

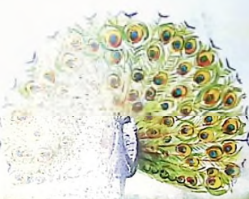
Citizen

OGBEMUDIA:

Will he hang
on, or jump?



Our New Direction



PREMIER COMMERCIAL BANK "the new strength..."

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Lt. Col. M.B. Marwa
Borno State Military Governor



Alhaji Baba Duna
Chairman, Premier Commercial Bank Ltd

therefore, be in the hands of its Directors".

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Citizen

All the News in Perspective

CONTENTS

Ogbemudia's moment of decision

The can-do image of Brigadier S.O. Ogbemudia (rtd) is severely tested by the unremitting problems of the Nigerian Railway Corporation as its sole administrator and it seems the one-star general is about to lose this war.

Page 11

Who is afraid of women wings?

The women of the National Republican Convention say their getting together as women is as a committee not a wing, which the law forbids. NEC and the police say what's in a name?

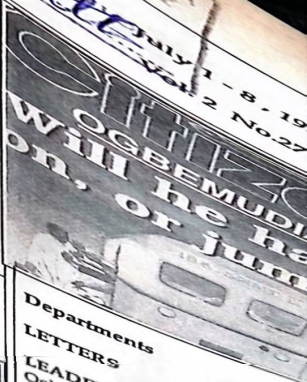


Page 23

Yugoslavia: Europe's "Lebanon"?

A country once held together by the will of late Tito and by socialism tears itself apart in the wake of violent ethnic rivalries.

Page 32



Departments
LETTERS

LEADERS
Ogbemudia's Waterloo?
Some other time
Africa's wind of change
MOHAMMED
HARUNA

NIGERIA

BUSINESS &
ECONOMY

AFRICA

WORLD

BILKISU YUSUF

Pa
7
7
8
9

11

23

28

31

32

33

Citizen

All the News in Perspective

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PREFACE

Few people could have enjoyed as much goodwill as Brigadier Samuel Osaigbovo Ogbemudia did when he was given the job of sorting out the railways two years ago. First, he is senior to the current military leadership and these things count a lot with soldiers. Second, a past master at cultivating the press, he was instantly portrayed as an achiever of record who will succeed where all those before him failed. This goodwill soon translated into financial largesse for the railways and positive press for every step he took to revitalise his charge.

His brief was simple enough, at least in theory; he was to refurbish the rail's coaches, (all 625 of them) and wagons (1,200), refurbish the locomotives (about 36) and buy a few new ones, improve the tracks (3,000 km) and re-equip its workshops. Without wasting time, the new sole administrator got to work. He told the authorities, cleaning up the railways will cost 600 million Naira each year for three years. The authorities believed in him. However in the first year they gave him 400 million Naira and like magic the trains started running. Next he gave us "TBB Spirit", Peugeot JS buses put on tracks. The president himself rode in one of them.

The following year he asked for the second tranche of funds. And then his woes began. Government said, tell us how you spent the first tranche. Apparently they found his account not quite satisfactory. Worse instead of refurbished coaches, wagons, locomotives and all, the public started hearing tales of improvisations that only worked for a while and packed up. To add to his woes, the workers took to the streets last month chanting and scribbling uncharitable epithets at him.

Matters came to a head a week ago when *Sunday Concord* lead with a story that the retired one-star general has been given the boot. The following day he denied the story and all signs were that he was very much on his seat.

The question now is for how long will he remain there? Will the railways prove his Waterloo?

Citizen sent out Kabiru Yusuf, Mohammed Haruna Bolaji Adebisi and Samson Ojo to trace his antecedents and the story of his brave attempt to turn the railways around. Their findings make this week's unputdownable cover story.

LETTERS

OAU Summit

The just concluded OAU summit meeting in Abuja is, as most observers saw it, a pride to Nigeria in particular and Africa at large. Though one cannot easily assess the smoothness or success of the meeting as at closing time, the truth still stands glaringly before any conscious African leader-state of underdevelopment, poverty and famine. Ray Ekpu couldn't have been more relevant in his observations, when he pointed out in his June 10 1991 Edition of *Newswatch*; that "African leaders must show a new level of commitment to the welfare of the people, without this level of commitment in our leaders I'm afraid we might have to spend another decade in clutches".

S.A. Okrie
Lagos

Can Babangida make a difference

Sir,

A great many people take pleasure at foreseeing failures more than success. It pays little good to be pessimistic. One would think that a man like Sully Abu of "The Guardian" would not be in this class. I don't buy his ideas at all.

I think Babangida will make a difference even though as chairman of the organisation he has no total authority but his ideas, his efforts to look into the problems of the continent will no doubt make some difference. Babangida has taken some heroic steps in the recent past. The Liberia issue gave him some notable award.

However, it looked like we spent too much to host the summit at a time when our economy is absolutely bad and we needed more wisdom in expenditure. Whatever reason is there, that colossal expenditure is unreasonable. Probably, when Babangida steps out in 1992,

he will understand better the state of affairs of the nation.

Ewoma Triumph
Benin-City

Minorities for president

Your cover story on the minorities for president made an interesting reading though I found some areas of your write-up as being very biased.

Though you carried out a fully backed research, your assertion on Sarah Jubril is very wrong.

Sarah Jubril is a hero and definitely, if all the women of Nigeria vote for her, through statistical data, she has a 70-30 percent chance of becoming the next president of Nigeria.

It is wrong for *Citizen* to say "she is being observed and just wants her name on print as having contested for the presidential election regardless of whether she wins or not".

Before you go on writing in favour of the men folks and casting aspersions upon the women, correct the error your magazine made because Sarah Jubril was not dropped from Governor Ibrahim Alkali's cabinet in 1998.

Nkechi Orlu Idia
Lagos

Identity card project: National scandal

It was like a knife thrust into my heart causing me great anguish, as I read the great revelation about the national identity card project.

If General Olusegun Obasanjo's government conceived the identity card scheme in 1976, why did it take him so long to launch it? In essence, why did he launch the scheme on September 1, 1979, when he knew he had only a month to leave the seat of the power? If the foundation of the project was laid upon sandy soil, then we shouldn't be surprised why

it has become a quick-sand in which the government has got stuck.

I feel the project is nothing but a white elephant. To be honest, if the government can call a national debate on this matter, 95 percent of Nigerians would readily say, "do away with it". While we have not forgotten the significance of the identity card, the nation cannot at this time continue to pump billions of Naira on what would not earn any profit. Perhaps that's one of the reasons why Major-General Muhammadu Buhari had to stop the project as soon as he took over government.

My people, perhaps we need a soothsayer to crack the riddle of Afro-Continental. Didn't Afro-Continental know from the initial stage that the project would require the Automatic Finger Identification System (AFIS)?

I now call on the government to take a critical look at the project before it drains more billions of Naira, and leave the entire populace to gnash their teeth.

Thomas M. Mokeo
Lagos

Sir,

This is to thank you once again for publishing my letter on the correction of the mistake that featured in the write-up of the "platform" interview with me. Unfortunately I have to write again to correct another mistake I observed in the published letter where you indicated after my name that I am a Member of the National Institute (mni) when the initials after my name were "mnmim" (Member Nigerian Institute of Management).

For the record I would like to state categorically here that I am not an "mni" but an "mnmim".

K. M. Bichi, mnmim
Kaduna

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 Unguwan Kanawa, PMB 2334, Kaduna.

JOINT ADMISSIONS AND MATRICULATION BOARD



CORRIGENDA

- 1.0. The attention of the applicants for admissions to Nigerian Universities in the 1991/92 session is hereby being drawn to the following information on additional courses available and entry requirements in eight institutions:
- 2.0. **FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MINNA**
Except for the six-year Architecture programme, all programmes available in this university are of 5 years duration for the Universities Matriculation Examination candidates as from the 1989/90.
- 2.1. **B. TECH in Science Education**
UME/DE Degree programmes in
Biology Education (Code 2506G)
Chemistry Education (Code 2507C)
Mathematics Education (Code 2508J)
Physics Education (Code 2509F)
Geography Education (Code 2511J)
Candidates applying for these course must satisfy the University's general entry requirements in addition to obtaining WASC/GCE/SSCE or equivalent at credit levels in five subjects which must be passed at not more than two sittings.
For the three-year degree programmes, candidates must possess at least three merit passes at the NCE level, including Education and two Science subjects. This is in addition to satisfying a minimum of 4 (four) credits requirement at WASC/SSCE/GCE 'O' Level or equivalent.
- 2.2. **B. Agric. Technology**
UME/DE degree programme in Soil Science (Code 2496E)

Requirements
U.M.E.: Credit level passes at GCE 'O' Level or SSC which must include Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology/Agricultural Science. At least a pass in Physics and English Language is required.
D/E: Two passes at the HSC, IJMB or GCE A/L in Chemistry and Biology or Botany or Zoology or Agric Science plus credit level passes in Mathematics, Physics and one Science subject at SSCE or 'O' level.
At least a pass in English Language is required.
- 3.0. **UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA**
- 3.1. **B.A. (Single and Combined) in Modern Languages (Code 25621) with options in:**
French
German
Russian

Special remedial courses in those languages are also available.
- 3.2. **B.Sc. Combined Biological Sciences (Code 2570K)**
- 3.3. **B. Sc. Combined Physical Sciences (Code 2621G) with option in:**
a) Chemistry and Maths
b) Chemistry and Physics
c) Chemistry and Microbiology
d) Chemistry and Zoology
e) Chemistry and Botany
f) Maths and Statistics
g) Maths and Physics
h) Maths and Geography
i) Maths/Statistics and Economics
j) Physics and Geology
k) Computer Science and Maths
l) Computer Science and Physics
m) Computer Science and Statistics
- 3.4. **Philosophy (Code 2625B)**
- 3.5. **Religion (Code 2628A)**
- 3.6. **Agricultural Economics (5 years) (Code: 2651K)**
- 3.7. **Agricultural Extension (5 years) (Code: 26431)**
- 3.8. **Adult Education (Code: 2575B) with specialisation in:**
a) Adult Literacy
b) Adult Education Administration
c) Community Development
- 3.9. **Combined course with specialised teaching subject areas:**

Continued on Page 10

Ogbemudia's waterloo?

Chances are by the time you read this leader, Brigadier Samuel Osaigbovo Ogbemudia (rtd) may have been relieved of his job as the Sole Administrator of Nigeria Railways Corporation because he has failed to deliver on his promise to turn the corporation around. However, in the unlikely event that he keeps his job for much longer than today, it is apparent that he no longer enjoys the goodwill of those who gave him the job.

Here at the *Citizen* we are not surprised that the retired one-star general would face his waterloo at the Railways. We are not surprised for basically two reasons. First we believe it is absolutely wrong in principle to run any serious organisation, in particular an organisation like the Railways with all its size and complexity, on a sole administratorship basis. A sole administratorship is a dictatorship in other words and dictatorships never work in the long, even medium, run, whether in politics or in business. Sole administratorships assume an all-knowing and all-perfect leadership. Needless to say such leadership exists no where in the world. It was therefore predictable that in spite of all the goodwill and good publicity Ogbemudia enjoyed, some of it justified on account of his known past record, he would leave the Railways in the same terrible shape that he found it — some would even argue that he has left it in a worse shape considering the almost unprecedented financial largesse he enjoyed in

his first year as Sole Administrator.

The second reason why we are not surprised at Ogbemudia's fortunes, or more accurately misfortunes, has to do with the press. These days public officers, it would seem, rate themselves mostly by how much favourable publicity they can get. As a result they spend too much time and resources on gimmicks that catch the headlines and too little time on substance. The corollary is that they also spend too much time and resources courting pressmen for favourable publicity.

Ogbemudia, it would seem, was no exception to this sad trend. For instance, he improvised with Peugeot J5 buses as coaches and mounted generators on locomotives as engines, named them "IBB Spirit" (the J5 buses) and "IBB Revolution" (the locomotives) for effect and showed them off as part of the solution to the Railway's problems. He even got the president to ride in one of the J5 contraptions. Of course he got all the publicity. However, in the end where did it get him?

The Railways is no better today than he found it in spite of the gimmicks. The moral is clear; catching the headlines can never be a substitute for doing an honest-to-God job. We can only hope that with the experience of Fidelis Oyakhilome at NDLEA, Tai Solarin at Peoples' Bank and now Ogbemudia at the Railways, other public officers have learnt this simple lesson that willy-nilly the reality always catches up with the image.

Some other time

Lately, agitation for the creation of more states is making the rounds, again. In April, an open memorandum was addressed to the president and members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council, AFRC, calling for the further splitting of Anambra and Imo states. In May, another group wrote to the president demanding for an Osun state to be carved out of Oyo state.

The fever soon caught on as demands for

more states started flooding in from other parts of the federation. It reached a high when the media said definitively that Delta, Ebonyi, Oshun, Kogi, Zamfara and, Hadejia states would be created, bringing the total to 27.

The recent calls for more states are as disturbing as they are curious. We had thought that the ghost of state creation had, at least for now, been laid by President Babangida when, in creating Katsina and

Akwa Ibom states, he cautioned that no further comments or petition will be tolerated within the transition period.

Then in early May, Secretary to the Federal Government, Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed, said that though the transition programme was tight, he would not be surprised if the government "in its wisdom decides to meet" demands for new states. The government, he said, "listens to genuine demands."

Well, if it does, we wish that it puts the issue of state creation on hold. In asking the government to do so, we are fully aware of the strong emotions attached to demands for new states. But we also know that often, such demands are primarily based on primordial sentiments.

Perhaps, more than anyone else, government is fully aware of the unviability of even some existing states. In the last last decade, the public had frequently been asked to donate money to support one state government cause or another. Parents have been levied and taxed in many ways to meet the increasing cost of social services. The education system, transport, housing and other basic necessities of life are increasingly stretching government resources, if not patience. The revenue base of some state governments clearly tells a lot about the futility of state creation.

Of course, one can find any number of reasons to justify ones action, but we strongly feel that most of the reasons advanced to justify the creation of more states have been discredited. Instead of being vehicles of development, states have more and more become havens for fraud, parochialism, subversion and, vainglory. If today 40 or so persons can compete for one political office, we speedily must find accommodation with ourselves than further divide our country into tiny enclaves to satisfy the ego of a few.

When General Murtala Muhammed created states in 1976, he was an unhappy man for the simple reason that the action illustrated the intolerance of Nigerians. Everytime we create states, we acknowledge our inability to co-exist. In any case, every new state creates new majorities and new majorities create fresh demands for new states. Should the circle continue until every household is turned into a state?

Given the history of state creation, there is the sneaking suspicion that those behind it know that they can only get what they want via a military fiat. In the second republic there were more than 50 demands for new states. Nothing happened because a democratic setting truly integrates people in such a way that state creation becomes needless.

We have to understand and work with the fact that it is people, selfless people who create development, not government slogans, not ego trips, not populism. If we can shed bigotry, selfishness and narrow-mindedness, development will spread and Nigerians will have confidence in themselves and in their fellow countrymen.

Those agitating for states in their already tiny enclaves should do well to remember that all of their state is perhaps no more than a local government area in other states. Suppose each insists on having one, what then?

