, of every 100 women that visit a gynaecologist, 60 will have fibroid while 10 will complain about things that relate to it. Fibroid is a disease which occurs more in black women than white. Essentially fibroids are usually benign growths in the womb which do not cause any problem. But when they do, it is usually in the following forms — heavy painful periods, inter-menstrual bleedings, prolonged heavy period and abdominal pain.

Fibroids are common in women above the age of 35 and up to the time a woman stops seeing her period — which is usually about the age of 50. It's within this age bracket, says Ogunkoya that the oestrogen level which tends to support the growth of Fibroids is highest. Do Fibroids have any connection with being overweight? Ogunkoya says there is no connection between Fibroids and being overweight. For instance, he says, "woman who could be described as thin could have a huge Fibroid." Could you tell by looking at a patient if she has Fibroid? Unless the Fibroid is extremely huge, it would not show on the patient.

Would Fibroids affect a woman having normal intercourse? Ogunkoya says Fibroids should not affect intercourse, except if they are large enough or situated in the lower part of the womb where they would cause pain during intercourse, as a result of pressure on neighbouring organs.

Fibroids are usually associated with infertility. That is not to say that they actually cause it. But in most women who are unable to get pregnant, the higher number of them

have Fibroids than those who have no difficulty in getting pregnant.

And a word of caution! Never believe the old wives tales that Fibroids could be treated. Surgery is the only cure. It is not preventable. No treatment will make it disappear say the experts. It will only get bigger or more complicated.

2

OVARIAN CYSTS: What has size got to do with it?

CYSTS do normally occur in the ovary. They vary in size depending on the time of the ovarian cycle. Most are usually less than 7 centimetres in size and could be regarded as physiological, that is normal. These cysts are usually symptomless. Occasionally cysts could become larger and cause symptoms in the form of abdominal swelling or pain, or scanty periods. Sometimes a cyst can get as big as a football.

But if you think the bigger the size, the more severe the case you'd be mistaken. Once again Ogunkoya who runs the Women's Medical Foundation, a woman's hospital located in a high brow area of Lagos says the severity of symptoms is not always related directly to size. An orange-size ovarian cyst, he says may cause severe abdominal pain while one that is triple in size may cause no symptom. Also, Ogunkoya goes on, an egg size ovarian cyst may have become cancer while a football size ovarian cyst may still be benign and only cause the patient breathing discomfort. Could ovarian cysts show from the outside? Ogunkoya says the bigger the cyst, the bigger the ovarian swelling. So if one has an ovarian cyst as big as a football, it would look as if she is pregnant.

On what age group that is susceptible to the disease, Ogunkoya says that various types of ovarian cysts occur in varying age groups.

So how does one know if she has one. Sometimes a woman who has not seen her period for three months and stoppage of her period may be due to the fact that she has gotten to her menopausal age. In other words, ovarian cysts may not usually disturb the menstrual cycle. However, this may be the case if the cyst is a functioning one, that is it secretes hormones that affect the normal hormone production.

There is no known cause for ovarian cyst but certain cases have been linked with the use of some brands of fertility drugs.

Sometimes ovarian cysts do go malignant. Under such situation, experts advise appropriate treatment by a gynaecologist.

3

IRREGULAR/HEAVY/ SCANTY/PROLONGED/ PAINFUL PERIODS:

One woman's meat, another's poison.

It all depends on the individual. What is scanty for one woman may be normal for another.

But on the average, most women menstruate between three — five days. Seven days may not be abnormal but a period should not last more than (7) days or less than (2) days, says Ogunkoya.

In any of these circumstances, the cause should be sought for through a gynaecologist.

Heavy painful periods, could be due to a variety of reasons. The most common, Ogunkoya explains "is due to what we call dysfunctional cause, (hormonal) that is to say that in the circumstances there are no organic or anatomical cause.

Some times heavy periods could have organic causes such as Fibroids, or pelvic infection. It could also be due to a condition called endometriosis — a condition when the lining of the womb is found not inside the womb but outside. In this case, not only is the period heavy, it is also painful, especially just before and in the early part of menstruation.

A woman who has uterine Fibroid may also witness heavy prolonged periods, while scanty period may sometimes be associated to a medical condition where the thyroid gland is not functioning as well as it should (hypo-thyroidism). Does any of the above defined conditions have any direct bearing on woman's reproductive ability? Ogunkoya says not direct bearing but a woman who has scanty or irregular period is not likely to ovulate regularly which means that she may therefore have difficulty in getting pregnant.

Women are advised to see their gynaecologists promptly whenever they experience any of these conditions above.

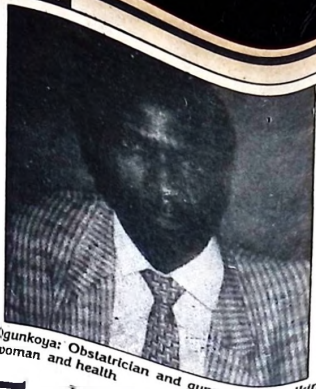
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VAGINAL DISCHARGE: From normal to abnormal

NORMALLY every woman has a small amount of discharge especially around the time of ovulation. So in this condition, there is nothing to worry about. But vaginal discharge becomes abnormal, according to Ogunkoya when it is copious for that individual or when it is offensive (smelly or coloured).

In any of these circumstances, a woman should visit her doctor for the appropriate treatment.

A curdly whitish itching discharge is an indication that the woman has got thrush, (yeast infection). However, Ogunkoya explains, infection with yeast is usually mixed with that due to trichomoniasis. In which case the patient may also have watery yellowish frothing discharge mixed with that of thrush.



Ogunkoya: Obstetrician and gynaecologist talking
woman and health

5

LOWER ABDOMINAL PAIN: How panicky can you get!

LOWER abdominal pains are not always purely gynaecological in origin. But when they are, they are likely to be related to pelvic infection. However, they are likely to be related to pelvic infection, ovarian cyst, Fibroid, ovulation pain or endometriosis.

A pelvic pain becomes chronic in nature when it may have been present, off and on for more than a year. This type of pain is usually associated with pelvic infection and most of the other causes listed above.

But it is not always that a pelvic infection is accompanied with pains, says Ogunkoya. There are situations where the infection is subclinical, in which case the infection is not noticeable to the patient yet untold damage could be done to the genital tract.

Pelvic inflammatory disease may be linked to sexually transmitted diseases. In this group are Gonorrhoea, syphilis and Trichomoniasis. Lower abdominal pain could also be linked with ectopic pregnancy.

6

INABILITY TO GET PREGNANT/MALE INFERTILITY: It takes two to tango but..

COUPLES should not be unduly worried about it unless they have been practising unprotected intercourse, more than one year. Infections are linked with infertility this way. When somebody has an infection, explains Ogunkoya, there is usually an inflammation. During the healing process

SPECIAL ON HEALTH

adhesions or fibrosis may occur. These adhesions which are like tiny strands of tube on the inner lining of the tube could bend the tube, making it impossible for an egg to pass. What makes a woman more fertile than the other? Ogunkoya answers "We do not know but given the fact that there is no infection in the pelvis, no anatomical genetic problems, and no hormonal disturbance, it is still possible that Mrs. A is more fertile than Mrs. B purely on familial basis that is to say that some families are more fertile than the others. On it a woman's chance of getting pregnant

depreciates as the years pile up, Ogunkoya says, a woman is fertile throughout the reproductive years which is between 16 and 50.

But fertility he says is on the average optimal in the mid 20s. This he says may be related to the number of immature eggs in the ovary among a sampled populace.

However, says Ogunkoya, the popular saying that it takes two to tango applies to the principle involved in achieving pregnancy. This however is not strictly so any more with the invention of procedures such as IVF (Invitro. fertilization or test tube baby). Egg donor pregnancy, sperm donor pregnancy etc.

— Ngozi Abanobi

7

BREAST CANCER: All you should know about it

IT is killing women daily, but early detection and follow up treatment is the key to its control and prevention. You can tell if you have got breast cancer, if you know how.



Abanobi: Awareness is important

Here an epidemiologist tells all about breast cancer and how to detect it.

WHAT IT IS: A malignant tumor may develop in the breast. Why this happens is not fully known. However, diet and hormones have been implicated. At first the tumor and stays in the breast. When it has grown to about 20mm or 1.4 inches or moves across the breast, it usually sheds cancerous cells that spread, through the blood-stream and the lymphatic system to other parts of the body where new tumors develop. In about 10 percent of the cases, tumors develop in both breasts.

SYMPTOMS: A lump, which may or may not be painful, develops in the breast, most commonly in the upper outer part. The lump is usually not readily noticeable and is most often detected in a breast self-examination. Sometimes the skin over the lump becomes dimpled or creased. There may also be dark-coloured discharge from the nipple, or the nipple may turn inwards and invert.

Cancer of the breast is the most common cancer in women. Data from developed countries indicate that one out of every fifteen (1.15) women develops this disease. It occurs most often in women in their 40s and 50s.

There are several factors that are associated with the risk of developing breast cancer. It is slightly more common in women who had their first baby much later into their reproductive year; in women who have never breastfed a baby; in women who have had a late menopause; and those who began menstruating early.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL: If it is not treated, or if it is treated too late, breast cancer will almost always be fatal. For this reason, early detection of breast lump and prompt follow-up treatment is key to its control and prevention.

Some women's breasts are irregularly shaped, uneven in texture, or have lumps in them. This is due to the make-up of the breast tissue, and is usually not a cause for concern. The appearance of a new (strange) lump is more important. Although lumps, most of them benign, are a regular part of the structure of the breast, malignant ones may appear in at-risk individuals and their early detection and treatment may save life.

Women should examine their breast for new and strange lumps at least once every month, preferably at the end of their menstrual period. If a lump that was not there before is detected, a medical doctor should be approached right away — for further diagnostic work up. The same goes for situations where a lump that had been in the breast changes in some way becomes painful, or harder or bigger. For women over 50 years or those who have a family history of the disease, regular check ups with breast examination is recommended.

HOW TO EXAMINE YOUR BREAST:

ONE: Stand in front of the mirror, and look at each breast to see if there is a lump, a depression, or a difference in texture.

TWO: Raise both arms and check for any swelling or dimpling in the skin of your breast.

THREE: Lie down with a pillow under your right shoulder and put your right arm behind your head.

FOUR: With the fingers of your left hand, repeatedly press and squeeze your right breast gently and circularly from the outside to the center.

FIVE: Squeeze your nipple to see if there is any discharge. Repeat from step 3, reversing right and left for your left breast.

— DR. OKWUOMA ABANOBI
Epidemiologist & Head of Community Medicine, Abia State University.

Resuscitation & Rescue

LOSS of breath could happen to anybody anytime. At times it happens at the most inconvenient of places and at the oddest of times. Too far or too unholly a time to get a doctor or an expert.

If you happen to be the one whose lot it is to save the patient's life and you do not know what to do.

This is how you can revive an unconscious patient who may not be breathing properly. This method is excerpted from "The Nigerian Health Compendium."

What do you do?

In emergency these steps must be instituted within three to four minutes. Time is very important. You may call for help but do not stop preparing for resuscitation.

STEP 1: Place patient supine on a firm surface (not a bed). A 1.2 by 1.8 meter (4x6) playwood sheet to be placed under the bed of the patient should be available in emergency care centres.

