

SOUTH AFRICA: THE INTRIGUES, THE CAMPAIGN AND THE

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Citizen

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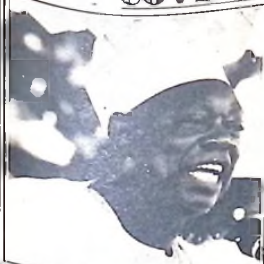
Citizen

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THE YORUBAS

**Their agenda and
the north**

Yoruba leaders seek a loose federation in a bid to escape perceived political domination. But the house seems to be divided as others insist that the issue is that of good governance

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Yar'adua

**How he gained
freedom**

The former SDP kingpin and army general is detained for what everyone else is doing

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BRIEFLY

A 10 man panel of Inquiry into the activities of the Nigerian Telecommunications, NITEEL Plc has been set up. The panel headed by Major General David Jambawon (td), is to examine NITEL structure and re-organise and reform the organisation. It is expected to submit its report by April 30.

The economic and social unrest anticipated in the wake of the massive devaluation of the CFA France in Francophone Africa has finally happened.

Last week, thousands of people took to the streets in Senegal in protest against high price hikes, retrenchment, salary cuts and general social and economic miseries. The protesters stormed the presidential palace and asked for the resignation of President Abdou Diouf. Scores of people were wounded during the protests as the army was called out to restore law and order.

President Douf reacted to this protest by banning the Islamic movement, claiming they were the cover the opposition was using for the destabilisation of the country.

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FROM THE EDITOR

In our September 26, 1993 issue (*Citizen* Vol. 4 No. 36) our cover story was **YORUBAS ARE ANGRY**. Yorubas are still angry — and about the same issue: **June 12**.

The west, the home of Yorubas and the pulse of the nation's politics, is a wounded **Lion**. It stoically bore a blow not delivered to it. It monopolised the pain and was left licking its wound alone.

The annulment of the June 12 election began as a very sad, painful and unfortunate incident for the whole country but was turned into a lamentation of tribal jingoism by Yorubas.

But perhaps there is nothing easier for a people haunted by the specter of northern, Hausa-Fulani, and now even Caliphate, domination to see nothing but the hands of this monster they have themselves created in whatever calamity befalls them.

June 12 remains a watershed that unfortunately, but incorrectly, validates and reinforces the Yoruba persecution complex. It was as if they were looking for something tragic to set them apart; but instead of getting some-

thing authentically and ethnically their own, they stole June 12 from the new Nigerians who, forgetting all the indices of division, gave MKO Abiola their mandate.

It was only after this masterful mishandling that many people began to see the great disservice done to the unity and future of this country by those who annulled the election and by those who tribalised it. The first only succeeded in providing what looked like proof for what is false, while the second made it difficult for non-Yorubas to wholeheartedly support what is otherwise against a just struggle.

But while others have put the issue behind them there is still widespread anger and disappointment in Yorubaland, and this, indeed, is their main agenda to the Constitutional Conference.

This week's cover story, written by **Bolaji Adebisi** with additional reports by **Akinyele Aluko**, **Samson Ojo** and **Moyo Akoshile** is about that anger.

Samson Ojo

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Citizen, February 21, 1994

LETTERS

Letter to head of state

Sir,

We are faced with a seeming political *cul-de-sac*; social and economic problems. With such a scenario, one can rightly call for a mighty rescue operation if this country is to survive. Surely we have endured a lot; courtesy of our leaders.

Your excellency, I urge you to look and study carefully into the past with the eyes of wisdom and experience, using the best of our human and material resources, to find the causes and effects of the political and socio-economic disease afflicting us as a nation before proffering any solutions.

Equally disgusting is the frequent meddling with our economic blueprints by the so-called international financial experts in their bid to 'help' us achieve the much needed economic security, which from historical records, offered us nothing more than the plausible theoretical packaging.

Another thing worth mention are the probes into NNPC, CBN, NEPA, NITEL, the Customs, judiciary, and the five exacting administrators for financial misappropriation and other crimes. This is quite commendable if executed with the sincerest of purpose.

Danjuma A. Bajoga
Unimaid, Maiduguri

Re: On 'mother' of all conferences

Sir,

This is to draw the attention of every right thinking Nigenan to the insinuations of Abubakar Jika on the topic above in your edition of January 31-February 6, 1994 (Vol. 5 No. 5).

The first question that one needs to ask Jikais "Who is afraid of what"? If every sane Nigerian should be clamouring for a national conference, are they not having the interests and the corporate existence of Nigeria as a single united and virile

country at heart? It is not people of the calibre of Jika that should be pointing accusing fingers at those who really care for the continued existence of Nigeria. One section of the country should not continue to dominate the political affairs of the country to the detriment of others. The Yoruba People have been known to be innocuous, and that has not changed up till today but one should not fail to state categorically that the group is always under oppression from the north politically.

Prince Tunde Adeyemo
P.M.B. 520, Ondo

S.O.S. to Col. Emerin

Sir,

I wish to bring to your notice the critical condition being faced by Niger State students of tertiary institutions at home and abroad. Indeed, it is quite disheartening that since 1992 and 1993 academic sessions our claims and other entitlement have not been paid.

On behalf of all Niger State students we are wishing you God's guidance and a successful tenure in office.

Jibrin Moh'd Ibn (Smart)
ABU, Zaria

Re: Kaduna Book Fair

Sir,

I am an avid reader of books and your weekly news magazine. When I saw the classified advert on the Kaduna Book Fair in your January 17-23 issue, I was ecstatic. I was, however, disappointed. The Book Fair according to your advert was scheduled for January 15-25. I was in Kaduna (travelling from Kano) on Saturday January 22, 1994 only to be informed that the fair was scheduled for January 25-29.

I believe your regular readers deserve an apology from you.

Amina Ado
66 Wudilawa, Kano

We apologise for the error.

Editor

Inaccuracies

Sir,

We write in respect of the cover story of the January 31 — February 6 edition of your magazine titled: "Leadership crisis in CD: Tyrants As Democrats?"

Constitutional Rights Project, CRP, was listed as one of the main groups in the Campaign for Democracy, CD. This is incorrect. Although CRP and CD share similar objectives of striving, through all legal means, to ensure that the rights of Nigerians are respected, that the rule of law prevails and that the country is fully democratised in line with internationally accepted standards, Constitutional Rights Project does not belong to the Campaign for Democracy and this was emphatically told to your senior staff correspondent, Mr. Akinyele Aluko when he came for an interview in CRP offices.

Your other assertion that human rights groups in Nigeria receive secret foreign funding is false and a figment of your reporter's imagination and must be dismissed as such.

The current misunderstanding in the CD is unfortunate, taking into consideration the historic role that CD, CRP, the mass media and other pro-democracy organisations played in bringing to an end the despotic rule of erstwhile dictator General Ibrahim Babangida.

More unfortunate, however, is the slant of your story which appeared to be a celebration of the misunderstanding in CD.

We must not let the CD misunderstanding detract us from the larger and more difficult task of ensuring that the nation is brought back on the path of democracy. All of us including the press of which you are a prominent member, owe it a duty to take all necessary steps that would make the military retreat to the barracks forever.

Babatunde Olugboji
Constitutional Rights Project, Lagos

Letters to Citizen, carrying names, signatures and addresses, should be brief and to the point. They should be typed double space and addressed to Letters Page, Citizen, G.11 Unguwar Kanawa, PMB 2334, Kaduna. The Editor reserves the right to edit, publish or reject all letters.

VIEWPOINT

West and its agenda

As the date for the proposed Constitutional Conference draws near, the positions taken are becoming clearer. On February 9, the Yorubas submitted a memorandum to the National Constitutional Conference Commission detailing the position of the tribe.

According to this memorandum, the conference must table, indeed take off from June 12 and affirm its "sanctity". Fine. But what does that mean? Nobody says; and all those who take this position usually stop there with calculated vagueness, as though June 12 is some opportunity for creating permanent tension with no possible resolution.

In the circumstance affirming the "sanctity" of June 12 can only mean two things — crying over spilt milk and other opportunities which is what we have been doing these past eight months, or swearing in Bashorun Abiola, which is probably impossible. Everybody agreed it was unfortunate the annulment took place but the nation is tired of being reminded about it everyday, especially by people who have gleefully glossed over acts of injustice.

But June 12 is not the only worrisome agenda in the Yoruba Focus. The western mindset is tired of what it says is domination of the nation's politics by the north. It wants unimpeded access to power guaranteed. If true, these are desirable things. Unfortunately if we want democracy we must recognise the accepted impediments along the way — you must get the bigger numbers or play the correct politics. And it is not helpful to pretend that its own dominance in the economic and bureaucratic fields is of no consequence.

If we are to create a polity that endures we

must accept that every section of the country has rights to demand and protect. And the west must ask itself why it so desperately wants power for itself but resents others' right to it. Some Yoruba leaders liken presidential power to merchants in the market, and complain that the power to allocate has been and continues to be monopolised. If this is true the solution is to stop it not try to replicate it. And if this is how they see it, it is indeed unfortunate.

Because no one from the west has yet been elected, and particularly due to the annulment of the June 12 election, frustration with the political process has boiled over and been channelled into demands for confederation. A looser federation, perhaps; but a confederation is invitation to dismemberment. Conventional wisdom teaches that we are too diverse for a unitary government but too slippery to go confederal.

Something that is most unhelpful in the attitude of Yoruba leaders, and which became more obvious after their recent meeting, is their single-minded desire to isolate the north politically. This is not new in any case; it sounds every inch a restatement of the traditional political culture of the southwest. Instead of advancing, the south-west is more interested in isolating the north. It is bound to fail as it has in the past. And they should be careful lest in trying to isolate the north, the Yorubas only succeed in further isolating themselves.

While it is good for each section of the country to fight for its rights we must fight for what is clear, reasonable and possible, otherwise we may defeat ourselves.

Time to get out

ECOMOG field commander, Nigeria's Major General John Inienger, said on January 22 that never in the history of the crisis in Liberia had all the parties come so close to achieving peace.

To prove him wrong, just a month later, fresh fighting broke out between Charles

Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL, and the Liberia Peace Council, causing thousands to flee to Buchanan. Forty thousand more were forced from their homes.

The commander may be new to this vicious cycle of broken promises which has

deprived Liberians of peace for four years now. General Inienger also reaffirmed that ECOMOG is in Liberia, not to fight, but to "maintain peace." This is curious given that Nigeria has lost several soldiers in maintaining the peace process.

We had noted in three previous editorials, that Nigeria was steadily getting sucked into the Liberian war without clear objectives, and warned that we either hit hard and get out or we would likely end up as the US did in Vietnam.

The argument for intervention had hinged on the constitutional principle of Africa being the centre of our foreign policy and as such had precedents of allowing gangsters like Charles Taylor to roam the African continent depositing governments at will.

The principle is sound, but at what price? What started out as a short, surgical operation to restore sanity to that unfortunate country soon turned into a full-blown military operation with 11,500 soldiers from Nigeria alone.

Our first mistake was to have gone in without concluding the necessary diplomatic groundwork to effectively control and bring about the resolution of the conflict as rapidly as possible. Today, only more contending groups have emerged and law and order is more likely to be in the hands of gun-toting bands of teenagers than the peace officers. In effect, ECOMOG went in to keep a peace that had not been established.

Bosnia: end in sight?

Thanks to the immediacy of television coverage, the latest savagery exhibited by Serbian gunmen in the horrendous massacre of muslims in Sarajevo has finally pricked the conscience of Western nations. Last week NATO forces gave the Serbs an ultimatum to hand over heavy weapons or withdraw them at least 20 kilometres from the besieged city.

If this is a serious and sincere attempt to bring peace to Bosnia it should be commended. Something good arriving late is still good, especially if it is to stop genocide, even if belatedly. But the past conduct of Western nations over this conflict does not give much cause for hope. The same nations scrambling to be seen as the saviours of muslims today deliberately aided and abetted their wholesale slaughter and eviction.

The then Interim National Government under Chief Ernest Shonekan had promised that Nigeria was pulling out its soldiers from Liberia. That policy has apparently been reversed. Indeed, what we have is fresh military build up.

It is obvious that a military solution to the Liberian conflict is neither feasible nor desirable. The three major contenders for power in Liberia — NPFL, ULIMO and the interim government of Amos Sawyer, despite the Cotonou Accord, are still at each other's throats, and since we seem unable to make a clear-headed choice, we have to stop playing an unsuccessful Uncle Sam. Nigeria should disengage immediately from Liberia and let the UN sponsored disarmament in Liberia be handled by Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

It is all fine to engage in expensive interventions, but are we ourselves economically and politically fit to do so especially when the objective is ill-defined? We have done our bit, let other members of ECOWAS also do their bit. There are also other serious dangers of prolonged involvement. Among others, it has created a booming market for gun-running not just by soldiers, but civilians as well. Bribery and corruption have set in within and without the armed forces.

In November 1992, we advised government to pull out of Liberia or hit hard and get finished with the "peace mission." Neither has been achieved. It is time to leave.

If they really wanted to stop the Serbs they could have done what they are doing now two years ago.

But what they did two years ago was to close their eyes as the Serbs killed and cleared muslims from the land. To make matters worse they imposed an arms embargo on the region. This in effect only deprived muslims of the means of getting weaponry while the Serbs were being armed by Yugoslavia and Russia.

Ending the carnage now will not be difficult for the West because it has got the guns. What is more difficult is instilling a just arrangement in the beleaguered land. For peace to hold the Serbs must surrender the land they took by force. If the West is serious about peace, let it force them. Unless they do, the Bosnian conflict will be fought in future — perhaps more ferociously.

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COVER STORY

Constitutional Conference

The agenda from the west

Yoruba leaders seek a loose federation in a bid to escape perceived political domination



Abiola: June 12 is alive

If you ask an average Yoruba, whose people inhabit the large expanse of land in south western Nigeria, who gave him his eyes and ears, he is likely to retort: God! But if you enquire further who opened them for him to see and hear how ugly or beautiful his environment is, he is likely to exercise little restraint in committing a blasphemy. "Although God gave me my eyes and ears," he may respond, "it was June 12 that opened them for me to see and hear clearly."

It may well be one of the paradoxes, Nigerians are now leaving with, that many Yorubas and their leaders are increasingly seeing the June 23 annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election, which their

kinsman, Bashorun Moshood Abiola, flagbearer of the proscribed Social Democratic Party, believed he won, as a blessing in disguise. For as many of them now readily admit, before that historic blunder by the erstwhile President Ibrahim Babangida, they had wallowed in the illusion that the alleged monopoly of power by the north was only a blackmail employed by a quarrelsome political elite, which unable to explain its unmitigated failure in the field of governance, resorted to base sentiments. "Now we can see" confesses a Lagos prince who was also the secretary of a proscribed Yoruba cultural group, "that northerners indeed want to rule forever." The prince told *Citizen* last week

that he had for long taken the talk of the north wanting to perpetuate its political hegemony with indifference principally because he felt, that as a businessman, "it was the Yoruba's political class problem to worry about." The grim faced prince, who exhibited abundant native intelligence and a clear understanding of the political situation in the country, said his pre-June 12 indifference to politics was informed by his observation that the Yoruba political leaders who complain about political domination were business and social partners of the very people presented to his like as the oppressors. All that has now changed because as the saying goes in Yoruba, "there is always a line of distinction between the father and the son." For him, and many others in the south west, that line was sharply drawn on June 12, last year. The tragedy, however, is not prince's discovery of the line of distinction, but his feeling that it is no longer possible for the Nigerian federation to survive. No doubt, he must have taken his cue from other notable Yoruba leaders most of whom have been vocal against perceived domination of the south by the north.

