

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW  
WITH NUJOMA

JUNE 10 - 17, 1991 VOL.2 NO.24  
RSD

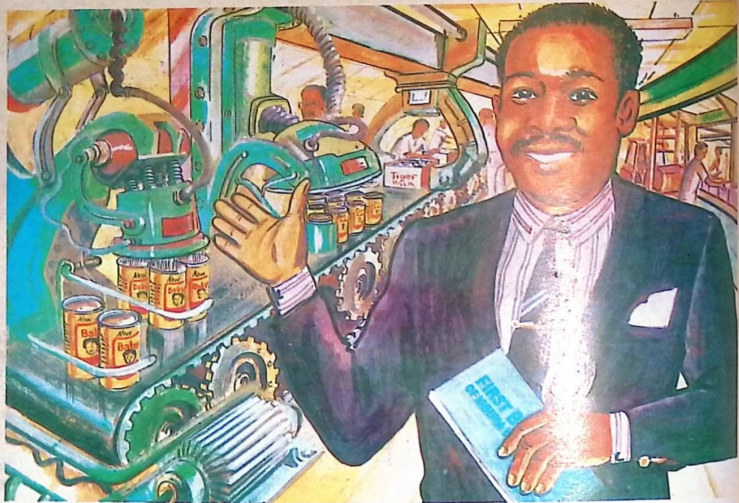
# Citizen

O.A.U. CONFERENCE:

# Behind the scene intrigues

- \*Did Libya walk out? and why Maghreb leaders stayed away
- \*Obasanjo and his 'running mates' to the UN
- \*South Africa: Hawks and Doves on sanctions
- \*Dilemma over Horn of Africa

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JUNE 10 - 17, 1991 VOL. 1

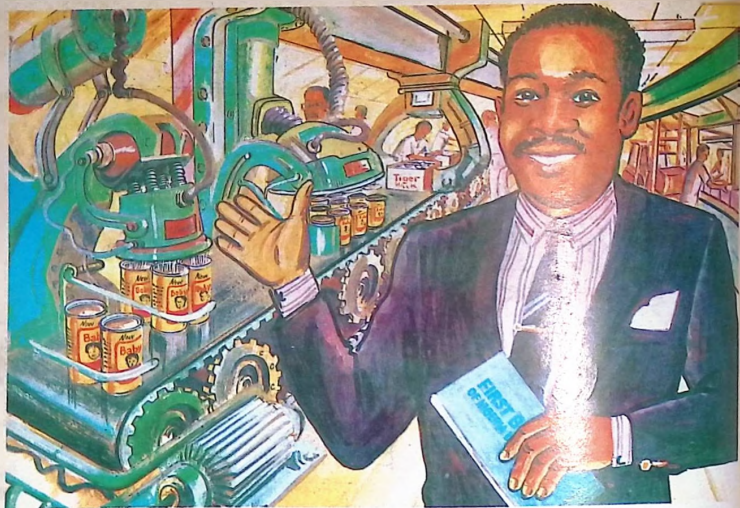
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# Citizen

All the News in Perspective

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## PREFACE

**A**buja was agog last week as it played host to 32 African heads of state. The usually mel-  
low setting of the town succumbed to heavy traffic as outriders and the motorcades announced the arrival of one president after the other. As the 27th OAU summit kicked off, the agenda proved to be a rather loaded one. The problems the OAU was established to solve have multiplied across the years. Independence has given way to rebel armed incursions, border conflicts and violent protests against authoritarian regimes.

The economies of most countries are in shambles stifled by the debt burden, structural adjustment programmes resulting in grotesque dislocations of the forces of production. The security, stability and development of the continent are far from being achieved. Yet the summiteers saw the integration of the continent as one sure panacea to some of these problems. Out of their optimism came the African Economic Community established to hasten the integration of the countries, boost their fragile economies and enhance their status in the international arena.

Our crew of Mohammed Haruna, Mahmud Jega and Tawey Zakka that covered the summit were able to catch President Sam Nujoma of Namibia for an exclusive interview. This and their account of high level politicking, the strings that were pulled behind the scenes to make things happen the way they did make this week's cover.

Mohammed Haruna

## LETTERS

**Re: Why religious riots continue regardless**

I am writing to express my opinion on the above titled article as published in the May edition of your magazine.

It is a matter of great concern and surprise that such high rate of ignorance can be exhibited by such a highly placed and knowledgeable person as the Editor-in-Chief of this magazine. A lot of flaws and error of judgement was manifested in his write up, that one cannot but mention.

It is true one's story and or evidence is usually coloured by the interest he protects, in other words, people are ostensibly biased in protecting their interest. But as a reputed journalist, I expected Mohammed Haruna's write up to be, not only sensible and rationale, but investigative as well.

Christians are not only portrayed as peace loving but are truthfully and practically so. In fact if it were not for the peace loving nature of Christians in Nigeria, this country world have been turned into Africans' Lebanon long ago.

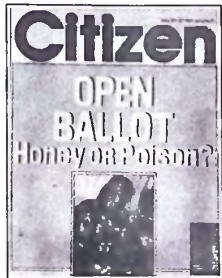
For example it is a known fact, that Christians have never been found to have assembled themselves to cause chaos, havoc, arson or any form of civil unrest, no matter the extent of provocation directed against them. If however you think I am taking an improper view of the situation, then records of previous religious crises in Nigeria will vindicate me. Records have clearly shown that, while no Mosque or other Muslims property have been targeted for destruction or vandalism by Christians at any point in time, every religious disturbance in Nigeria has always been followed by a trail of wide-spread destruction of Churches, and damages to Christian lives, property, and their business enterprises. Who then among the two is intolerant, destructive and fanatical? And who is

an ardent disciple of peaceful co-existence as enjoined by the two respective religions? Is it he who destroys, maims and loot in the name of God or he who patiently waits for retribution from God?

Gabriel Gidi Ngalabak  
Katsina.

**Open Ballot: honey or poison?**

Mr. Dap Dorman writing in the *Vanguard* and Mallam Mohammed Haruna writing in the *Citizen* magazine have drawn our attention to the immorality of key members of the out-going military administration aspiring to become presidents shortly after leaving office. One



suggestion is that this is one of the ways this administration planned to succeed itself. Whether this suggestion is correct or not, government should recognise instant power seekers with their newly acquired instant wealth as causes of serious instability within the SDP and the NRC and there is the urgent need for government and the two political parties to check this trend.

Having raised these critical issues I recommend that:

Government should, as a matter of urgency amend the relevant electoral laws to provide for the direct involvement of the National

Electoral Commission in the conduct and supervision of primary elections.

Aliyu Umaru  
(Legal Practitioner)

The *Citizen* issue of May 20-27 1991, endeavoured to show readers that the open ballot system is a disaster in the Nigerian political context because it is intimidating and disenfranchising.

I disagree. We cannot, with just one election, conclude that it is bad because it has not been thoroughly tested for success or failure. On the other hand the secret ballot has been shown to be a failure. I see no reason why elections should be conducted in secrecy. Why shouldn't voters be allowed to show their allegiance openly even if it would offend others?

The government is trying to build honest democracy and the best way is to give people alternatives and avoid past mistakes. It can be achieved through the open ballot system.

Ajiya B. Zarma,  
Kaduna.

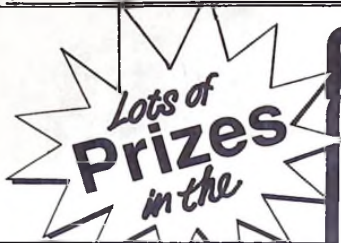
At my polling booth with two hundred registered to cast their votes only fifteen of us turned up that day.

I can assure you that if it were secret balloting no less than 50 would have turned up. Deep inside me I know that if they were asked, the one hundred and eighty-five that refused to vote that day would have intoned "how would I answer my benefactor if he were standing election while I was in the opposing camp".

Judging by the last election into local councils I agree with your leader that the government should rescind its decision to apply the same style of open ballot for the next elections.

John Galadima  
Amper

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# A summit of indecisions

Few people, if any, can dispute the fact that those who organised the 27th summit of the Organisation of African Unity did Nigeria proud. Indeed the very idea of staging it in Abuja, with its beautiful environment and reliable infrastructure could not have been sounder. True, there were hiccups here and there. For instance, accreditation of officials, delegates and journalists was somewhat muddled because there were only one camera and two typist to attend to no less than 2,000 people. In spite of such hiccups, however, the summit went quite smoothly, so smoothly you wondered if Abuja was part of Nigeria.

And just as well the summit proceeded smoothly, because it saw a record attendance by presidents and heads of government. With 32 of such eminent Africans accepting our invitation to host them, we could hardly afford to disappoint them. Their attendance in such a large number was obviously an expression of confidence in our leadership. The significance of this lies, among other things, in the fact that the summit held against the background of civil strifes and political

instability in much of the continent. If a lot can be said for the organisation and attendance at the summit, the same could hardly be said for its outcome. For if the must be told, the Abuja summit was more for the decisions that were taken than for those that were. The agenda was (1) economic integration (2) sanctions against military insurrections (3) Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda and Reparations and last but by no means least (5) fielding a common secretary-general to be vacant secretary-general candidate for the integration where all the members of the treaty establishing the African Community, were any African members made. Instead the new Chairman Babangida, was given definitive mandates to resolve the issues under several committees. Babangida has boundless energy, but it is too much to expect one man leading several committees to solve problems that was apparently reluctant to address squarely.

## First step

Last month the Nigerian Union of Journalists, NUJ, signed an insurance "agreement" with the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria, NICON, which is intended, among other things, to compensate journalists who die or acquire permanent disability in the discharge of their duties.