All the talk of neglect, even development etc are a product of intolerance. We should all work towards making a success of what we already have than engage in what can only serve to further erode our sense of belonging. The government should resist the temptation to bend to the will of those who seek to create disharmony and disaffection by re-introducing issues that can be tackled by honesty and selflessness.

No to drugs

Last week marked the United Nations International week Against Drug Abuse and illicit trafficking of hard

drugs. It was indeed a time for stock taking in the renewed battle to eradicate drug abuse and illegal trafficking. The ruinous

effects of these are visible in the country. Increasing cases of drug abuse are recorded daily at health and mental institutions. These patients, mainly the youth show psychotic symptoms and social maladaptive behaviours at school or home.

Apart from the malaise of drug abuse and its consequences on the health of victims, another worrisome dimension is the illicit trafficking for which this country has acquired notoriety.

So thick is the stigma of drug peddling that coat Nigerians that innocent citizens are harassed and subjected to humiliating screening at entry points in various countries. Painful as this may be for the majority of travellers who are not peddlers, the fact that many Nigerian traffickers are still being apprehended should give the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, enough to worry about. The number of arrests made at home and

abroad tell a sad story of our losing battle against drug peddling. From January 1990 to May 1991, 1,087 suspects were arrested. Between 1979 and 1989 about 15,433 arrests were made while 4,804 were convicted abroad.

Although one is tempted to call for reinforcement of the Miscellaneous Offences Decree 20 of 1984 and the Indian Hemp Decree 27 of 1984 under which users and traffickers were sentenced to death or given long prison sentences, the remedy for the drug problem goes beyond taking life. The solution lies more in re-orientation of the population to shun drugs and getting to the root of the syndicate by bringing the drug barons to book. To date, those arrested and convicted are usually couriers used as fronts by the big shots to deliver the drugs while the barons go scot free.

The challenge facing the NDLEA is to tidy up the loose ends by fishing out the barons. Only then can the drug war succeed.

Africa's wind of change

Last week, Togo joined the growing number of African countries which have convened or tried to convene a national conference in order to determine their country's political future. A national conference with full sovereign powers surrendered to it by a regime in power, has by now become one of Africa's greatest contributions to political theory and development. So far, a national conference has been eminently successful in Benin and in Congo; and more of such conferences may be convened in Cameroun and Mali in the near future.

A national conference as developed in Africa is by far superior to a coup, an armed insurgency, an invasion, or a street revolution of the types seen in Eastern Europe. Even in African countries where no such conferences were convened, multiparty democracy has nevertheless been adopted. In Mauritius, the opposition declared a provisional government after thousands of people had taken to the streets despite threat of a clampdown by security forces. A similar threat by the prime minister in Cote d'Ivoire couldn't stop widespread strikes after five weeks of

protest. In Cameroun, the government was forced to promise a limited conference while Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia invited the opposition to a constitutional get-together. Niger and Zaire wisely accepted the idea of multiparty democracy. Sao Tome and Cape Verde have gone so far as to hold multiparty elections, in which the reigning regimes were defeated.

Other African countries, such as Nigeria, have got programmes of transition to civil rule. Still others have recently moved to end internal conflicts, such as in Angola and Mozambique. Even in South Africa, apartheid is being dismantled.

While all these are welcome and comforting, there have been a few blots, such as the coup in Mali, armed take-overs in Chad, Somalia and Ethiopia, the rebel insurgency in Rwanda, the Moroccan occupation of Western Sahara, township violence in South Africa, and the refusal of the regime in Kenya to allow multi-party democracy to take hold. But there may be the exceptions that prove the rule of change.

The wind of change, whatever the forces behind it, signals the spontaneous rebirth of Africa's fighting spirit and is very welcome.

JOINT ADMISSIONS AND MATRICULATION BOARD

Arts	
Igbo Linguistics	(Code: 2563E)
English	(Code: 2558B)
Fine and Applied Arts	(Code: 2560F)

Sciences	
Home Economics Education	(Code: 2597D)
Agricultural Extension	(Code: 2643I)
Health Education	(Code: 2548K)
Industrial Technical Education	(Code: 2598H)
Business Education	(Code: 2596H)
Economics	(Code: 2649G)
Government	(Code: 2650D)

4.0	UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN	
4.1	B. Ed. degree programme in Special Education	(Code: 1792F)
5.0	UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN	
5.1	B. Ed. degree programme in Education Technology	(Code: 2052K)
6.0	UNIVERSITY OF JOS	
6.1	B. Ed. degree programme in Special Education	(Code: 2134G)

Requirements

U.M.E.: Five credit level passes in the SSCE,
Grade II Certificate or its equivalents.

D/E: i) Two or three subjects at GCE Advance level or its equivalents.

- ii) NCE plus three credit passes at Ordinary level or its equivalents.
For both U.M.E. and Direct Entry admissions, a credit pass in English Language and at least a pass in Mathematics are required.

7.0	ONDO STATE UNIVERSITY	
7.1	Law (Code: 3405J)	
7.2	Business Administration/Management (Code: 3425I)	
8.0	OYO STATE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, OGBOMOSHO	
8.1	M.B.B.S. Medicine and Surgery	(Code: 4006G)
9.0	BENDEL STATE UNIVERSITY, EKPOMA	
9.1	M.B.B.S. Medicine and Surgery	3552F
9.2	Accounting	3097B
9.3	English & Literature	3076G
9.4	French	3100J
9.5	Education (Pol. Science)	3101F
9.6	Biochemistry	3090H
9.7	Physics	3085E
9.8	Architecture	3095J

10.00 Detailed entry requirements are contained in the current issue of the Board's brochure.
11.00 Candidates who have already applied for admission for 1991/92 and wish to be considered for any of the courses listed above should write to:

The Registrar,
Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board,
11/13, Hawksworth Road,
Ikoyi,
P.M.B. 12748,
Lagos.

12.00 Such applications must reach the Board on or before July 15, 1991.

JUNE '91

REGISTRAR



MOHAMMED HARUNA

engaging in too many foreign adventures for our own good. *African Concord*, among many others, obviously thinks we are; the headline of its cover story of June 10 spoke volumes—*Babangida*, it said in effect, was pursuing adventures abroad when problems abounded at home.

For me, therefore, those who deride our hosting the OAU and ECOWAS Summits and our engagement in Liberia, and lately Sierra Leone, merely mistake our methods for our responsibilities. There can be no doubt that it is our responsibility to spend and lay

In support of "adventures" abroad

The other day someone at a lecture I gave on the role of the press in national unity, wondered if we pressmen have not shirked our responsibility by supporting, in effect, Nigeria's recent hosting of the OAU summit in Abuja. "How can the press say nothing when money that should be used to solve our domestic problems is being squandered to host the rest of Africa?" he asked. My answer was that the press was not guilty as charged. I had (and still have) no doubt in my mind that the decision to host the OAU summit was right. It is a different matter if in the process of hosting the summit there was waste, squandermania and graft—and I suspect there were all these. The haste in building the extension of the International Conference Centre and the presidential wing of Abuja airport (no one knows the exact cost yet), the standby generators at intervals of several kilometres to keep the city's streetlights on, the scores of brand-new vehicles—all these point at inefficient use of resources, perhaps worse. To that extent hosting the summit was at best a mixed blessing.

However, putting aside this point, there can be no doubt that we did the right thing by hosting the OAU Summit. This issue is pertinent because we will again be hosting the ECOWAS summit this week and soon enough questions will be raised as to whether we are not

On first thought skeptics would seem to be right. Apart from the OAU and ECOWAS Summits, we have been busy trying to win peace and stability in our troubled backyard—specifically in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Then of course there is this business of putting the federal might behind Nigerians interested in high international offices; specifically the secretary-generalships of the Commonwealth the presidency of the penultimate UN session and lately the scribeship of the United Nations.

This sounds like getting our priorities all mixed-up for a country facing very hard times while simultaneously attempting to enthrone democracy. The truth, to my mind, is different. Personally I think spending our resources pursuing high international office for our sons is a waste, and in the case of the UN, perhaps a will-of-the-wisp. As I said in these pages on May 20, I fail to see how a Nigerian on top of these organisations can fundamentally change the fortunes of Nigeria and Africa. However when it comes to Africa, it is a different story. By sheer size, population and natural endowment, we are a regional and continental power whether we like it or not; every fourth man walking the continent is a Nigerian, and our GDP is far and away bigger than those of the remaining West African countries combined. This fact imposes on us a continental responsibility we cannot run away from.

down our lives for Africa's unity and development. Given our size, population and resources, for instance, we stand to benefit more than anyone else from a successful African Economic Community, the treaty of which was signed by all OAU member in Abuja.

Trouble is, all too often we do not seem to search hard enough for the most cost-effective means of carrying out our continental responsibilities. Take Liberia and Sierra Leone for instance. Any one who says we have no stake in peace and stability in those countries would be talking bull, as the Americans would say. And these Americans, smart fellows, they deal with such problems through proxy wars, unless they are faced with an acute one like Iraq.

Otherwise they fund like-minded locals to do their "dirty" work (in the best sense of the word) for them. That way no American gets killed and they do not spend as much as they would if they sent in their own boys. Obviously in Liberia and Sierra Leone we can learn one or two tricks from these fellows.

As for the summits, by all means let's host them once in a long while, so long as we avoid waste, squandermania and graft. Those who say we must solve all our domestic problems first before we venture abroad forget or ignore the fact no nation can be an island unto itself.



Ogbemudia: NRC is his Waterloo?

COVER STORY

Nigerian Railway Corporation Ogbemudia's moment of decision

A workhorse of the early 70s seems to have no solution to Railways problems in the 90s

Last week was bitter — sweet for Brigadier Samuel Osaigbovo Ogbemudia (rtd). By a strange coincidence, the time he chose to celebrate his years of achievement as a public servant also became the instant when a long shadow was cast over his career. "Years of Challenge", his

autobiography was launched at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Lagos, on Wednesday, June 26. In it he showed his rise from a young captain on a temporary administrative assignment in the former Mid-West, to military governorship for 8 years, an elected tenure for a few months, and then on to other national assignments.

The Oba of Benin chaired the occasion and he seized the opportunity to correct some "historical misrepresentations" about the origin of the kingdom he now rules. The book was then reviewed by Professor B.I.C. Ijeomah. Before then, a representative of the publishers, Heineman Educational Books, had set the train of praise rolling when he



An abandoned coach during last month's strike

said: "I mean no disrespect to those present here, but in those days (when Ogbemudia was military governor) it was like there were only two governors, Ogbemudia and Audu Bako". General Yakubu Gowon, the head of state under whom Ogbemudia served, and who was billed to be the special guest of honour was unavoidably absent. But he sent a long address, which he asked his former press secretary, Moses Ihonde to read to the gathering. In effect, Gowon said the rehabilitation of former governors like Ogbemudia is a vindication of the regime he led. The excuse, he said, was that their government was removed because of corruption, "but the stench that came after our ouster was stronger than before". Gowon called Ogbemudia, "a soldier's soldier" and recalled how he constructed a barge in Congo to allow stranded Nigerian troop cross a river.

Chief of defence staff, General Sani Abacha, the highest ranking serving officer at the launching recalled that the celebrant was once his company commander. "We his juniors used to call him *Jaki* (or workhorse). He was very, very resourceful, industrious and competent", Abacha added.

General Alani Akinrinade (rtd), who as transport minister, was instrumental to Ogbemudia's appointment as sole administrator Nigerian Railways Corporation

(NRC) preferred to dwell on the present, rather than the past. Bringing everyone back to the present travails of the author, Akinrinade said "you did a wonderful job at railways". He added that if Ogbemudia is judged to have failed this time, it is because of "character assassination and holier-than-thou attitude".

Many people stole a quick glance at transport minister, Air Commodore Tony Ikhazoboh (rtd), who sat among other retired generals like Joseph Garba and Charles Ndiomu and chief launchers M.K.O. Abiola, Igbinedion and Sonny Odogwu, who between them coughed out 250,000 Naira. It was clear that Akinrinade was blaming his successor for the uncertain fate of the man he brought to the NRC with much fanfare two years ago. In the introduction of "Years of Challenge", Ogbemudia himself made a spirited defence of his years of service, past and present. "Is it not sad to find, even in a military regime, that instead of giving credit to an officer dedicated to the achievement of his goal, he is so often accused of operating the outfit as his personal property or estate?"

That question can surely not be far from the minds of most of the distinguished men and women at the launching. For they must know that the author of "Years of

Challenge" is again being challenged over his handling of the affairs of the NRC. Three days earlier, the *Sunday Concord* had reported that the retired brigadier "has been asked to leave" the corporation. The newspaper was careful to add that "the removal of Dr. Ogbemudia is not officially classified as an indictment of his two-year stewardship at the NRC", but the decision "to ease him out" was to pave the way for the widely speculated decision to split the corporation into three autonomous units.

Sure enough the following morning, transport minister Ikhazoboh confirmed that the *Sunday* newspaper was indeed on to something. Addressing a press conference, the minister confirmed that the NRC would indeed be carved into three autonomous companies: Nigeria Railways Limited (NRL), which would compete for passenger and freight haulage with private companies; Nigerian Railway Track Authority which would maintain existing tracks and develop new ones; and Nigerian Railway Engineering Company Limited, which is to take over NRC's major workshops in Zaria, Enugu and Lagos. Ikhazoboh had no difficulty explaining why his ministry had to take these drastic measures, which would involve retrenching 17,500 out of NRC's 25,000 workforce. The NRC he said, was losing money heavily, accumulating a 1.8 billion Naira operational deficit in the last five years. This was to explain the decision for its "partial commercialisation" as recommended by the Technical Committee for Privatisation and Commercialisation (TCPC). But what about the fate, reporters asked him, of sole administrator Samuel Ogbemudia? Was he among those to be retrenched, since certainly he cannot be sole administrator of three companies all at once?

Ikhazoboh parried the question. He said since nobody has yet been

retrenched from the NRC "it means he (Ogbemudia) is still there", and closed the subject. Reacting to the story of his sack Ogbemudia himself told *Vanguard* newspaper: "I did not even read the newspaper story and when I was told, I had expected to meet the letter terminating my appointment on my table this morning (Monday). But since I am yet to receive any such letter, work goes on as usual". The newspaper said Ogbemudia pointed "accusing fingers at some top shots at the federal transport ministry" for leaking out the story about his sack. Indeed *Citizen* can confirm that Ogbemudia was at the transport ministry all day on Tuesday (June 25), trying to determine how the story about his removal reached the press and on whose authority it was leaked. If the whole thing originated from the transport ministry as he suspected, then may be he could contain it. For he had earlier told another Lagos-based newspaper that "I have read the stories (about his removal), but I don't consider it a serious thing. It is someone's figment of imagination. If such a thing had come from the presidency, I would take it seriously".

Indeed the sole administrator was at his desk last week, during which our reporters visited the

Ebute Metta headquarters of the corporation to determine the reaction of staff and union officials to the news of his removal. David Ndokotsu, NRC's chief of public relations told *Citizen* on Tuesday that "he (Ogbemudia) came to work yesterday and I have seen him this morning before he left for the ministry of transport".