STEP 2: Take immediate steps to open the air way. In unconscious patients the tongue becomes lax and may fall backwards, blocking the victims airway. Gently tip the victims head

backwards as far as possible by lifting up the neck, near the base of the skull, with one hand and pressing down on the forehead with the other hand (See fig. 2.) Avoid hyperextending the victim's neck in accident cases when



there is a possibility of neck fracture. If necessary, keep mandible displaced forward by pulling strongly at the angle of the jaw.

If victim is breathing:

STEP 3: Clear the mouth and pharynx of foreign material (e.g., blood, vomit) with the hooked index finger out avoid undue probing. Do not remove dentures but leaves them in the mouth to obtain a better seal around the lip.

STEP 4: If steps two to three fail to open airway, forcibly blow air through mouth (keeping nose closed) and quickly and fully inflate the lungs four times. Watch for chest movement. If this fails to clear the airways immediately roll the patient on to one side and deliver a sharp blow between the shoulder blades. If this measure also fails, use the Heimlich manoeuvre (see illustration page 130)

STEP 5: Feel the carotid or femoral artery for pulsations.

Their presence gives you hope in the resuscitation efforts. And with some luck medical aid will be available before you need more complex procedure like endotracheal tubes, tracheotomy or the respiratory machine.





SMEAR TEST: What is it, who should have it, how often

It is a simple test in which scrapings from the neck of the womb is treated and examined under the microscope.

This procedure is one way of detecting pre-cancer stages of cervical cancer.

Every woman should have one within an interval of two to three years. If nothing abnormal is found or more frequently if needed.

At a fee of about N500 a woman could get herself a test in most hospitals in the country.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE PILL

As long as the pill has been around, there have been arguments as to its merits and demerits. A new study conducted says the pills today are really safe.

In addition, the study says there are tremendous benefits to using the pills.

Other than preventing pregnancy, the pill they say have other positive effects. It may provide protection against developing ovarian cancer and cancer of the lining of the uterus. The pill may also decrease the incidence of acute pelvic inflammatory disease — a condition which if left untreated could cause infertility.

Iron-deficiency, anaemia and ectopic pregnancies may also occur less frequently with particular brands of pills these doctors say. Pills could also make your periods less painful by decreasing menstrual cramps and increasing menstrual cycle regularly.

DO YOU WEAR CONTACT LENS?

EYES up for this piece of unpleasant news about contact lens. Recent studies show that disposable contact lens wearers

are 14 times more likely to develop uncerative keratitis — a painful eye infection that can lead to vision loss — than people who non-disposable extended — wear contacts.

WATCH THOSE STILLETO SHOES

HIGH heels are cute, fashionable and make you well dressed. But they have their bad side too. High heels don't just hurt your feet, they can contribute to major foot problems.

According to a study in an American University, wearing a



DANGER! Insulin is out of reach

By Felicia Oamen
and Grace Onyegbula

OVER the years the issue of diabetes in Nigeria has been widely discussed. The fact that this disease has seeped the life out of many Nigerians is therefore not really news worthy. However, what happens to be the cause of alarm these days is the high cost and in some cases non-availability of insulin. Insu-

lin is a life-saving drug widely recommended for diabetic patients. According to a pharmacist TSM spoke with who opted for anonymity, insulin became scarce since the budget of last year was announced. He disclosed that like most other drugs, fake insulin constitute a larger percentage of the product in the market right now. Gbadebo Adeleke, a medical laboratory scientist at Senor Medical Services Limited, Ilupeju agreed with the statement above. He also added that insulin is not only scarce but very expensive making it difficult for people to buy it even when available. And this is a dangerous

development since it could be a signal for increase in death toll of diabetics.

According to Gbadebo, in a case where diabetes is as a result of lack of insulin in the pancreas, the patient must be given insulin when needed otherwise he/she may die. He pointed to a dangerous trend in Nigeria as being highly responsible for increase in number of diabetics. That is consumer promotions of sugary products such as soft drinks. By his reckoning, people mainly affected by diabetes are those earning above "average pay." And also those in the age range of 35 upwards.

In an interview with Olikoye Ran-



three-inch heel puts 76 percent more pressure on the ball of your foot than going barefoot. Even a two-inch heel, according to the study, increases the pressure 57 percent. This extra weight on your foot can cause bunions, hammertoes and other serious foot deformities.

LESS IRON, LONGER LIFE!

WHY are pre/menopausal women protected against heart diseases while for post menstrual women the risk of having a heart attack is high and equal to that of men? This was the question in the minds of medical researchers until a new study which suggests that high levels of iron in the blood may be linked to heart attacks. Menstruating women are thus protected because the level of this nutrient are reduced in their bodies every month. The summation of the study therefore is that high levels of iron, posed an even greater risk of heart attack than high cholesterol.

Researchers now think that iron supplements are not a good idea unless you have serious deficiency.

One more plus for vitamins

ARE you horrified about breast cancer? Not to worry, because you will not need to go far



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Too hot for baby

RELAXING in a hot tub or sauna is a pleasure most people Indulge in. But this is a pleasure you may have to go without, especially if you are an expectant mother.

Researchers have determined that exposure to excessive heat within the first trimester raises the chances that your baby will be born with a neural-tube defect.

In a study of (23) thousand women, it was found that hot tubs pose the greatest risk of birth defects.

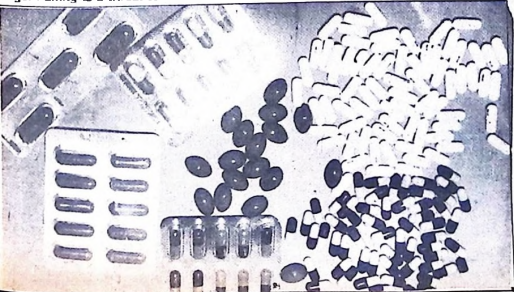
Coming out soon! A do-it-yourself HIV Test

SOON you may be able to tell in the privacy of your bathroom whether you test positive for the HIV virus or whether your partner does, before you have sex. This is all thanks to research.

A report says researchers are working on a new home AIDS test that utilizes saliva. But before the research which is still in the works comes out, doctors advise, still, that you get tested for AIDS and demand of your partner to do so. Use condoms for six months any way just in case either of you is infected but is still HIV negative, and if you have doubts, as to whether your partner is monogamous, stick to using condoms, indefinitely.

Compiled by Ngozi Abanobi

Drugs: Faking is a threat to health



the villages health workers how to diagnose the disease. This according to him was one of the major task he had to tackle.

According to Kehinde Apata, a pharmacist and the Production Manager, Boots Company Nigeria PLC. Ikeja, identifying diabetics alone is not the solution. Government has to make drug manufacturing an essential sector of our economy. Hear him: "I am suggesting marketing importation of all raw materials for drug manufacturing duty free and fixing of the exchange rate of naira at a value that will make it possible for importers to bring in raw materials at a price that will make the prices of drugs affordable for the common man. This in essence will also forestall stock-out that brings about the tendency to fake by unscrupulous individuals.



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Drugs: Faking is a threat to health





Mothers receiving post-natal treatment the orthodox way

Continued from Page 27

point to the fact that orthodox medicine is an "endangered" practice, at least in Nigeria. Of late medical practice has gradually been penetrated (and with measured success) not by your run-of-the-mill traditional healers, but increasingly educated professionals. Their weapon is the blend of both orthodox and unorthodox means of healthcare. And with added recognition of their importance by the society and even the government, the coast has just been cleared for a third tier in health care practice.

The catch phrase is "alternative practice" and at the fore front of the campaign for acceptability is the Complementary Medical Association of Nigeria (COMAN). COMAN is an amalgam of "radical" doctors championing the theory that there is "alternative medicine" to orthodox practice of the West. On February 12, this year, the medical Association of Nigeria's challenger successfully held a public exhibition on natural, safer and cheaper

If a medley of these "opposing" medical practices can hasten the sluggish step towards affordable health care rather than wait for the forlorn health for all by the year 2000 AD, the suffering masses of Nigeria, nay, developing countries will be the better for it.

ways of treating diseases. Just last week, the body held a seminar and fund raising function for the building of its medical centre.

A month ago, the campaigners received what could pass as a moral boost when there was a discovery in Britain that a Camerounian herb being researched for anti-tumour activity evidently killed the much dreaded Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) virus — a case of complementary medicine.

This is not the time for polemic medical rhetorics. The question should be how the claims and counter claims from both sides of the divide would benefit our health practice. If a medley of these "opposing" medical practices can hasten the sluggish step forwards affordable health care rather than wait for the forlorn health for all by the year 2000 AD, the suffering masses of Nigeria, nay, developing countries will be the better for it.



She believes in herself and in what she's doing. And if she's appreciated, she will be satisfied. It doesn't even matter if she doesn't break even commercially.

By Emma Anyamele Jnr

WHEN she made an appearance before an overwhelming, and highly critical audience at the 1991 Blakky show, tagged "Back to School," held at the UNILAG main auditorium, she performed a reply to Blakky's *Ross* and her voice was not lost on a good number of people.

And since then, that voice has haunted an appreciable number of those who made up that historic audience. During the show and thereafter, this audience yearned for more and this crave was ultimately satisfied, albeit partially at the *Quality Magazine* valentine party held at Niteshift where she performed the track, *settled*, a duet with her val; Tunde Obe, taken from her forthcoming album. The effect on the audience was once again, thunderous.

She is into pop in the strict sense of the word and when reminded that Nigerian pop lovers often turn to the West, the US to be precise, from where artistes splash them with first class pop, which has forced the Nigerian pop artistes in

WUNMI ABODERIN:

A new spark in the music horizon

search of relevance back home to infuse African rhythms into their songs, fact, she sees the romance with African rhythms as defeatist on the part of the ment to pure and unadulterated pop with considerable foreign influence.

Fondly referred to as Nigeria's version of the American Queen Latifah, and consequent upon her vocal dexterity and reputation as a rapper, the Philosophy graduate of the University of Lagos has such names as Blakky, as contemporary *Akokites*. And when UNILAG appeared to have usurped the function of UNN in the early 80's, which produced Kris Okotie and Jide Obi as undergraduates in the heat of their reigns, she preferred to see the UNILAG connection as purely coincidental.

But how and when did it all start? Wunmi Aboderin traces it back to 1987 when she is in conjunction with three of late

Wunmi: Reaching for the heights



Bobby Benson's daughters formed all female band known as S.W.A.L. (Sealed With A Loving Kiss). S.W.A.L. performed intros and shows here at there but could not really get off t launch pad, and with the sojourning Bobby Benson's daughters overse:

The band played its *trunk dummies* and nascent frustration. Jazzist Ma well Benson was at hand to make h rediscover herself. He made her reali that she didn't really need S.W.A.L. to actualise her inherent musical p tentials. And as if that was the ton she needed to lift her out of her career limbo, she went all out again into t beat, doing jingles here and there a also backing up such musicians a Blakky, Segun Arinze, Alex Zitto a Daniel Wilson. And now, she wants t be seen and heard as well.

And so, the beat goes on as her debu album is due to be released come Apr on the label of Big Time Record (B.T.R a baby of Ken Caleb Olumesc, the Gu

nor of Niteshift. In case you are wondering why Wunmi should offer herself as an object for experimentation in the laboratory of an embryonic recording company, then you can hear it first hand from the bass guitarist: "since I'm the first act on the label of B.T.R., the tendency will be there on their part, to make sure I don't fail, since my failure as a debutant might also signal the failure of B.T.R."