Hear Alani Akinrinade, a retired lieutenant-general and erstwhile chief of defence staff during the four year term of Alhaji Shehu Shagari, the only elected president to date: "It is the caliphate (north) that is



Oba Sijade and Oyekan: the case for Yorubas

dictating pace of events in Nigeria. The Hausa-Fulani are the ones dictating the events in the country." He finds this particularly objectionable because "they (north) want to stay in power all the time." The former defence chief's view approximates the feelings in the south west. Happily, however, despite the initial frustration expressed in emotional statements likely to encourage the dismemberment of the country, several leaders in the region are showing more restraint and are rooting for a peaceful resolution of the political crisis that has shaken the nation to its foundation. By the time the National Constitutional Conference Commission, NCCC, closed its doors to the submission of memorandum for the proposed constitutional conference, February 9, many south western leaders and groups, had joined their counterparts from other parts of the country to submit a list of their grievances and proposed remedies.

Not a few hold, like an article of faith, the view that the current structure of the federation has restricted access to political power in favour of the north. The evidence of this was not difficult to show by Megaforce, a weekly column, in *The Nigerian Tribune*, in its Wednesday February 2 edition. The column titled "Northern monopoly of power" drew at-

tention to the fact that, of the nine heads of state who have ruled Nigeria since independence, seven of them are of northern extraction. This, contended the column, noted for its regular criticism of northern political leadership, could not have been a coincidence given the stated objectives of northern leaders to keep political power permanently in the north. For the purpose of clarity, references were made to late Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi's 1988 outburst that non-muslims can never be allowed to ascend the nation's mantle of leadership, and how Al-

to this two years later when he reasoned that the north by virtue of its large number will always have one of its own at the apex of power. Perhaps these admittedly un-guarded statements would have gone with the wind of history if Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule had not reasserted the north's claim to leadership. He was quoted recently by a Lagos based weekly to have said that of the three major ethnic blocs in Nigeria, the Hausa-Fulani stock is specially endowed by God with leadership qualities.

For the south westerners, the



Akiyemi: fairness is the answer
haji Shehu Malamu the former Sarkin Sudan of Wurno gave tacit support



Balogun: confederation is it issue is not the monopoly of political leadership per se, but the advan-

Yorubas, victims of circumstances — Adedibu

Chief Lamidi Adedibu, strongman of Ibadan politics and a June 12 advocate says Abiola's victory is the Yoruba's agenda

Citizen: What do you think should be the Yoruba agenda for the constitutional conference?

Adedibu: We don't want to discriminate or specialise on Yoruba affairs. We want something good for the whole nation. Why our case is special is because we are victims of circumstances. We are victims of the annulment of the June 12 election. That is why we have a different case. So we are not going there with an agenda different from that of others. We are going for what will benefit the country as a whole, we are going to press for June 12.

Citizen: As regards June 12, how are you going to realise that at the conference?

Adedibu: It is an easy task. Whatever is going to happen,

once the people are not selected, and it is by election, which reflects the thinking and wishes of people once people get in there, I think those who believe in June 12 will not be less than 85 per cent. Certainly the issue is going to be debated.

Citizen: There is this saying fast gaining ground that the Yorubas have been the cause of their own problems right from the word go, if it were not for what some Yoruba leaders did, June 12 would have been realised, that instead of making June 12 an Abiola versus Babangida matter, they made it Yorubas versus Hausa-Fulani?

Adedibu: Who are those saying so? Who are those saying that? That is a very unreasonable argument. The whole country is in a morning situation in the sense that we had a free and fair election. A candidate won on a platter of gold. Was it the Yorubas alone that voted for Abiola? It is the whole country. But we Yorubas are the victim. If a king, chief or an Oba dies in a place, the pains belongs to the whole community, but his wives, chil-

COVER STORY

rages that have accrued to the north from it. Layi Balogun, a defunct Social Democratic Party, SDP, presidential candidate once told *Citizen* that the north had used its political advantage to make valuable incursions into the economic terrain where the Yorubas were believed to hold sway. Said he: "Politics is the master of economics and anyone who controls political power controls the economy." He gave an example: "100,000 traders in Abriba whose total turnover is 200 million Naira a year is nothing compared to (that of) one man who supplies military hardware of 500 million Naira." The **Megaforce** of February 16 expanded Balogun's views when it asserted that the north's incursion into the economic field via its political leadership has become so deep that hardly can a company of southern origin obtain a federal government contract without a northerner on its board of directors.

Social benefits are said to have also gone up north. References are made to how the principle of federal character has been used by northerners to "displace qualified southerners in the civil service; and how resources being generated in the south are being used to develop the north." Despite denials by northern leaders that most of these alleged advantages are more imagined than

real, that the nation's political leadership has been a collective one with the south dominating the civil service, most south western leaders, *Citizen* spoke to last week, insisted that the feeling of domination is real. For instance, said a former federal legislator in the aborted Third Republic, evidence abound that by the public end of last year, most leadership positions in the civil service had been taken over by persons from the north of the Niger. "My main grouse" complained the erstwhile legislator, "is that they (north) seem to be selective in their choice of position and always go for executive posts. In most ministries if they are not the director-general, they will be the director of finance. In the parastatals designation of executive powers depends on the origin of the holder of a post. Where a northerner is the chairman, he becomes the chief executive. But if he is the managing director, and a southerner is the chairman, the executive powers will be vested in the managing director." Similar complaints were made about the army, an institution whose vital command positions, some Yoruba leaders insisted last week, are manned by officers of northern origin.

This perceived state of affairs, it has been severally argued cannot be allowed to continue. To ensure this, leaders of the west have been jaw-

ing and are working round the clock to present what they call an alternative that will ensure justice and fair-play.

The general trend of discourse is not whether Nigeria should remain a union, but the mode of its union. Between the federal and confederal principles many have taken sides. The federalists include General Olusegun Obasanjo, who said having fought a war to keep Nigeria one, he would not watch the dismemberment of Nigeria. In the clan of confederalists who appear to be in the majority are Sunday Afolabi, and Dotun Philips, Afolabi, Second Republic deputy governor of Oyo State, proposed a loose federation in the hope that it will bring peace and sustain the fragile unity of the country. Philips, a professor and director of Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan, threw his weight behind the call for the carving out of Nigeria into six autonomous zones. But for Bolaji Akinyemi, a former external affairs minister, the issue is not the form of government but the practice of government. If government is just, he reasoned, people will be less concerned about the personnel of government. He opined that the solution to the present crisis lies in the conduct of a free and fair election and the acceptance of its results by

children and relatives will feel the pinch more than the whole community. So our own is a special case. The man whose election was annulled is a Yoruba man. So we are concerned than any others. So if they alleged that we are more concerned, whose case do they say it should be?

Whose case?

Citizen: Since the whole nation voted, they say it should be the concern of the whole nation?



Adedibu: That is always the case, but whoever owns a case should be more concerned than any sympathizer. This is our own issue.

Citizen: Do you believe in a loose confederacy as being advocated by some Yorubas?

Adedibu: That is the thinking of the majority of the people of this country. We don't want to live in a community where some will be treated as slaves and others see themselves as more superior than others. The country belongs to all of us and if we feel that a group of people will associate themselves together to victimise or oppress others, well we better part ways. If it is a confederation with limited power at the centre and strong powers in the regions it is better. It is even easier even if it is to completely break with ourselves. Let us do it in peace and not in pieces. When we had our independence it was on a platter of gold.

By Aluko Akinyele

every section of the country.

One interesting aspect of the debate on the future of the 33 year old crawling adult called Nigeria, in the south west is that while many individuals are rushing to the media with their panacea, the entrenched interest groups, who in the final analysis are expected to decide the matter, are keeping their powder dry. Leaders of such formal groups like the proscribed *Egbe Ilosiwaju Yoruba*, and the *Owo* group, a collection of core Awoists, whom *Citizen* approached last week for their group's position declined comments. Ayo Opadokun, a former organising secretary of the defunct Unity Party of Nigeria, who is now a prominent member of the *Owo* group told *Citizen* that his group has not taken any position yet but promised that as soon as they "complete delibera-



Opadokun: mum is the word

tions on various issues being discussed we will go public." In the case of the former, although its erstwhile secretary, Prince Babs Oyekan declined comment, *Citizen* gathered from reliable sources close to the

group that it submitted a memorandum to the NCCC. The *Egbe* a bipartisan cultural group made up of who is who in Yorubaland is said to have met at the Ibadan residence of its former chairman Major General Adeyinka Adebayo, on February 3 to discuss the need to harmonise the position of the Yorubas and present a common front at the constitutional conference. The meeting which was well attended set up a 32 man memorandum drafting committee under the chairmanship of Sabun Biobaku, a professor of history. Others in the star studded thank-thank include Olu Falae, Layi Balogun, Biyi Durojaiye, Cornelius Adebayo, General Adeyinka Adebayo, Lt. General Alani Akinnade, Toye Coker, Josiah Olawoyin, Wande Abimbola and Abiola Elgbede-Fernandez. The commit-

Most people want to remain one — Hamza

Alhaji G.N. Hamza, a philanthropist and businessman resident in Lagos in an interview with our man, Mannir Dan-Ali says the advocates of break-up are frustrated lots

Citizen: How do you assess the relationship between Nigerians of different tribes. Does the relationship today show signs of greater unity or development from the time of independence to date?

Hamza: The way I see it is that people are more understanding and they are more determined to remain as Nigerians under one country irrespective of the calls for break-up. Most of the people calling for break-up are either frustrated or biased for one reason or the other. So I think there is mutual understanding between Nigerians better than before.

Citizen: There is also the assumption that the Yorubaman feels superior over the Hausa and Igbo people, the Hausa also feels the same thing towards others of different Hamza: Well, here again I think it is people who for some reasons say that. Nigeria is originally divided between Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba and they are categorised according to their sizes. So because of the size whatever you do in Nigeria you have to consider these three major tribes.

Citizen: (Cuts in). I am here referring specifically to the advantage enjoyed by each of the three groups and how it promotes that feeling of superiority of one over the

others.

Hamza: Well, I understand what you are talking about but I am talking in general. It is true that every section has its own strong point in the scheme of things. All this depends on the way you look at it and who looks at it. Such feeling of superiority should be eradicated, should not be there. Because it is something sectional, generally as I said we should look at what unites us.

Citizen: Some people see inter-tribal marriage as one way by which Nigerians are getting integrated. How do you see that view?

Hamza: Well, that is very good because one of the best ways to avoid disintegration is through inter-tribal marriage. When an Igbo man is your in-law there is no reason why he will be fighting you unnecessarily. The same thing with the other tribes. So marriage is one of the best ways of uniting people, we should encourage



tee which was given the specific mandate of producing a south west blue print on the future of Nigeria had Mrs. Janet Akinrinade and Dele Ogedengbe as joint secretaries. Between February 3-6, the committee broke into groups to collate data on specific areas and produce a draft memorandum for the discussion of the general house between February 7 and 8. The divergent views of members, *Citizen* gathered, were put together on February 8 and was submitted to the NCCC the following day. Titled the Yoruba Focus, the memorandum highlighted the Yoruba's views on June 12, nature of union, structure of government, revenue allocation, armed forces, police and party system. *Citizen* learnt reliably that the memorandum's philosophical assumption is that pervasive injustice and mutual

suspicion among the ethnic groups are the bane of the nation. This it was maintained led to the annulment of the June 12 election, which it contended-remains the cleanest and fairest election in the history of Nigeria. The basic solution according to sources is the removal of the twin vices. For the south west, the memorandum asserts that the conference must table, indeed take off from June 12 and affirm its sanctity, because, as a member of the memorandum committee told *Citizen*, there is no way another election can hold in Nigeria without the resolution of June 12. "It is necessary to demonstrate that every Nigerian has a right to aspire to the leadership of this country," he explained.

The Yoruba Focus canvassed for a federation of six strong regions and a less domineering centre. The

underlying principle enunciated is a coordinate relationship between the two levels of government to the effect that there is a single independent authority for the whole area in respect of some matters and that there are independent regional authorities for other matters. Each set of authorities is to be coordinate and not subordinate in their spheres of influence. Under this dispensation, the federal government is expected to retain such items on the exclusive list like foreign affairs, international trade, defence, monetary policy, citizenship and judiciary for constitutional matters. Cultural issues such as education, health, agriculture, religious practices, municipal institutions and residual powers are to reside in the regions which are expected to have their own police and exploit their own economic re-

It is one of the best ways to foster unity in Nigeria.

Citizen: Apart from marriage what other ways do you think Nigerians should follow to get themselves further integrated?

Hamza: We have to have inter-business relationship especially where government is coming in. For example through loan disbursement since many people are looking for loan and so on, or if land is to be allocated for commercial use it should be to a group that consists of people from all the different tribes. That is one way. Also in the area of employment, the government should ensure that this policy is being applied in every working place. There should be Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and other tribes all working in the same place. All this will go a long way to improve our togetherness.

Citizen: This concept you just mentioned, but one stands out, that of federal character. You find that it is already being applied in admissions, employment, etc. But some people are already complaining that it is being abused. What do you say to that?

Hamza: Well, if people say that the system is being abused, perhaps they do not understand. If there is something happening you find that there is a special circumstance that leads to that. If for example the government is reappointing ministers or commissioners and some states have two candidates while others don't have any, this is a special circumstance. But I believe government does most things based on the quota system specially the police and army etc., they give every state a number proportionate to their size or population. And this has been going on, where a governor or so tries to favour only one section to the detriment of others you find that he is called to order.

Citizen: It is now 80 years since the northern and southern parts of the country were brought together by the colonialists and it is over 30 years since Nigeria gained her independence yet you still find a disturbing level of distrust among the constituent parts. People still prefer one of their own at the helm of affairs. What do you think is responsible for this?