Chukwudi Nwajel, the acting secretary-general of the Nigerian Union of Railwaymen (NUR) also spoke in the same vein when he told *Citizen* that he had just met with the sole administrator who denied press report of his removal.

On allegations of fraud against Ogbemudia, Nwajel said he could not say with certainty that the sole administrator misappropriated the corporation's fund because "one must have the proof that he (Ogbemudia) was given some money which he failed to utilise. But the situation is that he has not been given such funds so what would he have misappropriated?" The president of NUR, Surajudeen Odunuga also said he could not find any incriminating evidence of fraud against the sole administrator. According to him, management under Ogbemudia, may have "misplaced its priority but I cannot say that he has embezzled funds". When referred to the Wilcox report, which was quoted extensively by

Newswatch magazine as indication of mismanagement of funds, the bespectacled union president said although he had not seen the report, he was not in a position to allege financial impropriety against Ogbemudia. However, he admitted that certain projects which the sole administrator embarked upon were misguided. He cited the J5 railcar project which he said was quite unnecessary and wasteful. For him, the priority of railways should be the acquisition of new locomotive engines and wagons to replace the obsolete ones. He also criticised the revitalisation exercise which he said was an exercise in shadow chasing. "Instead of refurbishment of engines, wagons and coaches, he would have opted for purchase of new ones". Odunuga also agreed that the award of contracts for some projects left much to be desired. But Adeyori Olofin, a treasury officer at the Ebute Metta station would have none of the soft-line of his union executives. He said Ogbemudia must accept responsibility for whatever happened under him. Said Olofin: "Ogbemudia seems to have come to enforce a total destruction of the rail transportation (for) despite the fact that the corporation is being starved of money, he still engaged in wasteful spending".

If the executives and the rank



Striking rail workers



NRC taking delivery early this year



"IBB Revolution" and the "IBB Spirit": legacies of Ogbemudia

and file had divergent views on the allegations of fraud against Ogbemudia, their opinion on his performance were almost unanimous. Generally they believed that the problems of railways transcend Ogbemudia and he cannot be held solely responsible.

John Ola, who works at the Ebute Metta Diesel Running Shed of railways said, "we enjoyed his first twelve months here. Salaries came regularly and there were attempts to put the trains back to track. But after sometime, the problems return. I understand government didn't give him enough funds. So what can he do?" he queried.

John Etuk of the loco workshop, a sleeping giant house which could pass easily for an antiquated engineering museum, reasoned along similar lines. Said Etuk, "I think we must blame the problem on government's reluctance to fund the railways. Our union said they are the ones (government) withholding necessary funds, how can he operate?"

However, there were visible signs of anger against management and government. The Will Wright Workshop, was as of last week, desolate. There were less than 10 workers in the giant workshop which was habited by rusty heavy metal machines. In fact, the compound harbouring the about 100 square metre workshop was overgrown with weeds while

broken down locomotive engines, wagons and coaches littered the rail tracks in the compound. John Etuk explained that the workshop was deserted because workers had not got their May and June salaries. He said, they were frustrated and news of impending retrenchment has forced majority of workers to adopt a lackadaisical attitude to work. Evidence of this abound in the whole railways compound. Tired-looking and aged workers walk about in groups discussing what becomes of their future. Tajudeen Oyeleke, a locomotive driver for twenty years, said he was angry with both Ogbemudia and government for forcing on him so much uncertainty. "Both of them have colluded to make me a living dead. My children no longer go to school because I can't pay their fees. In any case, by now, feeding which is basic to life, has become extremely difficult".

It is quite clear that by accepting the restructuring plan for NRC, government is sending strong signals that Ogbemudia may have no further role to play in "revitalising" the railways. But is there any evidence of corruption or mismanagement against him to warrant such an ungraceful exit? As a member of the old-boy army network close to the present regime, no government official is willing to come out publicly and state the reasons for Ogbemudia's fall from grace. But after knocking on many

doors *Citizen* has managed to piece together the story of the power-play that the sole administrator may be on the verge of losing.

When he was appointed sole administrator two years ago, government promised to give the NRC a grant of 600 million Naira for three years, during which Ogbemudia said he could conclude the work of "revitalisation". But instead of 600 million Naira, he got 400 million Naira for the first year, 1989-90. When he pressed government to fulfil its pledge he was told to account for the 400 million Naira he succeeded in getting during the first year before any more funds could be released. A top-level government source told *Citizen* that Ogbemudia's account of how he spent the first subvention was not satisfactory. The matter was taken to the council of ministers, where it was decided the NRC's account should be audited before any more money should be released. That was the beginning of governments disenchantment with a man widely touted as an able administrator. But instead of telling him straight that his performance was found wanting, the regime tried to use sign language.

First the promised funds were not released. But Ogbemudia did not get the message. Late in April this year, our source said, the minister of transport invited

Ogbemudia and laid his cards on the table. His ministry has accepted the TCPC plan for the railways which means the position of sole administrator would soon disappear with the restructuring. He advised Ogbemudia to tender his letter of resignation, which would be understandable in view of the changes. Like Air Vice Marshall Aleydeino, Major-Generals Balogun and Paul Tarfa, before him, who came and saw and basically left the railways where it was, he would then be given a befitting send-off. But Ogbemudia didn't want to join the long queue of retired generals who made no difference to the railways.

Citizen learnt that he went beyond the transport minister to find out if the decision to remove him had the blessing of the presidency. He apparently did not get the assurance he needed so he resorted to lobbying traditional rulers and other retired generals to see if they could help him keep his job. As these moves were going on, railway workers embarked on a two-weeks nationwide strike which later culminated in violent demonstrations. Things became more complicated for both the transport ministry and the NRC administrator.

When he became sole administrator, Ogbemudia's high press profile, which he carefully cultivated since his "action-governor" days in the mid-west, reached a new height. In April 1990 during a courtesy call by Laban O. Namme, then *Daily Times* chairman, the sole administrator announced that he had stopped all retrenchment at the corporation. "Retrenchment is not on our priority list. We want our coaches, wagons, locomotives and communication gadgets to work first. All the railway people are useful to us". The workers applauded and so did the press. For Ogbemudia this reinforced his

image as populist who can perform "magic" as the *Daily Times* itself puts it, without causing much pain.

The trouble was that the TCPC restructuring plan, which the transport ministry had accepted required the retrenchment of about 70 per cent of the corporation's workforce. Hemmed in by restive workers and the tough commercialisation plan, Ogbemudia decided that retrenchment was after all necessary for the NRC to survive (See Box). After the rail workers strike in May, he met with union officials at the corporation's boardroom to agree on the criteria for the retrenchment (or "rationalisation"). According to a communique signed by Ogbemudia, NUR president-general and secretary, dated May



Dkhazoboh: NRC is a drain-pipe

would then apply some fool proof criteria to obtain the figure. These criteria would be sent to you later. You will please submit the list of volunteers not later than June 3, 1991".

An official in the federal

It is quite clear that by accepting the restructuring plan for NRC, government is sending strong signals that Ogbemudia may have no further role to play in "revitalising" the railways.

29, 1991, "the management explained to the union that as a result of the falling revenue, inadequate facilities to operate modern railway and the long time it would take to place overseas order and receive new equipment, rationalisation to keep within the limit of revenue has become inevitable. All those affected would be paid promptly all outstanding dues and their rights". The same day the sole administrator wrote to all directors and secretary of the corporation, informing them of the agreement with NUR. He added that "this message acts as a directive for you to explain to all your staff and call for volunteers to retire or withdraw their service. If the figure we require is not met, management

ministry of transport told *Citizen* that the NRC management was expected to present the full list of those to be "rationalised" by last Friday, June 28. The source added that since Ogbemudia has become a convert on the need to retrench, it was decided to allow him complete the job first. Besides, there was the launching of his book on Wednesday. No one in government wanted to spoil his hour of glory as indeed it turned out to be. But in the following days, either Ogbemudia himself decides or the transport ministry may have to decide for him, that it was time to throw that long-delayed send-off party.

By Kabiru Yusuf with
Mohammed Haruna, Bolaji
Adebiyi and Samson Ojo

War against retrenchment

Prospects of retrenchment unites two unions against government's move to rationalise the railways

his week, Tajudeen Adeoye, a locomotive driver will split five years on earth, thirty of which have been put into the service of the Nigerian Railways Corporation. In all these years he worked, he was able to get a wife and four children. That is all he has to show for his years of service to the nation. Presently, he looks seventy and lives in a rented tenement house somewhere in the slum of Lagos Island. "I have put in all my youth into the development of my country through the railways. Although I have nothing to show for this, I still intend to continue to serve hoping that one day, a man with the fear of God in his heart will become our ruler and reverse this trend of poverty in our favour" Adeoye wants to serve on, but going by what Tony Ikazoboh, a retired Air Force Commodore and minister of transport said last week Monday, he may as well do some rethinking.

On the morning of that day, Ikazoboh gathered journalists together at the conference room of his ministry to tell them that due to the inability of railways to fend for itself, government had decided to effect a major restructuring of the dying corporation. He told

journalists that the Nigerian Railway Corporation would be split into three autonomous units, viz: Nigerian Railway Track Authority, the Nigerian Railways Limited and the Nigerian Railway Engineering Company Limited.

Then the minister dropped the "bomb"

In raw figures, the number of persons that will be affected by this action is estimated at 17,500 leaving 7,500 "lucky workers" to do the job hitherto done by 25,000. For government, this is an inevitable consequence of NRC's inability to meet its monthly wage bill. Presently, the 25,000 staffers scattered all over the federation cost about 17 million Naira monthly.

which shattered the hopes of the likes of Adeoye. In a few weeks from now, 75% of the workforce would be retrenched, he said.

In raw figures, the number of persons that will be affected by this action is estimated at 17,500 leaving 7,500 "lucky workers" to do the job hitherto done by 25,000. For government, this is an inevitable consequence of NRC's

inability to meet its monthly wage bill. Presently, the 26,000 staffers scattered all over the federation cost about 17 million Naira monthly.

Yet, the present monthly earnings hover around 9 million Naira and 10 million Naira which will leave the corporation with a sure

deficit of about 7 million Naira monthly, excluding other recurrent expenditure such as maintenance of trucks, engines, coaches, office equipments and other sundry expenses.

The retrenchment plan had been in the offing since 1989 when Dr. Samuel Ogbemudia was appointed sole administrator. He had given the Nigerian Railway Workers Union,

NUR, executives assurances that his mission was to reinvigorate the ailing corporation and bring it out of the woods. He would not retrench staff because as he put it then, it was not their fault that they were redundant.

The prospect of mass retrenchment pitched the senior staff association (Railways) and NUR in the same camp against the rationalisation move of the government, last week Wednesday, when the two associations, at joint press conference rejected the retrenchment plans insisting that it has never solved the problem of the corporation. The unions told President Babangida in a letter that retrenchment was an inappropriate solution to the chaotic crisis in the rail system. Lack of rolling stock and locomotive engines and insufficient funding, they argued, was the major bane of the corporation.

The two unions said that between 1955 and the 60s, the corporation was able to break even and still have some capital reserves. This was achieved with a staff strength of 45,000 that worked with over 200 locomotive engines. There were fewer roads then and so NRC enjoyed a near monopoly of passenger and luggage

freight. In addition to that, government parastatals were compelled to freight their goods by rail. Over the years however, government neglect of railways set in with the effect that most of the locomotives went off-rail due to old age. They were not replenished.

Meanwhile highways sprang up all over the federation without a corresponding development and extension of the rail tracks. Consequently the corporation gradually lost its commuters to road transport which was faster and more reliable. This explains why the revenue base dwindled considerably to the extent that since 1969, the corporation has run a deficit budget running into millions of Naira. In fact, in 1969, the revenue gathered was 23,902,000 Naira. 25,618,000 Naira was expended leaving the corporation with a 1,716,000 Naira deficit. Ten years later the revenue went up to 33,372,000 Naira. Expenditure too climbed the ladder to 94,172,000 Naira and along with it on the upward movement was a deficit figure of 60,800,000 Naira. The 1989 figures, the year Ogbemudia ascended the saddle, show a huge deficit of 145,917,000 Naira. In that year, income was 48,103,000 Naira while a whopping 194,023,000 Naira was spent. All along the workforce remained stable while the number of locomotive shrank to 15

by 1989.

"The issue," said Chukwudi Nwajei, acting secretary general of the NUR, "is inadequate funding, lack of rolling stock and engines. Our equipments are old and there is a need for massive investment.

If government pumps in enough fund, the railways will need more than the present 25,000 staff to function." For him, therefore, retrenchment cannot in any way pave the way for the development of the industry. The alternative to retrenchment, according to the acting secretary-general, is for the government to make available to the railways more funds to purchase new locomotive engines and remove curves on the rail track network so that the trains can travel faster than the present 65 kilometre per hour.

In fact, the unions suggested at the press conference that government should as a matter of urgency, buy fifty more locomotive engines for the corporation and ensure that thirty more are procured for it next year. They also demanded that railway technocrat rather than a novice should be appointed chief helmsman of the corporation. Extension of standard gauge rail line to all states capitals, sea and airports and all industrial and agricultural nerve centres of the country, was another major suggestion which the unions believe if implemented will pull the

corporation out of its deep slumber.

Surajudeen Odunuga, president of NUR, told *Citizen* last week that he was confident that the alternative suggested to the president would be effective, because they address the root cause of the crisis within the rail system. But fears have been expressed as to the ability of the government to finance such a huge proposal. Perhaps that was why it opted for the recommendation of the technical committee on the privatisation and commercialisation of public companies, TCPC, that split the corporation into three autonomous entities. According to David Ndakotsu, chief public relations officer of the corporation, a new locomotive engine cost about 20 million Naira. Fifty new ones which the unions are now asking for will cost one billion Naira.

The present level of the economy, said Ndakotsu, cannot sustain that expenditure. He agreed, though, that what the corporations need is massive capital investment which if properly managed will yield dividends for the nation.

Railway workers and their leaders are unimpressed by the argument that the nation cannot afford the required massive investment in this regime of SAP. "The TCPC said it has set aside 520 million Naira for the settlement of workers' gratuity, why not use that to buy locomotive engines?" queried M.B.

Ojebuovboh, president of the senior staff association. By rough arithmetic, 520 million Naira will procure about 25 new locomotive engines which going by the present earnings of the corporation would provide it an estimated additional 25 million Naira monthly revenue. "It is even uneconomical" argued Ojebuovboh, "to release 520 million Naira into circulation, it will cause inflation".

Well, inflation may just be another economic consequence of the rationalisation exercise. But the social consequence is what is bothering most of the workers now. Said John Etuk, a worker at the Mill Wright Workshop, the locomotive workshop of the corporation, "my family will be the immediate casualty of this exercise. My children will no longer go to school because, I cannot think of what to do to pay their school fees. Of course I have dependants too. I will simply have to ask every one to fend for himself".

As the rail workers and their leaders spurned the rationalisation and retrenchment drive last week, the nation awaited further development. At their last week press conference, leaders of the unions did pledge to speak the language government understands. When asked what that meant, Chukwudi Nwajei merely said, "you will soon find out".