In the offering is an eight tracker of an album with an abstract title which is still under contemplation. It encapsulates such songs as *Not Rossi*, a reply to Blakky's *Rossi* and delivered in songs and raps (TLC style).

SUPANOVA — A typical Pop Song
Arimabarata — Taken from a Zairean language and with a pervasive African touch. This mid tempo song was written by Shedi Moses.

Sealed — A fast tempo song, which is a duet with her lover Tunde Obe and

written by the later.
Life — She describes this song as her ballad

Don't make me wait — A pop song written by Alex "O" with all his trade marks.
She's got soul — A miscegenation of rap and raga featuring Tunde Obe and Albert Eke.

Palaver — A pop version of Fela's palaver.

Wunmi who claims she is inspired by Whitney Houston likes Onyeka Onwenu's maturity which is manifested in her songs and Tyna Onwudiwe's creativity but then the only Nigerian musician she can walk into a record store and request for his album is Blakky.

One major problem militating against Nigerian pop artistes which Wunmi herself will attest to is choreography. For, Nigerian pop artistes often seem incapable of dancing to their own

rhythms. This, she attributes to sheer laziness on their part. "If somebody wants to do something," she says, "then he or she must be ready to dedicate himself or herself to the craft and master everything in that domain. This is in consonance with the exhortation of Michael Jackson, the undisputed king of pop to the effect that they should aim at being perfectionists."

But how would she react to the fact that the people are bound to fall madly in love with her music happen to be the non-album buying fans, who prefer to dub and borrow. "Even if I don't sell," she counters, "and what I'm doing is appreciated, I shall be gratified."

The view is widely held that Tyna Onwudiwe polished the music scene in 1992. So, will Wunmi Aboderin give us an encore in 1993? Let's wait and see.

Has PMAN forgotten Olu Aboderin?

Here is the story of a mag-nate who musically is believed to have seen tomorrow's Nigeria.

By Zik Okafor

IO many, Olu Aboderin was music. And music was him in Nigeria that is Tony Okoroji, PMAN's president described him as "a man with a great foresight." To Ken Caleb Olumese *Sabirun Shokoh* governor, "Olu was a visionary. He saw Nigeria's music, 20 years ahead." Yet Shina Peters, afro-juju pioneer simply referred to him as "god father." With gold-plated memories these entertainment pundits seem to reflect on the man Aboderin. With soprano voices and heart quacking dirges, they bemoaned his most untimely death before this writer.

But the mood was different at the Aboderin estate in Lagos. It was on Sunday, February 22. Wale Aboderin, heir to the Aboderin legacy was not all song. There was a certain chill in his eyes, a bickering smile and curious pauses. And hanging above him in a portrait inside the lounge was his celebrated father — Olu himself with a smile that seemed to mock man's transient memory. Wale's disposition

was perhaps spurred by what he holds against Performing Musicians Association of Nigeria (PMAN) even though he wouldn't say so. But what really is the relationship between Aboderin and PMAN? What's the man's worth in Nigerian entertainment? And how does his son feel about dad and his deal with PMAN?

Authoritatively, we gathered that late Aboderin, proprietor of *The Punch* newspapers was perhaps the first Nigerian business baron to lend his voice, vigour and money to music. He saw the potentials of music as an industry of its own and chose to play a pioneer at its nascent stage. PMAN, we gathered, could not have stood firmly without Aboderin. Financially the association was lame. Aboderin worked tenaciously to restore its feet. He didn't only donate money, he gave them a 504 (station wagon) to facilitate mobility and donated his office, for necessary stationeries they required.

To ensure that music takes the centre-stage as an issue in Nigeria Aboderin used his influence and carried PMAN's case to Shehu Shagari's door-steps. In 1980, the executive president, Shagari gave PMAN recognition paving way for the embryonic organisation to begin its giant strides.

Olu Aboderin was to do more. Even though he was convinced that profit was not foreseeable in the distant future for him, he established *SKYLARK RECORDS* and *SKYLARK DANCERS* He signed on and released growing talents



Aboderin — A visionary to remember

like Shina Peters, Christy Essien-Igbokwe, Dele Ojo and Roots Foundation, now Jambos Express. With the conviction that a serene atmosphere and exposure could enhance creative genius, Aboderin sent many of his artistes on two weeks (sometimes) a month leisure trip to his house in London. The entire financial responsibility was borne by his company. Towards breaking into the international stage, the visionary established *Lagos International Records* in London. His ambition was to sign on foreign artistes of stature in the hope that during their tours and concerts, Nigerian artistes would appear as opening acts. In this way, they could dare the sizzling international scene. American super star, Marvin Gaye of blessed memory was one of the artistes signed on by Olu Aboderin in the late 70s. Marvin Gaye was to return with *Lagos International Records* after the self imposed exile and frustrations that followed his monster hit album, *Let's Get it On*. He was said to have been signed on with an advance fee close to a million dollars. The contract did not work out before the magnate answered the ultimate call on that fateful February 28, 1984 in London.

Wale confirmed the fact that Marvin Gaye owed the Aboderins a large sum of money but they never reached him (Gaye) till his tragic death in his father's bullet fingers.

It was Aboderin's dream that the Nigerian musician should be comfortable like his fellow stars in the US and Europe. He accomplished this by buying cars for some artistes, not necessarily on his label. He also bought equipment for some musicians that include Shina Peters. Wale recalled their discussion in late 1979 when he protested against his father's insistence on buying musical equipment for artistes: His father replied "someday Nigerians will begin to appreciate music and then you'd realise the importance of what I am doing now. This profession has to grow." But how many of them will remember what you've done for them," Wale asked obstinately. "There may just be one in every hundred but it doesn't matter. Nigeria will be the beneficiary," he insisted. This posture may explain why Wale holds the man as one of the greatest patriots of the polity called Nigeria.

To crown his campaign for music Nigerians and Nigeria with and for music, Aboderin gave music the centre spread in his paper, the first privately owned national newspaper. He clinged to the notion that if the eyes of the Nigerians are perpetually punched with jazzy music news whenever they opened the papers, then they'd consciously or otherwise begin to digest



Okoroji — We remember Aboderin

the message therein and of course the tunes.

It is for all these unprofitable sacrifices; for this altruistic cause that many raised the question of whether PMAN has forgotten its pioneer and perhaps greatest patron? Why is it that he could not be given a post-humous award in the very first Nigerian Music Awards. If PMAN could give post-humous awards to some musicians why couldn't they remember the man who sincerely believed in their cause — not for any political interest. Remember Aboderin declined all attempts to make him join partisan politics in the second republic. Tony Okoroji will not however agree that Aboderin has ever escaped PMAN's thinking. He affirmed that Aboderin's wife was made one of the presenters during the Second NMA held at the National Theatre, Lagos as a recognition of her husband's contribution to music. "In the PMAN's 10th anniversary dinner, PMAN paid a glowing tribute to the man. All these show that we still appreciate his contribution, to the music industry," the president proffered. But couldn't PMAN have honoured the man with an award, we asked. "A lot of factors determine who gets a post-humous award. And it's just one

award in a year. There are many people that deserve such awards, but it's a gradual process. The NMA will outlive them and many of us. So you can't rule out PMAN honouring him in the future," Okoroji continued. Let's give

PMAN a little chance," he added imploringly. Olumese of Niteshift also thinks in his private opinion that Aboderin deserves an award. So does Shina Peters and many music lovers that we spoke with.

Wale Aboderin does not see what PMAN tagged honours as an honour. He is not even yearning for the awards. But he is aggrieved by the fact that the "so called glowing honour," at PMAN's 10th Anniversary dinner is political. Though he kept mute to our question, one of his pals insisted that PMAN mentioned his father's name at the dinner because Wale had wacked them for their failures in remembering the late patron. Sagaciously Wale summarised his reticent posture with a sentence — "you don't expect a reward when you offer a helping hand to the needy but it is only good...a sign of appreciation that the beneficiary tells others what you've done for him; that's a great way of paying back." He was more forthcoming with his father's vision which was partly inculcated in PMAN's ideals and objectives. The man had in his life brought international dancers and choreographers to groom Nigerian artistes. He bought instruments to make every singer practically well equipped to bear the respected noun, musician and to foster live shows. All these would help in developing music oriented people and concert-going culture. PMAN in Wale's humble opinion should strive to realise "these grand fundamental objectives rather than having Nigerian Music Awards as the loudest objective and the primal focus year in, year out.

And so as the 4th Nigeria Music Awards draws near the question arises, "will PMAN remember Aboderin? Will he be honoured this year, next year or some day? How does Aboderin's widow and other children feel about all these? All that will come your way soon. In keeping alive her father's dream, Wunmi; Aboderin's daughter, releases her debut elpee come April under *Big Time Music*. Details of her father's role in her music life will come to you via your Arty Stuff. And if you knew Aboderin in his life time, if you appreciate his vision, then read this page again when he's honoured and write in. That will be a scent of joy for the Aboderin "kids"; for as Wale summarised, "appreciation or reward does not have to be money."

Second coming of West African Pilot

The rudder of Nigeria's independence struggle is back and pledges to change the course of newspaper journalism again.

By Ambrose Akor

SOMEWHERE in Toyin Street Ikeja, Lagos, a dream is hopping into reality. It is a reality of re-convergence of Zikists, the meeting of talented, young journalists and the emergence of modern journalism in West Africa. But more than all that, the greatest tribute one can pay to the doyen of Nigeria's independence struggle and the man who pushed the fast-forward button to Nigerian journalism.

Armed with good education, the vibrancy of youth and a drink from America's racy journalism, Nnamdi Azikiwe (later Nigeria's first President) changed the face of Nigerian journalism and gave the country something more than a newspaper in 1937.

The combative, abrasive and provocative style of the *West African Pilot* gave Nigeria's independence struggle a bite.

So, many saw the paper rather as an institution. J.S. Coleman described the *Pilot* "as the most single precipitant of the Nigerian awakening."

It was, therefore, unfair to history and to the man behind such a force that the institution should die.

Just like other epics, there will be a second coming of the West African *Pilot* March 7. And as would befit the man, the new proprietors of the paper are set to change the face of journalism again, the way its first entry did it in 1937.

At the *Pilot's* temporary office in Toyin Street, the chirping desk top computers and the verve of youthful but experienced young hands on them are just part of the big, new *Pilot*.

Printing machines, considered the most modern, have already been procured by a group of Nigerians in the USA as part of their contribution to the re-emergence of the paper. But shipment has been withheld until the com-



Zik: Great honour to the man and his name

pletion of the reconstruction of the *Pilot's* former headquarters in Sabo, Yaba in about four months to befit its new, modern reach. Printing will start now in a commercial press in Ikeja.

Ogbuagu Anikwe, the new editor and former news editor of *The Guardian*, told *TSM* that as part of their technical plan, each writer reporter will have a computer set for feeding in stories and page planning. Most of them are now undergoing computer training under a firm headed by a Swede.

Ogbuagu says: "We want to advance two steps ahead of everyone here now." It is planned that the paper will be a tabloid, quality newspaper that will be in the forte of *The Guardian*, a paper that has faced little competition in that market since it was established 10 years ago.

To make that dream easily reachable, more than two-third of those on the staff of the resurrecting paper are from *The Guardian* — on the editorial and even advertisement and circulation staff.

Apart from Ogbuagu, former features editor of *The Guardian*, Felix Abugu and Mike Asuquo are serving as deputy editor and features editor respectively. Also from there is Hugo Odiogor, who was foreign editor and will serve in the same capacity for the *Pilot*.