Hamza: Well, gradually God will assist us to overcome such things. But such things are within us and it is not only here. I can give you examples. I travel a lot and whenever I go out (abroad) I notice that Italians prefer Alitalia among other airlines. The same thing for the British who prefer their own airline. It is only in Nigeria that Nigeria Airways is not preferred by us. And it is not because the services of those airlines are better, no. That is because we don't respect what is our own. So what is going on in the country, I mean tribalism or sectionalism, it is there. The only way to eradicate it is by educating people. The government showing that we are one, no preferential treatment, then with time and the way we are getting more educated, more civilised, such things will go down. But it is there even in the United States of America which is the most civilised country in the world today. Up to now black Americans and white Americans distrust each other. The whites think they built the country and the blacks are calling for equality and so on. It is not only in Nigeria but here we don't know ourselves, we have to get ourselves educated. That is why I gave you the Nigeria Airways example. Whatever happens your own is your own. It is my hope that through education and increased awareness the distrust will go.

sources. The idea behind this proposal is that it is necessary to allow each region its own autonomy to develop its own human and material resources without hindrance. The six regions proposed and based largely on ethnic and linguistic affinity include north western region comprising the Hausa-Fulani dominated Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, Kano and Jigawa states; north east made up of Borno, Bauchi, Adamawa, Taraba and Yobe states that have in their vast terrain the Kanuris, Kutubs and Jakuns; middle belt is to consist of the northern minority states of Plateau, Benue, Niger and parts of Kogi and Kwara states; south west is to harbour Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, Osun, Lagos and parts of Kwara and Kogi states populated by the Yorubas; south east will include a cluster of southern minority states of Rivers, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Delta and Edo; and east central which is proposed to comprise the core Igbo states of Anambra, Imo, Abia, Enugu and parts of Rivers states.

The Focus hopes that minorities problems of fear of domination and underdevelopment would be reduced since states in each region have close linguistic affinity and long period of historical association. Besides, since communities are supposed to exploit their own resources for their own good, it is hoped that real development will reduce ethnic

and intercommunal tension.

On revenue allocation, the Focus is proposing that each region should own and exploit all mineral resources both on-shore and offshore and contribute a percentage of its proceeds to the federal government. Regions are also to contribute specific amount of revenue collected to the centre. Regions are to collect their own custom duties.

For the system of government, the focus asked for a presidential system with an executive president and a unicameral legislature based on equal representation from the regions. The president is to be popularly elected. But the Focus' general expectation is that the break neck struggle for the nation's presidency will reduce since its power has been shrunk by the loose federal system. Their belief is that it is the enormous powers being wielded by the presidency that makes everybody want to have a shot at it. At the regions, there will be governors to be elected by a group of provinces expected to replace the states. The regions will have their own legislature that will make laws on matters within the sphere of authority of the regions. There will be a federal judiciary which will adjudicate on constitutional matters between regions while each region is to have its own judiciary to adjudicate on matters not extending beyond its

borders. Citizen learnt that the Yoruba Focus also proposed that each should have its own police while the armed forces should be decentralised with each region having a militia that will send officers and men to the central command as and when required. The chief of army staff will be rotated among the regions. Political parties did not escape mention. It was gathered that a two party system with provision for independent candidature was recommended.

Apart from this proposal for a loose federation, Citizen learnt that the south west is pushing for an open agenda for the conference. They are also advocating for election based on senatorial districts as the process of nomination for the conference.

The Yoruba Focus, bears striking similarity with the old western region's initial memorandum submitted to the September 12, 1966 ad-hoc conference on constitutional proposals for Nigeria organised by the government of General Yakubu Gowon. The west roared for a confederation of regions for fear of domination by the north. But that position was abandoned as a result of pressure from the federalists in the then mid-western region. On this occasion, it is doubtful if there will be a shift in position as virtually all the states south of the Niger are drifting towards loose federation. Most of the

"Are we indeed one nation?"

The Guardian, when it came on board in 1983 declared itself the flag-ship of Nigerian print media. In the early days the paper then did not give room for frivolity struggling to be fair and objective, it chose as its watchword the words of the Islamic scholar, Uthman Dan Fodio, "Conscience is an open wound: Only truth can heal it."

The truth is that in matters relating to the unity and continued coexistence of Nigeria the paper has been very pungent. May be the truth is that the paper is today echoing the feelings across the western part of the country. In its editorial of Monday February 14, titled "Ciroma and the way forward," it stated, "Where, as in the case of Nigeria power has been monopolised by one group since independence, as if it were a matter of divine right, no amount of 'mobilisation' can carry along the disconnected who are condemned in perpetu-

ity to play second fiddle."

The paper added further, "Is it by accident, for example, that as a general rule, only persons from a certain part of the country are considered appointable as heads of Nigeria's most prestigious diplomatic posts in Europe and North America? Why is it that officers from some parts of the country cannot realistically aspire to the leadership of the army? Let us not deny the fact of domination. It is real."

Since the unfortunate annulment of the June 12 presidential elections the above could be aptly described as the feelings across the western part of the country. To the most westerners, the June 12 election was annulled because MKO Abiola the perceived winner is from the west and also the annulment was done by Babangida at the instance of the north.

Citizen reliably gathered that Yoruba elders though

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Tiger by the tail...

The former SDP kingpin and army general is detained for what everyone else is doing

The house off Sultan Road, Kaduna, was not usually bustling with activity, cars and people choked up the parking space, people milling around or talking in groups. One of them was Dr. Perouk Abubakar. In the outer sitting room a couple of journalists and well-wishers. In the inner sitting room were Alhaji Adamu Bello, Dan Idris Adamu, chief executive and managing director of Habib Bank, Alhaji Abubakar Noko, a retired federal permanent secretary and another retired federal permanent secretary, the Senatorin Katsina, Alhaji M. T. Usman. In the dining area which was partially closed, one could clearly hear the cheerful banter of women. On the whole, it was a clear reminder of days gone by, as others would want, days ahead.

Was it a political gathering, a family meeting, a wedding or naming ceremony last Wednesday afternoon in Kaduna? Well, it was none of the above, but it had the hallmarks of all: it was the Sultan Road home of former Social Democratic Party (SDP) kingpin Shehu Musa Yar'adua, a retired major general and a one time minister of transport and chief of staff, supreme headquarters. And all had come to commiserate with the general, who was released from detention that morning. Where was the general? Outside talking to another visitor.

A few minutes later he came in smiling and joking. "Why haven't I seen you in a while?" The reporter sure that it was a case of mistaken identity because he was not a frequent visitor, answered jokingly that his being in detention had made that

prospect impossible.

As more people streamed in to greet the general, The *Dan Iya* and the general proceeded to make plans for a trip to Yola to condole the *Turakin Adamawa*, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, a staunch political ally, who had lost his mother.

Where were you detained? Why was nobody allowed to see you? What did you do that warranted your arrest and detention? The questions followed rapidly. General Yar'adua told Citizen that only his wife was allowed to visit him and that was on Tuesday, a day before he was released into the hands of security agents who escorted him home.

"No one has yet told me why I was detained. Now that I have instituted a court action, they have ample opportunity to tell me why I was detained," he said. The *Sultanin Katsina* said that when he confronted the authorities at the SSS headquarters in Kaduna to let him see his relative, he was told that they were under strict orders not to allow any contact.

Indeed, the general has taken the State Security Service (SSS) and three others to court claiming a total of 160 million Naira for illegally and unconstitutionally detaining him. Yar'adua was picked up by the SSS on Saturday, February 12 at his home shortly after returning from a trip abroad and held at its Kaduna office. He was denied access to anyone including a member of his government, the *Dallan Fika* Malam Adamu Corona minister of agriculture, among others. He became the first political heavyweight to be so treated by the four-month govern-



Yar'adua has to doze
ment of General Sanu Abacha. His political associate and one-time director of organization of his campaign, Dr. Abdulaziz told Citizen that they only thank God that he had been released.

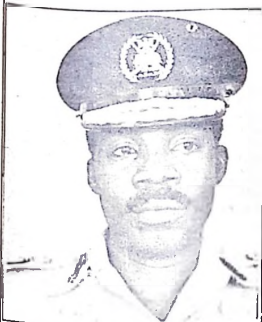
No one seems certain why he was arrested and held, but attention seems to focus on the press conference he held in Lagos on January 12 at which he not only questioned the capability and ability of the Abacha government to hold a "constitutional conference", but said it had better not stay in office longer than December 31. At that press conference, the general offered that a sovereign national conference in which decisions would be all-embracing, should take the place of the constitutional conference.

The former PP and SDP strongman had also canvassed for an



Dr. Abdulaziz: My thank God

immediate suspension of the ban on politics to enable Nigerians discuss all outstanding national issues without any restriction. But perhaps the most irritating to the government was his questioning of the credibility and competence of the military to hold the conference comfortably and its lack of a clear time table on its tenure. "The real problem," he said, "is not the break-up of Nigeria, it is the capacity of this administration to muster enough determination and courage to develop the right temperament required to administer the conference" in view of its expected robust nature. The military, which he blamed for the nation's current political problems, he said, should between June and December, put its political programme in order to implement the recommendations to



Coomassie: a warning to politicians

be made by the conference after which it should quit in December.

This did not sit well with the government, which, to show its displeasure, bared its teeth 24 hours later when it aborted a scheduled press conference by the president of the outlawed Association for Better Nigeria, ABN, Chief Francis Arthur Nzeribe who later complained of discrimination. Nzeribe had alleged that a senior police officer had told him that instructions had come from above to stop his press conference. "When I questioned him on the rationale of this ban on me, in view of the fact that 24 hours earlier, my

colleague, General Yar'adua held a highly publicised press conference at the same centre — Dele Giwa Press Centre — without any interference by the police, I was simply told that "Yar'adua slipped through. Although I am worried about what looks like a discriminatory attitude towards me, as a law abiding citizen, I have complied with the police ban."

Indeed, a day after Yar'adua's press conference, the police came out with a warning to the political class against "making utterances capable of threatening government's good intention to bequeath a viable democratic institution."

In what may signify growing impatience of the government with what it sees as uncontrolled public discourse on Nigeria's political future, the police threatened to arrest and prosecute "members of the political class" whose utterances were considered inimical to the avowed government's good intention. The four-paragraph statement signed by the deputy inspector-general of police, directorate of operations, force headquarters, Abuja, Alhaji Nuhu Aliyu, specified members of the political class as the object of its warning, but there was also a cursory prohibition for now, of positive contributions by Nigerians towards the political development of the country which many considered an ominous signal for the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of speech.

The police statement said the inspector general had observed with concern the recent political statements uttered by some eminent Nigerians, while in effect political activities have been banned. It said "henceforth members of the political class are hereby warned to desist from making utterances capable of threatening government's good intentions to bequeath a viable democratic institution. Any future statements of these sorts will not be tolerated by the law enforcement agents, as it will be met with arrest and possible prosecution." Although no

individual was mentioned, prominent politicians had recently offered opinions on the country's political direction.

The only government figure to give due to the arrest and detention of Yar'adua was Jerry Gana, a geography professor and minister of information. He told newsmen in Makurdi, Benue State, a few days after the general's press conference that the general may have stepped on the toes of the government for "misusing his freedom of expression." He said the SDP strongman had allegedly fled the country because he was aware of the consequences of such political press conference. The minister added that though there was freedom of expression, it was wrong to use it irresponsibly. He described Yar'adua's press conference as offensive to the government which could not stop it because it was "clandestinely done."

If that is the reason for Yar'adua's arrest and detention, people soon started reading meanings into it. Some questioned why all those who made similar public utterances had not been brought to book. Alhaji Bashir Tofa, NRC presidential candidate in the aborted Third Republic said it was in bad taste and came as a rude shock and pointed to the recent public comments of former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo, who was Yar'adua's commander-in-chief and Chief M.K.O. Abiola, and said nothing was done to them. He said in a press statement in Kano that if the general's arrest is linked to his call on the military to hasten up and leave, he was speaking the minds of Nigerians including myself. "The apparent influence, control and hold of this regime by the south-west has reached a most dangerous state," he said.

Chief Melford O'hiewa made a similar observation. He said "we are living witnesses to the inflammatory utterances made by Generals Obasanjo, Buhari and Akinrinade about this government, but nothing has happened to them. Or why Chief Abiola has not been questioned let

alone detained over his breach of aviation and internal security laws."

Some observers believe that the general's ordeal, which came to end with his release in the early hours of last Wednesday, goes deeper than the press conference. They point to the early case agreement with the government over cabinet appointments and a time table for a return to democracy. Others yet point to the position of die-hard proponents of late Mr. Abacha who insist having sidelined Chief Abacha to instal an interim government, the general had to be publicly humiliated.

Whatever the truth, tremendous pressure was brought to bear on the government to set the general free. *Citizen* learnt that a retired army general had bluntly told Abdulsalam

Abubakar, the chief of defence staff, to let him free. The general was irked that others on the national scene had made worse political remarks, some of which are clearly insulting and provocative without any repercussions.

That set the ball rolling for his release. Before that, the general had gone to the Kaduna High Court to protest his innocence. The plea for his release was ironically denied by Justice Sakariyau Ibiyeye on the day he was set free. The judge noted that if Yar'adua was released, the main grievance for which the suit was filed would be made bare and that it would not serve the interest of justice to release him without hearing the respondents. He, however, granted leave that the respondents

be located with the motion on notice which has been fixed for February 28.

Yar'adua's lawyer, Chief Tawo Ajala had said the general did not commit any offence or crime to warrant his being charged before a court. The Civil Liberties Organisation, CLO, Kaduna branch had also filed an ex-parte motion for his release.

So it was that his business and political associates, friends and relatives who had converged at the Kaduna High Court for the case, were unaware of his release from detention. As soon as they got to hear of it, they all left for the general's house.

By Muhammad Bomo

Education

The party is over?

Teachers speak of complete loss of interest in the teaching profession in the light of recent developments

When Steve Agu, the headmaster, Agidingbi Primary School, Ikeja was given a grade II teaching appointment in 1970, he psyched up his mind towards achievement. Said he "I actually wanted to teach. The prestige was so much that there was no reason for a teacher to envy any other professional." Not anymore. The event in the past few months in the primary education has changed all that. Agu told *Citizen* last week, in an interview, that in the present day situation teachers have become endangered species. Agu revealed how he has passed through hell over the non-payment of primary school teachers' eight month salary, said he: "I tend to believe those who say hell is on earth here because I don't think anything can be worse than what I have experienced in the last eight months. It's been tug of war between me and my wife as she too

is not working. If you look into my children's eyes you see pain, poverty and hunger."

Many of the primary school teachers *Citizen* spoke to last week have similar stories to tell. Mrs.



Ayu, education minister



Falade: we are paupers

Funke Olaiya of UAC Primary School, Isheri-Ikeja, told *Citizen* that she has lost interest in being a class teacher. "I am beginning to regret my decision to go into teaching. I never expected it would come to this. We are going through hell" she said.

Citizen investigation last week revealed that teachers in at least 200 local government councils in the country are being owed nine billion Naira. Chief Gabriel Falade, the secretary-general of the Nigeria Union of Teacher (NUT), lamented that "Primary schools teachers have been pauperised by the government. The failure to pay their salaries b

many of the local governments is the height of insensitivity."