By Bolaji Adebeyi,
with Samson Ojo

Rusty legacy

Sixteen years after Ogbemudia left office as first military governor of Bendel State, most of the companies and projects he helped establish are on the verge of collapse

The corporate headquarters of the New Nigerian Bank on Mission Road, Benin City is a tall and imposing building. It exudes grandeur, solidity and reliability. This is a facade however, for the truth of the matter is that the New Nigerian Bank is in deep

New Nigerian Bank, established in 1974, is one of several companies established by Brigadier Samuel Ogbemudia (rtd) which time, neglect and sheer managerial incompetence have turned into huge financial liabilities rather than the economic assets they were

sharp decline in the company's fortunes, the state governor, Colonel John Yeri shut down the company and asked its staff to stay home until arrangements for its privatisation were concluded. Established by Ogbemudia in 1974, Bendel Brewery was the

dominated by such household names as Star and Guinness Stout.

The success story did not last however. By 1981, seven years after its inception, it was obvious that things were no longer at ease. By 1986, the brewery was operating far below its installed capacity. In 1989, output stood at about 27% and then in 1990 hit an all-time low of 6%. The party was over. The state government stepped in and called the "undertakers".

While opinion is sharply divided as to how exactly the Bendel Brewery came to grief, there appears to be a consensus on one basic fact: the Ogbemudia administration, right from the outset, erected the brewery on a very shaky administrative and managerial foundation. Rather than set up a resourceful, independent and profit-motivated management team, the Ogbemudia government preferred to call all the shots from Government House. The brewery was run like another government ministry with the result that favouritism and patronage rather than meritocracy featured as primary considerations in the day today running of



Bendel Brewery and the Observer Group

financial trouble. Last week, the Bendel State government showed eight of the bank's top officers the gate in a desperate attempt to bale the institution from the murky water of bad debts in which it is presently floundering and there is yet no indication that it is succeeding.

The crisis-ridden

intended to be at inception. Indeed, Benin-City and the state in general presents a portrait of rust, decay and inertia these days, what went wrong?

This is one question the workers of the Bendel Brewery along Ikpoba slope in the state capital will not be patient enough to answer. Following a

state government's attempt to break the monopoly of such brewing giants as Guinness and Nigeria Breweries Limited, NBL. For a while the company did well. Its main product, Crystal Beer was very popular, especially in Bendel State and environs and it soon established its name in a market hitherto

the affairs of the company. By the time the civilian government of Professor Ambrose Alli took over in 1979, things took a turn for the worse. Party faithfuls literally took over the brewery, allocating whole trailer-loads of beer to themselves and selling them in the open market without bothering to return the empty bottles to the brewery. When Ogbemudia staged his second coming in 1983, it was business as usual. His cronies in the then NPN-controlled state government emptied the coffers of the brewery and in less than no time, made it bankrupt, and by so doing, signed its death sentence. By last week, Churchgate, an Indian-owned conglomerate was negotiating with the Bendel State government to buy off the still-born Bendel Brewery.

Other companies and projects established by Ogbemudia are in no better shape. One thing most Bendelites, like Matthew Akparayen, news editor of the Benin-based "The Observer" are quick to tell you is that "all you find in Bendel State today were conceived by Ogbemudia". Indeed some of them go as far as asserting that "Bendel is Ogbemudia and Ogbemudia is Bendel". And they have a point here. Among companies and projects conceived by the Ogbemudia administration between 1969 and 1975 were Midwest Line (now Bendel Line). The

Observer Group of Newspapers, NTA Benin, Oge Stadium Benin, Afuze Games Village, Delta Boatyard Warri, Bendel Library Board and Bendel Soap Factory. It was also during Ogbemudia's tenure that the foundation of the Midwest Institute of Technology which latter metamorphosed into the University of Benin was laid.

Setting up companies and ensuring their longevity are two entirely different ball games,

advent of party politics in 1979. Ambrose Alli turned the newspaper into a UPN megaphone when he assumed power. Ogbemudia did exactly the same thing in 1983 when he took over, only this time the piper was the NPN. Faced with unbridled government interference, the newspaper went under until the Ogbemudia government took a hand in the matter in January 1990 and appointed Tony Ikekanam, formerly of the *New Nigerian*

It is interesting to note however that the Odje Commission which was set up in August 1975 by Ogbemudia's successor, Colonel George Innih, to examine various aspects of 74 statutory corporations, boards and state-owned companies indicted the Ogbemudia administration on several grounds.

however. And it is in the latter that the Ogbemudia administration has been found wanting. Bendel Line, weighed down by fraud, petty rivalries and managerial inefficiency was literally limping until a few years ago when the Tunde Ogbemudia government injected fresh funds into the company and gave it a new lease of life. As for the Bendel Soap Factory in Sapele, it is now a ghost of its former self after years of neglect and inefficiency have taken their toll. The Observer Group was doing well until the

newspaper editor of *The Observer*, charging him with the difficult task of returning *The Observer* to its former glory. As for the Bendel Textile Mill in Asaba, it was more dead than alive until the Churchgate Group stepped in 1987 and took over. Now its Indian owners are smiling to the bank with fat profits.

If there is one legacy of the Ogbemudia years that has not gone rusty with passage of time, it is perhaps the University of Benin. Said Air Iyare, a noted educationist and social critic:

"Ogbemudia's greatest achievement was the establishment of the Midwest Institute of Technology which latter metamorphosed into the University of Benin". While Iyare agrees that a considerable number of projects which Ogbemudia established are on the verge of collapse, he absolved the former governor from blame in this regard. Said Iyare, "if you leave a legacy it is supposed to be maintained by incoming administrations. If you leave it just like that then it would gather rust. So that should not be put on the doorsteps of Ogbemudia".

It is interesting to note however that the Odje Commission which was set up in August 1975 by Ogbemudia's successor, Colonel George Innih, to examine various aspects of 74 statutory corporations, boards and state-owned companies indicted the Ogbemudia administration on several grounds. Read the Government White Paper on the Odje Commission in part "Government deploras the dishonest and utterly irresponsible manner in which public funds were dissipated by the Ogbemudia administration in this and other private projects or concerns established or acquired by government under the Indigenisation Decree". Could it be that this is why the house Ogbemudia built has also gone rusty?

By Ike Okonta
with reports from
Yinka Tella in Benin

Management and Union The agreement

Communique issued at the end of management/Nigeria Union of Railwaymen meeting held in the Corporation's Boardroom on Wednesday, 29th May, 1991

The Management and the Union leaders met to discuss future NRC operations and well being of the Nigerian Railway Corporation workers.

The Management explained to the Union that as a result of the falling revenue, inadequate facilities to operate modern railway and the long time it would take to place overseas order and receive new equipment rationalisation to keep within the limit of revenue has become inevitable. All those affected would be paid promptly all outstanding dues and their rights.

The Union on their side explained that it is against rationalisation

but, having regard to the explanation reluctantly accepted it because it is a matter of policy, but insisted that all money due to a worker should be paid in full before he leaves the compound.

In conclusion, the house noted that:

(a) The government has spent a lot of money in the revitalisation of the railway particularly under the present administration:

(b) There is need to have in the future a railway that would:

(i) provide efficient and comfortable service to its customers;

(ii) reduce NRC reliance on Government for annual subsidy;

(iii) Take its proper place in the transportation

industry.

(c) Note that if the above is to be achieved, restructuring and rationalisation would become inevitable.

(d) Note that the figures computed as being entitlement of those that would be affected by the rationalisation was read out by the sole administrator.

(e) It was agreed:

(1) That Management should send a message to all the Divisions and the Headquarters explaining the situation and calling for volunteers to retire or withdraw their service.

(2) That if, after this, the figure of volunteers received does not cover that which is expected, the Management should apply the criteria read out

by the Sole Administrator.

(3) That outstanding arrears of minimum wage for January-March 1991 should be paid along with May salary.

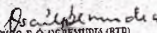
(f) It was resolved that letters of appreciation should be addressed by the Management to:

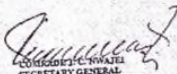
(i) Air Commodore Tony Ikhazoboh
Honourable Minister of Transport

(ii) Engr. Bunu Sheriff, Honourable Minister of Employment, Labour and Productivity

(iii) Mrs A. O. Williams Director-General Federal Ministry of Transport for their positive roles in ensuring peace and harmony in the corporation within the last three weeks.


COMRADE A. O. OGBEMUDIA
PRESIDENT GENERAL
NIGERIA UNION OF RAILWAYMEN


COMRADE A. O. OGBEMUDIA (RTD)
SOLE ADMINISTRATOR
NIGERIAN RAILWAY CORPORATION


COMRADE C. NWAJI
SECRETARY GENERAL
NIGERIA UNION OF RAILWAYMEN

Annexure I

In order to make the exercise objective and ensure justice and fairplay, the following criteria would be strictly applied in the course of compiling the names of staff to be affected:

(1) Call for volunteers

to retire or withdraw service, (if this fails to provide the correct number required, the undermentioned would then be applied).

(2) (a) All staff who have attained 55 years of age as at 31/5/91.

(b) All staff whose professional attainment fall below what are prescribed for their cadres

as provided in the circular for promotion.

(c) All staff with proven incompetence.

(d) Drivers with one or more accident cases.

(e) Staff with poor disciplinary records, i.e.

(i) those junior staff issued with Grade II and II warnings, and in the case of senior staff, those issued with at least Letter

of Reprimand,

(ii) those involved in one fraud or similar malpractice,

(iii) frequent absence and lateness to duty,

(iv) poor medical record i.e., protracted illness and other physical disabilities and frequent hospital attendance.

(v) cases of noticeable declining productivity.

Rationalisation: French style

French National Railways (SNCF) is one year into a major restructuring process designed to devolve greater responsibility and accountability to the regions. Clear-cut agreements have been made with the government regarding public service obligations and related compensation, and the road to financial equilibrium in non-supported business. Below are excerpts of an interview Jacques Fourrier, SNCF's president gave the *International Railway Journal*.

What was the philosophy behind the decision to restructure the management of SNCF? Has the restructuring been completed?

The idea was to implement a broadly decentralised form of management based on business units and controlled by head office. In this way we shall better satisfy our customers because management will be closer to the ground with better decision-making and action-taking at regional and local levels. It will also improve the means of supervision available to top management.

This new structure is based on four business units: long-distance passenger, freight,

Greater Paris commuter, and parcels. It also includes a service to supervise regional transport systems which, from now on, will be run by the regions.

Is it possible that future stages of reorganisation could involve the privatisation of all or part of SNCF? Is the privatisation of SNCF an issue that is under discussion in France?

There is and will be only one SNCF, both before and after the reorganisation. It does not in any way imply the establishment of each business unit as an

There is and will be only one SNCF, both before and after the reorganisation. It does not in any way imply the establishment of each business unit as an independent company, or the setting up of subsidiaries with top management acting as a holding company.

independent company, or the setting up of subsidiaries with top management acting as a holding company. It is merely a way of allowing SNCF the means to develop its businesses, to fulfil its public service responsibilities efficiently, and to secure its financial health in the long term in an increasingly competitive environment.

The privatisation of SNCF is not up for discussion in France. It never has been.

What are the main objectives of the 1990-94 Contrat de Plan in terms of a) public service obligation, and b) surviving in a competitive environment?

We have identified three strategic guidelines in our corporate plan, and the government has endorsed them. They are: development of fast rail links for passengers, which relies mainly on new TGV lines and trains; improving commuter and regional services, which are our largest areas of public service; and strengthening freight traffic, which faces severe

45.5 billion for TGV, FF 43.1 billion for the conventional network, and FF 15.7 billion for Paris area commuter services.

What do you perceive as being the greatest challenges now facing SNCF?

In short, our challenge is to succeed in turning SNCF into a modern company, both internally and externally. We have some obvious assets, such as attractive products involving advanced techniques. The TGV is the most obvious example, but it is not the only one. In recovering its financial health — and the conditions now prevail to ensure that this can be lasting — SNCF has become fully responsible for its business management.

Internally, modernisation implies social change involving everyone more closely in the running of the company. Our objectives to attain greater decentralisation, to give more responsibility to employees, and to bring the decision-making process closer to the base. The greatest number of people must share the benefits of the results, and railwaymen must benefit from their own efforts more than they have in the past.

Culled from February issue of *International Railway Journal*.

The breakdown is FF

NRC Vs NEC

Who is afraid of women wings?

NEC, police, say no! NRC women say men are jittery



Adedeji; men have become jittery

participate in politics?"

As the chairman and special guest of honour in the one day political seminar organised by the National Council of Women's Societies, NCWS, which provided the forum for the women to vent their feelings,

Olagunju could only

Dr. Tunji Olagunju, the minister for special duties, though looking amused swivelled uneasily in his chair. Alhaja Suliat Adedeji, national chairperson of the National Republican Convention, NRC, women affairs committee did not mince words in sending her message to the president through the minister. Said Alhaja Adedeji, "The men have become jittery. Police are harassing us daily, and I spent about eight hours in the police station each day I am invited for questioning. If I am not a strong hearted woman, will I still

answer. "Politics should not be played on the basis of gender".

The minister's answer and the National Electoral Commission's (NEC) stand brings to fore the apparent contradictions in government's stand over the matter. In an earlier chat with *Citizen* Alhaja Adedeji, asked rather rhetorically "Are the agencies, NEC and police, working at cross purposes with the federal government?" She stated further that whatever they (NRC) are doing now is as a result of the inspiration the women got from the Better Life Programme and Na-

tional Commission for Women and other women oriented programmes actively pursued by the first lady, Mrs. Maryam Babangida and supported by the federal military government. The woman activist, further told *Citizen* that "the women affairs committee of the NRC is one of the 16 committees set up by the NRC national secretariat to advise the national chairman on the problems facing the party and how to resolve it. She added, "we are appointed, not voted for and we do not have a separate budget, and there is no parallel organisation, we are a committee of 25 made up of 22 women and four men, therefore it is not a completely an female outfit".

However, it seems as if it is only the NRC that is in this predicament. Professor David Iornem, Social Democratic Party (SDP) national publicity secretary told *Citizen* "In our party, we do not have a youth wing, we don't have a women's wing, we are working together, the women within the SDP feel adequately committed and are recognised and are being used at various levels for various functions."

Mrs. Emily Aig-Imoukhuede, national president of the National Council for Women's Societies (NCWS) in her welcome address said that, NCWS is proud of those women who came out in 1990 to contest and much more proud of those who won. She added "we will not only ensure more women being voted in, we will also influence the men that are voted in".

Though claiming a non-partisan role, NCWS president did not

mince words in declaring the council's support for the political aspirations of women. She stated "we must provide linkages for women so that they can know what resources are available to them and know where to get consultations, support, advice and funding for their political participation". She added, "political programmes are deliberate programmes and women cannot become significant political leaders unless the political parties are serious enough to make deliberate efforts to see to it".

Mrs. Aig-Imoukhuede's position readily supports Alhaja Adedeji's that "Some women are afraid to go into politics, because they think it is a male affair or because they don't have money. In as much as we are looking for merit, this is the reason behind setting up our women affairs committee so that these problems can be identified and tackled".