It also meant to financially protect journalists against detention and similar acts which may inhibit them in their jobs. NICON under the scheme, will provide reasonable amounts of money to cover the medical expenses of journalists in cases of accidents.

According to the NUJ, negotiations for the take off of the scheme took a year and it is expected to cover around 10,000 journalists.

Given the unhappy performance of past executives of the NUJ, the current executive has every reason to congratulate itself for taking such practical steps to enhance performance of journalists.

We assume that the NUJ will bear the financial burden, but then a number of issues arise. First, who exactly does the agreement cover? The question is pertinent because there are so many professional bodies representing journalists.

If the NUJ agreement covers card-carrying members of the NUJ only, then there is bound to be confusion because a member of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, for instance, is also a journalist. So are the technical staff of the Nigerian Television Authority, NTA,

who belong to a trade union separate from the NUJ and work for the government. All of them regard themselves as journalists. Does the NUJ represent all? If it doesn't, then we shall have to go back to the whole argument as to whether or not the NUJ is a trade union or a professional body. And who'll insure those the NUJ doesn't represent?

Secondly, a pension scheme exists in most media organisations and the Workmen's Compensation Act, which though largely ineffective, covers the Nigerian worker irrespective of his or her station. The workmen's act especially should be of interest because it allows for flexibility as in the case of severe injury or death. The NUJ effort is therefore, probably, a duplication and if it isn't, there is the danger that individual employers of journalists may take refuge in the new scheme and deny the

legitimate compensation of its workers.

Given these conflicting interest groups and the various laws dealing with compensation, the action of the NUJ, though clearly laudable, needs extra work to function very well. Though it represents a major landmark in protecting journalists, we think that it is too important an issue to be introduced without apparently proper preparation necessary for sound take off.

Perhaps more than the scheme, the NUJ needs to fight some of the inhibiting factors that bring about the injury or even death of journalists. Two of these are the frequent detention of journalists and their occasional maltreatment by all sorts of interests. Insuring a journalist is good, but preventing or reducing the likelihood of his being killed or maimed is more beneficial. And that is where the next fight is.

## The killing of Dr Nwogu Okere

Two weeks ago, a Lagos-based advertising executive, Dr. Nwogu Okere was gunned down by the police in a most gruesome and bizarre manner. According to eye-witness accounts including May Okere, the deceased wife and the manager of the petrol station in Cbagada, a Lagos suburb where the bloody drama took place, Okere's car had driven into the petrol station, hotly pursued by another car which all thought was driven by armed robbers. Okere's driver and wife came down from the car and ran for dear life. Okere was not so lucky, however. His pursuers were already on him, so he raised his hands high in the air in a gesture of surrender, thinking they were merely armed robbers after his car.

Okere was wrong, though. His assailants were police officers, not armed bandits. Nor were they after his car. One of them raised his gun, fired, killing the young advertising executive instantly.

Police spokesmen have sought to justify the killing by advancing the explanation that Okere was mistaken for an armed robber. The argument was quickly punctured by Klinsite, Okere's former employers who pointed out that the police could not have been looking for a car whose theft was reported at the precise moment Okere was

murdered! Last week, police spokesman, Frank Odita put forward another claim. According to Odita the policeman had aimed at the tyres of Okere's car, but the bullet did a "trajectory" and found its way to his chest.

The truth of the matter is that Okere was murdered in cold blood. All available evidence point to this. The killing, coming two months after a contingent of anti-riot policemen slaughtered seven defenseless people in Agege, another Lagos suburb, on the excuse that they were armed robbers, casts a dark shadow on the image of the police as society's guardian. Indeed, the spate of extra-judicial killings in recent times has tended to portray the average policeman as a trigger-happy killer to be avoided.

This is not acceptable. The impression must not be created in the public mind that the police can kill defenseless civilians with impunity. We urge the police to fish out Okere's killer from its ranks and make him face the full rigour of the law. The police should also apologise to the deceased's family and thus make a clean breast of the whole sordid affair. Public confidence and support is the police's greatest weapon. They should not squander it.

## Algeria: The people know better

The age of change has finally come, or has it? Everything on the political scene is changing. When people came out onto the streets in Eastern Europe, in the Soviet Union and in Africa, making their point, many sit-tight dictators tumbled down from their thrones. Many cheered this great victory of the people's right to self-determination. The new watchwords were: pro-democracy, elections, multi-party politics and political pluralism. But just how plural is the new movement?

Nobody is cheering the popular Islamic struggle in Algeria and so we must assume that Islam is not a part of this pluralism. Since 1989, when the Islamic Salvation Front swept local elections in Algeria, there had been disquiet in western capitals and restive apprehension in Algiers itself. They had all thought that legitimising Islamic groups into the mainstream would dampen the appeal of Islam — and so keep Islamic revolution away. The Islamic front, contrary to their expectations, won the elections but before conceding defeat the government of Chadli Benjedid transferred all the powers of the local governments to itself, thereby nullifying whatever gains the front thought it had made.

And now, as the next phase of the elections comes around, the authorities have come out with discriminatory legislation to keep the front effectively out of the race.

Benjedid might soon find out the irony in what he had done, because the agenda of the Islamic front had all along been modest. It would not remain modest for long, especially if it went unsatisfied. The front, unlike other more militant Islamic parties fighting for political power, had chosen to work within the secular framework prescribed by the ruling National Front. Its only quarrel now seems to be with the electoral laws that are clearly biased against it. The resistance by government of an idea embraced by the people will effectively put the two at daggers drawn. Those who make peaceful change impossible, make a violent one inevitable. And so there you go.

As the world takes the route of democracy, Algeria takes that of repression

and commits its people to a life of avoidable tragedy. Already it has cancelled the so-called multi-party elections planned for June 27. The Islamic Salvation Front, meanwhile, has called on the people for more demonstrations and strikes. Officially eight people had been killed; the correct figure might be a hundred times that.

The Islamic struggle in Algeria is not a new phenomenon. The country was colonised by the French and, to a degree greater than for most French possessions, subjected to a most dehumanising process of assimilation. This was bitterly resisted by the Muslim people; and the resistance ultimately led to a great and bloody conflict — the so-called nationalist war in which more than a million Algerians were killed. It forced France to give independence without further delay.

To the National Front — the elitist, French-educated vanguard that spearheaded the struggle — it was a nationalist war. But to the Muslim people who actually did the struggle, it was a *jihad* to free themselves from foreign, culture-distorting invaders and revert to the rule of Islam. When freedom finally came, the elites pushed Islam aside and adopted Fabian socialism and disregarded their people's faith and imposed secularism on them. The Islam that made freedom possible became the new prisoner.

It was therefore inevitable that what is happening today should happen. What is surprising, however, is that all the centres of noise that jump to defend pro-democracy demonstrations worldwide are silent as the authorities kill Algerians on the streets. Their crime is that they have made their choice by demonstrating for Islam — and not just democracy as understood by the West. That choice — Islam — understandably has no defenders among the leaders of the world. It is on its own, just as it was in 1979 Iran.

And if the recent history of Iran is repeatable then we may be on our way to the Islamic Republic of Algeria within a year. The Western gunboats that shelled Beirut for most of the last decade might now have to visit Algiers.

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# A summit of indecisions?

Few people, if any, can dispute the fact that those who organised the 27th summit of the Organisation of African Unity did Nigeria proud. Indeed the very idea of staging it in Abuja, with its beautiful environment and reliable infrastructure could not have been sounder. True, there were hiccups here and there. For instance, accreditation of officials, delegates and journalists was somewhat muddled because there were only one camera and two typist to attend to no less than 2,000 people. In spite of such hiccups, however, the summit went quite smoothly, so smoothly you wondered if Abuja was part of Nigeria.

And just as well the summit proceeded smoothly, because it saw a record attendance by presidents and heads of government. With 32 of such eminent Africans accepting our invitation to host them, we could hardly afford to disappoint them. Their attendance in such a large number was obviously an expression of confidence in our leadership. The significance of this lies, among other things, in the fact that the summit held against the background of civil strifes and political

instability in much of the continent.

If a lot can be said for the organisation of and attendance at the summit, the same could hardly be said for its outcome. For if the truth must be told, the Abuja summit stands out more for the decisions that were not taken than for those that were. The major items on its agenda were (1) sanctions against Pretoria (2) economic integration (3) the civil and military insurrections in countries like Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia, (4) Reparations and last but by no means the least (5) fielding a common candidate for the soon to be vacant secretary-generalship of the UN. In none of these, except for economic integration where all the members signed a treaty establishing the African Economic Community, were any definitive decisions made. Instead the new chairman, President Babangida, was given wide-ranging mandates to resolve the issues under several committees. Babangida may possess boundless energy, but it is obviously asking too much to expect one man leading several committees to solve problems that the OAU was apparently reluctant to address squarely.

## First step

Last month the Nigerian Union of Journalists, NUJ, signed an insurance "agreement" with the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria, NICON, which is intended, among other things, to compensate journalists who die or acquire permanent disability in the discharge of their duties.

It also meant to financially protect journalists against detention and similar acts which may inhibit them in their jobs. NICON under the scheme, will provide reasonable amounts of money to cover the medical expenses of journalists in cases of accidents.

According to the NUJ, negotiations for the take off of the scheme took a year and it is expected to cover around 10,000 journalists.

Given the unhappy performance of past executives of the NUJ, the current executive has every reason to congratulate itself for taking such practical steps to enhance the performance of journalists.

We assume that the NUJ will bear the financial burden, but then a number of issues arise. First, who exactly does the agreement cover? The question is pertinent because there are so many professional bodies representing journalists.