However, last week, the situation changed for the better, following the education minister's appeal to state administrators to ensure full payment of teachers salary arrears nationwide. In Lagos State, the state administrator, Colonel Olagunsoye Oyinlola released the sum of 50 million Naira for payment of 30 out of cumulative 54 month salary arrears owed the teachers in various local governments. In addition, he promised that the remaining 24 months would be paid when the federal government released the expected funds. Immediately the Lagos State wing of the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) responded to the gesture and called-off its strike action involving teachers at the primary and secondary schools level.

Justus Adeloju, NUT Lagos State chairman, in a statement recently, however, warned that if government reneged on its promise again, the union will have no choice but to call out its members out of the classrooms again. He, however, expressed satisfaction at the agreement reached after the administrator was made to understand their plight. "The agreement to us is very satisfactory because 55.5 per cent of our request was being met and this as good as a state initiative." Prior to the suspension of the strike, last week many of the teachers in Lagos State primary schools have resumed teaching amidst joy by the returning pupils.

However, reports from some states show that teachers are still on strike. According to Mr. Olaitan Ojo, the Osun State NUT chairman, "the teachers in the state will not call off their strike until their demands are met.

Citizen gathered that the non-payment of teachers' salaries in the state has turned many of the female teachers to emergency pool collectors and commission agents and the men into commercial drivers and bus conductors.

The primary school teachers' predicament started last year when

many of the erstwhile local government chairmen repudiated their responsibilities. It was gathered that many of them were unable to pay because the many finance houses in which they lodged the money meant for teachers salaries, defaulted in payment. Professor Iyorchia Ayu, minister of education had said last year immediately after his appoint-

ment that the salaries will be paid during the first week of January so that these schools can re-open alongside other schools.

But this was not to be. The fear now is that despite the fact that some states' unions have called-off the strike, this perennial crisis has made many teachers vow not to return.

By **Samson Ojo**

Housing

A giant leap

Works and housing minister, has unveiled a two-year national housing programme to provide 121,000 housing units nationwide

When Alhaji Lateef Jakande was named a member of the federal executive council by the nascent re-elected council of General Sani Abacha late last year, Lagosians had predicted works and housing or education as his likely portfolio. They were proved right as Alhaji Jakande, fondly called LKJ, was eventually assigned the works and housing ministry.

Perhaps, it could not have been otherwise. As civilian governor of Lagos State in the Second Republic, Alhaji Jakande had carved a niche for himself as "action governor" because of his populist programme of free education and low income housing. And till date, "Jakande estates" and "Jakande schools" are about the most ubiquitous legacies bequeathed to Lagos state.

But now in his capacity as the minister of works and housing, can Jakande replicate his Lagos mass housing experiment nationwide? Citizen gathered from one of his political associates that this is one

question that cannot be answered in a jiffy because of various considerations. "LKJ no doubt has the herculean task to surpass his past record", he said.

The minister has, however, taken the first step. Last week, Alhaji Jakande unfolded his national housing programme whose thrust was the provision of 121,000 housing units for low, medium, upper and high income earners in the 30 states and Abuja. Citizen was reliably informed that the programme would be launched in the first week of March with the laying of foundation for 10,000 housing units in Abuja and Lagos respectively.

Works and housing experts have, however, expressed fear that the implementation of this housing programme may not sail smoothly

Continued on page 24



Jakande: reviving the good old days

ful factor in political contests.

In fact, the less this racio-ethnic conception of nations and nationalities reflect actual-existing realities, the more politically potent it seems to become, as the attempt to dismantle the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia is showing everyday. As we can see before our eyes, reversing the process of the emergence of a Soviet and Yugoslavian multi-ethnic nation and going back to Serbian, Croatian, Russian, Azeri, Estonian, or Ukrainian, Kazakh or Georgian nations is proving virtually impossible. It is also being accompanied by a level of material and human disruption and destruction, whose scale and intensity is rising and whose devastating possibilities are becoming apparent from the outcome of the recent legislative elections in the Russian federation. What all this is bringing out is that, while the Russian, Serbian, Latvian, Azeri and Georgian nations may have historical validity, they no longer provide an adequate basis for sovereign nationhood in the current economic, ecological, demographic, social, cultural and political circumstances of the world today. Of course, foreign powers may be able to impose an arrangement in some parts of the world which legitimises new polities based on this racio-ethnic conception of nationhood. But this can only be temporary. It shall also be very costly to all sides involved in such a blocking of the living currents of modern history.

On the African continent we have to understand what is taking place if we are to relate to these currents in a way which ensures the survival of all our peoples and their progress and dignity. As our bitter historical experiences of the slave trade and of colonial subjugation, and current, almost genocidal, underdevelopment, are demonstrating, our people on the African continent cannot ensure their survival, dignity and progress separately. We have to either swim or sink together. We have already sunk far enough due to our

lack of unity and cohesion.

In order to understand the history of this process we have to turn to the available literature, in books, journals, magazines, newspapers and in radio and television programmes. The literature we have on the subject of nations and nationalities, has a very weak basis in the primary evidence of the actual historical process. It largely takes off from the misleading notions developed to justify earlier political contests, particularly those of the 19th century; and to justify colonialism and its political projects, like the devaluation of the potential of the national liberation movements.

In Nigeria, for example, there is the notion of the "Yoruba race." The very name "Yoruba" was, up to the early 20th century, only applied to the groups belonging to the successor states of metropolitan Oyo. There is the notion of the "Hausa-Fulani," which for anybody familiar with the primary sources of the history of the emirates and Borno, even in the 20th century, is a ridiculous contradiction in terms. The *Fulbe* are *Fulbe*, because they are not *Habe!* A *Pullo* cannot be a *Kado!* What we have are Hausawa of varied antecedents; and *Fulbe* of diverse background. But it suited the interests of cliques of foreign and local power-brokers and power-mongers in Kaduna, Ibadan, Lagos, Benin and Enugu to promote the notion of the "Hausa-Fulani" and thus stereotype complex processes of community-formation and nation-building.

The fact is that almost all the contemporary nationalities of Nigeria have been formed as a result of the impact of colonial domination and the specific responses to it. Thus they were formed within the last century and there is nothing primordial or indigenous about them as they are now. But they are now being falsely promoted as representing the distinct constituent blocks which, as distinct entities, were brought together to form Nigeria, and as distinct entities decided to stay together after independence, and can now leave Nigeria as dis-

tinct entities and exist on their own or under some arrangement. When we look at the available primary historical sources we find that not only were most of these nationalities formed recently, but the very process of their formation was part of the process of the formation of the multi-ethnic Nigerian nation with all its serious limitations and fragility. Outside this process they cannot have any validity, historical or contemporary, no matter how stridently their Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, Ogoni, Ijaw, Urhobo, Yoruba or Kanuri identities are asserted in the pursuit of current political projects.

The facts of the matter is that when political consciousness is influenced by views of history, derived from superficial notions and has no roots in the actual historical process, as reconstructed from primary sources, then that political consciousness is unstable and subject to violent changes and the manipulation of those with narrow, but purposeful, vested interests. These notions deny the concrete details of our historical experience. They can only become pervasive and influence our political behaviour, if our knowledge of our history, which influences our political behaviour, is not based on historical reconstruction using primary sources. These primary sources, which, in their written form, are preserved in the archives, are therefore essential for nation-building, because they provide one of the basis for our coming to terms with the complex and dynamic nature of our nations and nationalities, as they were, and as they are changing. The neglect of archives, therefore, seriously undermines our capacities to continue to be able to understand who we are and where we are coming from and where we are going. In this historical epoch, it is dangerous, and actually suicidal, for a community, a nation, a people, and even an individual, to be ignorant of who they are and where, they, he or she, is coming from, and going.

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as anticipated.

One of the reasons being advanced is the political undertone the states allocation is likely to generate. For instance, Kano and Kaduna states, that are feared to be densely populated have been allocated 3,000 units each like 11 other states including Ondo, Adamawa, Ogun and Imo. Whereas 5,000 units have been allocated to each of Oyo, Kebbi, Kogi, Osun and eight other states that are believed to be sparsely populated.

Ministry officials, however, disclosed to *Citizen* last week that the current breakdown of allocation may

Although, analysts viewed the unit prices for the low and medium income houses as being fairly exorbitant, *Citizen* gathered that the real cost will still be subsidised by the government

not be the final decision. According to a source final allocation was expected to be determined first by the number of applications received from each state, and secondly by the number of applicants who returned their forms with the stipulated deposits for the three categories of houses.

According to the guidelines released last week, applicants for the low and medium housing units, in one bedroom and two bedroom categories are expected to pay a deposit of between 14,000 and 42,000 Naira out of the unit prices of between

70,000 and 210,000 Naira. A deposit of between 200,000 Naira and 306,000 Naira was required for the upper medium housing categories of three bedroom detached bungalow and three bedroom flat. While the unit cost ranges between 600,000 and 920,000 Naira.

Those in the high income category would enjoy the luxury of house categories of three bedroom duplex and four bedroom twin duplex. But they should be ready to pay deposits of between 666,667 Naira and one million Naira for the houses whose

the major concern of the works and housing ministry was how to keep the current prices away from the clutches of inflation. Estate watchers believe that the total cost of the housing programme was susceptible to the inflationary trend in the country before it is completed in two years. But the Federal Housing Authority, FHA, which is the executing agency is believed to have been put on alert for timely completion of the project.

As at last week, no less than 25 architects are believed to have been



Government owned duplexes: how many can afford them?

units cost ranges between two and three million Naira.

Although, analysts viewed the unit prices for the low and medium income houses as being fairly exorbitant, *Citizen* gathered that the real cost will still be subsidised by the government. That is why "payment is to be made over a period of 25 years through accredited mortgage institutions", said a ministry official who declined attribution. The source also told *Citizen* that land for the housing programme had been acquired a long time ago under the aborted sites and service scheme. But *Citizen* gathered that the federal government had paid land compensation to the tune of 25 million Naira for the programme.

What, however, appears to be

deployed to the FHA from the supervisory ministry. Similarly, *Citizen* gathered that the works minister had resolved to purchase the entire building materials needed to complete the project. But there was apprehension among senior officials of the ministry that the materials could be stolen before the project is completed.

By last week, a committee had been set up to handle the purchase and safe keeping of the building materials. "With this", said a ministry source, "the implementation of the programme should sail smoothly." If this is done, the Abacha regime would have taken a leap towards realising the dream of the housing for all by the year 2000.

By Moyo Akoshile

SPECIAL REPORT

South Africa

First impressions

By Kabiru Yusuf (after two weeks) in Johannesburg

It was raining when the Kenyan Airways plane touched down in Jan Smuts Airport Johannesburg, after a three hour flight from Nairobi. This reporter had passed through Jan Smuts before, but on transit to elsewhere. This time the mission is to South Africa, to actually live there and to report back to you in Nigeria.

Where is apartheid?

If you were looking for apartheid in the major cities of South Africa you have to look hard to find it. Johannesburg is a major cosmopolitan city. For years it has been a melting pot, where radical blacks and liberal whites have challenged the so-called Groups Area Act, which prevented blacks from living in white areas and vice versa. This has created areas like Hillbrow and Yeoville, which even before the official demise of apartheid had been thoroughly mixed. This is the place where black yuppies and white hippies can meet in innumerable restaurants, bars and jazz clubs. The whole area is near the city-centre, where there are more shops, restaurants, hotels and all the skyscrapers you see on postcards of the city.

However, one odd thing is that many of the big downtown buildings have either a "for sale" or "for rent" signs on them. It appears that as apartheid began to crumble and blacks moved into parts of the city, white business took flight to the suburbs. The suburbs are where most white people live, in well ordered splendour with their shopping centres, cinemas and golf clubs. I used to think that Harare, Zimbabwe, which has 44 such well-defined suburbs, last time I was there, was beautiful and well-spread out. I don't know how many such suburbs are in *J'burg* (as it is generally called) but to give you an idea when I looked into an index on suburbs under "A" alone there were 55 entries and seven under "Z." You can figure out the numbers in-between!

Anyway, whites have been moving their businesses away from the bustling city-centre nearer to their homes. The main reason, they say, is that the city is becoming crime-infested. When I was staying at a downtown hotel I heard all sorts of horror stories of thugs ripping off wristwatches and necklaces or sidling up next to you with a knife and demanding that you give up your wallet. But I stayed all of 10 days in this area, and while I did see many sharply dressed black kids walking aimlessly about, I felt as safe as in the streets of Lagos. But then I am also black and could walk with the Soweto

swagger when the need arises!

Rich whites feel unsafe in this new milieu. Since the suburbs are like fortresses where few blacks live (except gardeners and domestic helps) there is a full retreat into them. The biggest beneficiary is Sandton, which used to be a quiet suburb, but has grown into a more or less self-contained city. Sandton is at the centre of what we called "the northern suburbs," a vast residential up-market area, for which Sandton has become the new business and city centre.

For now the old Johannesburg city-centre is losing some of its verve, with plenty of office spaces and apartments waiting to be bought by anyone with confidence in a future black government. Nigerian businessmen over to you!

Apartheid is not yet dead, and even if right-wing Afrikaansers do not get their separate state or *Volkstaat*, it will take a whole generation of "affirmative action" (a new buzz word in South Africa, which means correcting the years of injustice against blacks) for some kind of normality to be achieved. There is no law preventing a black person from living in any of the suburbs, and quite a few do (including many of the ANC leaders). But if you go to any of the good restaurants, clubs or cinemas in the city almost all the clientele is white, while most of the workers are black. Apartheid has been privatised, so if



Mandela: president in waiting?



Buthelezi: chameleon-like

you can afford it you can live in a suburb, send your kids to white schools and dine in fancy restaurants. But you also have to live with being the odd-man out, for there is something uncanny about being the only black man in a room full of boisterous Afrikaaners.

Mark you, in personal interactions the Boers (another name for Afrikaaners) can be charming. Especially when it comes to a business deal, South African whites do not discriminate. This is one of the most intensely

capitalist societies I have ever seen. One very good reason why the whites agreed to give up the advantages of apartheid, was because it limited their marketing drive and also dampened the purchasing power of majority of the population. Now they can sell not only

to more and more black South Africans, but to visiting Nigerians as well! And can they sell!!! The other day I went to buy a second-hand television set from a Boer family. They had advertised it in the newspaper (from where I also saw an apartment to rent and a car to buy). The man and his wife waxed eloquently on what a good deal I have had with the wife saying she was sure I could sell it for 100 rand more later (to which I promised to give her 50!). Any-

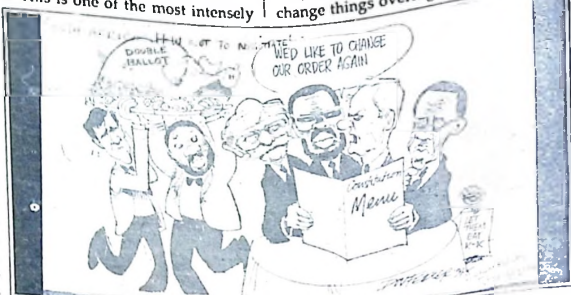


De Klerk: bringing apartheid down

way, I asked the man to help me move the rather heavy set to my car, to which he said no, called his son to help him and asked me to lead the way and open the door. The whole family stood patiently on the porch

while I turned my car to wave me goodbye. There is nothing like cash to break down barriers!!!