The first lady, Mrs. Maryam Babangida in her message of goodwill as patron of NCWS, read on her behalf by Mrs. Fatimah Momoh, national secretary of NCWS, the first lady stated that the seminar could not have come at a better time and that, "it should further help to expose women to politics rather than being mere voters".

In her reaction to the issue, an SDP female delegate said that who prefers anonymity because her party has no women affairs committee said that, "the mere fact that government allowed this seminar to hold is enough proof to show that if Nigerian women must be carried along in the politics of the third republic, NEC has to give legitimacy to women committees in the two registered political parties". She added, "NEC as a matter of urgency must even encourage the two parties to form women affairs committee".

Mrs. Rahila B. Chattalas, national coordinator, women affairs committee for Plateau State NRC told *Citizen*, "if NEC bans us completely, it will be too bad, because

the responsibility of mobilising the women rests squarely on us and this we do even by going from house to house".

ise women. According to the minister for special duties, women should put their numerical strength to electoral advantage. He added:



Delegates at the seminar



Imoukhuede (second left) conferring with a guest at the seminar

The women might not be wrong after all in declaring that men are getting jittery and may be using their authority to cleverly marginal-

"we must listen to her, know what she wants, and learn from her native wisdom".

By Aluko Akinyele



As the aspirants for the governorship race in Plateau State intensify their campaigns for the August primaries, the question being asked is which senatorial district will provide the candidate? North made up of Jos, Barikin Ladi, Bassa and Mangu; East, comprising Pankshin, Kanam, Wase, Langtang and Shendam and, or West, comprising Lafia, Awe, Doma Akwanga, keffi and Nassarawa? The issue of zoning though does not seem to be officially on the agenda of the two political parties; the issue is only that of fielding the best candidate at the primaries.

The decisive factor is the usual geopolitics of the state of upland/lowland or north versus south and to some extent the personal records of the contestants.

Mr. Solomon Lar, the first civilian governor of the state is from Langtang in the lowland zone of the state or the south. There was a tacit agreement that on completion of his second term of office, it would be the turn of the north or upland. The Biroms, in the home base of Chief D.B. Zang, were awaiting their turn but the military coup of December 1983 put paid to that dream. There are many in the state who now hope to realise this dream in the third republic.

Plateau State Set for the big one

The issue at stake is not what party but what part of Plateau State

Whatever hope the north or the upland have appear threatened as some influential members from the south have joined in the race. What may have informed the entry of the candidates from the south was the appointment of Navy Commodore Atukum as governor of the state by the Buhari regime. It is felt that Atukum who is from Mangu is enough compensation for the upland or the north.

The exit of Lar from the political scene during the transition period

philosophy are all over the place. It was largely their efforts that gave the SDP a clear margin over the NRC in last year's local council elections.

As August 24 draws closer, no fewer than 20 candidates have indicated their interest to contest. The NRC has six and the SDP 14.

In the NRC, notable contenders who have received their party blessing include Mr. Miskom Puepet, Bagudu Hirse, Hannatu Chollom, and Davou Zang.



Tagpun (SDP)



Hirse (NRC)



Shittien (SDP)

has created room for shift in alliances. A good number of his political associates have found haven in other camps. Notable figures like Chief Ezekiel Yusuf, former managing director of Jos International Breweries (JIB), and Hannatu Chollom are now in the NRC. The new alignment has brought new political equation.

However, it would be naive to underestimate the political strength of Lar. The newbreed who are enamoured of his political

Miskom Puepet, 43, is the most visible among the contestants. A chief magistrate in 1980, he left to set up a successful private practice. He has made impact in his campaign at the grassroots.

Miskom, however, has a very formidable opponent in his half-brother, Umar Shittien who is contesting on the SDP ticket.

Bagudu Hirse resigned his federal appointment a few months ago to contest for the post. He has endeared himself to the civil service

and the indigenes many whom he had assisted into the federal civil service. He comes from Mangu as Commodore Atukum. His long absence from the state is however expected to count against him at the grassroots.

Yop Hannatu Chollom, 48, is not a novice in politics. She comes from Barikin Ladi. She has been an activist in women affairs and politics. In Lar's government she was at different times chairman of the Plateau Hotels Board and Water Board. Referred to as 'Iron lady' by her supporters, she possess a lot of



Puepet (NRC)

political clout. She has been a target of subtle blackmail in some of the soft-sell magazines.

At 35, Davou D.B. Zang is the youngest of the aspirants but he is certainly not a pushover. He is the eldest son of Chief Zang, a former NPP chieftain in the state. He was involved in the family business managing his father's large business enterprises during the second republic until he branched out to be on his own in 1984. Davou owns major shares in the company that bottles swan water. He was appointed a councillor in the Jos local council in 1986.

His entry into politics and especially the NRC is seen as a big surprise in the state considering his father's political leaning and this may cost him the support of many

of his father's confidants. Yet, because of his age he commands some degree of followership of the youths. Both Zang and Chollom are Birom and together with Bagudu Hirse are all from the upland areas or north.

The SDP parades formidable personalities for the primaries. They include Fidelis Taggun, Professor Umar Gomwalk, Umar Shittien and Michael Bot-Mang.

Fidelis Taggun, 46, is seen as the hottest contender. He sees himself as governor-in-waiting. He recently retired as director-general from the



Chollom (NRC)

state civil service. He was once sole administrator of Jos local council and had acted in 1986 as general manager, Plateau Publishing Company.

Mr Taggun certainly has big hurdles to scale. Apart from another contender in his local government, Shendam Mr. Umar Shittien, he may encounter a greater obstacle in the north where Mr. Michael Bot-Mang, a retired NTC manager is a hot favourite. Mr. Bot-Mang, is the choice of the Birom until Mr. Shittien and later Taggun joined the race.

Mr. Shittien, a legal practitioner and business man is one of the earliest members of the SDP to declare his interest in the governorship race and seems to have done substantial ground

work. Umar Shittien is also a very well known candidate and runs neck-to-neck with Fidelis Taggun in terms of acceptability. How the Taggun/Shittien issue is resolved will be an interesting development in the governorship race.

Professor Umar Deshi Gomwalk is also considered a serious candidate. He has an impressive record. Born in Amper, Pankshin Local Government, the 53 year-old professor is a former lecturer at the Ahmadu Bello University, ABU, Zaria. He was appointed the first vice chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri in 1980 where he served for eight years. He retired from ABU recently.

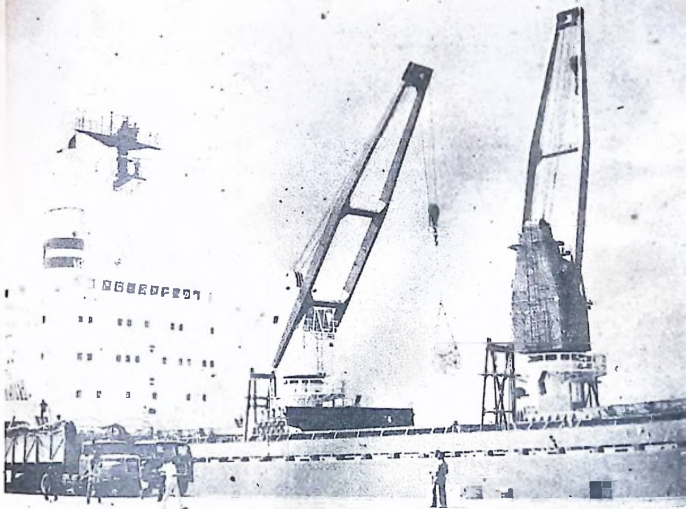
Professor Gomwalk is the elder brother of the first Governor of Benue Plateau State, late Police Commissioner Joseph Gomwalk who ruled the state for about nine years during Gowon's administration. Although, his late brother's record should be an advantage for his candidature, the belief in the state is that the governorship should not be the exclusive preserve of any family.

There are two other SDP candidates are Mr. Chuwang Rwang Pam, son of the former chief of Jos and Dr. Saidu Na-allah, a ceramics expert. Of the two, Rwang Pam may spring the biggest surprise in the race. His candidature enjoys the support of the PF faction of the SDP -- a faction that is very active in the party.

What may however brighten his chances is the likelihood of a gang-up among the Birom candidates to oppose either Taggun or Umar Shittien. "The gang of five" hopes to use the fact that Biroms have always played second fiddle in the state affairs. Should that become a reality, Mr. Chuwang Rwang Pam may be emerge the only candidate. Already they are counting on the support of party faithfuls in Pankshin, Lafia and, Awe local government areas.

By Abu Mommoh in Jos

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Business in ECOWAS

Slow like snail

Experts discuss the potentialities of an integrated ECOWAS market

At its inception, the founding fathers of the Economic Community of West African States, (ECOWAS) aimed among other things to achieve the economic integration of the sub-region. For instance Article II of Principles of the ECOWAS Treaty says "it shall be the aim of the community to promote co-operation and development in all fields of economic activity particularly in the fields of industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions and in social and cultural matters."

Unfortunately, 16 years after the establishment of the 15-member community, economic integration of the sub-region has not been achieved. The ECOWAS handbook of international trade published in 1989 shows that exports and imports of the region is still tilted towards the developed countries rather than countries within the sub region. A recent survey shows that the volume of intra-regional trade, still constitutes a mere 4.3 per cent of the overall external trade of member countries.

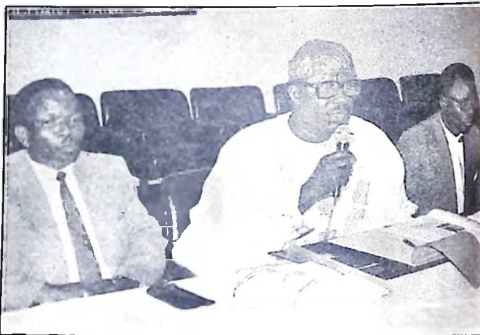
In fairness to the leaders of the Community, a lot of treaties have been signed but, the extent to which these treaties have been implemented, leaves much to be desired. What is responsible for full business within the community and how can the potentials of the community be utilised for the improvement in the standard of living of member countries? This and other related issues, was the

focus at the annual business lecture of the Faculty of Business Administration, University of Lagos last week.

Chief J. Akin George, who delivered the lecture, believes that, the topic, "financing of Business in ECOWAS" could not be more appropriate and timely at this time, when economic integration is top of the agenda of economic blocs of the world. Looking at the present state of investment in ECOWAS,

economic activities within ECOWAS sub-region has been substantially retarded by bureaucracy, language barrier, distrust among national leaders, communication inadequacies, political differences, the influence of the colonial masters and political instability in the sub-region.

Also important, in financing business in any country is the role of banking. Akin-George remarked that the banking system within the



Akin-George (centre) target not yet achieved

Akin George, who is also president of The Federation of West African Chamber of Commerce, pointed out that the investment potentials of West Africa have not been optimally explored by both indigenous businessmen and foreign investors.

Industry watchers believe that

ECOWAS community has been so underdeveloped that it has not been able to discharge its functions satisfactorily. Assuming the infrastructures are available and businessmen are willing to invest their money in countries within the sub-region, business analysts believe

that the endemic rivalry and jealousy especially between the Francophone and Anglophone countries will continue to hinder business activities within the sub-region.

Emmanuel Abbe a Nigerian businessman, who was born in Cameroun, told *Citizen* that, when ever there is riot in the country (Cameroun) Nigerian business concerns are always the target of attack by looters and arsonists. In the same vein, Femi Ekundayo, managing director of Devcom Merchant Bank explained that although Nigeria was responsible for 85 per cent of the trading activities of the West African Clearing House (WACH) in 1989, evidence of hostility against Nigeria by some member countries still abound. If other West African

countries are doubtful of the genuine intention of Nigeria towards them, perhaps it is because of the bad image of the country. This was the impression of Mike Adenuga general manager of Devcom Merchant Bank. According to Adenuga, some Nigerian businessmen sacrifice quality for easy profit, flooding the market with fake and sub standard goods. In reaction to this development, some ECOWAS countries especially Niger, Togo and Ghana reject pharmaceutical products manufactured in Nigeria.

And for business activities to flourish in any country, Mr. Lea Aimuwa Sales Director with Lever Brothers Nigeria Limited told *Citizen* that there "is no substitute for good government that is based on justice, fair-play and respect for human

dignity". Unfortunately, however, most countries in the sub-region are currently facing political instability thus affecting the free flow of business.

Still market watchers argue that West Africa cannot afford to play with economic integration. This again, they say depend on the political will of the leaders. As OAU secretary General, Salim Ahmed Salim rightly observed during the last *Guardian* annual lecture "if Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act had been pursued seriously, our continent, today would have been in a much better shape and certainly better equipped to confront the challenges of the fundamental global challenges, problems and opportunities of a unified Western Europe".

BUSINESS BRIEFS

GPT engineers back

In line with its policy to see that the technical staff of the company get the best in training, two Engineers of GPT (West Africa) Limited have just returned from a four week course in the United Kingdom (U.K).

They are Engineer S.B. Abidoeye and Engineer Simeon

Ozemoya.

The four-week training was to abreast the engineers with the latest in communication technology in U.K., especially the installation and maintenance of GPT's new advanced Integrated Services Digital Exchange (ISDX) which has just hit the Nigerian market.

The system is geared towards providing comprehensive voice and data communication facilities to firms planning for future integrated digital exchange systems.



Abidoeye: a worthy trip

Leadway Assurance IDA makes debut

Leadway Assurance Company has introduced a new product, "Individual Deposit Administration" (IDA) into the insurance market. It is an investment-linked policy, aimed at further simplifying the concept of administering savings related to life assurance policy.

According to Mr. Oyedele, assistant general manager (Life and Pensions) "the company in designing the product, tried to recognise the policy holders needs, their expectations and of course their rights."

In his address at the presentation of the new

product, which took place at the Federal Palace Hotel, Lagos last week, the general manager of the company, Pastor J.O. Oni remarked that the company identifies itself with the aspirations of the Nigerian Economic Policy with particular reference to the role of insurance companies and other financial institutions.

The "IDA" is an entirely transparent product where it is clear to the policy holder how much of his premiums are being invested and how much is retained by the insurance company to cover the costs of death benefits and policy related expenses.

United Distillers

Home brew

The United Distillers and Vinters Nigeria Limited had been appointed sole distributor of "Lake Country Wine" products in Nigeria.

The managing director of the company Mr. Lary Omisore, told newsmen in Lagos, last week that the appointment took effect from 1st January of this year. He said that his company which is a subsidiary of SEAGRAM company limited of New York (USA) became the sole distributor of the wine in Nigeria because of the confidence repose in the high quality of its products.

Like Country which

is either in berry or beached is a non-alcoholic wine manufactured only in U.S.A.

Omisore urged investors not to waste their money going abroad to import the wine since "it is now at your doorstep".

United Distillers and Vinters (Nigeria) Limited is situated in, Ogun State.



Omisore (centre) at the launch

UNIPETROL

More shares per gallon

The closing date for the application list for the public offer for sale of 48 million ordinary shares of UNIPETROL Nigeria PLC has been extended for two weeks. With this extension, the new closing date is Friday 5th July.