Sports which Ogbuagu said will be given a wide coverage will be steered by ex-Guardian, ex-Concord Dave Enechukwu. From the most unusual

place is Okagbue Aduba, an ex-Classique, who will brush up the regular 24 pages of news and make them readable. He was chosen from the human interest fold to help put life in the news from the departments now headed by straight, hard news people. *TSM* was told.

Style and business are other departments that will feature eminently. In fact, there is already a plan to create a leeway for the business department to grow into a separate business paper.

Share ownership in the venture, with N40 million as initial operational capital, cuts across the country.

Featuring eminently are the Ogunyans, the Gbadamosis, a presidential aspirant from one of the eastern states and a couple of other die-hard Zikists. Also involved are a crop of yuppies in the financial and banking world lending their blue chips to journalism. *TSM* also learnt that one or two persons now in government are part of the venture.

Life eased out of the *Pilot* in 1978 mainly because the mission it set for itself — attainment of independence — had been reached. What is then the new focus of the re-emerging paper?

Ogbuagu told *TSM* that the paper "will not be used as a weapon anymore but as a tool for the improvement of the lives of the readers in whatever sphere."

He said: "There will be strong emphasis on forward looking analyses of issues that have implications to the society." Just like *The Guardian*, the group is looking forward to drawing such input from experts outside the fold.

These days when the newsstands are overflowing with publications, the *Pilot* plans to live up to its name and, therefore, widen its market. *TSM* learnt the entire West African sub region will serve as its audience and market, especially Nigerians there. In fact, plans are on to establish three regional offices in Lome, Abidjan and Banjul to ensure full coverage of the sub region.

Just as Azikiwe said then, he had to cover the sub-region because "The West African colonies have a common foe," the new proprietors are seeing a common fortune, fate and fear binding West Africa.

The realisation of the dream doesn't end there. The *Pilot* heralds in yet another better day for those in Journalism. Apart from owning shares in the venture, journalists working for the paper earn enough that will force union leaders in other papers back to the negotiating table, asking for more pay. The average pay in the *Pilot* is about N40,000 per annum.

For sure, the light is deservedly back so that people can find the way. For the sake of the man Zik and for history.

Operation total auction looms

Amidst dissenting voices on the sudden decision of the Federal Government to divest its equity shares in some public enterprises, investigations show that even those not initially slated for privatization will soon be offered for sale.

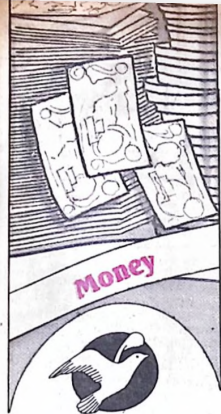
ssive overhead cost of the public sector. The SAP philosophy therefore added new lexicons to our economic dictionary. Such words as Deregulation, Privatisation, Commercialization, Market Economy, Liberalization, Import tariff subsidy, became household sing-songs.

Although Nigerians are today not bordered by the operational effects of the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme which has already forced the federal government to privatize or commercialize about '76 companies (including twelve big banks) a new toga to the existing phenomenon will soon be made public. TSM exclusively gathered that plans are underway to fully privatize all existing federal government companies/parastatals.

This move which, we learnt, is designed to boost the effectiveness of the private sector will entail the provision of opportunities for all and sundry to participate and engage in lawful economic activities of the nation. In effect, it will require the withdrawal of government from active involvement in various activities which the private sector could handle effectively. For example, any form of supply other than that of a security nature would soon not be the responsibility of the government.

Sources at the Federal Ministry of Finance hinted that the policy is conducive to private sector. In this regard, all forms of administrative controls which inhibit freedom of entry into, or exit from, the mainstream of economic activities would be removed. Deserving of similar treatment, we gathered, are policies which centre around individuals rather than issues of societal interests. The government is therefore expected to play the role of an umpire instead of being the domineering actor in the national economy.

The present move by the federal government will likely receive serious knocks from a good number of Nigerians especially the low-income earners. This is because these people have, since 1986, been at the receiving end of major government policy measures. Their main source of concern is on why services rendered by public utilities should be expensive considering the fact that it is part of the social responsibility of government to make them available to the citizens at affordable prices. Their argument therefore, is that it is baseless for government in the guise of trade liberalization or commercialization, to make it impos-



By Obinna Nwachukwu

It all started as far back as 1986. It was in that year that the federal government in order to right the

wrongs which consist distortions and waste in the economic management unleashed on the economy, initiated what is now known as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

By that time, it was clear that the revenue base of the nation could no longer continue to shoulder the ex-



Oladele Olashore — Protecting the interest of his colleagues

ble for the citizens to enjoy services which they are entitled to by law.

A good number of experts, TSM interviewed on this issue adduced several reasons which they believe, might have prompted the plans to fully privatize all existing government parastatals. Although the Transitional Council had in the 1993 budget said that all already commercialized public enterprises would be privatized, the decision to now include even those not slated for either privatization or commercialization, economic analysts explained, arose out of the need by the federal government to adhere to directives from both the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and our Creditor Nations — the London and Paris Clubs. It will be recalled that the IMF had last December told the federal government that the *naira* was still over valued. It also directed the authorities to remove all forms of subsidies as well as divest fully, its shares in public enterprises. This directive from IMF was followed by a visit to Nigeria in January by the British Secretary for Overseas Development, Lynda Chalker who at a press conference in Lagos reiterated Britain's support of the IMF order.

Observers are therefore quick to explain that the present action of the federal government as well as plans to remove oil subsidy are not unconnected with the above factors. According to a senior lecturer with the University of Lagos, "this development conforms to the Logic of Structural Adjustment as propounded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). And when you realize that this administration has been more determined than any other government before it to take these measures, the picture will become very clear. What this implies is that the government is increasingly confirming its irrelevance to the existential needs of the Nigerian populace. In any case, the administration parted ways with the people the very day it adopted the IMF inspired monetary measures."

The consequence of this, he further explained is that Nigerians would become largely alienated from the state since the state cares not for their economic survival which has been threatened by inflation, unemployment, food scarcity, homelessness and also care not for the security of their lives. "What all these show," the social scientist said, "is that this regime has run out of steam. It has lost control of the machinery of government which is meant to protect the interest of the citizens. This is the sign of deep-seated crisis."

Apart from listening to the advice of the western powers, it is also being argued that the plan to privatize all public



Ahadu Rufai Mohammed — a larger proportion of government expenditure does not improve real output.

enterprises was influenced by members of the Transitional Council Peter Anyanwu, a chartered accountant, said that, going by the fact that majority of the council members are from the private sector, it is possible that they have lobbied the military class into taking the measure as this will be beneficial to them, their friends and the Senior Military officers when they eventually retire from active service. Both Ernest Shonekan, the Transitional Council Chairman and Head of Government, as well as Oladele Olashore, the Secretary of Finance, had prior to their appointments, been strong advocates of greater involvement of the private sector in the management of public companies. Perhaps, this could rightly explain Lynda Chalker's statement while in Nigeria that her British government had confidence that Shonekan will strictly apply the recommendations of the Western creditor nations. Shonekan himself is a product of British education and once headed UAC which is a British company.

On the other hand, the Federal government could be acting in response to demands of the Organized Private Sector (OPS), which comprises, the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), and the Nigerian Employers Consultative Assembly (NECA). In fact, Ahmadu Rufai Mohammed, NACIMMA National President admitted this. He told TSM that the federal government, in her efforts at resource mobilization has accorded a meaningful role to the private

sector. The range of activities expected to be carried out by this sector, Mohammed pointed out, has been substantially increased since the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme under the government's privatization and commercialization policy, which he said has made a number of public enterprises to be privatized.

Hopeful that all public enterprises would soon be handed over to the private entrepreneurs, Mohammed expressed optimism that this will greatly boost the economic base of our country as it will reduce government's frivolous expenditure on non-productive projects. Said he: "a large proportion of government expenditure does not increase real output, while the expenditure goes on to increase domestic money supply with consequent pressure on the rate of inflation. The rapidly rising trend of government expenditure calls for maximum restraint especially with respect to non directly productive projects, which could be better managed by the private sector."

The NACIMMA President, stated that what is required to achieve this is a stable, non hostile business environment. "I want to submit that I do not know of any free enterprise economy in our world today where trade liberalization is everywhere in chains, where international commodity pricing is determined much more by geo-political factors than by free market pricing and where bilateral economic relations is increasingly becoming more meaningful and sustainable between the South-South than between the North-South countries."

Ignatius Ukpong, a professor of Economics and Head of Department of economics, University of Uyo agreed with Rufai Mohammed. According to him, it is the responsibility of the government to provide the required economic and social infrastructure for the efficient functioning of a free enterprise economy.

"It is the responsibility of the public sector (government) to design and implement appropriate fiscal and monetary policies for the efficient and proper allocation of national resources to all sectors of the economy. By promoting the creation of money and capital markets, the government can influence mobilization of investible funds for either public investment in economic and social infrastructure or for providing loans to private investors," Ukpong said.

His belief is that by World Bank and the IMF standards, Nigeria is a free enterprise economy just like the western nations. In these countries, the university don explained, the private sector is larger than the public sector, while

Apart from listening to the advice of the western powers, it is also being argued that the plan to privatize all public enterprises was influenced by members of the transitional council.

the governments have been supportive of the private sector by providing adequate social and economic infrastructure. The governments of Japan, Korea and Taiwan, he said, apart from performing the traditional functions of the public sector (maintenance of law and order, protection of the rights of private property, regulation of the monetary system, provision of public projects etc) have been helping the private sector enterprises. The same thing applies to the United States of America which in her "golden" age of industrialization was among the world's most protectionist countries.

But must Nigeria follow the footsteps of these advanced countries? Economists seem to be divided over this issue. For while indigenous entrepreneurs believe doing so will boost their profit margin, others, especially those in the public sector are careful to give it a 100 percent pass mark, as privatising all public enterprises will not only threaten their jobs but will also force the prices of goods and services to jump.

At the moment, the Federal Ministry of finance seems fully prepared to let go, government's control of equity share in public enterprises. Going by a statement made in Lagos recently by Oladele Olashore, Finance Secretary, it is only a matter of days before this measure will be effected. Speaking at a one day seminar organized by the Nigerian Economic Society (NES), Olashore, who himself is a private entrepreneur, said that his ministry will soon provide an enabling environment for the emergence of a viable and sustainable free enterprise system in Nigeria.

His words: "Herein lies my support for the emergence of a full-fledged Free Enterprise system in this country in which the private sector would be expected to play a meaningful but genuine leading role." To be able to

cope with this new challenge, Olashore said that the private sector itself needs self appraisal and should be prepared for the new roles they are expected to play. As at now, he continued, many "successful" private sector organisations rely mostly on government patronage, and their activities have no value added whatsoever. "There are also some organisations in the sector which continue to rely wholly on government for their survival. Some specialize in securing special favour to trade in commodities that have been prohibited. As long as these persist, we are not likely to evolve a private sector willing and able to manage the Free Enterprise Economic System envisaged," Finance Secretary said.

A way out of this, he stressed, is for both the public and private sectors to have an agreement on areas of activities that need to be shared between them, since according to him, "the nature of the transition from an economy dominated by the public sector (government) to that of a truly free enterprise system must be clearly understood and agreed upon." Under this new arrangement, the private sector is not expected to rely on government largesse, but rather, to concretize the nature of its meaningful contribution to the economy, whereby it would be able to take over, and effectively manage, the commanding heights of the economy.