But if you want a taste of the real Boer behaviour, I hear, you have to visit some of the large farms or small towns. One writer said to see apartheid visit any town ending in 'drop' 'fontein' 'krpan', 'stroom', 'hoop' or 'poort'. There are still many such places in South Africa, and even a democratic elections in April will not change things overnight in such backwaters.



A cartoon in *The Star* showing the alliance's double standards

date of the election may be postponed to allow protracted negotiations to continue with the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and Afrikaaner Volksfront. There is real concern that if the Inkatha, which has strong support among Zulus (the country's largest single ethnic group) and the white right-wing (which has many supporters in the military and police) decide to boycott and resist the election as they have threatened to do, this heightens the possibility of widespread violence or even civil war.

The ANC and the government have been bending over backwards to accommodate these conservative forces, which are grouped in the so-called Freedom Alliance. Members of the alliance basically want a constitution which gives independent powers to regions where they hold sway. Some Afrikaaners want their own *Volkstaat* around Pretoria and the Orange Free State, Inkatha says Zulus want Kwa-Zulu state, and even the homeland of Bophutatswana wanted to remain independent. The ANC was dead set against any arrangement that balkanises the country they are about to govern. But at the last minute, as the deadline of February 12 for registration of parties approached, the ANC made major concessions on regional powers. Still, the Freedom Alliance decided that it will not take part in the elections. That it will deliberately disrupt the vote and will not recognise its outcome. As a cartoon in *The Star* newspaper showed, members of the alliance were simply not negotiating to reach an agreement, but stalling in order not to have an election. They changed their minds when the ANC agreed to the very

The election campaign

Barring a major catastrophe there is little doubt that South Africa will have its first free non-racial elections at the end of April. Until last week there was a real possibility that the

things they have been demanding for months.

Why is the Freedom Alliance so determined to boycott South Africa's first democratic elections? Well, the most recent poll (first week of February) gives an indication of why some parties are not keen to face the voters. A Media Marketing Research (MMR) poll finds that 67 per cent of all potential voters, irrespective of which party they personally favour, believe the ANC will win the elections. The ranking for the other parties are, National Party, seven per cent, Inkatha, one per cent, Pan African Congress (PAC), 0.6 per cent and Democratic Party, 0.2 per cent. The Afrikaaner Volksfront did not make it, although a total 17 per cent of those polled said they were not yet sure, while five per cent refused to say.

Inkatha is the biggest loser in all this, which may explain why Mr. Buthelezi is taking the major political risk of allying himself with white Afrikaaners who want to block change. Inkatha used to be regarded as the second major black based party after the ANC and Buthe-

Inkatha is the biggest loser in all this, which may explain why Mr. Buthelezi is taking the major political risk of allying himself with white Afrikaaners who want to block change

lezi would have wanted nothing better than to be on the same pedestal as Mandela and De Klerk, deciding the future of South Africa. But gradually he has been side-lined, or has side-lined himself, to the fringes of white right-wing politics. Allister Sparks, a leading South African journalist, sums his chequered career: "Buthelezi took office (as prime minister of Kwa-Zulu homeland) under the apartheid system. He opposed the system but used the constitutional platforms it gave him to wage his campaign for change from within... Yet now that political change has come he refuses to go into the post-apartheid system. He doesn't like the new constitution, which is fair enough; but he won't take office under it, the way he did under the apartheid constitution campaign for change from within the way he did before. Now that the revolution is over, he suddenly wants to become a revolutionary."

Where this kind of kamikaze politics will take South Africa is not hard to guess. Already there is a low-level Africa between ANC and Inkatha supporters in Natal civil war between ANC and Inkatha supporters in Natal and occasional clashes in townships all over the country

where Zulu hostel dwellers and township residents coexist in an uneasy truce. If the Freedom Alliance makes good its threat to resist the elections, the violence will escalate, especially in Natal and the black townships. White right-wingers, despite all their rhetoric about civil war, are having too good a life to give it up and go into the trenches. But they have the resources and the support of sections of the security forces to egg on poor Zulus to battle other black supporters of the ANC. This can seriously bleed the ANC, distract it from the election campaign (it is hard to see how it can campaign in Natal with all the threats from Inkatha), intimidate its supporters, and if it decides to fight back, have a full-scale civil war on its hand, like the MPLA in Angola on the eve of independence.

This is the worst-case-scenario. My impression is that at some conscious or unconscious level, the Freedom Alliance, the National Party and other liberal white elements, who are all scared about an ANC victory are working in tandem. Mr. Buthelezi and Inkatha are just tools in this grand design to alter the nature of white domination, without giving it up altogether. The main goal is to weaken the ANC by all means available, to ensure it does not win two-third of the vote in the elections. Virtually all the parties that have registered for the elections are openly working not to win, but to reduce the extent of ANC victory. Those who have refused to take part are threatening to use extra constitutional methods to achieve the same thing.

If the ANC wins a two-third majority it can write the post-apartheid constitution the way it wants. But it is almost certain that with all the forces ranged against it, the ANC will be lucky to win 50 per cent of the vote (SWAPO in similar circumstance made 57 per cent in Namibia). This is still enough to make Nelson Mandela president and the ANC dominant in a coalition government. The white establishment will use its supporters in the constituent assembly to block any attempts by the ANC to nationalise sectors of the economy and other radical measures aimed at improving the condition of impoverished blacks. Whites want South Africa to remain a free-wheeling capitalist economy, with guarantees about private ownership and other personal freedoms. This will ensure that the economy remains as it is — in their own hands. Despite its transformation from a liberation movement to a respectable political party, with well-attired leaders living in white suburbs, the establishment does not trust the ANC, which has well-known links to the South African Communist Party (SACP), and is under tremendous pressure from the black under class.

White South Africans have one of the best living standards in the world. I think they are fighting not to destroy it, but to preserve as much of it as they can. And they may succeed.

Aluminium smelter company

Resuscitating a viable alternative

Government vows to complete the export-oriented Aluminium-smelter company in Akwa Ibom in the face of dwindling oil revenue

The face of the minister of power and steel, Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu, was a study in grave concern Thursday as he inspected the 30 billion Naira Aluminium Smelter Company (ALSCON) project in Ikot Abasi, Akwa Ibom State. Since 1989, when construction of the company began, work has been proceeding at a slow pace due to numerous problems. First, funding by government. Citizens gathered, has not been smooth-sailing although the project has gulped about 15 billion Naira so far. But then, not all the money came from the Nigerian government. By the terms of the funding agreement of the project, federal government has 70 per cent of the total equity shares. The remaining 30 per cent is shared between Ferrostaal AG of Germany, which controls 20 per cent and Reynolds International of United States of America who controls the rest.

Ferrostaal are the turnkey contractors while Reynolds is supplying the technology. EBE/Reynolds will manage the plant for at least 10 years.

ALSCON was conceived for implementation in realisation of the cheap energy that could be tapped from the nation's abundant gas resources — which is currently being wasted through flaring — into power through an energy-intensive aluminium production plant. When completed, the plant is planned to produce 180,000 tonnes of aluminium per annum in various shapes and sizes. The bulk of this an estimated 80 per cent, will be exported. From this export venture, an average 360 million dollars is expected annually. Apparently, it was this high hope that is informing government's renewed vigour on the project. Al-

ready, an undisclosed sum of money has been set aside in this year's budget, according to Alhaji Bashir, and is top on the priority list.

When completed the project would do more than generate foreign exchange for the country; it would also conserve it as well as facilitate Nigeria's march to technological greatness. Ingots and billets, basic raw materials in rolling mills



Dalhatu addressing officials of ALSCON: optimistic

and extrusion plants and which are currently imported, would roll out from ALSCON. Home production of these raw materials is expected to promote expansion of aluminium fabrication activities for the production of flat sheets, coils and circles. These in turn, would be passed on to down-stream aluminium industries for the manufacture of finished products like aluminium kitchen utensils, aluminium roofing sheets, deep freezers and vehicle bodies.

Great expectations indeed. But all these would remain a dream if the problems the minister was intimated with are not immediately addressed. Beside poor government financial support, which Alhaji Bashir admitted while appreciating the dedication of the foreign partners and which he has pledged would be tackled anyway, there is a

litany of obstructions. For one, the supply of natural gas, the principal raw materials to ALSCON, may continue to suffer a delay if the Ogoni and Andoni communities in Rivers State do not end their hostilities, both to each other and to the gas pipeline sub-project concerning ALSCON.

Pipelines for the supply of the gas are planned to go through these communities in Rivers State to service the smelter company in Akwa Ibom State. But the pipeline project has suffered a delay because of the bloody clashes of the two communities in recent times. Mr. Peter Waschka, ALSCON's general manager, warned that the Nigerian Gas Company, NGC, gas supplier to the project, may not be able to accom-

plish its mission earlier than the end of 1995 if these communal hostilities persist.

Besides, the roads leading to the plant site are impassable which the dredging of the Imo River through which raw materials would be brought in and finished products taken out, is also yet to be done. But the minister remained optimistic on early solution to these problems. An official in the ministry said this optimism derives from the fact that preliminary arrangements have been completed on the dredging of the river although funds for actual work are yet to be provided. "But it would soon be done" he enthused. He also asserted that work on the two access roads to the plant — Eket-Ikot Abasi and Aba-Ette roads would soon be completed.

By Tayo Odunlami

The VAT rip-off?

Greedy traders cash in on the Value Added Tax to cheat consumers

About five weeks after the newly introduced Value Added Tax went into operation the fiscal policy has elicited confusion just as it has shot up inflation. For one, payees of the new tax are grumbling about multiple taxation, even though the Federal Inland Revenue Service, FIRS, insists it is a "single tax." Second, unscrupulous companies and retailers are taking advantage of the tax to jerk up prices more than the percentage stipulated in the VAT decree of 1993. Consumers are expected to pay a flat rate of five per cent on products and services.

Essentially, VAT, which replaced the sales tax is significantly designed to boost government's revenue — as it is believed it is the only mechanism readily available to check tax evasion and control the consumption pattern of Nigerians — it covers 17 items of goods and 24 items of services as opposed to only nine items under the sales tax. Items exempted include pharmaceuticals, educational materials, books among others. But complaints across the country suggest that the tax may turn out to be an overkill. Since the system commenced, prices of various items ranging from electronic appliances and on a low-priced tin of powdered milk have shot up.

By last week, a 14-inch colour television which sold for 10,500 Naira only last December, sold at the popular Alaba international and Idumota markets for 14,000 Naira. Peak, Nido and Coast powdered milk in standard size now sell for 95 Naira, up from 75 Naira it sold for in December.

At West African Milk Company (WAMCO) Ikeja, an official of the company maintained that the com-

pany has not increased prices on the Peak powdered milk this year pointing out that "If our powdered milk sells for as high as 95 Naira, it is the handiwork of middlemen."

However, these middlemen who are imposing the new tax on many products are not registered with the local VAT offices scattered nationwide for the purpose of making returns to the FIRS. Mr. Z. A. Egbonwor, an official of the service at the Obalende Lagos Island office admitted that false claims and no return by traders are some of the problems FIRS would have to face for now.

He, however, said that after the stipulated three year grace, offenders can be penalised with fines "ranging from 10,000 Naira" or various terms of imprisonment. The FIRS officials are hopeful that those now exploiting the introduction of VAT to make illegal gains would eventually formalise their practice "and register with the FIRS."

Even then this development may not guarantee strict compliance with FIRS rules or rule out exploitation as there are no mechanisms to stop them from exacting more than five per cent above the price of their products using VAT as the reason for the high price.

A fortnight ago, the director-general of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, MAN, Mr. Uzor Okeke complained in a letter he sent to the presidency in Abuja and other pertinent offices and individuals that manufacturers are being made to pay VAT on raw materials imports, spare parts and industry machinery. Mr. Okeke requested that imposition of VAT be put on the hold until further clarifications are made. There is also strong resistance from finance and insurance associations in the belief that VAT will reduce investible fund available to the sector. But an official of the FIRS explained that such multiple payments are refundable once an affected payee fills form VAT 002, obtainable at FIRS offices nationwide. The form details a return of goods or services made or received at a particular period.

It may indeed be a breather for

well-placed individuals and groups to start claiming refunds on multiple VAT payment as soon as they understand the technicalities involved. But small-time consumers are saying it is a waste of time and energy to undergo the rigours that the exercise entails. The case of a newspaper cameraman presents a critical case study. The cameraman, it is known, purchases films and prints photographs on a regular basis. By the new VAT culture, a cameraman now pays tax on every roll of film he buys as well as on every roll he takes to the laboratory elsewhere for printing and development. Of course, he also pays tax on every other photographic item he purchases for his job. So how does he collect his refund on the VAT payment he has made at several stages of a single production? Titiloye Amzat, *Citizen's* cameraman, fumed that even if it is indeed possible to collect refunds, the amount due for collection would be so infinitesimal that "it will not cover the trips to the local VAT office on efforts to collect it."

The biggest complaint against VAT is lack of public enlightenment. This should have been done for a period of two years to sensitise members of the public. This explains the confusion the policy has engendered.

Again, the computer facilities to effectively prosecute the VAT system is not really in place. The chairman of the FIRS Mr. J. Naiyeju, admitted last year that the new system entails intensive computerisation. From all indications, this has not been achieved. A visit to VAT local offices in Lagos State and other states show a manual operation of the registration exercise going on now.

With this myriad of problem, how ready is the FIRS to plug all the loopholes associated with the Nigerian tax system to make this new one work?

By Tayo Odunlami with additional reports
by Abu Mommoh and Saleh Ibrahim.