A statement from the office of the Technical Committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation TCPC

last week said that the approval for the extension has been obtained from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

The two-week extension was as a result of reports of shortage of the application form in various parts of the country and because of the Eid-el-Kabir holidays which fall within the period of the offer.

Meanwhile, more application forms have

been printed and distributed nationwide and can be obtained from bank branches, stock brokers, state investment companies, state ministries of trade, chambers of commerce and state privatisation committees.

The application list for the UNIPETROL public offer of sale for 48 million ordinary shares at 2.00 Naira per share opened on Monday 27th May.

By Tola Sunday



Zayyad

South Africa

Huddleston's return

He was a thorn in the flesh who waged a bitter war against the powers that be

Archbishop Trevor Huddleston flew into South Africa for the first time in 35 years early last week. On hand to welcome the anti-apartheid cleric were the senior leaders of the African National Congress, ANC upon whose invitation he was making the historic visit. Huddleston left South Africa in 1956, when the arch-racist regime of Prime Minister Strijdom stripped him of his acquired citizenship and forced him to leave the country. Prior to that event, Huddleston had been a constant thorn in the flesh of the racist authorities. From his small Anglican parish church at Sophiatown, a black township 20 kilometres outside Johannesburg, he had waged a bitter campaign against apartheid, then still in its infant stages.

As far as the ruling Afrikaner National Party was concerned, white clerics such as Huddleston who participated in the anti-pass protests of the 1950s were traitors in the same league with white communists such as Joe Slovo, Ruth First and Arthur Goldberg. Huddleston himself was actually a Briton who took up South African citizenship in order to more effectively challenge apartheid. His final confrontation with the racist authorities came in 1956 when, under the terms of the Group Areas Act, bulldozers moved in, backed by police trucks, and demolished Sophiatown, forcing its black residents to move to Soweto. This was the opening chapter in what was to become a regular campaign of evicting black "squatter camps" on land reserved for the white minority. In place of Sophiatown,

a plush all-white residential area, Triomf, was built. Huddleston angered the racist authorities with his book, *Naught for your comfort*, an anti-apartheid classic that helped in subsequent decades to expose the brutality of Vitenhage and Crossroads.



Huddleston: moral duty

Last week, Huddleston, at 78 the leader of Britain's powerful anti-apartheid movement, said he did not return to South Africa "to celebrate the death of apartheid because apartheid had not ended. We have got to move into the last and shortest phase of the struggle." Referring to the violence in some townships that has slowed down the pace of dismantling apartheid, the cleric said he feels "morally bound to stand by the ANC at this critical time." The archbishop will literally stand by the ANC this week when he attends its first national

conference inside South Africa for more than 30 years, which will hold in Durban July 2-6.

In the run up to the conference, the ANC entered into three-way talks last week in order to resolve two of the thorniest issues holding up the reforms process, i.e township violence and the release of political prisoners. The government and the Inkatha Freedom Party joined the ANC in last week's talks, sponsored by the South African Council of Churches, to find a lasting solution to the violence in the townships, which, according to the ANC, is caused by the government's security forces. The ANC and the white regime also held separate talks to resolve the impasse over the release of political prisoners. South Africa's Justice minister Kobie Coetsee said last week that the government has so far released 1,040 "clear-cut political prisoners" under the terms of the "Pretoria Minute", last August's agreement to remove obstacles in the way of negotiations for a non-racial constitution. The white minister said last week that the rest of the prisoners whose release is being demanded by the ANC are "borderline cases". Coetsee said that 343 persons on the ANC's list of prisoners could not be traced, and another 133 were held in Bantustan prisons and were therefore outside the white regime's jurisdiction. The justice minister however said he was sure that an agreement will be reached with the ANC at last week's talks, just in time for this week's grand ANC conference.

By Mahmud Jega with Agency reports

Yugoslavia

Europe's 'Lebanon'?

Croatia and Slovenia have declared independence, cutting short the road towards civil war

Big crowds went into a celebration in Ljubljana and Zagreb, capitals of Slovenia and Croatia, Yugoslavia's two northerly republics which on Tuesday, June 25 declared themselves independent states. Glasses of champagne clinked and were passed from hand to hand. Parliamentarians in both republics sang patriotic songs as the vote for independence was announced.

"It's just the will of our inhabitants" Slovenia's information minister said in an expansive mood Wednesday. That "will", he said, was "clearly expressed in a plebiscite last December and the government and parliament have "strong order to realise such a law". The Slovenian president, Milan Kuchan, said the republic would take over control of frontiers and custom posts immediately and "take gradual control of some federal institutions, such as the army.

The new independent states have two immediate difficulties to scale — recognition and economic viability. But their leaders still riding on the crests of passion do not seem worried. They think that for now foreign governments will "take sometime to see what's going on here" but "in a short time we'll be recognised by our neighbours. Both republics are optimistic about economic survival. Slovenia is confident of its economic viability. "Economically, Slovenia is the least partner for anybody in and outside Yugoslavia", its information minister boasted on Wednesday. His was confidence bolstered by the belief that "there will be no economic sanctions against Slovenia".

Expectedly, opposition to the

declarations of independence has been swift, coming mainly from the leaders of the majority Serbian population and the federal authorities in Belgrade. Leaders of the minority Serbian Renewal Party in Croatia said that the republic has "no right to create a so-called independent Croatia state in any area settled by the Serbian majority today or settled in 1941 before Croats committed genocide against Serbs. Yugoslavia, he said, was close to a civil war.

A former Tito aide said it was a complete stupidity. A Yugoslav embassy official in London called it a "messy" business but he was optimistic that Yugoslavia would come out of the crisis still one united country. He did see the need for change, to make the state "truly democratic in all its respects".

The initial reaction of the federal authorities in Belgrade has been, first, to order the army and police to secure the external and internal borders of Slovenia. Observers had believed that the action of the federal authorities was just a symbol, but as we went to press, war had virtually broken out. Belgrade, which had placed a moratorium on war for three months, suddenly sent in tanks into Slovenia.

The leadership in Slovenia said Friday that it was formally at war. That 100 persons had been killed and that six helicopter gunships had been downed.

Civil war and disintegration is definitely at hand. Slovenia had



Yugoslavia, shaded areas are the "new republics"

said that it did not want to go to war. Its information minister had said any decision to go to war would have to be taken somewhere else, not in Slovenia. But he says the "state" will defend itself if attacked.

Reactions from outside, have been cautious. The United States of America and the Soviet Union have said they would not recognise the two states. The European Economic Community, EEC, will not recognise "any unilateral declaration of independence". However, Italy, which is an EEC member state says "Europe will have to recognise independent Slovenia because it simply cannot deny the existence of a state in the very heart of Europe". Reactions to the "war" have been angry. The western press has accused the west of deliberately allowing the situation to get out of hand.

By Tawey Zakka with Agency reports.

Citizen

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CONTENTS

Citizen

All the news in perspective

July 1 — 8, 1991

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SOCIETY

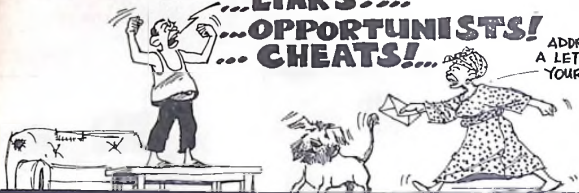
	Page		
CITIZENSHIP	36	ARTS	43
PRIVATE EYE	37	MEDIA WATCH	45
POETS' NEST	38	SPORTS	47
HEALTH	39	DEFINITIONS IN HUMOUR	50
LIFE	41		



Two old pals: faces at an Old Peoples Home in Mushin Lagos Page 41

...LIARS!...
...OPPORTUNISTS!
...CHEATS!...

ADDRESSED TO YOU,
A LETTER DEAR,
YOUR LETTER.



NO TIME FOR LETTERS!...
...MY PEOPLE ARE SAPPED!...

I KNOW!...I KNOW!...WE NEED
SOME IMPROVEMENT TOO, AND
OUR FAITHFUL DOG IS VERY
SICK AND HUNGRY!



...ANYWAY, LET'S SEE THEIR LIES!...

...I...I CAN'T BELIEVE
THIS!...ME? A
SPECIAL ADVISER?...

...ONE GOVERNMENT MAN BROUGHT IT.
SO BELIEVE IT!...



...NO...NO...NO...YOU'LL
SPREAD RABIES IN
IKOYI!

WOW?...
WOW!



Tafawa Balewa bomb

The Muslims in Tafawa Balewa are still sitting on a keg of gun powder which governor Abu Ali of Bauchi State would rather pretend does not exist. Someone ought to tell him that no amount of tears will douse the fire when another bomb explodes. I am referring to the religious crisis of Tafawa Balewa. The famous Lagos press (never mind that they economically and sectionally "pressed") reflected and reduced the whole affair to Bauchi town. What happened in Tafawa Balewa, the real scene of the problem is left to the garbage. The focus on the misguided Sayawa elites and of course their unguided and deliberate misrepresentation of facts were after-all the hallmark of junk journalism. What a pity.

They may not be at fault though. The government is clearly undecided on what to do. In the last two weeks the government paraded some Sayawa leaders including the chairman of the local government, a Christian Basayi and a police officer on television to tell the people that normalcy had returned to Tafawa Balewa. The police commissioner also appeared on television to dispel the rumours

of an impending crisis.

Never mind the tempo of the people, the chairman of local government had placed key areas of the government deserted by the was with "his people". now raising victory signs.

The government also how Juma'at prayers were in Bogoro village a fortnight ago. And this is how it happened. The district head of Bogoro, a Muslim, was persuaded to go home. He went with several aides. On Friday the *muazin* for prayers. A Basayi Christian confronted him and asked if he permitted him to "shout" the *muazin* said he was not permitted to pray and he needed nobody's permission. A Christian Basayi dared to shout again. The *muazin* was prepared to be hacked into a martyr, so he reported the matter to the district head. The district head called for the person. The *muazin* repeated the threat before the district head. He was dumbfounded. When he recovered he sent for the person who unfortunately com-

The Barons

Baron Nakawu, a banned politician is on a recruitment tour to brief his colleagues and sympathisers on political development in the country. He visits Baron Bahago a power broker in Sokoto

Baron Nakawu—You are right sir the picture is gloomy but beneath every dark cloud there is a silver lining.

The soldiers have messed up things with the introduction of so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) and other costly innovations.

Baron Bahago—Do we still have

consulting clinics which sell drugs, equipment or even say, they are a thing of the past. Hospitals are centres of corruption like their counterparts in Europe and United States. I do not know if the state of affairs now as I have been in Sokoto since my release from prison. I do not read or listen to radio or television. All these have been an abuse for us men of the ousted regime.

Baron Nakawu—Very well, changed for the better. I remember Abacha's famous speech in September 1983. Go out and see for yourself, sir, the only silver

Language of songs

Songs speak a serious language. Between the lines and the soothing rhythm is a powerful message. Songs give vent to the people's frustration, their stifled hopes and dashed aspirations.

They also serve as an avenue for the expression of hopes in a dimlit world.

Today's song

Today's song is full of abuse,
Let the patient, mannered flutist
Hang his thing above the fireplace;
Today's song is not for the lily-livered,

The blood-phobic wrestler must retreat

Behind the sanctuary of loafers and women;

Today's constipated song blisters the tongue,
Chameleons are frog-marched out of the arena

While impetuous lizards decree themselves heroes;

Who says today's song of profane triumph is

For the people who have waited this long

To be nurtured on mildewed words?

Hyeladzira A.B. Shaffa

A song

The moon is an impotent
Seamless rock

Flaunting someone else's silver
Gown.

Dancing from their neighbour's
motion

Invisible push

Abstract drums

Three thousand trees in my garden

Waltz to the drums of the winds

Windbreath feeds me

But I nourish nature when I expire

Nature and Man thus

Are in copulation!

Toll, then, that surreptitious bell

Of conviction's art,
And sing of cool Eden and stuffy
Hell

And of the whims of the heart.

A memoir

Howling among leafless boughs
beneath the tender coats of bird-
lings,

Shuttling through green-grey ears
of seedlings

in the drymistness, the wind blows
rousing in the silent cottage ghost
stormlets of thick, rolling dust.

And Danchoko is devoid of wet-
ness,

And school road was full of miles
Toward the east, beyond the gulls,
squadrons of clouds invaded the
vastness;

Hurry then, mate Auntie at
home

had her heart flying to perceive us
come!

Earth in the toe-furrows and nos-
trils

desecrates our blazers's pride of
white;

But let us keep the mind quiet:
Auntie shall have them in Festsa's

liquid reels,
where those free folk soaked down

low
in the sand's pure, whitish glow.

Ibrahim Sheme

Difference

Before the thread of dawn appears
with a creased brow I fought

Thought solutions sought
this square queer query drum

and roll-pulls the mind along
Fox of a perplexity parallel to none

but where
and where

could this cold difference lie
Out moving rambling eyes belie

though we grope in every realm
While it teases the gentle reap

reaping cool our toils broil we
weep

And when the sun appears



dank a House that reeks
butts and kicks of gun butts
combine to reek-block the nose
of blood, sweat, drink and scents
somehow become the crux and
cross

Unknowingly a bubbling busy
leech

Endured we leaching from it
scratch

Benumbed by scents and drinks
silently sucks blood to leave seat

But when the giant moves its parts
Sokoto its head, florin hands

Zaria zooms in breath, unbear-
ingly

Borno brims and Kano kicking
leechers screechingly gushing

blood
Clutching cleansing Calabar down

drainages draws vice veiling truth
propped lame Lagos truth prone

The Kernel

Let the sun shine away
Its lights and the moon

Blaze in its borrowed splendour
The world has no for rest

Allow the skies empty
Its cold and colourful bowels

For the Earth is hot and thirsty
Let the silent southern air

And the western wind blow
Their soft and different clouds

Beyond the tintured focal point
When the darkness spreads

I shall be away in your room
Restless in a romance with you.

Maikudi Z. S. Z. Sambo

Beating Diabetes (III)

James W. Anderson, MD, a professor of medicine and clinical nutrition at the University of Kentucky, reviewed more than 100 reports on the effect of high-fiber diets on Type II diabetes. The studies indicated that, in general, an increase in complex carbohydrates and fiber improves glycemic control for diabetics and may, especially for Type II patients, reduce insulin needs. High-fiber, high-carbohydrate diets also lower serum cholesterol and triglyceride values, tend to lower blood pressure and promote weight loss.

However, Phyllis Crapo, RD, a leading researcher and dietitian at the University of California at San Diego, cautions against overdoing it. "The goal is adequate fiber, not high fiber. Too much fiber may potentially cause vitamin malabsorp-

By Arnold Schechter

tion and intestinal blockages."

Lower salt intake. This will moderate blood pressure and thereby reduce the risk of stroke,



kidney disease, heart disease and damage to blood vessels in the eyes. Salt should be limited to 1,000 milligrams per 1,000 calories.

Lower alcohol intake. Greatly limiting the amount of alcohol you drink will reduce the risk of heart disease and nerve damage. Alcohol also can cause effects like nausea and dizziness when taken with oral diabetes medication.

All these are general guidelines. Individual nutritive needs can vary greatly, so every diabetic should consult his or her health-care team for specific dietary guidance.