If the NUJ agreement covers card-carrying members of the NUJ only, then there is bound to be confusion because a member of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, for instance, is also a journalist. So are the technical staff of the Nigerian Television Authority, NTA,

who belong to a trade union separate from the NUJ and work for the government. All of them regard themselves as journalists. Does the NUJ represent all? If it doesn't, then we shall have to go back to the whole argument as to whether or not the NUJ is a trade union or a professional body. And who'll insure those the NUJ doesn't represent?

Secondly, a pension scheme exists in most media organisations and the Workmen's Compensation Act, which though largely ineffective, covers the Nigerian worker irrespective of his or her station. The workmen's act especially should be of interest because it allows for flexibility as in the case of severe injury or death. The NUJ effort is therefore, probably, a duplication and if it isn't, there is the danger that individual employers of journalists may take refuge in the new scheme and deny the

legitimate compensation of its workers.

Given these conflicting interest groups and the various laws dealing with compensation, the action of the NUJ, though clearly laudable, needs extra work to function very well. Though it represents a major landmark in protecting journalists, we think that it is too important an issue to be introduced without apparently proper preparation necessary for sound take off.

Perhaps more than the scheme, the NUJ needs to fight some of the inhibiting factors that bring about the injury or even death of journalists. Two of these are the frequent detention of journalists and their occasional maltreatment by all sorts of interests. Insuring a journalist is good, but preventing or reducing the likelihood of his being killed or maimed is more beneficial. And that is where the next fight is.

## The killing of Dr Nwogu Okere

Two weeks ago, a Lagos-based advertising executive, Dr. Nwogu Okere was gunned down by the police in a most gruesome and bizarre manner. According to eye-witness accounts including May Okere, the deceased wife and the manager of the petrol station in Cbagada, a Lagos suburb where the bloody drama took place, Okere's car had driven into the petrol station, hotly pursued by another car which all thought was driven by armed robbers. Okere's driver and wife came down from the car and ran for dear life. Okere was not so lucky, however. His pursuers were already on him, so he raised his hands high in the air in a gesture of surrender, thinking they were merely armed robbers after his car.

Okere was wrong, though. His assailants were police officers, not armed bandits. Nor were they after his car. One of them raised his gun, fired, killing the young advertising executive instantly.

Police spokesmen have sought to justify the killing by advancing the explanation that Okere was mistaken for an armed robber. The argument was quickly punctured by Klinsite, Okere's former employers who pointed out that the police could not have been looking for a car whose theft was reported at the precise moment Okere was

murdered! Last week, police spokesman, Frank Odita put forward another claim. According to Odita the policeman had aimed at the tyres of Okere's car, but the bullet did a "trajectory" and found its way to his chest.

The truth of the matter is that Okere was murdered in cold blood. All available evidence point to this. The killing, coming two months after a contingent of anti-riot policemen slaughtered seven defenseless people in Agege, another Lagos suburb, on the excuse that they were armed robbers, casts a dark shadow on the image of the police as society's guardian. Indeed, the spate of extra-judicial killings in recent times has tended to portray the average policeman as a trigger-happy killer to be avoided.

This is not acceptable. The impression must not be created in the public mind that the police can kill defenseless civilians with impunity. We urge the police to fish out Okere's killer from its ranks and make him face the full rigour of the law. The police should also apologise to the deceased's family and thus make a clean breast of the whole sordid affair. Public confidence and support is the police's greatest weapon. They should not squander it.

## Algeria: The people know better

**T**he age of change has finally come, or has it? Everything on the political scene is changing. When people came out onto the streets in Eastern Europe, in the Soviet Union and in Africa, making their point, many sit-tight dictators tumbled down from their thrones. Many cheered this great victory of the people's right to self-determination. The new watchwords were: pro-democracy, elections, multi-party politics and political pluralism. But just how plural is the new movement?

Nobody is cheering the popular Islamic struggle in Algeria and so we must assume that Islam is not a part of this pluralism. Since 1989, when the Islamic Salvation Front swept local elections in Algeria, there had been disquiet in western capitals and restive apprehension in Algiers itself. They had all thought that legitimising Islamic groups into the mainstream would dampen the appeal of Islam — and so keep Islamic revolution away. The Islamic front, contrary to their expectations, won the elections but before conceding defeat the government of Chadli Benjedid transferred all the powers of the local governments to itself, thereby nullifying whatever gains the front thought it had made.

And now, as the next phase of the elections comes around, the authorities have come out with discriminatory legislation to keep the front effectively out of the race.

Benjedid might soon find out the irony in what he had done, because the agenda of the Islamic front had all along been modest. It would not remain modest for long, especially if it went unsatisfied. The front, unlike other more militant Islamic parties fighting for political power, had chosen to work within the secular framework prescribed by the ruling National Front. Its only quarrel now seems to be with the electoral laws that are clearly biased against it. The resistance by government of an idea embraced by the people will effectively put the two at daggers drawn. Those who make peaceful change impossible, make a violent one inevitable. And so there you go.

As the world takes the route of democracy, Algeria takes that of repression

and commits its people to a life of avoidable tragedy. Already it has cancelled the so-called multi-party elections planned for June 27. The Islamic Salvation Front, meanwhile, has called on the people for more demonstrations and strikes. Officially eight people had been killed; the correct figure might be a hundred times that.

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It was therefore inevitable that what is happening today should happen. What is surprising, however, is that all the centres of noise that jump to defend pro-democracy demonstrations worldwide are silent as the authorities kill Algerians on the streets. Their crime is that they have made their choice by demonstrating for Islam — and not just democracy as understood by the West. That choice — Islam — understandably has no defenders among the leaders of the world. It is on its own, just as it was in 1979 Iran.

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## Khomeini

Last week was the second anniversary of the demise of Imam Ayatollah al-Uzma Sayyid Ruhullah Musawi al-Khomeini (*quddisa sirruhush sharif*). He was, without doubt, the most outstanding personality of the era, and the Islamic Revolution he brought about the most astounding phenomenon of this century.

Two years it was since the Islamic world was orphaned, so to speak, and the wretched of the earth deprived of a fearless spokesman and an uncompromising defender. It told alot about our world that it would generally fail to fully appreciate this unusual leader. The media not only prevented him from being known, it went ahead to create its own Khomeini and fed him to the world.

While millions loved him as passionately as is possible for human hearts, millions more feared him — needlessly — and feared his ideology even more. Those who feared him alive went on to become more frightened of him dead. His legacy, for them, became dreadful business. Khomeini was unlike anyone before him in these modern times and quite unlike anyone to come after him.

"What strikes me most about my father", Ahmad Khomeini said, "is the strength of his character. (Because of his love for justice) he was unable to kill a fly, but he was at every moment ready to go into

## ADAMU ADAMU

battle (with oppressors) in defence of divine values — even if he was alone", he added. That indeed might explain why they wouldn't leave him alone.

He initiated and led a revolution that founded a unique republic without external aid. To do so in fact he had to defeat an assortment of powers led by the United States which supported the Shah. They imposed a war on him through Iraq. This raged for eight years. He won the battles but they denied him the victory. Initially when they had lost hope of defeating him or breaking his resolve, they sought to end it all. The Imam refused. Name the aggressor, punish him and make him pay reparations, he said. They refused. Saddam was their boy, carrying out their errand. They ganged in his support. Later Saddam turned against them, if so he did. He thought he could always pillage, plunder, kill and burn. For so they taunted him. They spent billions and killed hundreds of thousands trying to stop him. Now it suited them to learn from the Imam. Now, they are agreed. Saddam is an aggressor, he has been punished and humbled, and must pay reparations. The law is their own to make, break or mar.

The Imam threw communism into the dustbin of history and so there it landed. When he exposed the Saudi and Gulf monarchies as American stooges, agents of imperialism and enemies of Islam, half of the Sunni world denounced him. After the Gulf War those who denounced him turned to praise his apparently inerrant foresight. Those who didn't, knew.

But more important than all this was the effect of his revolution on the Islamic World. It is perhaps the one phenomenon that a billion Muslims worldwide regard with interest and varying degrees of support. What happened to the revolution was therefore of immedi-

ate relevance to those who supported it and, hopefully, a lesson to those who didn't. But more important than all this was the effect of his revolution on the Islamic World. Possessing the only ideology that could save humanity, the Islamic world ought to have been at the forefront, giving the world a lead. It needed a Khomeini to give it a dose of confidence and a courageous unfurling of the banner of Islam. Moral power is with them: they only need to take the stand.

Khomeini represented an on-going battle that would never end. His battle and the battle incumbent on his supporters is not with America as such or with the west because it is the west. It is a battle against injustice whoever it is by or against. And it is certainly not against any religion.

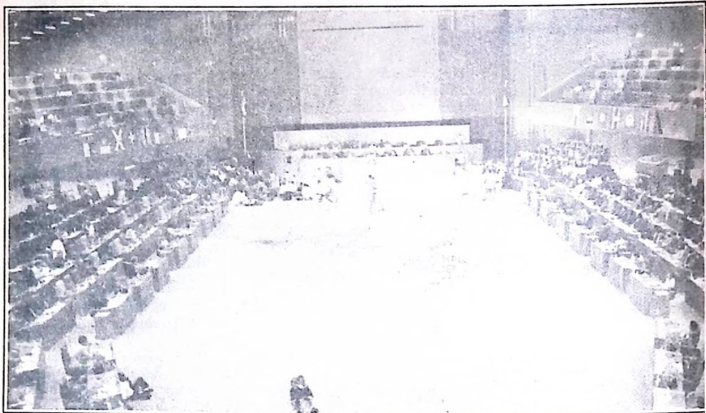
"Our religion is Christian, our leader Khomeini". So chanted the Armenian Christians of Pahlavi Iran as the nation rose to topple the most hideous tyranny of modern times. Nor were the Jews to be surpassed. The Tehran Society of Jewish Intellectuals forcefully spoke out in favour of the Imam even when the Shah was in power.