BUSINESS INDEX

International Trade Fairs

Country	Venue	Subject	Date
Taiwan	Taipei	Electric novelties and houseware.	1994
Taiwan	Taipei	Toys, amusements and xmas items.	Oct. 27-30, 1994
U.K.	Manchester	Furniture, bedding & ancillary products.	Aug. 7-10, 1994
Taiwan	Taipei	Office automation system and data communication.	June 2-6, 1994
U.K.	Birmingham	Medium to high grade fashion shoes and leather.	March 13-15, 1994
United Germany	Frankfurt	Musical instrument, sound & lighting.	April 4, 1994
South Africa	Johannesburg	Hardware, software communications technology and business technology etc.	April 18-21, 1994
Thailand	Bangkok	Boats, Yachts windsurfing boards and equipment, marine instruments and electronics, sea rescue equipment, water tourism etc.	April 1994
Oman	Seeb	Computers, peripherals, software components.	April 4-7, 1994
Taiwan	Taipei	Bicycles, Spare parts and accessories.	April 4-7, 1994

International oil monitor

Bonny light.....	\$14.62
Premium Gasoline.....	\$151 - \$152
Brent Blend (dated).....	\$13.43-3.47
Brent Blend (March).....	\$13.15-3.55
Dubai.....	\$12.80-2.85
Forties.....	\$13.65
Eko risk.....	\$13.80
Urah Med.....	\$13.00
Iran Hysk.....	\$12.30
Es Sider.....	\$13.35
Suez Blend.....	\$11.55
Forcados.....	\$14.05
Gas oil.....	\$144-\$145
Heavy fuel oil.....	\$77-\$79
Naphth.....	\$136-\$139
Jet fuel.....	\$159-\$160

Last week's International commodity prices

Gold (London) (per troy Oz)	\$382.50
Gold (New York) (per troy Oz)	\$383.50
Gold (Hong Kong) (per troy Oz)	\$383.25
Cocoa (London) March	£880
Cocoa (New York) March (tonne)	\$1,082
Silver (tonne)	530.5 Cent
Platinum	\$389.50
Palladium	\$130.50
Copper (US)	92.0 Cent
Lead (US)	35.00 Cent
Tin (London) Settlement price	\$5,380 (Tonne)
Tin (New York)	248.50 Cent
Cattle (Live weight)	121.12p
Sheep (Live weight)	110.62p
Pigs (Live weight)	71.28p
London (day raw sugar)	\$267.50
London (day wte sugar)	\$307.10
Tate & Lyle Sugar (export)	\$294.50
Maize (US No 2 Yellow)	\$126.0
Wheat (US Dark North)	\$143.5
Wheat (Chicago)	Yen 376.00
Rubber (Mar)	\$64.25
Rubber (April)	\$64.50
Rubber (KL RSS No 1 Fb)	\$234.5
Cocconut oil (Phil)	\$580.0
Palm oil (Mklay)	\$387.5
Copra (Phil)	\$375.0
Soyabean (US)	\$206.0
Cotton (Outlook A. Index)	81.05 Cent
Wooltops (64S Syrier)	378p

Stock watch Nigerian Stock Exchange

Turnover	12.6m+	(959 deals)
Index	1692.2	(+21)
Lagos	7.7m+	(842 deals)
Ibadan	2.9m+	(80 deals)
Kano	.123m+	(16 deals)
Onitsha	1.9mt	(16 deals)
Kaduna	.052mt	(35 deals)
Port-Harcourt	.014mt	(5 deals)

West African Unit of Account (WAUA)

		S Rate	N Rate
Beceao	CFA	381.095	0.0791
Gambia	Dalasi	12.0759	2.5697
Ghana	Cedi	\$45.6310	0.0366
Guinea	Franc	1279.0000	0.0242
Guinea Bissau	Peso	12810.1160	0.0024
Liberia	Dollar	1.4179	21.8860
Mauritania	Quidriya	112.0737	0.2768
Sierra Leone	Leone	800.8157	0.0387
Nigeria	Naira	31.0322	

Trade war

The world remains in suspense as trade talks broke down and the prospect of trade wars looms large between the two economic super powers America and Japan

By Shoyebi Abayomi with agency reports

AFRICA

South Africa

Violence lives

Rowdy campaigns, deaths and threat of secession cast doubt over the future of South Africa

As the electioneering campaign trails are dogged by violence and threats of anarchy reverberate, it seems that some elements in South Africa are not keen on shedding the culture of violence for which that country is famous.

Last week, the Freedom Alliance of the Afrikaaner Freedom Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party boycotted party registration for participation in South Africa's historic all race elections in April. With such stance, the Freedom Alliance has thus rejected the transition programme and has thus drawn the battle line. The country is thus set on the course of violent electioneering.

Ferdinand Hartenberry the leader of the Afrikaaner Freedom Party clarified the violent stance of his group thus: "We can't be seen to be part of the establishment of a communist government in South Africa." His counterpart, Mongosotho Buthelezi of the Inkatha group buttressed his rejectionist stand with an ominous declaration that "it is impossible for me to lie to you and reassure you that the IFP opposition to contesting the elections under the present constitution will not bring casualties and even death." He has also called the Zulus to arms by declaring that "We must resist the ANC and their communist surrogates, we must defend and fight back. If we do not defend our people, no one else will. We must defend our communities with all our might". He, therefore, called for international mediation to pull South Africa from the brink of disaster. He met ANC's concessions cautiously.

His nephew, the Zulu king Goodwill Zwelethini is the arch secessionist, who is keen on the resurrec-

tion of Shaka's old kingdom. Bophuthatswanar also prefers it sham republican status.

While the rejectionist Freedom Alliance canvasses for and advocates violence and secession, the national government and the ANC continue to preach co-existence and non-racialism. President Frederick de Klerk stated categorically that "We can't allow any minority to disrupt the process." He also promised to table before the parliament new concessions made to the right wing by ANC. However, his campaign train recently encountered rowdy scenes at Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State. Robie Coetzee, the law and order minister, stated that security forces are prepared, as security has been tightened at army basis and army depots throughout the country.

Nelson Mandela, the president-in-waiting remains undaunted in the face of Freedom Alliance's threats. He has offered the right wingers some concessions like double votes in local and regional elections and more regional autonomy. In continuation of his campaign, last week, Mr. Mandela undertook an emotional tour of Robin Island where he was kept in captivity for about three decades. He said that while the past was painful, recent happenings in the country represent the closing of an era and the opening of a new one, and that the registration of all parties was an historic landmark that continues to generate great excitement. Cyril Ramaphosa, ANC secretary-general, argues that those who failed to register their parties have missed the greatest opportunity to contribute positively to the growth and development of South Africa.



Mandela: up for grabs

At the close of registration last week, 19 parties accented to participation in April's polls. There were about 22.3 million registered voters and parties must win 0.25 per cent of national votes to secure a seat in the national parliament; opinion polls scored ANC 70 per cent in the elections.

The United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa, UNOMSA, has budgeted 30.04 million dollars for election monitoring in April while 1778 observers would be deployed.

As South Africa wobbles towards April elections, some apprehensive members of the business community took to flight in anticipation of chaos promised by the Freedom Alliance.

By Shoyebi Abayomi
with other Bureaus



Buthelezi: still for bloodshed

Liberia

What's up ECOMOG?

ECOMOG's relevance put to question

The ECOWAS monitoring group (ECOMOG) manifested its weakness to handle the Liberian crisis as renewed fighting broke out. The UN brokered Cotonou accord had earlier stated the presidential election for February, this year and it was endorsed by Charles Taylor and other prominent politicians of the warring factions. But with the current reverses and persistent guerrilla warfare in Monrovia, Buchanan and Green Hill by the different factions last week, the peace agreement in Cotonou has been thrown into the dustbin. But the ECOMOG field commander, General John Ininger warned in Monrovia that "by the time we disarm the warring factions who are signatories to the Cotonou accord, those who are not ready would fizzle out but if they don't they would be surely disarmed so it is to their own discretion to either agree or continue with deaf ears." He had however refused to disclose the time and ways in which the disarmament of the warring factions would begin. But explained that "a blue print paper for disarmament and encampment of the warring factions had already been worked out by the ECOMOG and the UN observer mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) to speed the resolution of the crisis.

General Ininger also lamented over the acute shortage of infrastructures, stating that all the equipments used by the peace keeping force since early 1990 have worn out and required urgent replacement. According to him "peace keeping troops needed new communication equip-

ment, vehicles, petroleum products, health facilities and imperatively food to re-enforce military men stationed in crisis ridden areas.

Similarly, the Nigerian head of state, General Sani Abacha called on Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other related peace keeping organisations to mount pressure on the inconsistent warring factions to desist from violent attacks and also give peace a chance, so that enduring democratic structure could be effectively restored. He also re-echoed the excellent performance of ECOMOG troops in Liberia during his bilateral talks with Sierra-Leonean head of state, Captain Valentine Strasser, adding that the efforts of Nigeria was not only to end the internal squabble in Liberia but also aimed in halting the dislodgement of Sierra-Leonians who shared the same boundaries with Liberia. General Abacha did not say whether government will withdraw its troops before March as earlier stipulated by the former head of interim National Government, Chief Ernest Shonekan who vehemently gave March 1994, as the deadline to bring the boys back home.

Reports also revealed that majority of Nigerians want to see Nigerian soldiers back home since the long term peace accord still remains fragile.

With this grim scenario, director of defence information, Brigadier-general Fred B. Chijuka contended in Lagos that ECOWAS leaders would soon reconvene to deliberate on fundamental issues and may give fresh mandate to ECOMOG troops



Taylor: how serious is ECOMOG?

to go on offensive so that it will help in fastening the disarmament of warring factions in Liberia. But contrary to the March deadline as stamped by Shonekan before his exit, the director of defence information said that any attempt to withdraw Nigerian troops from ECOMOG would surely widen the scope of trouble and may even give advantage to the warring factions.

In the same vein, the government of Ghana has reaffirmed its steps to withdraw its troops from Liberia within this month if the peace progress remains hanging. According to radio reports in Ghana "No sign that the warring factions were prepared to resolve their differences despite the presence of the troops, so if within one month from now no progress has been made to ensure that the Liberian peace process is on course, Ghana will review her continuing participation in ECOMOG operations."

Meanwhile, Mr. Taylor is beginning to loose some of his military bases to the ECOMOG. The latest was Robertsfield international airport, as his National Patriotic Front has been dislodged from the airport.

By Yabagi Kolo
with agency reports

WORLD

Bosnia

West tires of doing nothing

Armed with a UN mandate, American and French tough-taking, NATO forces attempt to make Sarajevo safe following the horrendous massacre of muslims by Serb artillery gunners. It was an attempt coming too little too late

The whole world saw it as it happened. A mortar shell fired by Serb forces from the hillings surrounding Sarajevo slammed into the city's central market, killing 70 men, women and children waiting in food queues. The pain, the anguish and the carnage was shown worldwide.

The West, which had been dragging its feet over Bosnia, didn't need any one to tell it: it would lose what little credibility it had if it refused to act even now. It did — by issuing an ultimatum to the Serbs: withdraw the guns from the city's outskirts, hand them over to the UN or have them blasted. And for the first time, the NATO sounded as if it was serious. This ultimatum for the warring factions to turn in their weapons expires midnight Sunday.

NATO and UN officials met for two hours Thursday to resolve dispute over the degree of control to be exercised over the heavy guns. NATO supreme allied commander, General George and UN top official in Belgrade, Yasushi Akashi, emerged from the negotiations with a unified position.

The UN's definition of "control" had proved acceptable to NATO, Akashi said. We agreed that Serb guns must be put in UN hands and not merely be just under its supervision.

Details, however, remain to be worked out how this is to be enforced and how breaches of the ceasefire will be dealt with.

An earlier meeting brokered by the European Community and the UN ended last Saturday without progress. Vitali Churkin, Russia's deputy foreign minister flew in from Moscow twice in the week. Russia was anxious an unacceptable condition be imposed on their Serb kith and kin or an agreement be reached without its input.

While the UN-NATO meeting was taking place, Churkin conferred with Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and the two declared their support for the UN moves. Russia then announced it was sending 400 troops to help enforce the

ceasefire in Sarajevo. Encouraged, Karadzic declared that the Bosnian war was at an end. This, the Russians said, would eliminate the need for air strikes.

And it might. UN troops began enforcing

the ceasefire Monday between encroaching Serb forces and defending muslims. The Serbs have pounded Sarajevo with artillery fire and mortar shells for the past 22 months.

For muslims life has been tough. Last week Bosnia's prime minister, Haris Slajdzic, said muslims have no choice but to cooperate. Slajdzic said they were ready to sign any peace deal. He said they were not going to wait to exploit NATO's air strike threat to regain conquered territory in order to revive its dream of full multi-ethnic state.

Serbs were initially reluctant and last week they threatened to stop cooperating. A deputy Serb commander, Milan Gvero, said Serbs regard the proposed NATO air strikes as open aggression against them. He said in the event of strikes they would launch an all-round attack on muslims.

Bosnia-Herzegovina came into existence as separate independent state following the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia on March 1, 1992 in a referendum which Bosnia Serbs boycotted. More than 63 per cent of eligible voters, however, participated with a 99.4 per cent Yes vote. It was recognised by the European Community and the US in April. And Serbs began bombarding Sarajevo thereafter. Today the Serbs control more than 75 per cent of Bosnian territory.

Serb objective in the war is to take away as much Bosnian land as possible so that no viable muslim state is established in Europe. The NATO action, it was made clear, will not reverse the conquests.

By Adamu Adamu
with agency reports



Digging a new grave for the dead

Trade

Uncle Sam is angry

The US may fight Japan for the first time since 1945 — over trade

US trade representative Mickey Kantor could no longer hide his anger. Days before a scheduled Washington meeting between US President Bill Clinton and Japanese Prime minister Morihiro Hosokawa to discuss trade, Kantor said the US will seek "other options" if Japan failed to open its markets to American imports. "Other options" is the euphemism for sanctions.

At the last summit meeting of the G-7 leaders in Tokyo last July, pledges were made by the European Union to reduce tariffs, by the US to reduce its budget deficit, and by Japan to reduce its 131 billion dollar trade surplus with all nations, 50 billion dollars of it with the US alone. President Clinton was determined to get access for American products into the most sheltered areas of the Japanese economy, namely telecommunications, medical supplies, insurance and cars. At Tokyo last July, Clinton demanded that "objective criteria" be set to gauge progress towards more open markets. The Japanese rejected this demand and argued that it kind of guarantees the success of American products in Japan. After seven months of talks by officials of the two countries, there was still no agreement.

Prime minister Hosokawa, who took over power in Japan last July, is already committed to reducing the large number of regulations that increase consumer prices in his country and reduce imports. However, his manoeuvring room is reduced by the worst in 50 years. Hosokawa's grip on power is also fragile. Two weeks ago, when he proposed a 55 billion dollar tax cut and a seven "national welfare" sales tax from 1997, the largest party in his eight-party coalition, the Social Democrats,

threatened to bolt from the government. The tax cuts were part of a 138 billion dollar economic stimulus package to boost consumer spending. The prime minister hastily retreated from the plan.

On Friday, February 11, Mr. Hosokawa met with President Clinton in Washington for several hours but the talks reached a deadlock. The Japanese again refused to accept "numerical targets" to measure the opening of their markets. The two leaders met again the following day, February 12, but failed to agree on any "new systems" for measuring progress on trade. Immediately, share prices fell on the Tokyo stock exchange and the Japanese yen rose sharply against the US dollar.

On Sunday, February 13, the *Washington Post* reported that the US was considering trade sanctions against Japan. The *Post* quoted a Clinton administration official as saying the US must adopt firm measures or "we will lose total control of the negotiating process... we'd



Hosokawa: a plea for understanding



Clinton: angry

be clobbered at home. We will just have to examine what our steps will be, and we will be turning to that next week."