One topic not in the ADA report is worth noting: smoking. Silverman warns, "smoking constricts flow in blood vessel, and thus is implicated in diabetic complications like cardiovascular diseases."

Do you have diabetes?

Type I diabetics are stricken quickly, generally in adolescence, and there is no doubt about the diagnosis. But the American Diabetes Association estimates that half of all Type II diabetics don't know they have the disease. Your symptoms—such as increased thirst, appetite and urination—may remain mild, even while complications are worsening.

You should arrange a screen-



ing for diabetes under any of these conditions:

- You have a strong family history of diabetes.
 - You are 20 percent over your ideal weight.
 - You have a history of recurrent skin, genital or urinary tract infection.
 - You are a woman who had gestational diabetes (a form that can occur during pregnancy), an abnormal birth even such as a miscarriage or stillbirth, or a baby weighing over 9 pounds at birth.
 - You are a member of an ethnic group with a higher-than-average occurrence of diabetes.
- Your doctor can take your history and give you a routine physical examination to evaluate you for diabetic complications.
- The earlier diabetes is diagnosed, the better your chance of controlling or reversing it and forestalling dangerous complications. If

your doctor concludes that you don't have diabetes but says you are at higher-than-average risk, you would be well advised to follow the prescription for diabetics: a prudent, well-balanced diet, weight control, regular moderate exercise and stress reduction.

As Silverman says, "The right lifestyle for diabetics is really the lifestyle for everybody."—A.S.

Culled from *Modern Maturity*





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Life in the evening

Nigeria's senior citizens face poverty and neglect, especially in

For Pa Raphael Adinoyi, 74, getting aboard a "molue", the usually congested Lagos commercial bus, is a veritable ordeal. It is a torture he undergoes each morning as he battles with other passen-

ing as the Structural Adjustment Programme bites even harder. The daily life of these senior citizens is a pot pourri of experiences, some tragic, some absurd but always heart-rending. Some of them, only a handful,



Inmates of the Old Peoples Home at Mushin Lagos

gers, usually younger and more agile, to catch a bus to Ojota where he works as day watchman for a plastic factory. May 21 was however a particularly bad day for Adinoyi. While scrambling with other commuters for a space in a bus, he slipped and fell. For a while he lay prostrate on the ground and then two or three sympathisers rushed to help him to his feet. A bruised and shaken Adinoyi limped home. He did not go to work that day.

Incidents such as this are a daily occurrence in Lagos and other Nigerian cities and graphically illustrate the neglect which the nation's senior citizens are increasingly fac-

are comfortable, thanks to their caring children and relatives. For oth-

abandoned, the old man pounds the streets of Mushin, begging for han-

On the wrinkled faces and sunken eyes of these grand fathers and grandmothers, agonisingly written in bold. For their daily bread so they pound the streets, begging for aims. Those whose feeble limbs cannot bear the rigours of daily begging, simply resign themselves to the inevitable death due to starvation. And nowhere is this tragic phenomenon more evident than in Lagos metropolis.

ers, it is a
squalor of
grand old
boldly, the
pound the
Those who
bear the re
sleaply, be
inevitable
And now w
non more
metropolis
Pa Adeleke
daily at Mushin, he
ing to Oyenu, he
ging when his
Omolede, died
along three years ago,
suffering from an acute
The ailment, he said, started
after his wife died in 1978.
Omolede, who had treated
many hospitals for
working hard to raise the
hospital bill for optical sur
a pair of prescribed eyeglasses,
he died. Now lonely, hungr

douts.

While some elderly people resort to begging as a means of survival, a few others still work as securitymen. Nathaniel Ube, 76, said he fought during the second world war in Burma and India. After returning

As part of the programmes for taking care of the elderly, day centre facilities (old peoples' home) have been provided in some states of the federation. Examples are those in Mushin (Lagos) and Awkunanu, near Enugu, in Anambra State. But

are not adequately funded.

The idea of putting the aged in day care centres in alien to indigenous culture. However most of the senior citizens who *Citizen* spoke to see the idea as a subtle form of neglect and rejection on the part of their children and relatives whom they laboured to cater for in their prime. Oluwale Funloa, a philosophy lecturer at the University of Lagos, told *Citizen* that "it would amount to subtle begging for the aged to depend on the government's welfare facilities" adding, "we would be failing in our duties if we consign the old ones to charity homes and government". Another lecturer in the university, Lai Olurede, explained that in caring for the elderly, emphasis should be on community-oriented programmes instead of institutional rehabilitation. According to Olurode, family intimacy should not be allowed to wither away. "Looking after these senior citizens should be society's collective responsibility, because they are the custodians and transmitters of our culture and values", said the sociology lecturer.

The idea of putting the aged in day care centres in alien to indigenous Nigerian culture. However most of the senior citizens who *Citizen* spoke to see the idea as a subtle form of neglect and rejection on the part of their children and relatives whom they laboured to cater for in their prime.

home it took several years before he started receiving "irregular stipends" as pension entitlement. The ex-servicemen said he earns 100 Naira as pension out of which he pays 2.60 Naira as tax. This meagre pension, Ube said, is grossly inadequate to sustain him, two wives and many children. "I have to look for a means of increasing my income. I found a job as a security man in a private company where I earn 250 Naira monthly. Even with my supplementary income, the money is still not enough to meet my financial obligations in these hard times", he told *Citizen*.

those homes are very few in number. Where they are available, they



Gwom: a lease of life for the aged

Latest indications from the federal ministry of social welfare and culture are that the government has not totally turned a deaf ear to the problems of the old in the society. Just recently, the government launched a holiday programme for the elders. The programme, which is geared towards refreshing the minds of old citizens and educating them on some aspects of daily living, has already been launched in 13 states.

In a speech at the opening of the 13th zonal excursion programme for the aged in Katsina, Navy Commodore Lamba Gwom (rtd) hinted that a new lease of life awaited the old in the country. The minister who spoke through David Waminase, promised that the ministry intends to establish day care centres across the country for the aged. The centres, said Gwom will have social, economic, medical and recreational facilities for use by the old citizens.

By Samson Ojo with additional reports by Isaac Umunna.

Chuck Mike

Home to roost

Dateline: New York. The city of skyscrapers and wide pavements where glittering cadillacs jostle for space with sleek limousines and even Rolls Royces. This is America's showcase to the world. Somewhere in this bustling city, a young graduate of Fordham University, Brooklyn, is anxiously waiting for a letter. His grant to pursue a post graduate course in African drama had been approved a year ago. All he needed, now, was a confirmation from the University of Ibadan.

Ibadan? Faintly, he recalls that it is a town in Nigeria, a country he had read about in some travel journals as the most populous in black Africa. Instinctively, he throws the black power salute. Africa! It was a dream come true. At last he was going home. This was the period black militancy in America which started in the '60s was at its peak.

His choice of studying in Nigeria was a matter of course...

But one year? A year and half? Not a single word from Ibadan. He was getting restive. By year's end his patience snapped. He packed his baggage and headed for Nigeria. Remonstrations from his mortician father and mother, a nurse, to exercise a little more patience fell on deaf ears. Neither could the appeals by his senior sister nor younger brother alter his decision.

"I just had to leave", he says, sipping a glass of cognac in his well furnished office at Kingsway Road, Ikoyi, Lagos. "So you are Chuck Mike", the man sitting behind the oak panelled desk, boomed. "We've been expecting you. Here, sit down". He was in no mood to sit. All he wanted was to collect the letter and leave. So here it was at last he thought, gathering dust. The urge to punch the man in the face seized

him but the restrained himself, collecting the document instead, without uttering a word.

For Chuck Mike, coming to Nigeria in 1976 was an eye-opener. Used to the whiteman's portrayal of Africa as a dark continent and a jungle accentuated by Tarzan films, he was surprised at the rate of development already going on.

At the University of Ibadan, he really got a shock. He had been directed to meet one Professor Nicols, an American who was staying then at 3 Amina Way. Just then he saw a spritely dressed youngman in designer jeans, T-shirt with big Afro-hair-do. A New Yorker by all standards. So, confidently, he had walked up to him: "Hey, brother, I'm looking for 3 Amina Way". The man looked at him and in heavy native accented English replied: "Sorry, but I am not hearing you", and simply walked away. When an equally gaily dressed lady came along he accosted her with same request. She too, complained of not understanding him, leaving him to his fate.

If he was to get to his destination, he knew he had to change tactics. His slang was working against him, he reasoned. Luckily, a fellow dressed in flowing shokoto and jumper with a scruffy beard, a proper Nigerian no doubt, came along.

He psych'd himself up and gesticulating wildly said: "Pl-ea-se, I am loo-king for 3 A-m-e-na Way. Can you he-lp me, pl-ea-se". The man burst into laughter. "You, a JJC? C'mon, you want to see Prof? I'll take you to him". The man was an African American like himself! His initiation into Nigeria had truly begun ...

At the department of Theatre Arts, he enrolled for the two year M. Phil Programme. And by the end of one year, his grant ran out. He had two options: to go back or stay on without funds. It was a difficult decision. He wanted to learn more about Nigerians, their ways simply



Mike: a Brooklyn hustler

intrigued him. He decided to stay...

Survival became the name of the game. He joined the Unibadan Performance Company working under such renowned play-wrights as Wale Ogunyemi in "The Vow" and Zulu Sofoluwa in "Wedlock of the gods". But by far his greatest experience came from playing Baba Fawomi (a native doctor) in Femi Osofisan's play, "Once upon four robbers".

He spent six hours everyday learning the right cadence of the character", he recalls. "By the day the play opened, I overdid it", he concludes, unabashedly. His remuneration from the acting company barely met his needs. Somehow, he had to supplement it. His exposure to the world of disc jockeying in New York came to his rescue. He initiated a show on Radio Oyo known as "Starchild", introduced "The Bus Stop" a dance step to the Ibadan community later recorded for TV and "The Hustle", a dance made popular by John Travolta of "Saturday Night Fever" fame.

And hustling he really did. Besides anchoring most of the social functions in and out of the campus, he took tutorials while at the same time pursuing his graduate studies!

In fact, Ibadan was becoming too small for him. So when Akinbola of the University of Ife came asking for him to participate in Ola Rotimi's epic play, "Ovonranwen Ngbaisi", he quickly accepted to go with him. Even though the production never materialised, he worked with Kole Omotosho on "Shadows on the Horizon", before Wole Soyinka formally asked him over to work with Ife performing company. Here, he manned the Guerrilla Theatre Unit which produced such sketches on the street as OFN and RICE, all satires on government programmes of the time. Soon, he became absorbed into the department of dramatic arts as a graduate assistant teaching acting and directing.

For twelve years he taught there and still do. But something kept bothering him: the inability of his acts to practice their profession

again and again, like a recurring decimal, news of talented actors of his, drifting into other professions hit him. One of them was even selling palm wine.

There was only one way to help: Creating an avenue for them to practice. That was how in 1989, he organised a few of his former students in Lagos to produce "Home" under the umbrella of the United States Information Service. A festival of black American dramas (FESBADA) that spanned four weeks followed. In 1990, the American Theatre Revue (ATR) was executed for four whole months. His dream was finally taking shape. For within the period the productions lasted all participants took home handsome amounts of money.

With the productions becoming an annual affair, a management and consulting unit, now known as "Collective Artistes" was incorporated with him as Executive producer. This year the season is lasting six months with five plays already produced on a monthly basis. But this is just an aspect of the Collective

(PSW) which in his words "is designed for the training creating and performing in the out reach theatre".

In one fell swoop, the burly actor, director, and producer had not only created an avenue for the practice of the theatre to teeming graduates of theatre but has been able to bring fulfilment to them. Obviously he could not have done it all alone as budgets for season productions run into hundreds of thousands of Naira. As he puts it: "I have been particularly lucky to have the United States Information Service backing me. Companies such as Nigerian-American Merchant Bank, First City Merchant Bank, Texaco and 7Up (handling the promotion of the 1991 season) have been very helpful. Individuals like Rasheed Gbadamosi, Deji Akintilo, Ms Jombo (now late) and my in-laws, and Mrs. Edokpaye have supported me in no small way. Even my staff have displayed a great amount of loyalty and dedication to the cause...."

For Chuck Mike, the question of going back to Brooklyn is a moot one. And why should he? Married

For Chuck Mike, coming to Nigeria in 1976 was an eye-opener. Used to the whiteman's portrayal of Africa as a dark continent and a jungle accentuated by Tarzan films, he was surprised at the rate of development already going on.

Artistes programme.

"We do two types of productions", he explains. "The formal, in which season plays are produced and the informal where improvisational pieces relevant to the man in the street are presented to them. On this score, we have mounted plays on child care in the Market place, on Road Safety in Motor-Parks and on environmental safety for Shell Company in their premises".

But Chuck Mike is not done yet. In July, he would be launching the Performance Studio Workshop

to a Bendelite from Warri, a woman who just took leave of the academia to face publishing and Interior decoration, they already have two children.

"Nigeria is my home", he affirms, nonplussed. "My art and my purpose will always keep me here. I look forwards to a time that my work in Nigeria will link up with the ones going on in America and other parts of the world....."

Surely, the Brooklyn hustler has finally come home to roost.

By Oji Ozoka

Citizen, July 1, 1991

A Journal for Journalists

The Nigerian Union of Journalists launches a quarterly journal to keep tabs on the profession

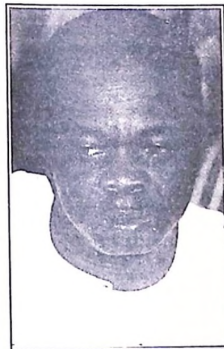
Last week's debut of the *Nigerian Journalism Quarterly*, NJQ, barely three months after "Media Review" another journal which monitors trends in the media world hit the news-stand, is clear testimony that journalism practitioners in the country are set to redefine the profession and settle, perhaps for all time the raging controversy of who qualifies to be called a journalist. Is a banker who contributes to the opinion page of a newspaper also a journalist? Does a public relations consultant who writes commissioned articles on government projects for publication in a mass-circulation daily qualify to wear the tag of journalist?

The *Nigerian Journalism Quarterly*, a house journal of the Nigerian Union of Journalists,

NUJ, is poised to tackle these questions, among other issues that impinge upon journalism practice in the country. In the words of Sanni Zorro, president of the NUJ, "the *Nigerian Journalism Quarterly* will interpret what journalism is and what it is not". According to Zorro, the new journal which is distinct in form and focus, is designed to act as an unbiased umpire between the press on one side and the society on the other. More importantly though, the *Nigerian*



The journal



Aikhomu demands tact

Journalism Quarterly is expected to serve as the spokesman and final arbiter of the profession, setting standards of professional conduct and etiquette, highlighting positive as well as negative trends and setting the agenda for "journalistic" discourse. In short, the *Nigerian Journalism Quarterly* is the watchdog of the journalism profession.