TSM research shows that the need for any government "involvement" in the nation's economic management has its root in economic history. It is believed that at the early stages of a country's development process, there will be no sufficiently developed market that will

ensure optimality in resource allocation. The theory also suggests a weak or non-existent Private Sector at the initial developmental stages of the economy. Consequently, Government over the years and in every nation of the world has been responsible for guiding the direction of the national economy. They have in appropriate cases, intervened to ensure balance in economic development. In the more organized economies, involvement in economic activity is usually limited to non-profit making social investments that would not be attractive to the private sector, or to capital intensive industrial investments which are beyond the funding capacity of the private sector or to strategic industries of security nature.

Since attaining independence, Nigeria has performed these traditional roles of government in nurturing, guiding, and intervening in the economic activities to ensure balanced growth and development. However, following the oil boom era of the early seventies, the government came out with policies of controlling the economy. At the Federal and State levels, normal economic activities that should have been the exclusive preserve of the private sector were undertaken by governments. Unfortunately, most of these were done with glaring inefficiency — they made no profits, created wide economic distortions and hence, became instruments of political exploitation.

Figures from the Federal Office of Statistics show that by the beginning of the 1980s, the public sector alone accounted for some 50 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the economy and some 60-67 percent of the modern sector employment. By 1986, the Federal Government alone owned nearly 200 non-commercial and commercial parastatals. Public enterprises in Nigeria as at that time was over 500 with total government investment in them worth over N36 million in the form of equity, loans guarantees and subventions. Such a phenomenal growth of public enterprises is attributed to growth in government revenue during the oil boom period 1973/74-1980/81.

Unfortunately, this direct government involvement in production and control did not improve the efficiency of the public sector. It however, took Nigeria till 1986 before the consequent distortions and wastes in economic management started being addressed with the adoption of a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The new SAP order emphasized the disengagement of government from the economic activities that could be better handled by the private sector.

Hamza Zayyad — TPCP chairman.



Bank Chiefs tackle finance industry problems

The problems of the money market are numerous but bank directors have just one belief: we could together salvage the troubled market.

By Ono Bobi

VICTOR Odozi, CBN deputy governor and *cicero* of the banking industry is a man whose long years of tailoring the garments of the sector have culminated in a wide speculative experience.

This balding egghead took a hard look at the future of the financial services industry last week and "prophesied" that: "the financial services industry in Nigeria is likely to undergo significant structural changes over the next few years as competition both within and between subsectors of the industry grows more intense." His message hit target when he explained that what actually would happen is that the financial market would grow and become more active as the past, "as new institutions and articles of trade of the operators gradually appear in the markets.

On such trade instrument which is likely to become very popular and an essential feature of an efficient financial service industry are the derivative in products (specialised services which are fallouts of new practices in the industry and forced on customer by the dictates of time).

Odozi further acknowledges that the monetary authorities have a role to play in creating a stable macro-economic environment, *moreso*, at a time when the industry can now influence the fixing of prices or rates of shares and interests in the market. However, it is very clear that the CBN is still very worried over the existing phenomenon of a wide disparity in deposit and lending rates in the money market. Like an inhouse surgeon who is unsatisfied with the efficiency of his equipment, Odozi believes that the irregularities in the interest rate struc-



ture were some of the pointers to a system with very limited capacity to effect improvements which are dependable in the sharing of resources.

Odozi is sure knows the banking terrain too well and props up his argument saying that in December last year, commercial banks' savings deposit rates varied from 13.5 to 25 percent while prime rates (the rates at which banks are prepared to lend to each other) ranged between 30 and 61 percent.

In assessing the interest rate scenario, Odozi suggests that the financial institution of the future would have to be able to make substantial investment in new technology and personnel skills and should be able to carry out research and development.

Odozi is not alone in finding a lasting solution to the problems posed by high interest rates to the nation's economy. Chris Ekeigwe, managing director of Financial Research Associates states what he calls an "obvious fact": the current high interest rates in the money market might retard the nation's manufacturing sector. The situation, he says, has become so unsavouring that manufacturers could hardly borrow funds at the on-going high interest rates and still operate profitably.

And as a panacea to "sweet borrow-

ing," Ekeigwe wants government to establish some agencies that will extend cheap funds to manufacturers. He reasons along the same line of Erasmus Akingbola, managing director and chief executive of Nigerian Intercontinental Merchant Bank Limited, who advises that for the industry to grow, the procedure for getting credit must be convenient and devoid of demoralising administrative bottlenecks.

Akingbola also tackled other areas of the pains of the financial sector. The issue dear to his heart was the failure of many banks to repay funds borrowed from the inter-banks transactions to repay funds borrowed from the inter-bank money market, a situation which he said, is threatening the stability of the nation's financial system. According to him, if this worrisome trend is not checked, it could lead to the eventual breakdown of the financial system.

Of recent, banking chief executives, have been piqued by recent happenings in the money market, fallouts of the 1993 budget which is still under review by the National Assembly. One of such was Ateko Peterside, managing director and chief executive of Investment Banking and Trust Company Limited, IBTC, who bared his mind on the fiscal issues of government. He believes that foreign exchange market reforms and interest rates management would only succeed if "we are prepared to take the bull by the horns and do away with Forex documentation and make the naira fully convertible." More importantly, Peterside says that new investment expenditures were unlikely to flow into the agricultural and manufacturing sectors against a background of national instability an extreme exchange rate and interest rate volatility.

What other solutions could be preferred for the numerous problem of the money market? While Odozi agrees that there has actually been intensified competition between banks, he calls for innovation, enhanced efficiency and customer/customer orientation.

The bank chief also believes that matters of increased off-balance sheet transactions by banks, declining quality of loan assets and the increased number of distressed banks, calls for enhanced and robust supervisory remedies like restructuring, mergers, take-overs, sale or liquidation.

Odozi further made known that applicants for banking licenses should not misinterpret the on-going policy of financial deregulation to mean that the embargo on the continued suspension of approvals for new banking firms by the CBN has been lifted. "It is in fact still in force as deregulation does not mean the absence of control," he said.

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MONEY BRIEFS

By Akaninyene Esiere

Kano hosts Agrimotor fair in May

THE era of generalized trade fairs is now being challenged. Nigerians are beginning to embrace specialized fairs aimed at addressing specific problems. And come this May, the commercial city of Kano will be playing host to a 10-day specialized National Expo for Ag-

riculture, Motor and Allied Products tagged "Agrimotor show Kano." Billed to start on the 20th of May, the fair hopes to provide the yearning break through in solving the nation's food shortage and transportation crisis.

Third in its series, the fair is being put together by a Kano-based trade promotions firm, Adbiz Press Limited. In a press release issued by its chief Executive Ajayi Memaitelan, local governments, large and small scale farmers, food processing companies, motor and tractor marketers will be involved in the fair. The release also claims that most virulent food and transport crises still exist in Nigeria despite the pretensions and common official disclamation.

The fair, said to be a gate-free one, will also feature talkshops (mini seminars) on special days to be devoted to grains, livestock, rural development, finance, motor and tractor while its Gala Nite will be sponsored by Research Institutes, Universities and the private sector.

£1.4 billion life line for Heron International

THE £1.4 billion rescue package to salvage the cash-strapped Heron International has received the backing of a five-strong creditors' steering committee headed by Barclays Bank. The final documents for the banking facilities will however be sent to Heron's 83 banks creditors shortly for vetting. The banks with £775 million outstanding with Heron International, are set to sign a deal by month end, by which time bond holders will receive final proposals concerning the rescue.

Heron, the property to most petrol stations in Britain founded by Gerald Ronson, has also been offered working capital. In principle by the steering committee. A banking source said last week the proposed restructuring offers "materially better recovery prospects than any alternatives." The deal, which took 11 months of negotiation to materialise, has been linked to Heron's shock decision last month to halt payments to what it termed non-essential advisers.

The embattled Ronson will soon be replaced by a new non-executive chairman, as what one banker calls "the most complicated refinancing ever attempted," is completed. Heron proposes that the banks will receive £400 million in equity, which would reduce the holding of Ronson's family trusts to just five per cent.

F & E 2nd Oil Fair coming

FAIRS and Exhibition Services (F & E), a division of Publicity Services Nigeria Limited is

tooled up for its second specialised International Oil, Gas and Petrochemicals exhibition slated for March.

The six days exhibition which kicks off on the 16th of March is aimed at creating awareness for gas development in the 90s and at expanding investment opportunities in the Nigerian oil and gas industry. According to



Dotun Okubanjo F & E Chief Consultant

the coordinator of the fair, Louis Chuku participants will include oil companies operating in Nigeria and 10 oil producing countries.

The fair which will take place at the Lagos Trade Fair Complex, Badagry, will feature sectoral exhibition in oil exploration and marketing companies, banks, transporters, energy, computer and ancillary industries, plus a two day seminar for professionals. Secretary for Petroleum and Minerals Resources, Philip Asiodu, a chief, will deliver the opening speech, while Organisation for Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Secretary General Subroto, a doctor, is expected as special guest speaker.

St. John holds Fire Safety and Security fair

SECURITY consciousness received a boost last week with the successful hosting of a three day Fire Safety and Security Solution Exhibition '93 in Lagos. The exhibition organised by a foremost security outfit, St. John Security Company Limited, featured 20 top light fire safety and security companies in Nigeria. Billed for the prestigious L Hotel Eko Menden, the exhibition featured a display of a variety of high quality safety products.

Products exhibited at the fair included electronic security burglar alarms, closed circuit television (CCTV), electronic fire alarms, car alarms, anti-bugging devices and portable security equipment. With a theme titled "Trends in fire safety and security in the 90s, the exhibition aimed at updating Nigerians with the latest in security products and spreading security awareness in an increasingly insecure environment.

Commenting on the fair, the Managing Director of St. John Security, Chiguita Leak, (Miss), said it was timely especially now that there is a staggering rise in bank and home burglaries in the country.



The World



HI

IS television image is, no doubt, an arresting one but one which also casts him as a politician brimming with flash and dash but not keen on hard choices. That is — or used to be — the public image of Bill Clinton. America's 42nd President. Just before his inauguration, a *Time* magazine reviewer, basing his analysis on Clinton's tenure as the governor of Arkansas, had summed up as a "big carrot small stick" politician and posed the question: will Clinton be a Yes president in a No era? The fact that Clinton the campaigner backed away from the word *sacrifice* was cited as a pointer to the manner of president he would become. But all these were calculations, never absolute judgements, for the challenges of candidacy and those of the presidency are often necessarily different. Right from his January 20 assumption of the exalted office when he first spoke of "shared sacrifice", Clinton has veritably undergone what may be dubbed a metamorphosis. He has shown that not only can he but that he will — do whatever he deems necessary to positively address the economic quagmire in which America is currently enmeshed. This inclination is the deducible *arrière-pensée* behind the bold economic blueprint he recently unfolded in his first state-of-the-union address.

It is remarkable that before this ascension, the Clinton presidency had started off on anything but a cheerful

Clinton's big stick

...as he unfolds an economic blueprint that underlines the fact that he is rapidly growing on the job.