The Christians and Jews had nothing to fear from him; the Muslims had everything to be grateful. The oppressed of every faith have every faith now to be hopeful of victory over their oppressors.

Imam Khomeini represented what was the best in Muslims — a shining symbol of total reliance on Allah and total independence from the powers of blasphemy no matter how intimidating and immediate their threat. To have known him made life worth living. To have loved him was joy indescribable.

It was indeed a great honour for the world that it gave residence to such a precious personality. We may not see his like until probably the end of time.

## 27th OAU Summit



*The ornate hall, venue of the summit*

# A new awakening?

The 32 African presidents who gathered in Abuja last week for their 27th summit agree "Africa is on the threshold of a new awakening", but take faltering step towards the new dream

**T**hey took their time arriving that afternoon of Monday, June 3 at the Abuja International Conference Centre. Black limousines, bought specially to "ferry" them from their suites in Nicon Noga Hilton Hotel to the summit venue, brought the presidents or their representatives, one after another.

By 4 pm 32 of them had gathered in the grounds of the International Conference Centre for the ceremonial tree planting.

The number was eight more than the 24 required for a quorum of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. Dr Ibrahim Daggash, director of information at the secretariat of the Organisation of African Unity, OAU, in Addis

Ababa, Ethiopia, had told journalists at a pre-summit press conference that 32 or more heads of state and government were being expected. "This summit in Abuja will have the biggest attendance since the OAU's founding in 1963," the director said. He was not disappointed. The list included familiar as well as barely recognisable faces. Lt. Col.

Ahmadou Toure, Mali's new military strongman and Chad's Idris Deby belonged in the latter category.

If the leisurely arrival of the "brother presidents," as Nigeria's General Ibrahim Babangida preferred to call his guests, created an impression that "things" would be quickly wrapped up in the three days the summit was due to last, Dr. Dagash was to say on June 5, how wrong anybody would have been who had thought so. He told a surprise press corps that the summit has been extended by a few hours; the closing ceremony would no longer take place that evening but the following morning, June 6. The reason for the change, he said, was that the plenary sessions had barely afforded the leaders time to "address African issues." At the instance of President Babangida, the leaders for the first time in the OAU's existence, would retire into a small room, where they would be able to "interact intimately, speak as friends" and get to know one another better, said Dr. Dagash.

The "African issues" he talked about had been recommended by the 54th meeting of the council of ministers which preceded the summit of the heads of state and government. It was a fully loaded



Salim and Gambari (inset) Nwachukwu

agenda, giving emphasis to one or another, reflecting largely regional sensibilities.

Speaking during the opening of the 27th Assembly, shortly after taking over "by acclamation" from Ugandan president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, as the OAU chairman, President Babangida moved quickly to draw attention to

socio-economic development.

On South Africa, the President welcomed the release from apartheid cells of Nelson Mandela and other black political prisoners. The presence of Mandela and Clarence Makwetu, deputy president of the ANC and president of the Pan-Africanist Congress, PAC, respectively, in Abuja meant that "all Africa is complete." He said "they are here to enrich our deliberations, and help us in the search for the way forward through the complex maze of apartheid." But welcome as their release from jail is, the president thinks it is not enough to warrant a softening of the pressure on the minority white government of president Frederic de Klerk to completely dismantle apartheid structures.

"The decisions we shall reach on this matter should reaffirm to the world that we, as leaders, are absolutely concerned with the well-being of our people and that we respect human dignity," President Babangida said. According to him, the struggle should now be taken to the doorstep of the racist regime.

All 32 heads of state and government who came to Abuja as well as 19 other leaders of delegations signed the treaty establishing it. Even Libya whose prime minister was later to "walk out" of the summit in protest over the "passage" through Nigeria of American trained anti-Gaddafi mercenaries, signed the document.

agenda, running the whole gamut of the situation in South Africa, conflicts on the continent, its external debt, human rights and democracy as well as the continent's economic integration. Speaker after speaker picked up these issues but

"Africa's unfinished agenda for the 1990's and beyond." This included eradication of apartheid in South Africa, restoration of peace and stability on the continent, creation of a democratic culture and the right atmosphere for the continent's

Meanwhile, he urged the liberation forces to "join hands to forge a united front to protect the helpless masses."

Uganda's president Museveni, the outgoing chairman, joined the debate on sanctions. His position was that sanctions should remain in

developments and assist in the process of change in that country."

The African presidents were unanimous in applauding the creation of the African Economic Community. All 32 heads of state and government who came to Abuja as well as 19 other leaders of

## In the words of Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda, "we must be prepared to do not a little but a lot for the development of our continent."

place, until "the inhuman system of apartheid is completely dismantled." To lift them now, he said, "would not only be premature but decidedly dangerous." He saw repeal of the "pillars" of apartheid as being peripheral to the "core of the problem," which "is the black man's disenfranchisement." Give him the vote and all the pillars of apartheid would come tumbling to the ground.

What non-African observers had initially perceived to be division between the ANC and PAC over the sanctions issue was corrected by PAC president Makwehu's address to the Assembly. He said all the 36 opposition organisations inside South Africa agreed on keeping sanctions intact. Both ANC and PAC lamented what they saw as the erosion of a solid African position on apartheid by some African governments. A PAC official revealed that the organisation would "picket" the operations of such governments inside South Africa. However, both PAC and ANC preferred to leave the matter of sanctions in the hands of the OAU ad-hoc committee on Southern Africa. The new chairman, Nigeria's President Babangida said a team of OAU foreign ministers would visit South Africa to "evaluate

delegations signed the treaty establishing it. Even Libya whose prime minister was later to "walk out" of the summit in protest over the "passage" through Nigeria of American trained anti-Gaddafi mercenaries, signed the document. President Babangida described the AEC as "one institution which we should together resolve to build as it holds the promise for a greater tomorrow for our continent."

It is "an important milestone in Africa's quest for continental integration."

President Museveni called it "a crowning experience." The treaty setting up the community, he said, "represents a complete embodiment of the collective African philosophy on economic integration..... as well as the articulation of the mechanisms for the achievement of such continental integration." A continent that has remained "a virtual museum piece," while the rest of the world was modernising, is now stirring. But for the country to be able to meet the challenges of "these contemporary times," vision, faith, courage and perseverance are required.

In the words of Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda, "we must be prepared to do not a little but a lot for the development of our continent. A firm political hand is

necessary to guide the process towards economic integration." OAU secretary general Salim Ahmed Salim believes that the "evolution" from politics to the socio-economic development of the continent is an arduous task. Success, he says, depends on sustained effort showing through in ratification of the treaty, giving drafting of its protocols "priority status." Institutional reform, particularly that of the structures of the OAU secretariat which are not suited to the new changes, is required, the secretary general said. The community, to him, is "a pack of solidarity," which should be established within the framework of existing regional groupings.

World Bank President Barber Connable, whom many observers



Boigny: absent

believed was invited to strengthen the argument of those African governments implementing IMF-imposed structural adjustment lived up to that expectation. He said during the plenary on June 4 that Africa "is a continent in crisis" and he believed the only way out lay in restructuring.

Mr Connable said however that he was optimistic about the continent's future since, for one, there was a changing attitude and approach to economic policy. More than 30 African countries were already implementing structural adjustment programmes, second,

there is a momentum of support from the developed economies and clear emergence of a consensus between "Africa and donor countries in development. Africa's strategic agenda," as Mr Connable sees it, must include increased investment in human resource development, a "people-oriented development focus," the other elements are promotion of agriculture as "the engine of growth," population reduction policy to give the economy a breathing space to catch up with population growth, and recognition of women as major agents of development.

The World Bank President saw in the treaty establishing AEC a "movement away from dreams to deeds," saying that the bank would help to achieve the objectives of the community. But ultimately Africa would require its own capacities, resources and institutions. In particular, he would like to see an improvement in the quality of governance, there should be an end

to civil strifes and people must be allowed to participate in economic life. This is "an entirely legitimate demand," Mr Connable said.

President Babangida also spoke of the need for Africa to develop "an enduring internal capacity and mechanism for managing change." The demand for democracy is increasing on the continent and African leaders would do well to

that democracy is not only an attractive option but a rational and inevitable one," he said.

The Assembly, according to information director Daggash, was able to reach decisions on many of the issues on the agenda, such as appointing committees to deal with conflicts on the continent and restoring peace and stability. Others proved rather intractable, such as

**The World Bank President saw in the treaty establishing AEC a "movement away from dreams to deeds," saying that the bank would help to achieve the objectives of the community.**

allow democracy to flourish. "In short, the cost of maintaining structures of dictatorship, including the energy dissipated and the blood expended in warding off challenges to the monopoly of power all over our continent makes it imperative

the choice of the candidate Africa would present for the United Nations secretary generalship. In such difficult cases, the Assembly simply resolved that further ground work was required.

By Tawey Zakka

## UN Scribe

# Obasanjo loses round one

Thanks to Francophone objection, the general loses round one

For General Olusegun Obasanjo, former head of state, it must have reminded him of his good old days in Dodan Barracks — or almost. There were of course, none of the formalities that normally heralded the arrival of presidents, but as he walked into the lobby of Nicon Noga Hilton Hotel Abuja last Monday, accompanied by Professor Ibrahim Gambari, our permanent representative at the United Nations, anyone could see that this was a very important person. First, he was ushered into the hotel lobby through the entrance reserved only for presidents and heads of state. Then as he moved across the lobby towards the lifts,

several officials and delegates to the OAU summit from home and abroad, tried to shake his hands

addressing him as "your excellency," a couple of them, including a former Ugandan



Mobutu and Deby of Chad: The Francophones objected

ambassador to the UN, also seeking an appointment with him.