Interestingly, the launching of the journal brought the guardians of state security and the guardians of the word together under one roof at the National Hall of the Tafawa Balewa Square complex in Lagos. Vice President Augustus Aikhomu, representing the former, took the press to task for publishing information which, according to him,

is capable of undermining state security. Said Aikhomu, "there is a very real possibility that chaos and disaster could result from the lack of judicious handling of information". Aikhomu went on to justify last month's closure of *The Guardian*, arguing that the *Guardian Express* report on the shooting of two students of the Yaba College of Technology was a classic example of bad judgment on the part of the editor, given the already tense situation in the country. Chief M.K.O. Abiola, publisher and Chief Executive of the Concord group of newspapers held forth for the guardians of the word. He censored the Lagos State government for closing the Rutam House, describing

the action as "an unnecessary display of arrogance". Governor Raji Rasaki who was also a member of the high table, maintained a studied silence while Abiola took the government to task for its various sins of omission and commission with regard to the press. Government, Abiola pointed out, had no business meddling with the electronic media. "The electronic media in the country" said Abiola "is now sterile and redundant, giving room for CNN and other Western television stations to take over the soul of the Nigerian viewer". The press baron anchored his argument for the privatisation of the electronic media on the ground that it will create employment opportunities for Nigerians, improve standards in the industry by attracting trained professionals, and create a conducive atmosphere for the flowering of individual talent. Bashorun Abiola also took time off to fire a salvo at junk journalism practitioners. Remarked Abiola, "we have more serious business in this country than encouraging trivialities".



Zorro and Abiola: stop government muscle

"The electronic media in the country" said Abiola "is now sterile and redundant, giving room for CNN and other Western television stations to take over the soul of the Nigerian viewer".

Junk journalism also attracted the attention of the Oba of Benin, Omo-n'oba Erediauwa. Erediauwa expressed the hope that the new journalism quarterly would not degenerate to the level of junk publications and also urged the relevant authorities to do something about these irreverent publications which in his own words "invade the privacy of individuals with impunity".

The launching of the *Nigerian Journalism Quarterly* attracted such media heavy weights as Maida, Editor-in-Chief of the News Agency of Nigeria, (NAN), Mohammed Haruna, Managing Director of *Citizen* magazine, chief executives of the Nigeria Television Authority and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, (FRCN) among others.

Also present were Colonel Fred Chijuka, Army Chief spokesman and Dr. Olu Agunloye, director of the Federal Road Safety Commission, FRSC.

Sanni Zorro's speech, brief and to the point, drew attention to certain problems which are currently plaguing the profession: poor remuneration, the threat to commercialise NTA and FRCN and the retrenchment of some of their staff, insufficient training for journalists and the lingering question of press freedom. Zorro called for the inauguration of a national policy which will deliberate on the role of journalism in development and also urged

government to enact a freedom of information act to enable journalists discharge their duties without fear.

For Vice-President Aikhomu, the imperatives of national security demands that journalists approach "sensitive" news stories with tact and caution. Journalists have another word for this: self-censorship. But who defines national security and national interest? The government or the people on whose behalf the journalist puts pen to paper? Perhaps the *Nigerian Journalism Quarterly* will help resolve the controversy.

By Ike Okonta

SPORTS

All-Africa Games

Bracing up for the best

A new approach to organised sports may see Nigeria to the top in the 5th All-Africa Games in Cairo

As Africa's biggest sporting competition, the All-Africa Games inches closer to its take-off day in Cairo next September, Nigerian athletes, coaches and sports administrators seem to be working hard to secure the top spot of the games' medal table for the country.

Samplers from coaches and athletes at some of the five camping sites currently being used to groom the athletes for Africa's version of the Olympics are so optimistic that if the tempo of the on-going training can be maintained, Nigeria should be able to break out of its traditional second position and emerge the overall winner of the games for the first time.

This optimism hangs on the country's long-term planning that has been mapped out to ensure that Nigerian athletes excel in Cairo. In what can be termed the first organised, and carefully mapped out preparation for a major international sporting meet so far, the federal ministry of youth and sports, is devoting three and half months to the camping of the Cairo bound athletes. The total of 105 camping days is divided into two stages. The first stage of 51 days which comes to an end this Saturday, July 6, is expected to be used for preliminary training and trials during which athletes who fall short of the expected standard will be dropped. The second and final phase of 54 days (July 9 — August 31) is meant for rigorous training and trial competitions for the selection of athletes who will represent the

country in the Cairo show down. The training schedules also make provision for overseas training tours "where applicable," according to the camping guidelines. By the time the

athletics coach, who led Nigeria's track and field team to the last Commonwealth Games in Auckland, New Zealand, told *Citizen* in Ilorin that they were working hard to raise a team that would catch the fancy of everybody in Cairo. "We want to go there and emerge the overall winner, and we are working hard enough to achieve that," he said.

But it is not as if Nigeria will romp to the top of the games medal table while other countries keep their cool, watching in admiration.



Momah and Agbamu: how ready?

camping period comes to an end, the 512 athletes currently in camp in Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Ilorin and Jos are expected to have been whittled down to about 330 sports men and women who will represent Nigeria in the 16 games she has entered for.

What do the athletes and coaches think of this arrangement? Is it good enough to make Nigeria the overall winner in Cairo? National track and field chief coach Gladstone Agbamu who is training the 400 metres athletes at Ilorin camp said Nigeria had never had any training arrangement for a major sporting competition as good as this. The

Apart from the stiff opposition expected from the host country who has consistently edged Nigeria to the second position since the games took off in Congo Brazzaville in 1966, formidable oppositions are also expected from countries like Ghana, Kenya and Algeria in athletics and swimming. According to Harission Momah, another track and field coach in Ilorin camp, these countries have started making appreciable inroad to the sprint events like 100 metres, 200 metres and 400 metres and the relays which before were regarded as the traditional stronghold of Nigerian athletes. To beat this inevitable

challenges from these countries, coach Momah is grooming his athletes towards "a very high standard that will be very hard to attain by other countries who are going to compete with us. But while doing this," said the coach, "we have to be very careful so that they (the athletes) don't break down or reach their peak before they depart for Cairo in September."

But the high response and commitment the athletes are showing to their training may present the coaches with selection problem because, according to Harisson, everybody is working hard to make the Cairo team. The secret behind the positive change of attitude on the part of the athletes who were known to be quite reluctant in the past to train with full commitment, (if at all they honoured the call to camp), is attributed to the general improvement in their welfare in the camps. In addition, there are also adequate training facilities.

Ann Otutu, javelin and shot put thrower currently camping in Ilorin said she and her colleagues were not creating sensational headlines with series of complaints as used to be the case in the past because "we

have everything we think should be in a good camping site. The kits are okay, the food and other amenities are quite excellent. With this development, I don't see anything that will prevent us from coming out top in Cairo."

At Ahmadu Bello Stadium in Kaduna, where football, taekwondo and gymnastics athletes are being camped, the situation is the same. The training schedules are very tough, according to a taekwondo athlete who did not wish to be named. But he quickly added that "any sportsman or woman who wants to win a medal at the All-Africa Games must be able to endure hard training."

But the taekwondo coach, Korean-born Byoung Ho-Lee who came to the country in January, is not quite impressed with the response of his boys to the rigorous training programmes he has been giving to them. Even though the original 32 athletes invited to camp have been pruned down to 17, coach Lee is still not very happy because they are still very far behind in terms of techniques he wants them to acquire before their departure for the All-Africa Games.

The taekwondo instructor is also scared by the fact that countries like Kenya, Egypt, Cote d'Ivoire,

Malawi and Ghana whom his boys will compete against in Cairo are already undergoing a training tour of Korea, the home of the game. The coach a sixth Dan Black belt holder is optimistic of building a strong team before their departure for Cairo, but he is appealing to the federal ministry of youth and sports to consider his boys for a brief tour of Korea so that they could learn more through exposure to the best skills and techniques in the game. Taekwondo which was a demonstration event at the 4th All-Africa Games in Nairobi, Kenya in 1987 will become a scoring event in Cairo. Eight gold, 8 silver and 16 bronze are at stake in the game.

After overseeing the first phase of the camping period, Malam Tijani Yusuf, zone six coordinator and camp commandant in charge of Kaduna camp and Alhaji Abba Yola zone seven coordinator who is in charge of the Ilorin camp, are already describing the training programmes for the country's athletes for the All-Africa Games as the best the country has ever planned for a major international competition. "Looking at the past preparations vis a vis what we are doing now, one can be quite optimistic that if we maintain this tempo, the country will top the medals table in Cairo," said Abba Yola.

But if we must beat Egypt in their backyard, we must also be able to beat them at their strongest game — swimming. While Nigeria has not been showing much improvement in swimming in recent years, Egypt has been showing remarkable improvement and they have been using their superiority in this sport to edge us to the second place. In 1973 games held in Lagos Egypt won 17 of her 25 gold medals in swimming while Nigeria won only one gold in that event. Tunisia had also displaced us to the second position in Algiers in 1978 by their superior skills in swimming.

By Joe Olajuwon



Otutu, Mohammed: top contenders

Citizen

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DEFINITIONS
IN HUMOUR

Riding tiger's back

Those who ride the tiger's back, especially, without the tiger's consent, ultimately end up in its stomach. Digestive eminence! That, "chewy and mauly" as it is, may be the easier part. Death, by the way my dear, is simply a long sleep; and it cures you of all your worries, chief among which may be tiger's fangs or its sharp molars.

Safe from that, unsafe from other things. Ya'u Shehu Darazo, whose tum it is to make you laugh, cry or reflect this week, is an investigative journalist — forever digging into records and much of unsavoury past. I don't dig but I dig what he dug. Do you? Read on — it is all about tiger.

Ya'u: This "mafia" of Telephone Governor is turning into something else. Or has someone speculated, oh sorry rumoured (that sound more junky) to them that they will be treated to another anti-SAP treat. Sorry executive dinner? Do you understand?

The "cheers" gentleman from the "dem-crazy" group descended so lowly or highly depending on where you stand on the two sides of the Junks. But the most daring are those who "sit-on-zinc". They must have been assured, I guess of protection from the Protector of iron. Otherwise I can't imagine Mohammed Haruna's representation of C.V. to the authorities for consideration to the Praise Singing job. And for Adamu Adamu, don't mind him he is simply having "black stomach". He

doesn't want the Honourable to be "the sun of the Tiger".

Before this "son" starts mauling you, remember the president of the NUJ once accused him of framing the press. This serious accusation

miraculously went unnoticed. The press I think needs more framing. Otherwise why should these people who, according to one of them, drink boiled sea water with a sprinkling of zinc dedicate two editions to misquoting the "Son". How dare you make drinking of sea water your hobby, How dare yoummm, don't quote me.

Kwasa-Kwasa

So after digging into the past and records, Ya'u decided to be airborne. And the spectacle of extinction apparently knows no bounds. The endangered family is quite a big one. I gave my apologies to the bat, old Benjamin, *Babba-dajaka*, the goose, heron and the egret. When I talked about *Shamuwa Fund*, Ya'u wanted not one fund but many. Why?

Ya'u: How dare you sentence someone for being violently sycophantic while your case of selective sycophancy and deliberate neglect has not been tried? Why bother about vulture and the clearing of the mess in the good old days? Is someone insinuating that the sanitation under WAI (Hausa meaning *wai*) is now simply dead?

And for *Shamuwa Fund* what are you doing on "kwasa-kwasa" and "zikiti" that have since become extinct? Hold it, what of "jemage" and "jaki"? Oh, never mind the donkey he doesn't fly. His fault like the "Mass Transit" is that he belonged to the masses and that is a serious crime.

Executive Jobbing

Talking of executive joblessness, I think at the rate things are going this writer appears a good candidate, if he is an executive to start with, that is. And to finish, I give the space to Ya'u — again.

Nomadic Education — They roam about. Yes. But they are "not" mad and therefore, they must be educated. In the beginning, most Africans were nomads. They might have been mad. Those that were educated later lost their identity and became something else — elites, meaning illiterates, culturally. The remaining who stubbornly remained Africans, are the nomads. And so they too must be conquered, made to lose their identity, culture, and become idlers, parasites and criminals. How do you achieve this — half baked education — please set them a commission.

Nomadic Education Commission — After all it is a commission. Why worry? Someone must be smiling.

I.D. Card — Mr. I.D. Card — This gentleman sounds foreign and so is his mission. Your work must be good since no one is complaining. Is T.C.P.C. listening?

E.E.C. — *ei, ei, sea* — someone is choked to see the sea of slavery and exploitation and who is he? Blackman.

Frank-phone — It is a phone line from Paris to Lagos, and Francois is on the line. What did he say? Reject Obasanjo.

Commonwealth — Where to get the wealth, where and how to spend it is decided by the House of Commons. The Lords simply give orders. The Common Leaders are in Africa.

Broad Street — *Bread Straight*. Chineke! Godness! Ike Okonta must have contemplated abandoning journalism — for a broader pay cheque.

Citizens



The rise and rise of Buba Muhammed Gamawa is how best to describe the phenomenal climb to the top with full applause and acclaim of this 1977 history graduate of University of Ibadan. But it was all by dint of dogged hard work.

An unrepentant workaholic, friends call him "jack of all trades, master of more", he rose from a humble student journalist (he edited the *Azare Times* in the 60's) to become a rich man of the year among Bauchi States local government sole administrators in 1990. When sole administrators gave way to elected chairmen, Malam Buba became the managing director of the Bauchi State Integrated Rural Development Agency (BASIRDA). It is a challenge, he agrees. But it is a challenge he will conquer, like all the rest.

Life for Malam Buba has been a series of challenges and awards, it seems. And is the next challenge that of the political Kingdom? No, the man is still too much of a civil servant to even think of politics, so far.

He started his career in *New Nigerian* back in the early seventies as a graduate and rose to become its editor in 1980. A clash with an ex-governor of one of the northern states and his refusal to apologise to the authorities for a story he insisted was accurate, earned him a promotion sideways from his editor's desk. Soon enough he left only to become the founding chief executive to New Africa Holding, publishers of the *Weekly Democrat*.

The publishers planned for a daily but before that could materialise, the company went under a year after the 1983 coup, somewhat confirming suspicions that it was bankrolled by the NPN government of President Shehu Shagari.

Since leaving *Democrat*, Malam Ibrahim Suleiman, has been the boss of *The Reporter*. Until several weeks ago, however, he was its managing editor. Then the board decided on a few changes of titles and he became its Managing Director, while Malam Aliyu Hayattu who always edited the



paper in Suleiman's absence was appointed substantive editor.

As the chief executive of one of the only two national newspapers in the north, Suleiman says he has a mission to make his paper the best. He seems well on the way already for technically *The Reporter* is today the best printed paper on the newsstand.



Dr. Abdullahi Mahdi, the acting director of Arewa House, Kaduna, and former head of the history department, A.B.U., Zaria can say one thing about himself: "I am a workaholic". He has to be; lecturing since 1976 without a leave; finding time to read loads of magazines, newspapers, journals, etc, writing papers endlessly for conferences and doing his bit as a reader or associate professor. Dr. Mahdi, a specialist in African history is one of those very rare breeds whose undergraduate theses are up graded for a doctorate. Through this, he automatically earned a masters degree. Mahdi who has served as chairman, ABU chapter of the Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU, is interesting to know. His meek aura deceptively veils an extremely hard working man.

By Adamu Adamu, Mohammed Haruna and Delia Nzekwu

ACK

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