By Maik Nwosu

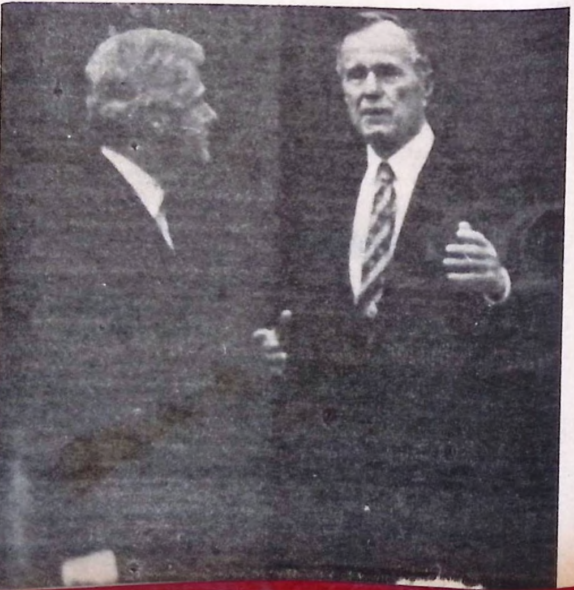
note for the Democrats. In Lance Morrow's words: "The famous double nanny disturbances that resulted from Clinton's search for an Attorney General and the fierce electrical displays over the issue of gays serving in the military had the effect of making Republicans, at least, cheerful for the first time since November [when, via the defeat of George Bush at the polls, the Democrats upstaged the Republicans at the White House]." Then there was the "medically justifiable but politically explosive" Clinton's plan of welcoming AIDS-infected foreigners into the United States — a proposal that, according to a *Time* CNN poll, ignited a

71 percent rejection outburst. Despite this mood and in spite of current regulations, an undaunted Clinton still intends to push on with plans to remove all (AIDS, syphilis, gonorrhoea, leprosy) but one (tuberculosis) item from the list of communicable diseases that are grounds for barring entry into the US. Why not tuberculosis as well? Because that, unlike the others, can spread through the air. So much for President Clinton the humanist.

Beyond humanist aspirations, which have demonstrated a tendency to bog the new president down, Clinton has soared to a confrontation with the medusa spirit of America's economy — "a call to arms," in his own words. The Clinton blueprint, which aims at a \$31 billion economic stimulus and a four-year plan to reduce the budget deficit \$145 billion, is composed of these elaborate specifics as spelt out in *Time*:

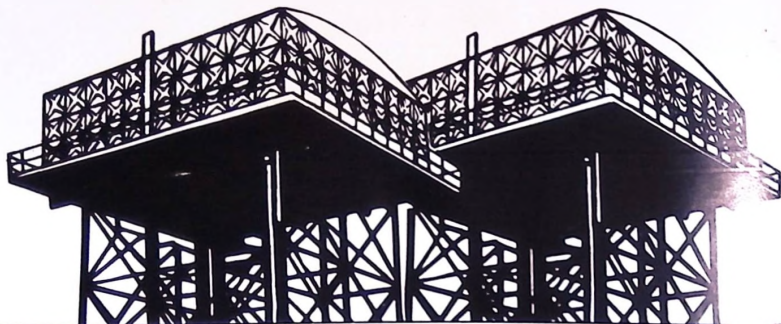
- A boost in the top marginal income-tax rate from the current 31 percent to 36 percent applying to incomes over \$200,000. First year value: \$14 billion; over four years: \$60 billion
- A 10 percent surcharge on in-

The new and the old: Clinton and Bush





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comes over one million dollars. First-year value: \$300 million; four years: one billion dollars.

— A boost in the corporate income-tax rate from 34 percent to 34 percent to 36 percent. First year value: seven billion dollars; four years: \$28 billion.

— An increase from 50 percent to 85 percent in the amount of Social Security benefits subject to taxation among elderly American citizens with incomes over \$32,000. First year value: \$5.8 billion; four years: \$24 billion.

— A tax of five percent on energy consumption. First-year value: \$13 billion; four years: \$60 billion.

— A limit on corporate tax deductions for executive salaries of CEOs and other officers. First-year value: \$100 million; four years: \$13 billion.

— Tighter enforcement of taxes operating in the US. Though Clinton has said the tax could net nine billion dollars in the first year and nearly \$45 billion over four years, the revised expectation is closer to two billion dollars in the first year and eight billion dollars over four years.

— A cut by half in allowed deductions for business meals and entertainment. First-year value: two billion dollars; four years: \$12 billion. Tax increases all-spiced with spending reductions:

— A cut of \$50 billion in the defence budget over the next four years, starting from a whack of up to eight billion dollars this year.

— A cut of three billion dollars in government administrative costs and reduction in federal payrolls by 100,000 through attrition, which will save an additional six billion dollars. A separate plan to lower the number of advisory commissions could save \$50 million annually.

— A 25 percent down sizing of White House staff and elimination of limousines and other perks will save a symbolic \$10 million annually.

In setting forth a programme of tax increases, Clinton has thus entered his name as the third consecutive US president to go back on his election promise. But, with a keen political insight that had hardly been accorded him, he had targeted these increases at upper class incomes: "For 12 years, the Republicans have raised taxes on the middle class. It's time to give the middle class tax relief." In addition to this consideration (families with gross incomes under \$30,000 will pay almost no additional tax) and the emotive appeal of everyone paying "their fair share," the Clinton promise is that this road will lead to a growing economy and



Clinton, out to make his mark

more jobs. How do the Americans view this? Revealed a Time-CNN poll: The president currently enjoys about 49 percent approval rating, with 60 percent feeling that Clinton's problems are basically unsolved problems left over from the Bush administration but a significant 54 percent are of the opinion that the economy has remained the same since November 1992.

But Clinton has never claimed to be a miracle worker. "I'm here to tell you we didn't get into this mess overnight, and we won't get out of it overnight," he reportedly told a crowd in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Election Day. Responding to the Clinton blueprint, via a February 18 article in the *New York Times*, former President Reagan countered that the real lesson of the decade (a backlash at Clinton's statement "I know we have learned the hard lessons of the 1980s") was that tax cuts induce hard work and investment. "The fact is, every dollar the politicians take back to Washington means less spending power for average Americans and more opportunity to waste money."

But the new president is not likely to be deterred by such skirmishes for his commitment, as he has reiterated a number of times is to change — the renewal of America, no less, one powered by a comprehension of the thorns and glories of the past. "We have to face the fact that to make the change our

country needs, more Americans must contribute today so that all Americans can do better tomorrow." "The historical landscape is littered with the bugles that American Presidents have used to call the people to sacrifice," writes an informed Lance Morrow. "The calls have often failed. Americans may enjoy a call to sacrifice as rhetoric ("Ask not what your country can do for you," John Kennedy said in his flashy reversible prose, "ask what you can do for your country"). But the key to Clinton's program will not be some mass popular talent for sacrifice. It will be an American trait more characteristic and useful and durable: a sense of fairness."

After the enunciation, Clinton, employing his salesmanship talents, hit the campaign trail to market his programme directly to Americans — in keeping, in part, with his campaign promise to stay in touch with the average American. According to George Stephanopoulos, his communications director, he plans to spend at least one day a week on the road in the coming months, being well aware that his administration's popularity and its chance of re-election in 1996 rest largely with his economic agenda — in the same way Reagan set the mood for his two terms by having his economic plan approved without a hitch by Congress 12 years ago.

Besides, the new Clinton campaign is quintessentially the Clinton phenomenon in ascendancy, either because of a or despite the presidency, for Clinton the campaigner is Clinton is his element. By taking his message to the people, the president also hopes to turn popular pressure on Congress, which will vote on the reforms in about six months. The Clinton charisma is, thus, pertinent — the warmth that led to his inviting 50 people, including wheel chair-bound Mike Morrison, he met on the campaign trail to an inauguration dinner and which, in part has garnered an instant symbolic donation of a thousand dollars by an American woman as further finder to keep the flames of the Clinton plan soaring higher. The Clinton charisma, ironically, is not unlike the Reagan aura — in its ability to pull at the heartstrings of people deeply.

There are so many factors at play, but this truth is self-evident: that in making the transition from a candidate to Mr. President, Clinton has become stronger rather than weaker: a Big Carrot/Big Stick politician, so to speak. It is remarkable that a recent *Time* cover portrait adorned his regular chubby features with a wisdom beard. That is the new Bill Clinton, out to carve his niche in the Hall of Fame.

UNDP and Africa's development in the 1990's

"Seek ye first thy political kingdom and all else shall be added onto you."

— Kwame Nkrumah

By Joseph Umunegbu

THERE is this thing about the United Nations — which has a spiderweb of interlocking agencies, catering for all types of human activities that one can imagine — that appears overstretched and undermanned.

The UN, the world's number one organisation, gives the impression of a plodding benevolent giant, still finding its feet, in the murky waters of the new world order. Certainly, its objectives are sound, its staff, first class and its delivery — exquisite.

But it has a problem. It was never designed to take the world by the scruff of the neck, and change it along the paths of its laudable objectives. Instead it is as if a clique of powerful countries have taken the UN by the scruff of the neck and used it to prod other nations into line.

One major player in UN affairs is the United States. One major recipient of UN beneficiaries is Nigeria. And one major UN agency is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In this instance, the UNDP is used as an international medium of exchanging relations and activities between the US and Nigeria. Under the current UNDP programme assistance (1992-96), Nigeria became the highest beneficiary of UNDP's assistance in Africa, and the fourth highest in the world — behind India, China and Bangladesh.

The US, on the other hand, donates more to the UN cause, than any other country in the world, followed by Sweden, Japan and Australia. It then comes as no surprise that an American, who heads the UNDP, should visit Nigeria on matters relating to the UNDP's assistance programme to Nigeria, and other national issues. The courtesy

call was made to president Ibrahim Babangida, the First Lady — Maryam Babangida and Ernest Shonekan, Head of the Transitional Council. After the visit, the UNDP administrator jetted from Abuja to Lagos, for an interview with journalists, penultimate Thursday.

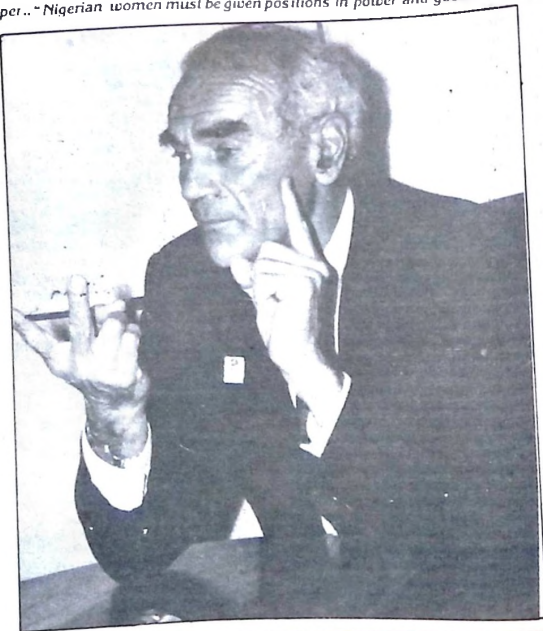
The American in question, William Draper III, has been at the helms of UNDP affairs for close on seven years. He is a distinguished business administrator. And since he assumed the leadership of the UNDP, there has been a considerable increase in the resources available for development, under UNDP's technical assistance

programme. He has also put into place, the necessary ingredients, now being used to allocate those resources among developing nations.

Draper's visit to Nigeria was the first, by a high ranking UNDP official to the UN community, in many years. It also came at an appropriate time, because it is the final lap in the transfer of government to a democratically elected president in Nigeria. To this end, Draper showed a readiness to assist Nigeria complete her final transition hurdle. He told reporters at the interview, which was attended by TSM, that "(the UN), might be of service to the democratic procedures in Nigeria which may ensure a fair (presidential) election."