What can the US do? The *Post* said if Japan is found to violate the 1989 agreement to allow Motorola access to the Japanese cellular-phone market then sanctions will be imposed on certain Japanese products. The Americans had not decided on which products to target because President Clinton was still hoping to avert a trade war.

Prime minister Hosokawa tried to dissuade the Americans from imposing sanctions. Just before he left the US, he said, "I very much hope that the US will refrain from resorting to unilateral actions that would be a contravention of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)." Hosokawa said he had no plans to meet President Clinton again before their next regular session in six months' time, but said he hopes trade talks will resume at working group level.

In Tokyo, chief cabinet secretary, Masayoshi Takemura said, "On our own initiative, we should draft plans to further open our markets and boost domestic demand." Whether that will avert a US-Japan trade war, remains to be seen.

By Mahmud Jega
with agency reports

PRIVATE EYE

Soja Wayo

Government works in mysterious ways. And if you want to remain sane, try not to understand its ways. Or else at the end of your effort you will be left bewildered and gasping for breath, like fish out of water.

Doubting Tankos can sample this. An ABC government appears from nowhere. Just as suddenly, people will begin to swear that it has been there all the time. However, for this new government to look different, it has to make efforts at movement even if it goes around in circle. An inspiration, hurrah!, investigating panels, not probe panels, mind you. Familiar, isn't it? Not to the *hoipolloi* who in their blissful naivety fall for

the old trick, partly blinded by their love for blood and drama — so long as it is not theirs or they are not the actors.

Well, actually, pardon the verbosity, the panels are another job for the boys. The not so polished call it by its motor park name — settlement. How? The panels settle down to work but first their bill to the organisation they are to investigate. A clear case of "man must wack" first. And the bill could vary depending on how well-lubricated the affected organisation is. Which is the organisation that will refuse to be generous to a group out for its head? At the end of the day everyone is happy.

Occasionally, of course, a panel may actually want to look tough, then, some heads roll. And so more jobs for the boys. The other time a



high powered commission investigated one of the most lubricated companies around. Its report was sent back to that organisation to prepare a white paper. Whatever the colour of the paper, nobody saw it and now a panel has arrived to go over what the commission did or did not do. Meanwhile government continues as usual. Time is bought and trouble makers are kept at bay or occupied. This *na soja wayo*

... the black market princes

A friend of mine came from one of the towns in southern pet-hate, the caliphate, in his jollop without reinforcement of the black gold in the boot hoping that unlike his dry desert he stands better chance of filling his tank at will as he is within reach of the commodity.

He soon found out how wrong he was because instead of filling his

tank at say 200 Naira at the open market, he spent 3,500 Naira for the two days he spent in Kaduna. With eyes bulging from their sockets he asked me why. Bewildered I asked back why what because unlike him I am used to the vagaries of the market forces that is called black market. At this black markets, strewn all over this city of Lugard and Sir Ahmadu Bello, the dealers though wretched,

carries the air of opulence. With their bulging pockets full of the days sales they go about it unhindered. You wonder why? Well, while Colonel Ja'afaru Isa shouts himself hoarse threatening to deal with them, they tell you whether you care to listen or not that nobody can touch them. They are right, their suppliers are no other than men in uniform. Pity wouldn't you say!

Why Gwadabe and not Danjuma?

Dear Private Eye,

Northern bashing is becoming synonymous with southern journalism, but luckily, even among us northerners, there are some who are willingly spared the might of those elitist pens.

Hence when Tell magazine decided to recall those endless sins of super-rich army officers (both retired and serving) gleefully cited as example, how Colonel Mohammed Lawan Gwadabe poured a two million Naira into the coffers of a mosque appeal fund "on behalf of myself and friends" in Jos, years ago, and kept deaf mute about Lt-General T Y Danjuma's five million Naira "per-

sonal" donation to the Benue University fund just last weekend.

Nor can Tell, for the life of it, remember that it was this same general who donated four million Naira to the Abuja National Church appeal fund some years back.

While I am not complaining (how can I, when some northerners are considered above reproach) I still cannot help thinking that if Gwadabe had been a northern minority officer or if he had been army chief under a Yoruba general, then he would have been spared Tell's ire. Which brings us to the conclusion that Gwadabe's sins were not those of being a "super-rich" army officer but of

being the "wrong" super rich officer.

Still we have to be grateful for small respites, and if the Danjumas are spared, then the Gwadabes ought to be happy.

Ko ba haka ba, P.E?

Yours wonderingly,

Maikudi Umar
Tarauni, Kano

Dear Umar,

And if the Gwadabes are not happy, they know what to do. I have little sympathy for those who could help a situation but wouldn't. Disraeli said, "If I want to read a book, I write one".

Private Eye

Transition (II)

Black November

Five of eleven
 A date to reckon with
 A day filled with emotions
 Sorrowful for me
 Joyful for another
 Princess dearie
 Are you really gone?
 In bondage you now are
 But free and searching
 I remain.
 Honey love,
 Will I ever set eyes on you
 Remember!
 Surely I will
 That remains my only
 Consolation
 The knowledge that lucky
 He is but not lovelier
 None like you there was
 And none like you
 There ever will be
 This as sure I am
 As the sun will rise
 Tomorrow
 Tasted have I
 A little of your absence
 But never have I
 Dreamt of an absence
 So eternal like.
 Lovely darling
 Is this really the end?
 Twice I reclaimed
 Now in losing
 Will I ever reclaim?
 Gone you may be
 But in my heart
 Ever you will remain
 To you Karima
 My *du'a*
 Is for the best
 Of all things and
 Worlds of here
 And hereafter abound
 So long dearie.

Adieu Kimsy

From the blues emerged
 The eagle
 Desperate to snatch
 A chick all too good
 To let go of easily
 Down it went

And up you went
 With it
 If only I had claws
 Made strong by
 Half and two decades
 Unavoidable would have been
 A battle so fierce
 One I would surely
 Put all
 To become victorious
 Agape I watched helplessly
 My priceless pearl
 Being carted away
 Oh precious one
 I called
 Don't ever leave me
 A far cry it seems
 For, higher and farther
 You went away
 From my grasp
 And cold I went all over
 With reality downing
 On me that you
 Truly are gone
 Go ye with him
 Kimsy
 And do as Allah wills
 With all your heart
 And my blessings
 As for me I'll grieve
 And grieve but over it
 I will come even if it
 Takes eternity
 Adieu.

Armaya'u Umar Baba

Tears

Elicitation from the eyes
 Is but a manifestation
 Of two extremes of life
 Which are opposed by nature
 Showing both sorrow and joy
 Wearing a uniform garb.
 Tears, you are warm or hot
 As you flows down the cheeks
 why not wear black for sorrow
 And white for joy?
 Why not flow hot for sorrow
 And warm for joy?
 I question your dual role
 As messenger of most distastes
 And bearer of bliss.

Adamu Moh'd Nababa



Passage of a patriot (For Muhammad Kandi)

God alone is worth of all praise
 Who sent down death
 Upon the rich and poor
 The oppressor and oppressed
 The king and the queen
 The gods and goddess.

When the praise of the Almighty
 Comes to pass
 They were thrown into a pit
 And were tumbled
 From their high palaces
 To the depths of the earth
 Lifted from their soft beds
 Given over to the worms and in-
 sects.

When everyone faces Munkir and
 Nakeer
 (angels who examine souls in grave)
 When one must lie under the ground
 For a long while and has to abide
 For a prolonged of time
 And then one has to witness
 The severe spectacle of doom
 Thereafter
 One is destined to abide
 In paradise or hell.

Kamil!
 Ever, remembering you
 And the *Hotliners*
 Coming to join you soon
 In the warm arms of the Praise One
 For to Him (alone) we return.

Danladi Garba Tal

ENCOUNTER

Entertainment

Singing to the top

Mustapha emerges from his dark musical background in Kano to head PMAN

About a decade and half ago, when Mustapha Amego started his music career in Kano, little did he know that he would one day be addressed as president of Performing Musicians Association of Nigeria, PMAN.

album, *Guarantee* in 1989.

By his activities in the PMAN, he cannot be described as a newcomer; in 1987, he was an ex-official member and in 1991, he became second vice president of the body, under Tony Okoroji.



Amego: don't call me 'funky Mallam'

However, in October 1993, when the election of the association took place in Benin City, he defeated other contestants to have a sweet taste of victory. Hence, he became the president of PMAN.

In 1986 when he returned from London where he went to study business administration, Amego presented the popular music-variety, *Kessinsheen Hit Show* and yet another television musical *Roll Tape*. He consolidated his effort in showbiz with the release of his solo

His long romance with musicians, however, proved the axiom of he who wears the shoe, knows where it pinches. Having known that Nigerian artistes are being cheated by recording companies in all business transactions, he has vowed to do something about this. "Welfare of the musicians forms the bedrock of my administration's objective," he said.

For a better bargain and meaningful relationship among the artistes, recording companies and PMAN, Amego told *Citizen* that a study of the agreements between the two parties have begun with a view to removing conflict areas.

He claimed that PMAN was as much responsible for the success of the copyright law, and for that reason, the benefits of the law should not be monopolised by the recording companies but the two parties.

Disturbed by the little attention musicians used to get from recording companies, the PMAN president

noted that the association has set up a Musician Trust Fund, adding, "because of the hazards of the profession, an insurance firm has been approached to work out modalities for an insurance cover for all PMAN accredited members."

Mustapha described the Nigerian Music Award (NMA) as just a fraction of what PMAN does, arguing that the suspension of the awards last year has nothing to do with a purported court injunction but primarily because of the political crisis in the country at that time. On the credibility of the awards, he said "award is not a right but a privilege."

Regarding dissident musicians within, who have formed a rival Nigeria Union of Musician, NUM, President Amego pointed out that under the Trade Unions Act of Nigeria, PMAN is the only legal and bonafide union of all musicians in Nigeria. "Legally", he emphasises, "PMAN is the only constitutionally recognised musicians' association in Nigeria."

He argued that the citing of the PMAN Plaza in Abuja was in order. According to him, the idea was to make it a business venture that would be strictly run for profit. "Apart from this," he adds, "the Abuja choice actually gives the project a national identity because I don't believe there are more musicians in Lagos than other parts of the country."

In this view, people only disagree with the activities of PMAN because of their ignorance of either the issue or the policy behind every activity of the association.

Mustapha, 32, is not contemplating marriage yet. "Marriage has not been my priority" he said. He does not like the prefixes 'Funky Mallam', "I don't like title(s) or people calling me 'Funky Mallam: I don't know where the funky mallam comes from, and I will appreciate if people just call me Mustapha'."

By Titiloye Amzat

TRAVELOGUE

Crossing the Niger

Three days of driving from Lagos to Port Harcourt have

By
Tawey Zakka

A long drive through a vast Bini territory. Names

revealed a lot I did not know about my country and compatriots, even at 34. There is still so much more to find out, I wonder why some other people strike out across the borders.

Soon we were out of Lagos and on the Benin Expressway. Shagamu and Ore whizzed past. A beautiful countryside, thick forests and streams with darkened sand beds. A variety of farm produce on both sides of the road: processed garri, banana and plantain. Smoked game for sale.

We are in Benin, that ancient city of the Binis. Churches everywhere. One welcomes you into the city and another bids you bye when you leave. There is so much of religion, which leaves you wondering why there is so much crime here. Nothing works properly. The most bizarre, a traffic warden "arrested" our car because the driver failed to observe a stop signal (a raise of the hand) but waved on one that very nearly caused an accident.

He demanded for "our" driving license, road worthiness certificate, etc. "Police want them as surety that we would be in court on Monday," the warden said. Already he adjudged us guilty. But he was overruled by his boss. He arrested the wrong people. A peacock has had its feathers ruffled! We wanted to stop for a quick lunch in some restaurant. The driver played dumb, kept his hands steady on the steering and eyes on the traffic ahead of him. Very nearly out of town, he slowed down and pointed to a drab eating house with a yard of dirty see-through linen hanging in the doorway. "This is a restaurant", I declined. And he offered this explanation: "No hotel offers a decent meal." I didn't believe him but did not tell him so. I believe he was anxious to leave the crime-infested, church-filled old city behind as fast as we drove into it.

sonants than vowels averaging 10 to a dozen letters. Before you could pronounce a name, you had been driven out of the town or village that bears it.

We are now in Asaba, capital of Delta, one of the dozen states created by former president General Ibrahim Babangida. People have questioned the wisdom of making Asaba the capital. Nothing of worth: a filling station, an aluminium factory, Federal College of Education (Technical). The famous River Niger bridge. Don't forget the smoked fish and long yam tubers that women hawk on the road side.

The speed limit sign suspended from the roof of the River Niger bridge reads: "Minimum speed is 80 km/h." Some passengers got into an argument over the English. But there shouldn't have been any argument. It simply means the bridge is an expressway and vehicles are expected to drive straight on without stopping. You must therefore not slow down to below 80 kilometres an hour. Those of us used to being warned against over-speeding found that order very strange. At the other end, you hit Onitsha, the unofficial capital of Anambra State. All the buildings are high rises, 3-4 storeys each. The biggest park of Nigeria's luxury passenger buses. A city of absentee landlords, trading far away from home. People steal anything under the sun, from food to cars and even human beings.

Awka, the official capital; where is the town? A huge billboard tells you there is a campus of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Some kilometres ahead, you are in *Umuodo*. Ily (short for Ifeoma) who hawks oranges at the road intersection says the word means "something that is good" that made us stop there. We had a puncture which delayed us for about an hour.

Enugu to Port-Harcourt. We missed our way. We saw a soldier walking and asked him for direction; he obliged. Well, everything has a price. The man in khaki saw his chance and asked for a lift. We obliged. It turned out to be a very long lift, some 30 kilometres away, we were slowed down by a damaged section of the road. A swarm of girls emerged from nowhere shouting "Ugba! Ugba!", something close to baked beans. It was neither sweet nor bitter, hot nor cold. I recalled the words of my dear Lord Jesus: "Because you're neither hot nor cold I will spew you out..." (Rev. 3: 15-16). I rolled the Ugba into a ball with my tongue and spat it into the bush.

Umuahia Ukigwe, Aba toll gate (between Lagos and Port-Harcourt there are eight toll gates in an all). A sign says "you're welcome to Port-Harcourt, the garden city". True, there is a big lot at the end of the Aba road fly-over but it is anything but a lush garden of trimmed hedges, plants and flowers. We drove into a city in mourning. A junior secondary school third former had taken a hit from a stray bullet and dropped dead. The parents refused to take home the corpse. The story went like this: students of the University of Port-Harcourt were holding their rag week. There was a confrontation between some students and *yan kamisho* (touts) at a motor park. Soldiers intervened to break up the belligerent parties; live ammunition was used. According to the report, many people were hurt, some seriously. There was one death, the student.

The story was the talk of the town that week. An angry resident said that the soldiers who shot and killed the student were "northerners" because they spoke Hausa. "Soldiers have no tribe", said another but he was shouted down by the former whose anger was by now uncontrollable. We left town in the afternoon of February 4, the people still in mourning.