Obasanjo was not the only former Nigerian head of state to attend last Monday's three day summit; General Yakubu Gowon, our longest serving head of state (1966 — 75) was there, as also was Alhaji Shehu Shagari, our first executive president (1979 — 83). Of the three, however, none attracted as much attention as Obasanjo.

This attention was understandable. For months now speculations were rife that the general was our prime candidate for the general secretaryship of the United Nations, soon to be vacated by Javier de Cuellar. Obasanjo, was not the only Nigerian speculated to be interested in taking over from de Cuellar. There were others including Major General Joseph Garba, to date our most flamboyant foreign minister and a long serving permanent representative to the UN, Professor Ibrahim Gambari, his successor at the UN, Professor Bolaji Akinyemi ex-minister of external affairs and even General Gowon.

In time this speculators' long list narrowed down to Obasanjo and Garba. Neither would categorically confirm or deny their interest, but their activities in the last several months suggested such an interest; both have of recent become quite active as intenter statesmen, Garba by working through the UN system, and Obasanjo by forging friendships with former colleagues in and outside Africa and by initiating the Africa Leadership Forum. One tell-tale indication of their interest, a reliable source told *Citizen*, was the fact that both of them recently took French lessons in order to achieve at least a bi-lingual status and thus broaden their appeal.

In the last several weeks, Obasanjo seemed to have emerged as Nigeria's candidate. To date the government has not named any one as its candidate, but the signs are that Obasanjo is indeed its choice. For instance short of calling him by



De Cuellar and wife: support for Africa

name, Major General Ike Nwachukwu told the *African Concord* last week that the General was the country's choice. Said Nwachukwu "our candidate is someone who led the way in the return to civil administration in this country when he had the opportunity to head the administration of this country." It is quite obvious who this cap fits — Obasanjo. And as if this was not conclusive enough evidence, Nwachukwu went further to tell the magazine that he knows that the country's candidate "has been sponsoring the quest for stability, security, cooperation and development within Africa and the world community." Obasanjo has only recently initiated a conference in Kampala, Uganda, in conjunction with the OAU and the UN Economic Commission for Africa, which came up with a document on "peace, security, development and cooperation in Africa" that was discussed at the Abuja summit. Indeed *Citizen* has it on good authority that both General Nwachukwu and Professor Gambari were given a mandate by President Babangida just before the summit, to canvass for the support of African leaders for Obasanjo's candidature.

Obasanjo himself has refused to



Obasanjo: a thorny path

be drawn on the matter. But he virtually gave the game away during the Abuja summit when he turned out to be the only head of state of the three in attendance to stay throughout. The others stayed for only one day. Second, in an interview with *Tell* magazine last week he virtually admitted his interest. When the magazine pointed out to him that Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka has come under heavy criticism for objecting to his candidature, he replied, "But he has since swallowed it (his objection)."

Given the widespread belief that Obasanjo is Nigeria's

candidate, it was hardly surprising that he was a major attraction throughout the summit. Even then it was far from certain that his candidature would receive OAU's unanimous endorsement. This was partly because there were other eminent candidates from other African countries notably Zimbabwe, Ghana and Sierra Leone. *Citizen* was informed by a reliable source, that during the council of ministers meeting, preparatory to the summit, these countries announced their candidates, namely Bernard Chinzero, Zimbabwe's brilliant minister of finance, Ken Dadze (Ghana), an executive director of UNCTAD and James Jonah (Sierra Leone) recently promoted an under secretary of the UN.

This list of four *Citizen* learnt, came under heavy criticism by Francophone leaders when the matter of a single African candidate for the UN job came up for discussion. The Francophone countries were said to have objected to the fact that all four candidates were from Anglophone countries. More specifically, Mobutu Sese-Seko, the Zairean leader reportedly complained that Nigeria did not confide its interest in him.

Professor Gambari told *Citizen* that the objections from the Francophone countries was unfair. "All the candidates for the UN job may be Anglophone", he said "but most of the French countries were canvassed for support and they did not raise any objection before the summit".

Perhaps if President Felix Houphouët Boigny of Cote D'Ivoire had turned up, it would have made a difference. *Citizen* learnt that the grand old man, very much respected in Francophone Africa, was supportive of our bid and gave assurances that he will be at the summit. Ill-health, as President Babangida told the summit during the closing ceremony, kept him away.

It seems the Francophone

objection carried the day and so instead of a common candidate or list of candidates, a committee was set up under the chairmanship of President Babangida with a mandate to draw up a list of interested countries, short list the candidates and come up with one name. Other members of the sub-committee included Kenneth Kaunda (Uganda) and Joachim Chissano (Mozambique), to represent southern Africa, Ali Hassan Mwinyi (Tanzania), to represent East Africa, Mobutu Sese Seko (Zaire) for Central Africa, Hosni Mubarrak (Egypt) for North Africa and Cnasingbe Eyadema for West Africa.

Clearly Obasanjo is not about to have an easy ride to the general secretaryship of the UN. It is, indeed, far from certain that Africa will get the job, in spite of the ringing endorsement it received from de Cuellar, in his address to the OAU on Monday. "De Cuellar," said one leading Nigerian delegate who insisted on anonymity, "was only being diplomatic. He may have endorsed Africa candidature, but he did three things which could very

rather than have an African, some of the super powers may persuade him to stay on. Finally de Cuellar delivered his address in four (English, French, German and Spanish) languages as if to say Africa will have to match this if it hopes to have any of its sons take over his job."

Although Africa's interest in the UN secretary generalship generated a lot of interest, it was hardly top of the agenda. The item that qualified for this status was the issue of lifting sanctions on the Pretoria regime in the light of its recent reform of apartheid.

Here the line was clearly drawn between the hardline Pan-African Congress and the more softline African National Congress. Whereas PAC objected to any lifting of sanctions until apartheid was completely dismantled, the ANC's position was that there should be a conditional step-by-step lifting of the sanctions. The OAU itself appeared divided along this line, with the council of ministers adopting PAC's position and the summit itself adopting ANC's line.

Needless to say it was the

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well be more significant than his endorsement. First, he introduced the element of Eastern Europe as a region that, along with Africa, has never had a go at UN secretary generalship. This is a new element. Second he only talked about his successor, but did not say if he is indeed leaving at the expiration of his second term. There are speculations in UN circles that

summitteers, rather than the ministers, that carried the day. As with the UN general secretaryship, the OAU resolved to set up a committee under President Babangida with a mandate to determine when the Pretoria regime's gradual reform is enough to warrant lifting of any sanctions against the regime. This decision seemed rather ironical because

initially *Citizen* learnt the ANC's deputy president Nelson Mandela was to address the summit on behalf of all the liberation movements in South Africa. For some reason however, the PAC was invited. Clarence Makwethu the PAC's president delivered a hardline speech in which he insisted that it is a gross misunderstanding of the issue to think that apartheid can be reformed. "Apartheid cannot be reformed," he said "It has to be completely dismantled." More seriously Makwethu charged that most of the violence is perpetrated

not by Inkatha, but by black right wing elements from neighbouring Namibia, Angola and Mozambique, who enter South Africa with the connivance of the security forces of the Pretoria regime. Makwethu's choice to speak for the liberation forces in South Africa suggested that the sympathy of the OAU lay with it. As things turned out the organisation, while postponing a definite decision, was more inclined towards the ANC.

The next 12 months, it seems, will stretch President Babangida to the full with the mandate the

OAU has given him to tackle every major issue from sanctions through a common African candidate for the UN top job, to the civil strife raging in Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda and several other countries.

Said an observer "I am not surprised that the summit failed to tackle the problems facing Africa squarely, instead of merely passing the buck to Babangida. The surprise is that given their problems at home, a record number of presidents and heads of government would turn up a fall".

By Mohammed Harun

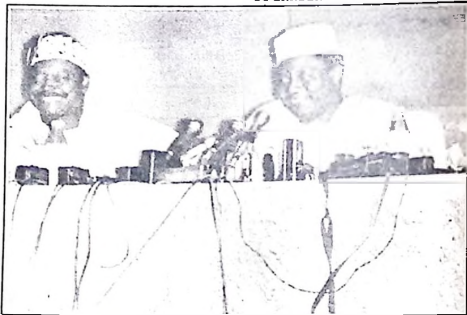
## From each according to his worries

Several African leaders addressed the press on those issues they knew the most

President Ibrahim Babangida's press conference on Tuesday was attended by hundreds of reporters. Not only was he the conference's chief host, but he was also the new chairman of the OAU. Most reporters saw this as the opportunity to unearth some of the secrets the leaders were keeping close to their chests. In the event, many were disappointed. General Babangida read an opening statement outlining his major tasks as dismantling apartheid, restoring peace to the continent, improving Africa's economic situation, speeding up ratification of the Africa Economic Community treaty, and electing an African as secretary-general of the UN.