A free and fair presidential election is crucial if Nigeria is to benefit from the transition to democratic rule. But Draper believes that Africa, in general, should not feel disheartened about its setbacks throughout the odd thirty years of independence. "compared to over 200 years in US and a longer period of existence in other countries, there is still a long way to go for Africa. The other countries are now begin-

Draper... "Nigerian women must be given positions in power and government."





Draper, flanked by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf UNDP Director of Regional Bureau for Africa (left) and Assefa Fre Hewit, UNDP resident representative in Nigeria (right).

ning to squeeze out corruption from its democratic system. Collor's resignation would not have been possible, but for the democratic process in Argentina."

"The 1990s is for Africa's democracy. Africa's problems were caused by the lack of democratic principles in her body politics, among other issues. The continent is too dependent on former colonial powers. If Africa can take control of its political future (through democracy), continue the privatisation programme and take charge of its social development, there would be better things ahead for Africa, and she should be able to head out of the clouds and into the sunshine in the 21st century. It is true that part of Africa's problems since independence, was caused by the West. But with the thawing of the cold war, there could be tremendous advantages for Africa," he said.

But Draper insisted that the UNDP is only in Nigeria to give technical assistance programme, such as, the Better Life Support Unit. Maryam Babangida who leads the Better Life for Rural Women Programme, and has the Centre for Women Development, in Abuja, named after her — expressed satisfaction at the recognition of the potentialities of the centre by UNDP, and its willingness to help its growth.

Maryam earlier said in Abuja that, assistance was still needed to facilitate access to funds for women to set up small scale industries, fabricate simple working tools and improve transportation in the rural areas. Draper described Mrs. Babangida's programme as universally relevant. To this end, he announced, the disbursement of a \$2 million (N40 million) funding by the UNDP, for Nigeria's Better Life Programme. The financing would take place when specifics of the programme has been decided, which could be ironed out over a period of some years.

Throughout his stay Draper visited other UNDP sponsored projects in Nigeria and gave some impressions on how the projects have been run UNDP: "I went to the (UNDP) programme support office to identify action needed in solving some environmental problems, privatisation, health, human development etc. The UNDP sponsored human development report, now three years old. One of our message is to get the people more involved, and to insist that the Nigerian government improves the people's capacity and empower them to do a competent job."

"Two problem areas identified in Nigeria is health and education. The human development report shows that health is not as good as in say, Kenya, which has an average life expectancy of 62 years. While in Nigerian it is 52 years. But Nigeria is ahead of Sierra Leone which has an average life expectancy of 42 years. As these are 1990 figures, we expect that there must have been some improvements by now. However, the figures for life expectancy shows that Nigeria is in the middle category as far as health is concerned."

"Education is also not as good as in Kenya. The yardsticks used to measure educational standards is the literacy level. This is 65 percent in Kenya. While in Nigeria, the literacy rate is just above 50 percent. But the women are lagging behind in literacy. Women must be given positions in power and government, in order to redress the balance."

The progress to privatisation is another issue of keen interest to the UNDP.

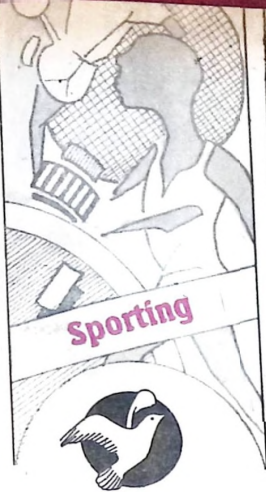
Draper remarked that significant progress has been made in this area. "The 'Prime Minister' (Ernest Shonekan) wants to get the privatisation programme moving as far as possible, before the elections," he said. An area that could assist privati-

sation is the boosting of UNDP's Human Capacity Programme in Nigeria. "We try to link Nigeria's project development with potential investors and workshops to sensitise the investment climate. \$12 million (N240m) is set aside in the private sector, for this purpose. The privatisation process has taken such a step that even Germany is privatising its highways! This may seem over the top, but it shows that government should concentrate on civil order, defence, etc, and leave the rest to the private sector," he added.

On the question of the effects of UN's cuts on Nigeria, Draper blamed it on the worldwide recession, saying, "there is a recession in Europe. And earlier, there was one in America. But the US has come out of its recession strongly and its contribution to the UN programme has gone up from \$100 million to \$125 million. We (the UN) will grow again but sluggishly. And the small 15 percent cuts on UN funding is made in order not to hurt programmes in Nigeria."

"The UN has a formula it uses for disbursing its funds. This is based on the number of people in a country and its income per capita. The assistance goes mainly to least developed countries and Africa gets 50 percent of it," He remarked.

The UNDP has been operating in Nigeria for more than two decades to assist her national development efforts, and secure resources from the international donor community. The objective of the programme is to improve human development and to execute sustainable development. The UNDP has earmarked about \$25 million (N500 million) programme to be executed in the next five years.



...He has always cried for help. When the opportunity came, he developed "clay" feet

By Isodi Dike

NO one will know exactly how he came by the name, Hunter Clay, but events of the past few weeks have shown that the man's destiny has one or two strings attached to his chosen name.

Forget that in one minute of madness, he may have decided to answer, the name, boxing's great Mohammed Ali, took to a well — deserved Olympic gold medal, when he was a thrilling Cassius Clay. No, this man's story can only be likened to an allusion to some weird romantic tales. The type that can only be found in Greek mythology. A man, who all the while has so bothered and implored the gods to assist him to the gold throne, that the gods had no option than to do so, bidding the man to go ahead, that his destiny is in his hands.

But alas, when all obstacles have been cleared for the man; just when he had reached the exalted throne, what did he do? Nothing! When he needed to summon up the last resolve within him, he had instead developed feet of clay. He failed to sit astride the throne, for which the "gods" have toiled so much, and like a grave mirage he woke up clutching clay — which ironically was what the gods have known all the



Hunter Clay...What went wrong?

Hunting for

time the man deserved. You see, they only wanted to give him a chance to prove otherwise.

Yes, Hunter Clay of Nigeria before now, World Boxing Council's (WBC) International Junior Middleweight title holder and now only clutching the African title recently showed his tendency to go for clay instead of gold. Who will blame the man? Perhaps he is in love with the name, clay.

That alone though will not excuse the man his misdemeanor in London where he went to defend his world title crown against England's "Journeyman" Louis Ghent. Or perhaps, Hunter Clay did not know the seriousness that a world title defence garners. The man clowning his way through the 12-rounder on Tuesday February 16th; dancing, blowing kisses to Bob Marley's record "jamming" when his opponent was psyching himself up, grinning sheepishly throughout the encounter; drawing more than 20 public warnings for persistently clutching and tucking his opponent's head under his armpit instead of putting his height and long reach to a good use and almost

allowed himself to be knocked out in the seventh and 11th rounds. In the end the English man won on unanimous points of 119-113, 119-111, 119-111.

But Clay's shabby performance did not come as a surprise to boxing followers in Nigeria. In fact, his tale leading up to the world title fight did not start that day.

Hunter Clay had been in boxing for over a decade now. All this time he had clamoured for attention, crying for assistance from anybody who cares to listen. According to him then, that was the only thing that stood between him and a world crown.

One of Clay's obsession was the desire to meet, Africa's First Pillar of Sports, and presidential aspirant in the SDP, MKO Abiola. His reasons as he told *TSM Sporting* were that if MKO Abiola is from the same village in Ogun State as himself; that if Abiola is as generous as he is, then why not to him — his home boy; especially as he needed all the support towards achieving his ambition. His logic satisfied,



flanked by MKO, when he won the world champion.

clay

Clay always tried his... see Abiola when the opportunity presented itself. He got the chance on the night of May 29th, 1992. That night he clinched WBC's world title and finally met Abiola.

TSM Sporting gathered from authoritative sources that since that night, Abiola, an avowed sports lover had stood behind Clay as stolid as the pillar of sports that he is. When the time came for the first title defence against Louis Gent of England, Clay got a sumptuous amount of cash to aid him in his title defence. Other well-meaning Nigerians followed the chief's cue. Hunter Clay received money "here and there" to enable him put up a good defence. But what did he do but fritter the golden opportunity away — on a platter of gold.

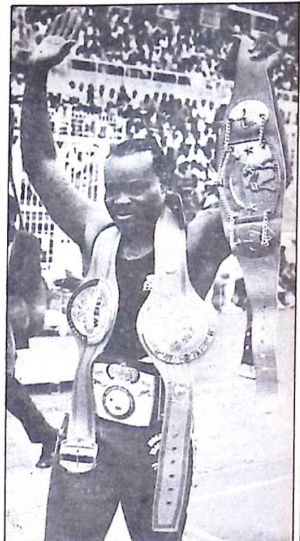
TSM Sporting investigation shows that contrary to expectations Hunter Clay failed to prepare adequately for his world title defence. Weeks before the fight the man was seen casually strolling the pavements of the National Stadium, Surulere, Lagos even at times

when any sports person should be training hard. In fact, the stadium wasn't the only place, he indulged on his leisurely walks. According to veteran Sports Writer, Tunde Oshuntolu, he too was surprised to see Clay on several occasions strolling, puffing cigarettes amongst some area boys in the area where he lives.

Another boxer, Jerry Okorodudu, was willing to bet his life that Clay would lose the title defence in London. When asked, why he was so sure he said: "look I'm a boxer and preparing for any title defence is not a joke. Hunter Clay had not been training. Until you confirmed now that he has travelled out for the fight, I thought that he would not go and that is why he was not training."

As at the time of going to press, Hunter Clay was not available for comments and his promoters would not budge though TSM Sporting discovered that only a manager in the promoter's outfit, accompanied Clay and other officials to London. Even then, the particular manager from Harridot Promotions Limited in a chance encounter with Sports Writers made some unsavoury remarks about Hunter Clay's attitude towards the world title defence.

But that is after the fight. Clay and therefore Nigeria has lost a world Boxing belt. What role the trainers, managers and promoters actually played will



Bash Ali, Anyame...Both "g ave out" their world crowns on a platter of gold.



take sometime to emerge. Until then, the loss of the only remaining world title belt in Nigeria will seem to be the final straw to the terrible nose-dive that boxing has taken in recent times.

DANGER ALERT!

Total strike looms in oil sector



This strike action, should it happen, will cost the nation everything!

By Ademola Adedoyin

CALL it mother of all strikes and you won't be wrong. Senior staffers of the nation's oil industry, under their umbrella union — Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) are poised for a showdown with the federal government and their employers. And unless the government rises swiftly to the occasion and puts out this fire that has the potency of engulfing the nation's economic life, Nigeria may be heading for an unprecedented economic disaster.

TSM was reliably informed during the week that last weekend, Central Working Committee (CWC) of the union met in Kaduna, and resolved that now is the time to take a decisive action over the twin issues of retrenchment in the oil industry and the status of DPR (Department of Petroleum Resources). "PENGASSAN has decided to go on strike in the interest of the nation and let the governments not doubt whether we can do it or not," M.G. Dabibi, the association's general secretary told TSMN last week.

But why would the entire workforce of all the nation's oil companies (both producing and marketing), oil service companies want to go on strike. What

are the implications to the nation? Let's go into the reasons first then we take a look at the implications.