BOOKREVIEW

Muted trumpets

Title: *Nigeria: The limits of justice*
 Authors: Clement Nwankwo, Basil Ugochukwu and Dulue Mbachua
 Pages: 73
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 Price: 100 Naira
 Reviewer: Akinyele Aluko

In the words of Clement Nwankwo, head of the Constitutional Rights Projects, CRP and of the authors of the book *Nigeria: The Limits of Justice*, it is just a coincidence that this book is coming out at a time when the government is probing the judiciary. Consequently, said Nwankwo, the book is not meant to be a memorandum to the Eso/Oputa judiciary review commission.

A book of six chapters based mainly on library researches and direct interviews it paints a graphic picture of the nation's judiciary and the various cogs in the wheels that hamper the dispensation of justice. It also attempts to highlight the reasons why over the years the judiciary had gradually turned into an ass for the executive arm of government to push and ride as it pleases.

Chapter one of the book which is also the introduction tries to recapitulate the pre-colonial judicial system in operation in the communities that now make up the entity called Nigeria. It acknowledges the fact that the closest example to a modern legal profession in the area called Nigeria before the coming of the British was Northern Nigeria. "In this places, the Islamic judicial system thrived. In both civil and criminal cases, the *alkali* administered a body of Islamic laws known as the Sharia." Re-stating the high point that in traditional Nigerian communities, the purpose of justice was to seek a genuine settlement that would disperse all feelings of rancour and restore harmony to the whole community. The authors noted that "the modern judiciary in Nigeria has over the time not been successful in winning the full confidence and trust of the Nigerian

people as a conflict resolution mechanism."

Although the judiciary is supposed to be an independent second arm of the three tier system of government, it has been subjected to much arm twisting by the executive although it is still held "sacrosanct" enough to remain when democratic governments are swept unlike its third arm, the legislative which gets the hammer after every military takeover. The story is that, with the authority to appoint and fire judges solely vested on the executive, Nwankwo *et al* noted that such appointees have performed below the expectation of the public. The book also strongly criticised the government tendency to appoint judges from the civil service "who wittingly or unwittingly believe and act as if their allegiance is to those who appointed them."

The book also dwelt on six factors affecting the judicial officers and the dispensation of justice in the country. Security of tenure, tops the list. According to the authors, the retirement age of 65 does not only deny the judiciary of experienced people, it also creates vacuums as good replacements are difficult to find. Hence the sacking in 1990, of Katsina State High Court judge Usman Muhammed by the Armed Forces Ruling Council, AFRC, among others was cited. Another high point is the working condition of the learned judges which centres on very poor remuneration which "discouraged independent-minded lawyers in private legal practice from taking up positions in the bench as such lawyers are reluctant to give up relatively lucrative private practices for poor judicial positions." The

congestion in courts, absence of infrastructures and corruption were also identified as part of the problems facing the judiciary. All the above, the authors noted contribute largely to the inability of the citizens to get justice as at when due. "The delay in the dispensation of justice is compounded by the sheer volume of cases handled by judges. In several of the courts, the volume of cases listed is very high. Some courts have as much as 30 to 40 cases listed..." the authors noted.

The conclusion without mincing words is that the judiciary got the worst bashing of its life from the military, especially the Babangida days. Retroactive decrees, some affecting Nigerians directly and others rendering the courts impotent even when the rule of law is seriously threatened. The authors did not end on a note of criticisms but attempted to present a nine point recommendation on the issues raised in the book. The recommendations may be a good starting point for anybody attempting to rebuild the nation's judiciary.

However, to make the volume worth its efforts, there ought to be far more in depth revelations of the constraints facing the judiciary. That is, the authors should have gone beyond those widely recorded in newspapers."

Also for the purpose of future reference and academic research the book I believe ought to cast a look at the constraints caused by the inability to fuse the customary laws, Sharia laws and the English common law into a unified legal system for the country.

In appendix B of the book are questionnaires said to have been administered on judges, magistrates and legal practitioners. The book would have been more interesting and comprehensive if answers to these questionnaires were reflected more deeply in the work rather than the authors generalising. All the same, with the bold types and 73 pages it is a book readers will find interesting and less time consuming.

SPORTS

USA '94

Eagles' year to rule the world?

Everything seems to point to a glorious World Cup debut by Nigeria's senior national soccer side, the Super Eagles

It is World Cup year and, already, expectations are running wild. Determined not to leave anything to chance, the senior national soccer side, the Super Eagles, jetted out early enough in the new year to Bangkok, Thailand, for a number of friendlies aimed at putting them in good shape for the challenges ahead. At the four-team invitational tournament the Nigerian lads performed above average, returning home with the silver tro-

phy after ending up in the second position behind FC Copenhagen, the Danish top league clubside. Many more warm-up ties have been lined up with clubs and national teams from Africa to Asia, Europe and the America, as part of the Eagles' World Cup campaign estimated to gulp a staggering 390 million Naira.

Nigeria by virtue of the draws of last December 19, is in Group D alongside Bulgaria, Greece and Argentina. When the giant of Africa files out for her first senior World Cup match ever on Tuesday, June

21, it will be against the crack Bulgaria squad. The venue for the baptism of fire: The Cotton Bowl Stadium at Dallas, USA, which can comfortably sit some 72,000 spectators.

On paper, Greece, who is trotting out for its first ever World Cup appearance, should give the Eagles the least headache.

Bulgaria, with six World Cup outings, none of which took it beyond the second round, though, should



Eagles: can they conquer the world?

be hard meat. Diego Maradona's Argentina is in a class of its own. With 11 World Cup appearances, two of which were iced with the lifting of the coveted trophy, the Argentines tower above all others in a zone which, like each of the five other groups, will supply two qualifiers for second round fireworks. For the Eagles, the challenge, indeed is quite enormous. Analysts, however, believe that when the chips are down, the Nigerians will have a lot of things in their favour, which should boost their morale and inspire them to

great heights. One of such morale boosters is the venue of the preliminary showdown. Dallas harbours a large concentration of Nigerians, who have already swung into action, mobilising support for the Super Eagles.

Although the Nigerian ambassadors have been much vilified for their clumsy approach to the round leather game, the fact remains that they have enough to give them a psychological advantage, rather than feeling inferior to their opponents. Going by the ratings of the world's soccer governing body, FIFA (Federation of International Football Association), the Eagles have in the past one year ranked among the 17 best senior national soccer squads in the world. Just in the closing days of 1993, they were pronounced Africa's most successful national team by FIFA.

The Nigerian boys achieved the feat by winning half of the 10 competitive games they played during the year, drawing three and losing only two. Ranked below them are the Indomitable Lions of Cameroun, the surprise team of the last World Cup championship that seems headed to excite the world once more, and the new breed K.K. Eleven of Zambia, who missed the World Cup train by whiskers, but will be present at the African Nations Cup slated for next month in Tunisia.

Another morale booster is the ascension, late last December of hot shot Rashidi Yekini to the throne of Africa's footballer of the year 1993. Swift on the ball and lethal in the goal area, the gangling goal poacher has always proved to be a blessing to Nigeria, especially at critical moments.

With the team thickly populated with an array of stars who rub shoulders with the world's best footballers in the tough leagues of Europe, the general feeling is that there is no reason whatsoever to shiver at the thought of the challenges ahead.

By Isaac Umunna

WORLD OF SPORTS

FOOTBALL: Super Eagles technical adviser, Clemens Westerhof has travelled to Europe to hold discussions with officials of some clubs who are unwilling to release Nigeria players two weeks to the Nations' Cup competition in Tunisia.

The object of his Europe trip, according to the secretary-general of Nigeria Football Association, Malam Sani Toro, is to persuade those clubs to change their stand on the release of the players concerned. He is also to plead for the release of those players for invitational tournament planned for the Super Eagles



Westerhof: opts for diplomacy

before the World Cup finals.

According to Malam Toro, "At times, the clubs don't inform the players about home invitations because of their tight schedules. So Westerhof is meeting the clubs in order to negotiate the release of the players or else the Portugal training tour for the Nations' Cup will be without the invited players."

*** Both Confederation of African Football, CAF, and the world soccer ruling body, FIFA, have imposed further sanctions on Al Ahly National of Egypt's right full back, Ibrahim Hassan.

CAF had earlier banned the de-

fender from all organised competitions for one year. But last week the continent's soccer governing body imposed a 20,000 US dollar (4.4 million Naira) fine on Ahly National for withdrawing from this year's Mandela Cup competition because of the sanctions against its player.

FIFA on its part has extended CAF's ban on Hassan from one to two years, and has also stopped him from being transferred to any club either within Africa or any part of the world.

Hassan is being sanctioned for assaulting the centre referee during the Super Cup match between Ahly National

ATHLETICS: Katsina State is to recruit more popular athletes from outside the state as a means to further the development of sports. Alhaji Habibu Gachi, the new director-general in the state directorate of sports development, youths and sports, disclosed this, to reassure non-indigenous athletes in the state that they would not be sent away.

Alhaji Gachi said although, Katsina State was working towards parading teams made up fully of indigenes of the state, "We must continue to rely on those outside our state to enable our indigenes gain confidence and experience to represent the state."

OLYMPICS: Olympic champions in Lillehammer will get medals made mostly of grey stone with only a decorative smattering of gold, silver or bronze.

The 345 medals — 115 in each category — were carved from rocks cleared from hillside behind Lillehammer when the Ski jump arena was built. A metal band encloses the stone disc made of sparagmite. One side of the stone is etched with the 34th Olympic Winter Games, with the five Olympic rings and "Lillehammer '94."

*** Austrian athletes, Gerard Reinher, has been expelled from the Winter Olympic Games by the country's federation for testing positive to anabolic steroids.

The Austrian Olympic committee waited for the result of the "A" test on Reinher before announcing the expulsion. Reinher refused to take a second test, stating that it was absolutely unnecessary. He told the committee that he took the steroid to speed recovery from a muscle injury.

Reinher finished eight in the 1992 Olympics in Albertville and was part of the Austrian four-man team that placed sixth of the world championships last year.

BOXING: Mexico's Miguel Angel Gonzalez, the unbeaten World Boxing Council (WBC) light weight champion, will defend his crown in Paris next month against France's European Champion, Jean Baptiste.

Gonzalez, who has never fought in Europe before, will make the fifth defence of his title on March 27. The Mexican, who won his title by stopping Colombia's Wilfredo Rocha in 1992, has a record of 30 wins, and 24 of his opponents have failed to go the distance.

NIGERIA '95: The chairman of the presidential monitoring committee for hosting of the FIFA World Youth Soccer Championship, retired Major-General Mammam Kotangora, has said that the report of last month's FIFA inspection of stadia facilities is very encouraging.

Speaking at Ahmadu Bello Stadium (ABS) in Kaduna, the chairman, however, said "that does not mean we have won the hosting bid."

Major-General Kotangora told newsmen that his committee would now concentrate on the provision of score boards, flood lights, practice pitches and security at the four stadia slated for the finals.

ADAMU ADAMU S

DEFINITIONS
IN HUMOUR

both *tabo*
and *santsi*,
and even
rairayi,
those who
admire
without be-
longing —
and the leg-
acy of Chief
Obafemi
Awolowo

Yar'adua: laughing last

There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about and that is not being talked about — Wilde

General Shehu Musa Yar'adua is someone I wouldn't wish to have as an enemy. I have very good reasons.

First, I don't like enemies. Second, I don't like to have my programmes disrupted. Third, I don't like those who don't return my blow; it is said, they not only don't forgive you, they don't allow you to forgive yourself. Fourth, I have phobia for soldiers, because they are soldiers and remain capable of doing all the soldierly acts in or out of uniform. Fifth, I have an even greater phobia for successful, bulldozing politicians, because one day they may make it and I may have to run for the border.

Sixth, I fear a forward-planning, scheming, successful goal-getter because he plans, he schemes, and primarily because I do not wish to be his goal. Seventh, I fear people who are normally taciturn; because, having two eyes and one tongue, they see twice as much as they speak; and I know nothing nobler and safer than silence. Eighth, I dread people who are surrounded by competent minds — one excellence here remedies one deficiency there, and by the day's end you meet competence in person.

Ninth, I may think myself tough (me Tarzan, me tough) but I can never hope to be tougher than the legacy of Malam Aminu Kano —

— both the Awoists and the Committee of Friends, and even the Committee of Enemies — all of whom Yar'adua laid low. Tenth, I fear a winner, because it is said, when God loves you, He raises your enemies from among the stupid and the losers. *Dirkashil!*

Ten very good reasons why one should avoid crossing the general's path. I am surprised that the government of General Sani Abacha couldn't see any of them. Not that the general is a sacred cow. He is not. He is a sacred horse; and the difference between the two is that while the cow sheepishly (or *cowishly*) waits to be conferred sacredness, the horse bulldozes (or *horsedozes*) his way and crowns himself with the halo. Is that clear?

Detaining him is an extraordinary misjudgment that must also have been a clearly ill-advised act. Because it achieved nothing — and probably lost many things.

Of course, unlike most Nigerians, Yar'adua did not give this government the initial benefit of the doubt. Perhaps because I once heard him say, "Doubt indeed has no benefit." Ha! ha!! Let me be honest, I never heard him say that. But even if he hadn't said that, he ought to have said it, and I ought to have heard him. I ought to have done what I ought to. And so, since it has no benefit, why give it? And so, instead, he gave the government the benefit of scepticism.

Many people made the mistake of querying the government why it

grabbed him and left some persons untouched. Will they therefore have been satisfied if the others were also detained? The situation is that no one of them should have been questioned, let alone be detained. The government must just get used to the concept of freedom for the people. Freedom is not in political parties, constitutional conferences or probes, but is in people being free — to speak and to associate. And so if it is laying the foundation for democracy it should not be doing one and not the other. While it has the chance.

Our sacred horse was annulled on the point of winning his party's primary elections and, probably, later even the presidency, by General Ibrahim Babangida.

When Babangida finally stepped aside to Minna, most of the credit for sending him there belonged to Yar'adua.

When Babangida annulled the results of the June 12 election, the west, and in particular MKO Abiola, believe Yar'adua had power to de-annul it — forgetting that a few months before they all said he had no support but only rigged the elections. And even now when they lift the ban, he will be out there in front — a political wizard who can't be stopped. And who can do a lot of damage, too.

On the evening of Wednesday February 16 Radio Nederland did a profile on the general. It was accurate but it concluded that in his quest for power he is fired only by personal motives. This, unfortunately, is a sentiment shared by many people. Perhaps the general is guilty of imperfect self-advertisement, but unfortunately it is not people who have to struggle to find out the real you — it is the politician who must be an open book. And take the trouble to be read.

General, no one can stop you — perhaps not even this image — but it must be shed. Now. And remember that this detention, your second, may not be the last. Power resides in prison; it is from there that you take it to palace.

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