From then on, President Babangida joked, dodged and manoeuvred his way through the press conference. Asked to explain Morocco's curious behaviour in the OAU, General Babangida replied that a delegation from Morocco brought to him a message from King Hassan. He did not say what the message was. Asked if he would

Babangida now said that since the Libyans signed the economic treaty, he considered them to be present. Regarding Nigeria's real concerns in Liberia, the president said it was only to help secure peace. Asked "when and who" will announce Africa's candidate for the UN top post, the OAU chairman said "it will be announced when the decision is



Babangida addressing the press: So much to do for Africa

permit the OAU secretariat to move out of Ethiopia to Nigeria, he said he had not given it a thought and therefore could not answer. The previous day, Libyan foreign minister Ibrahim el-Bishari told reporters he was walking out of the OAU meeting, but General

made". General Babangida was more forthcoming about AIDS. "We should all check ourselves", he said.

When Dr. Amos Sawyer, interim president of Liberia, addressed the press, he read no prepared statement. Dr. Sawyer did not dodge his questions, but answered

them with an adroit mixture of partisan politics, realistic economic and military calculation, some academic detachment and a sprinkling of diplomacy. Dr. Sawyer smiled when asked how many countries recognise his regime. "Our presence here", he said, "is proof that we are recognised by everyone as the legitimate government of Liberia. No one walked out to protest our presence". Dr. Sawyer appeared to have some respect for his bitter rival, Charles Taylor. "Taylor is the speaker of the interim National Assembly", said Sawyer. "This is the highest position he can occupy in the interim government and still be able to contest the forthcoming elections".

The interim president of Liberia was sombre in describing his country's war damage. "Of our pre-war population of 2.3 million", he said, "800,000 became refugees in greater Monrovia alone." Dr. Sawyer added that "although Taylor may control 90% of the land, he does not control the people. Most of the people are under the interim government's control. People are also daily moving out as fast as they can to our areas. People run not to, but away from Taylor's lines".

Mr. Yasser Arafat, leader of Al-Fatah, chairman of the PLO and president of Palestine, addressed the press on Wednesday. Mr. Arafat's main concern last week was that Israel was planning another invasion of southern Lebanon. Even as he spoke, one of his aides slipped in a paper to inform him that the Israelis had begun an artillery softening of Lebanon. Mr. Arafat maintained last week that the PLO wanted an international, not a regional, peace conference. "The international conference we ask for is called for by UN resolution 435", he said, "and is supported by the Arab League, OAU, Non-Aligned Movement, the OIC, the EEC, the Soviet Union, China and the PLO". He accused his Western critics of "double standards" in their

contrasting policies regarding Kuwait and Palestine.

When President Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola spoke to the press on Wednesday, he was visibly pleased by the ceasefire agreement signed in Lisbon between his government and UNITA. Mr. dos Santos was calm and on top of the situation. He explained that this agreement was unlikely to fail, as previous ones did, because it is the

against external invasion (by South Africa). The internal war (against UNITA) was a prolongation of the external one. We fought an undeclared war against South Africa for fifteen years because of our support for SWAPO. It was this war that did us the biggest damage. We estimate our losses as 80,000 maimed, 800,000 people displaced and 20 billion

## The Naira and the Kobo

The OAU summit in Abuja has come and gone. Soon we will start counting the cost.

It may be months before all the bills come in. However at the opening day of the summit, estimate were in the region of eighty-five million Naira for hotel accommodation, protocol, communications, transportation and other sundry items. By the time the final bills comes in, sources in the presidency say, the expenditure may be in region of 120 million Naira.

This sum does

not include the cost of building the gleaming extension of the International Conference Centre, venue of the summit, the construction of 300 units of houses for the accommodation of foreign delegates as well as the construction of the presidential wing of Abuja International Airport.

It also does not include the cost of the 50 odd Mercedes Benz limousines, and the 100 odd motor-cycles imported for the occasion by Julius Berger, the German construction firms

that built the Conference Centre. The limousines may have cost anywhere between fifty to seventy-five million Naira. Too, the sum does not include the cost of other back-up vehicles, mostly peugeots, for carrying delegates, security men and other officials.

It will be recalled that in his budget speech for this year, President Babangida announced a 250 million Naira expenditure for both the OAU and ECOWAS summit meeting.

By Mohammed Haruna

first one ratified on paper. Then also, a ceasefire monitoring mechanism was already in place, involving not only the MPLA and UNITA but Portugal, the US, USSR and UN as well. President dos Santos admitted that war had done Angola a great deal of damage. "It was a long war", he said, "first against the colonial power, then

Dollars in property losses, including cities and hospitals. For example, the two-kilometre long bridge over the Cunene river, rebuilt after the 1975-76 war, was again destroyed in 1987".

The Angolan president did not agree that Angola's dealings with De Beers constitutes a violation of sanctions against South Africa. "De

## "Terrorists today, leaders tomorrow" — Nujoma

Twenty-eight years ago when the first crop of leaders of Independent Africa met at Addis Ababa to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), neither them no, the few journalists that watched the event, could have paid much attention to an averaged-sized, bearded man who spoke English with a German/Ovambo accent. His name was Sam Nujoma, and he was attending the historic May 25th meeting as an observer, on behalf of an unknown liberation movement (SWAPO) that claimed to be fighting on behalf of one million or so people in the vast, underpopulated south-western corner of Africa. In 1963 there were more liberation movements than independent countries: From Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Guinea Bissau, South Africa. From Namibia itself, the biggest and best

known organisation up to that time, was called South West Africa National Union (SWANU), whose leaders had caused a bit of a commotion at the United Nations, the body that inherited Namibia as a "trust territory" from the defunct League of Nations.

Then in his 30's, Nujoma, a former South African railways steward and unionist, was running away from "justice" after organising a demonstration that ended in a massacre. He had jumped bail, crossed the border into Botswana and made his way across the continent to Ghana where, Nkrumah, the leading Pan-Africanist of that era gave him sanctuary. Thus began Sam Nujoma's thirty years of exile and struggle. But as he told the Citizen team that interviewed him last week in Abuja with a hearty laugh, "the terrorists of today are

the leaders of tomorrow". No, corrected Mohammed Haruna, "the terrorists of yesterday are the leaders of today".

To be sure the large and luxurious presidential suite of NICON Noga Hilton is a far cry from the bush of Angola, from where Nujoma directed an epic guerrilla war of 15 years, before taking over power in Windhoek last year. But as he made it clear, one phase of "the struggle" is over, but another has just begun. That Sam Nujoma, or "the old man" as everyone else around him calls him, is still the same man, in the bush or in a 5-star hotel. He has not added a single ounce of weight since midnight March 20, 1990, when the South African flag was brought down and that of SWAPO began to flutter in the Namibian wind. Indeed he said a meal a day is still adequate for him and

pointing in the direction of a burly presidential aide, he added that younger men like him can do with two, but the struggle is to ensure that all Namibian children have three square meals a day.

The bearded revolutionary who attended the first OAU Summit unnoticed as an observer, was last week welcomed to its 27th edition with the deafening roar of 21 — gun salute. It took quite a while to piece through the concentric circle of protocol and security around him, but when you finally do so "the old man" is still very much the same. Except that the lush black beard has now turned all white and in the old OAU tradition he did not wish to be drawn into the 'Internal' affairs of other African countries. The Citizen team was made up of Mohammed Haruna and Kabiru Yusuf.

**Citizen:** It is now one year since you took over. The whites are still there and in large numbers. Since an African government took over, have they now seen any thing to make them to leave of change their cooperation with your government?

**Nujoma:** Well, basically there was this propaganda made by the apartheid regime that every thing that is North of South Africa in Namibia was chaos, hunger, disease and all that. They were showing pictures of hunger in the horn of Africa - Ethiopia, Somalia and all that. To

them that was Africa. They were made to believe that if SWAPO takes over there will be chaos. This was what they implanted in the minds of the whites. Of course, when we arrived the whites were afraid. Some of them sold their properties and went to South Africa; some were just hanging on in the hotels waiting to depart the moment the chaos starts. That chaos never started.

**Citizens:** There seems to be one outstanding constitutional issue - in the Walvis Bay. What is your government doing

about that?

**Nujoma:** Well, certainly we have already started to negotiate with the South African government. We started the negotiations on the 14th of March and it continued on the 15th of May and it will continue again. The negotiations of course is taking place. It will take a little time, but certainly we are determined to ensure that the completion of the decolonisation of Namibia is achieved at the



Nujoma: *aluta continua*

earliest possible time.

**Citizen:** Do you have any specific time-table for this?

**Nujoma:** We want to have

the Walvis Bay right now if it is possible. But we are negotiating for the handing over.

**Citizen:** There are reports that there has been a division, from your meeting yesterday, concerning the lifting of sanctions against South Africa. What is the Namibian position? How do you think the issue of sanctions should be resolved?

**Nujoma:** We in the Republic of Namibia are always guided by the position of the national liberation movements. In this case, this is a matter really to be decided by the ANC and PAC leaders who are here representing the interests of the people of South Africa and we just support what they say.

**Citizen:** It seems there is a division between them. It seems to us PAC holds a different position from that of ANC.

**Nujoma:** Again, this is an internal matter and I cannot say anything about it. They are here. You can contact them.

**Citizen:** A number of reforms are taking place in South Africa now with the aim of dismantling apartheid finally. As one of the countries that are very close to South Africa, how soon do you see the end of apartheid from your own calculations based on what is happening there now?

**Nujoma:** I think basically, that the Apartheid regime is very isolated and it does feel the pinch of isolation. They are trying to create the impression that after all, they admit that they

were wrong in pursuing a policy of racism against their fellow citizens and they wanted to see a change in that. We hope that the negotiations that are now taking place between the apartheid regime and the leaders of the oppressed people will bear fruits soon, so that apartheid will be eliminated once and for all and the establishment

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of a united and non-racial South Africa will soon be in place.