One of the major issues as mentioned earlier is retrenchment in the oil industry. Before 1989, sacking an oil company employee (senior, junior or management cadre) was pretty difficult because the company which wanted to carry out the exercise needed to intimate, first the Federal Ministry of Mines and Power, by 1972 circular, then later NNPC by 1978 circular, on why the affected staffers should go. The appropriate authority would look into the issue and responds accordingly.

But a circular letter dated 12th January 1989 by H. Alkali on behalf of the then Minister of Petroleum Resources, Rilwan Lukman, changed all

that. The circular gave the oil companies a blank cheque to do whatever they deem fit with their employees.

Since then, according to Dabibi, things have not been the same again in the oil industry. In a petition dated 20th January 1993 to Philip Asiodu, a chief and secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, PENGASSAN noted that "within the last quarter of 1992 alone, no less than, 1,200 staff in the senior category have lost their jobs." This figure, the petition said further does not account for those in the junior staff category who have also lost their jobs.

The facts on the ground seem to bear out PENGASSAN. In the past two years many heads have rolled in the oil companies and what is more disturbing in the view of industry watchers is that retrenchment of Nigerians is virtually at will while more expatriates arrive to take up plum jobs on a regular basis.

TSM found out that in 1992, one hundred and eleven junior staffers of

Asiodu...Oil Ministry boss



Shell Petroleum lost their jobs. Throughout that year only nine Nigerians was employed while 92 expatriates were brought in. In the same 1992, National Oil and Chemical Marketing PLC dispensed with the services of about 320 Nigerians. This included junior and senior cadres.

As at 1992, while these oil producing companies employed very few Nigerians if any at all, they have the following expatriate positions: Chevron - 100 (both occupied and unoccupied), SAIPEM - 77; and Mobil - 59. The more disturbing aspect of this expatriate quota issue is that some positions are left vacant awaiting the expatriate who would occupy them while qualified Nigerians are either sacked under the guise of "load shedding" exercise or in some cases, the companies deliberate withhold promotions of Nigerians to such positions.

The situation is so bad in the major oil companies for Nigerians as they are treated like second class citizens in their own country. The story was told of a particular major oil producing company with large American presence that makes its helicopter available only to expatriates. The helicopter drops the expatriates at their oil fields and pick them back to Lagos while Nigerians, even those on the same positions have alternative transportation arrangement.

The retrenchment of Nigerians is by no means restricted to the oil producing companies alone, as TSM found out. The service companies too seem to be more interested in expatriates than Nigerian oil specialists.

In October 1992, Prakla Seismos Ltd. set a record in the history of employer employee relations when it sacked and recalled, sacked and re-called, and at last sacked over 50 of its employees. OTIS of Nigeria, at the moment has only 40 Nigerians, but the service company has about 30 expatriates on its pay roll. Last November, United Geophysical (Nig) Limited sacked several of its staffers and increased its expatriates staff at the same time.

What is more, TSM can confirm authoritatively that drilling rigs that have come to Nigerian waters since 1990 are now completely manned by expatriates. TSM has it on good authority that major producing companies even go out to demand that old rigs should be manned completely by expatriates. The implication of all these is that more Nigerians are out of job and the possibility of qualified but unemployed Nigerians securing jobs in the oil industry is remote said Dabibi: "The Government can no longer afford to keep mute. We are not over staffed in the oil industry, this is not the time for re-

trenchment in a growing concern. The government should step in and correct these excesses."

The federal government, TSM learnt, may have become very worried about the current state of retrenchment in the oil industry. A top source at NNPC told TSM that the corporation is indeed as concerned as other Nigerians about "The plight of our colleagues who are daily losing their jobs and for the others who don't know what tomorrow holds for them. But there is one thing you must not lose sight of. A company reserves the right to hire and fire, it shouldn't be made to look like a crime when a company sacks its employee; it happens in other companies too."

PENGASSAN does not appear persuaded by the logic of that submission. For it believes that retrenchment in the oil industry, "carried out as it were in the face of huge profits, is designed as a cost-saving measure aimed at garnering sufficient funds for the maintenance of the workers of the affected companies in Europe and America where some of the companies are running at losses."

Furthermore, according to Dabibi "if there is a rapid turnover of Nigerian workers in the oil industry, we shall not have specialists in the various sectors of the industry. And this will not augur well for the nation's

oil industry."

The second issue which will trigger off this mother of all strikes is the status of the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) The story of DPR has been told several times. That is the watchdog of the oil industry. Its role is monitoring and supervising the activities of the oil companies. It used to be an arm of NNPC but in 1988, when Lukman was still calling the shots at Ministry of Petroleum Resources, he transferred the department, then known as Petroleum Inspectorate to the ministry. Since then the department has been enmeshed in a crisis of identity. The budget pronouncements of President Ibrahim Babangida granting the department could not even save it. It remains a department under the ministry.

Whether DPR staffers are civil servants or NNPC staffers (the corporation that employed them) still remains a knotty issue.

But more than that, a number of experts have pointed out a lot of dangers inherent in transferring such a vital department into the Ministry. In these past five years, these fears have been confirmed and that has heightened the clamour for the implementation of the Petroleum Inspectorate Commission PIC as directed by the president in his 1991 budget. Now PENGASSAN nationwide is demanding PIC and they said they are ready for a showdown if that demand is not met. And they have their reasons.

DPR is supposed to monitor the activities of oil companies. According to PENGASSAN, if there was an autonomous Petroleum Commission in place, it would have been very difficult for the oil companies to retrench indiscriminately as they are currently doing.

And in observers' view, DPR, as it is presently constituted is a lame duck which can hardly disturb the oil companies from doing whatever catches their fancy. In 1988 when the department was transferred from NNPC there were about 1000 staffers on its (DPR) pay roll, today they are a little over 700.

Yet, oil marketers are increasing by the day. Ditto depots, oil-wells and oil outlets. By 1991 it was 5,280. More have sprang up. The quality of crude refined in 1988 stood at 9737298 metric tons. Out of 29 depots in the country only 18 are manned by DPR while the remaining 21 are left unmanned because of the importance of the functions of DPR, it is supposed to have offices in all the states of the federation. At the moment, it has offices in only 17 states.

As at the moment, operational equipment including safety wears are virtu-

Oyekan....DPR boss





A mock coffin...PENGASSAN pronounced DPR dead

ally not available to DPR staffers. In most cases DPR has had to depend on oil companies it is supposed to supervise for these essential equipment.

Under the ministry, training operational staff has become a rarity. Civil service bureaucratic bottlenecks have also made it impossible for the staffers to act swiftly: to react to developments in the oil industry as they crop up.

Because of all these, the nation may have been losing millions of dollars without knowing it. An apt example, according to Arthur Onovionon, the chairman of PENGASSAN DPR, Lagos chapter, is the crude oil export. "As at the moment, he said, "we cannot say how much crude we export." This is because DPR staffers cannot monitor the oil companies meters effectively owing to non-availability of required tools. When meters are not monitored its servicing is impossible and when the meters are serviced then the valves are weak they pump out more crude.

It is in the light of the foregoing that PENGASSAN wrote a memo to both Babangida and Chu Okongwu then the

Petroleum Resources Minister, some time last year to expedite action on the Petroleum Inspectorate Commission.

TSM has it on good record that Chu Okongwu was in favour of PIC and actually recommended its implementation to the presidency before quitting office last December.

Now PENGASSAN, DPR branch, with active support of the national secretariat has resolved for a showdown if by February 26 (last Friday), nothing favourable is heard from the government on PIC. In a memo titled ULTIMATUM sent to DPR Director 5th February, PENGASSAN DPR branch noted: "The enduring five years of our members of the groping for their identity is enough a sym-

bol of patriotism and therefore for (sic) the interest of peace and harmony in the entire oil industry, we urge that this demand be met within the stipulated period as the Association shall not guarantee the reactions of its members at the expiration of this ultimatum."

TSM was informed during last week that the central working committee of PENGASSAN has given its blessings to DPR's intended action and has also resolved to support DPR.

Should

PENGASSAN

nationwide make good its threat and go on strike, the nation will be in for a major crisis. The action simply put, will paralyse the nation's economic activities. This, for many reasons.

First, fuel scarcity, or rather non-availability will rear its head once again. Without DPR staffers' approval, oil tankers cannot load petroleum products from the depot. In fact, it will be impossible for refineries to take delivery of crude oil for processing. The possibility of fuel scarcity at this delicate period, in experts opinion, may lead to untowards action from over SAPPED Nigerians.

And it is not only motorists that would not have fuel. The aviation industry will be directly affected. And NEPA with its litany of woes would have to contain with non availability of gas for its plant.

In monetary terms, the immediate loss will be colossal to the federal government. The implication of a PENGASSAN strike is that the government would have to pay heavy demurrage for vessels that will not be able to load crude oil and petroleum products.

For a vessel of 950,000 barrels capacity, the government would pay daily \$185,000 as demurrage. There are seven terminals in the country. And all the seven are supposed to be loading daily. In the event of a strike, it will not

be possible. And government would have to pay demurrage to vessels in all the terminals. Vessels that are here to load petroleum products will also claim demurrage.

What's more the oil producing companies will not be able to produce implying that the over two MBD produced will not be possible.

The government, to cap it all will pay the oil companies for the losses they will incur while the strike action lasts.

It is not only that the the government would pay heavily but it will lose heavily too. With a PENGASSAN strike action, the government will not be able to push into the market the 1.78 million barrels OPEC daily quota. At roughly \$17 per barrel, the loss would run into millions of dollars per day. While it lasts, the government would have lost its quota to other oil producing countries who would make quick money out of the nation's woes. This will have an adverse effect on the economy.

On the whole, billions of Naira have been lost as the action will paralyse the nation's economic life.

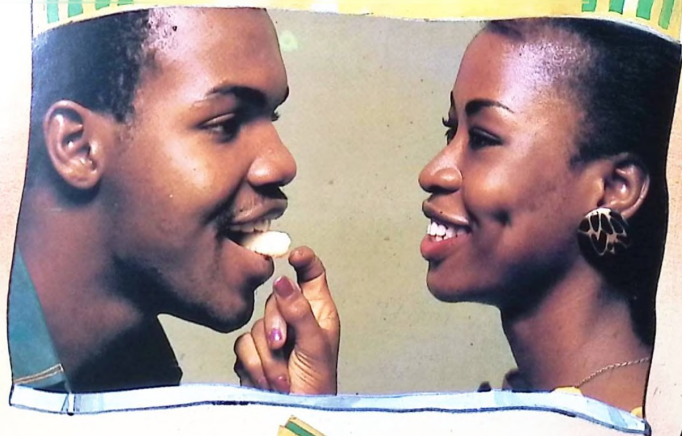
It is to avert this that well-meaning Nigerians want government to go into negotiation with PENGASSAN immediately. And government TSM learnt, has started doing this. Before press time, Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour officials were still holding dialogue with PENGASSAN officials but there was no truce before press time.

Further, TSM learnt from a reliable source at the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources that government may have decided to grant DPR the much sought autonomy. An official swore that a decree would soon be promulgated to that effect.

The expectation is that the government will rise fast and save the situation from degenerating into unpleasant development. This is one strike the nation can do without at this critical period in its history.

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MILITARY is afraid of me

— Ojukwu

"When somebody says 'my ambition is to dip the KORAN in the waters of the Atlantic' to do that, you have to pass through my area. And I ain't gonna let you."

**How Zangon-Kataf
sacked Gowon**