**Citizen:** Here in Africa - in Nigeria, we are used to sirens and Presidents going about in motorcades. But as I remember, a couple of months ago, a BBC report said there were incidences being made of your motorcade - shooting some white farmers who were crossing the road for something. Is it a minor accident that your government is dealing

with? Secondly, does Namibia have a candidate for the UN secretary general given this demand for an African candidate?

**Nujoma:** Perhaps I can answer the simple one, we have no candidate we are not in a position yet to .....

**Citizen:** But do you support any one of the names being touted?

leaders of our movement. Those kind of elements are still there but they have no supporters and they are becoming more and more isolated because our policy of national reconciliation is accepted by every body.

**Citizen:** But why is it an issue on the BBC that your motorcade was passing and somebody is shooting...

**Nujoma:** Well, you know what the BBC is like (laughs).

**Citizen:** What are your expectations from this summit?

**Nujoma:** I consider it that this is a very historic summit in Abuja.

Abuja is new and I think there should be new events emerging from this summit. One of them is the signing, I believe, by all the leaders present here, of the African Economic Community Treaty. I have the full mandate of my government to sign this treaty.

**Citizen:** There is this article of the OAU charter which says respect the borders as they were in 1963. But now we have problems in Somalia, in Ethiopia where we see the borders being redrawn.....

**Nujoma:** I don't think I need to go into that. We believe firmly in the future of a continental government for Africa. Those who want to fall away like coal from a locomotive engine can fall off. We shall continue until we reach our destination which is a united continental African government.

Beers is a (diamond) monopoly", he simply said. Mr. dos Santos also insisted that it was the MPLA's own reform process to political pluralism and a market economy, begun in 1985, that rendered UNITA's war meaningless and prepared the grounds for peace.

Mr. Thabo Mbeki, standing in for Nelson Mandela before the press on Wednesday, initially faced a skeptical audience, since no one could fill Mandela's shoes. But Mr. Mbeki's deep knowledge and eloquence soon transformed the situation. He had many interesting insights as well. For example, he argued that the violence in the black townships in South Africa in no way proves that black rule will lead to a conflagration, since "the violence is restricted to southern Transvaal while all other areas in the country remain peaceful". The ANC leaders, interestingly, do not hold *Inkatha* responsible for the violence in Soweto. Mr. Mbeki explained that in Natal province, where Chief Buthelezi is most influential, violence ended after *Inkatha* and the ANC reached an accord. As for



Mbeki, Daggash (centre) worries... worries

government must release the remaining political prisoners, take action upon security officers indicted by tribunals, and ban the carrying of weapons in public, as preconditions for the ANC's participation in constitutional talks. He was not worried by the fact that both the ruling National Party and *Inkatha* are opposed to an elected constituent assembly and an interim government. "Although the National Party opposes these two", Mbeki said, "it accepts that they

journalists appeared to accuse the ANC of reposing confidence in the apartheid judiciary. Mr. Mbeki denied that this was the case and reiterated his earlier position, which probably reflects the suspicion of Mrs. Mandela by top ANC leaders.

Chief M.K.O. Abiola also addressed the press on the rapidly ascending case for reparation to Africa. The publishing tycoon had prepared his case well, and brought with him the Jamaican ambassador to Nigeria, Dr. Thomson, also a fighter for reparations. "One hundred and thirty million Africans died in slavery", said Bashoroun Abiola, "excluding those who died in transit, in plantations and in attempting to escape. Colonisation was the son of slavery. They decided to end the slave trade and instead enslave us on our continent. We demand reparations in the form of a road from Cape to Cairo and from Dakar to Mogadishu, as part payment".

Bashoroun Abiola initially caused a stir when he said Africa's external debt should not be forgiven. "We don't want to be forgiven", he said. "We want to pay our debts and we want them to pay theirs. Let every side tender its bill. By logical extension of the reparations paid to Israel for the death of six million Jews, we are owed US 300 trillion Dollars."

There was palpable tension when the gangling President Habyarimana of Rwanda, in a calm voice, accused out-going OAU chairman, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, of aiding the invasion of his country.

southern Transvaal, the ANC secretary explained that "violence is caused by people brought in buses by someone to the single-sex hostels, heavily armed, and directed to attack. They are recruited from the rural areas where there are five million unemployed. They are asked to attack the people who are said to prevent them from getting jobs, so they attack the hostels". Mr. Mbeki made it clear that the inciting is done by the security forces.

Mr. Mbeki also reiterated the ANC's demands that the

would be discussed and a decision reached at the constitutional conference". The ANC and its allies, including, more recently, the PAC, expect to dominate the conference and have their way.

The most difficult moment for Mr. Mbeki came when he explained that the ANC wanted "the law to take its course" in the trial of Mrs Winnie Mandela, since the organisation "respects the principles of judicial independence and equality before the law". In an ironic twist, several African

# The humorous, the scandalous

The occasion was serious, but some asides were less so

For some delegates, observers and pressmen, the 27th OAU summit was one of the worst ever organised. The day before the conference opened, a long queue formed for several hours outside Room 09, the accreditation centre for all delegates, observers and journalists. The foreign minister of Zambia, the finance minister of Tanzania and several ambassadors waited in the queue, which did not move an inch for an hour. The Namibian delegation (attending only their second OAU summit meeting) openly complained that "this cannot happen in Addis Ababa".

When Mr Tonye Graham-Douglas, the minister of aviation, came for his own accreditation, he was urged to bail out other African ministers. As the door opened for the Zambian minister, an elderly Arab lady, claiming to be an Egyptian journalist, promptly charged the door and physically gate-crashed into the hall. She was promptly thrown out by Graham-Douglas' police orderly. Sobbing, the Arab woman gathered strength, again charged the door, and landed right inside. Nor had the lady any papers to present to the accreditation committee. "I have dropped them", she said in-between sobs. "What can I do my brother? I dropped them". She was accredited.

A young Ghanaian journalist went berserk outside the accreditation centre when his gate-crashing ploy flopped. For an hour, he rained abuses upon all and sundry, including two policemen who were called in to arrest him.

The plenary sessions of the OAU summit, with thirty-two heads of state and ten premiers in attendance, were understandably

sober, sometimes tense, other times humorous. President Kenneth Kaunda revealed that he has been married for forty-five years and is an authority on matrimonial matters. Addressing President Babangida, Kaunda said, "I saw that you flashed a smile at your charming wife, and she smiled back".

In that respect President Sese Seko Kuku Mwezu Waza Banga Mobutu, better known as Mobutu Sese Seko, tried to outshine the new OAU chairman. On Thursday, the imposing Zairean leader walked into the conference hall firmly clutching the hand of his light-skinned wife, while his other hand held his famous walking stick. President Mobutu had been so excited after signing the African Economic Community treaty on Monday that he forgot his walking stick on the table and took several steps before he remembered and rushed back for it.

General Mobutu was not a happy man last Thursday. When he arrived the conference venue at 10.05 am, he found one of his bodyguards at the door, blood streaming from his head after a rough encounter with Nigerian security officials. The Zairean leader promptly declared that he would not enter the hall. It took all of General Babangida's persuasive skills to convince Mobutu to change his mind. An hour later, after Babangida formally closed the 27th OAU summit, he permitted the Ethiopian delegation to read "an important statement". Before they could do so, however, President Mobutu rose, retrieved his wife, and made for the door. General Babangida hurriedly left his seat on the dais, caught up with Mobutu and walked him all the way to his car.

President Mobutu was not the only African leader who carried a walking stick. Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, president of Kenya, who normally carries a fly-whisk with which he performs the *nyayo* dance, on this occasion carried a golden walking stick. The large Kenyan delegation, taking after Arap Moi, all wore immaculately tailored suits. Others probably took after them, for when the fifty-one heads of African delegations posed for a group photograph on Monday, there were enough suits to shame the Harrods store.



El-Bishari: walked out in protest

Ali Hassan Mwinyi, the sober president of Tanzania, appeared to be the shortest man in the large Tanzanian delegation. Day after day, he unobtrusively led it to occupy seats in the back rows and did not seem to mind. If Mwinyi went unnoticed, the legendary Nelson Mandela could not. There was a round of applause whenever the Black Moses appeared on the large television screen of the conference hall. There was visible disappointment when Mandela failed to make it to a scheduled press conference on Wednesday. Some

reporters had already waited for three hours when the highly eloquent Thabo Mbeki, secretary for international Affairs of the ANC, walked in to represent Mandela, who had departed Abuja two hours ahead of schedule on an urgent mission to China.

If Nelson Mandela fired the African's pride, Mr Barber Connable dampened it. This patronising American plutocrat, as president of the World Bank, was invited by President Babangida to address the summit on Tuesday morning. Mr Connable listed a litany of African economic and political woes and warned the leaders that if they do not improve, "Afro-pessimism" will take over in Europe and America and Africa will be "marginalised" by creditors. Many hoped it will happen soon.

There was palpable tension when the gangling President Habyarimana of Rwanda, in a calm voice, accused out-going OAU chairman, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, of aiding the invasion of his country. Tension was so high as Habyarimana spoke that President Babangida refused to leave the hall for his scheduled press conference, already ninety minutes late. When Babangida finally appeared before the press, he said he was late because "some leaders were making important

contributions" in the main meeting.

The Rwandese attack unsettled the balding Museveni, who, the day before, had delivered the most rousing speech of the whole conference. Speaking about de Klerk's reforms of petty apartheid, Museveni had ignored the substantial number of white observers in the hall when he said, "I am not eager to sit with a White man in the same toilet or to bath with him in the same beach!"

Futile attempts were made by General Olusegun Obasanjo to persuade Museveni not to respond to Habyarimana's attack. Obasanjo's open pleadings with Museveni were a part of the former's open campaign to be sponsored by the OAU for the post of UN secretary-general. The Federal Government of Nigeria did all it could to promote Obasanjo; along with General Yakubu Gowon and Alhaji Shehu Shagari (though not General Muhammadu Buhari) he occupied a conspicuous seat during the opening ceremony. President Babangida glibly referred to Obasanjo in his chairman's speech. On Tuesday and Wednesday, while Gowon and Shagari dropped out of sight, Obasanjo freely roamed the conference hall, spoke to more than a dozen leaders, posed with some of them for photographs, sat for some hours in the official Nigerian delegation, and at one point mounted the dais and engaged Babangida in an intimate chat.

General Obasanjo felt uncomfortable on Monday, when out-going UN secretary-general Xavier Peres de Cuellar switched from English to Spanish, then to French, and back again to English, in his address. All who spoke more than one international language made a show of it, including Africa Development Bank President Babacar Ndiaye (who speaks French and English), and Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, who speaks Portuguese, French and English.

Among the more colourful personalities attending the summit was Yasser Arafat, leader of Al-Fatah, the PLO and Palestine. Mr Arafat sported a revolver in the conference hall, the only one in sight, while two PLO commandos stood guard over him. Also attracting attention was the ample president of Togo, Gnassingbe Eyadema, who left his seat more often than most and was trailed by the largest entourage of all the leaders present in Abuja. In contrast, President Sam Nujoma of Namibia, now quite gray-bearded and unobtrusive, was trailed by a delegation of two. The most flamboyant leader in Abuja was Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, who was also the only leader who wore a military uniform. Rawlings wore his belt tight and sported his cap low on his forehead. He left for Ghana soon after the opening ceremony in order to celebrate his June 4 revolution at home. The messiest departure however, was by Ibrahim el-Bishara, Libya's foreign minister, who stormed out on Monday accusing Nigeria of imperialism in Liberia and of collaborating with the CIA in Chad. El-Bishara's unspoken motive was probably to reward Nigeria for Shagari's reluctant presence in Tripoli in 1982.

The most disciplined entourage in Abuja appeared to be Cameroun's. President Paul Biya showed no sign of facing growing unrest at home as he attended every session and almost never left his seat to roam around.

The Nigerian press conference on Tuesday was one of the least successful. President Babangida arrived ninety minutes late, and his information minister, Alex Akinyele, immediately launched into praise singing. "This is the tiger himself! This is the greatest leader of our generation!" General Babangida quickly reached out and tapped the minister's wrist, cutting him short in mid-sentence.

By Mahmud Jega



Museveni: what will change?

## Press

## Freedom on trial

Government seals up *The Guardian* and puts to question its commitment to human rights and freedom of the press

**B**ayo Oguntimehin, the editor of *Guardian Express*, a Lagos evening tabloid, had looked forward to commencing his annual leave May 30 but Joe Idika, one of his reporters aborted that prospect for him. Idika had anchored a scoop reported by seven other reporters from the evening paper on the fatal clash between the students of Yaba College of Technology and the police in the early hours of Wednesday May 29. The reporters had heard that two students had been felled by police bullets during a dawn crisis at the Yaba campus of the college.

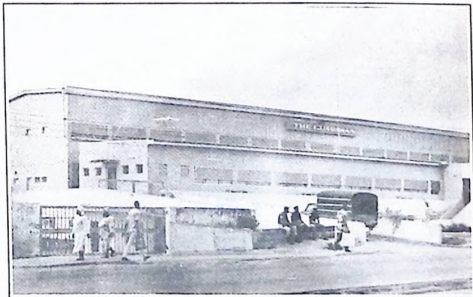
To confirm this, they went to the mortuary of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital, LUTH, where attendants confirmed "the receipt into (their) morgue of two students (Felix Ukutsemuya and Stephen Olumide) of the Yaba College of Technology who reportedly died from gun shot wounds". With this confirmation, their editor directed that it be used as the lead story for the evening. The paper came out at about 2 pm on that day with what it thought was an exclusive. They were wrong. A scoop, yes, but an exclusive, no. The *Evening Times*, another evening paper from the *Daily Times* group, also had the same fact as its lead story. But that evening as the editorial and operations staffers of *The Guardian*, a sister tabloid, sweated to put the daily paper to bed, stern-looking policemen in three trucks led by Ola Ogar, the Lagos Police Command image maker, drove into Rutam House, abode of the paper and sealed it off. That was how Oguntimehin's leave was adjourned indefinitely, and his

newspaper along with six other companies habiting in Rutam House were put in the slammer, sequel to what Ogar called "order from above".

For two days no one was told why *The Guardian* was put out of business. Then, on Friday May 31, Raji Rasaki, an army Colonel and governor of Lagos State, emerged from a brief consultation with vice president Augustus Aikhomu, to tell State House correspondents that he issued the order for the closure of the Oshodi-based newspaper because it published "false information" which in his opinion was likely to cause "public disorder". Rasaki said that as the chief security officer of the state, he would not fold his arms while "a section of the press is publishing information which is capable of inciting the public". He said *The Guardian Express* report on the Yabatech crisis contained some false information and to that extent

was irresponsible. "It is time" said Colonel Rasaki, "the Nigerian press begin to exhibit responsible journalism". *The Guardian*, said Rasaki, will remain out of business until the publisher publishes an apology to the governor or retracts the story.

While the governor was holding what some observers said appeared like court session at Dodan Barracks, Victor Eiomokhai, a police prosecutor was presenting Bayo Oguntimehin, Taiwo Akerele, Tunde Suleiman and Ben Akparanta to chief magistrate Z.A. Rehem at magistrate court one, Ikeja, for trial. The prosecutor accused the four *Guardian Express* staffers of conspiring with "two others at large" to publish false news. According to him, the foursome knowingly and falsely published a false news captioned "Police shot and killed two Yaba College of Technology student rioters". This he said,



Deserted Rutam House a fortnight ago

they did "with intent to cause fear and alarm among members of the public". Eiomokhai told the magistrate that the two acts constitute offences punishable under S516 and 531 of the Lagos State Criminal Code Cap. 31. Vol. 2 of 1973. When Ajomiwe Ihekweba, counsel to the embattled journalists requested for bail for them because the offences were not capital offences, chief magistrate Rehem refused his application in agreement with the prosecution's contention that the police is still investigating the matter. They were to be remanded in prison custody till June 10, when the case would come up for hearing.

The Nigerian Union of Journalist in its reaction described the closure of *The Guardian* and the detention of Oguntimehin and his reporters as another affront on the right of the press to inform the public without undue hindrance. Sani Zorro, its president told *Citizen* last week that the Lagos State government's order on *The Guardian* was an act of executive lawlessness. Zorro said that it was unfortunate that "the platform for exchange of ideas (the press) is being assaulted without any regard for the rule of law". Nosa Igiebor, Editor-In-Chief of *Tell Magazine*, agrees with him arguing that by its actions, the Lagos State government had subjected *The Guardian* to "a

triple jeopardy". Said he last week, "The government has taken four of their staff to court and they are being remanded in prison custody. Secondly, they have closed down the company (and) you can imagine the losses they are sustaining as a result of this closure. Thirdly, the governor is demanding a public apology from the publisher. So why should they be given three separate punishments for the same offence? What offence has the *Guardian Express* committed that its parent company and several others who had nothing to do with the offence should be subjected to triple jeopardy? I think the government which is entrusted with the task of enforcing our laws should also obey these laws".

"The governor's demand for a public apology is outrageous and unreasonable and no reasonable organisation or person will accede to it," said Zorro who also contended that it is not part of their responsibilities as journalists to please the government. For Igiebor "it is totally unacceptable and I will feel very bad if *The Guardian* accede to that demand". Rather than apologise as requested by Colonel Kasaki, the management of *The Guardian* last week opted for a judicial resolution of the matter. Rotimi Williams, a senior advocate of Nigeria, took *The Guardian's* case before an Ikeja

High court last week Tuesday. In the motion *ex parte* filed by the companies from *The Guardian* Group namely *Guardian Newspaper Limited*, *Guardian Magazines Limited*, *Express Printing and Packaging Materials Supplies Limited* and *Melleg Limited*, the court was requested to grant them leave to apply for the enforcement of their fundamental rights, jointly and severally. They prayed for a court order staying the decision of the Lagos State government to seal up the offices of each of the applicants at Rufam House, Isolo.

While the public awaits the outcome of these judicial actions, observers are questioning the veracity of the stated official reason for the closure. For one thing, they argue that the *Evening Times* published a report with similar facts and nobody had gone there to close it down. Secondly, it is being contended that the government does not have the right to bye-pass the law to mete out selective punishment for, as it is claimed, it is not the duty of the government to close down any press house for publication of false news. That, they insist, is the prerogative of the court. Consequently, it has been insinuated that there is more to the closure of *The Guardian* than meets the eye and that the governor may be punishing the newspaper for its past sins. At least Sani Zorro did not discountenance this theory when he told *Citizen* that "the governor definitely has an ulterior motive". Perhaps so, for in the heat of the students' crisis, *The Guardian* did an editorial in its May 25 edition where it berated the government for its bellicose response to the students demands. In the editorial, *The Guardian* said although the NANS' ultimatum and demands may not be entirely realistic, governments spokesmen's response was nothing short of irresponsibility. It said that "young persons will be young persons, and due allowance should be made for the exuberance that is bound with youth". How-



Friends and colleagues of the fallen Yabatech students at the college gate last week

ever, no such allowance, argued *The Guardian*, "can be made for those who make official bellicose utterances" of government officials to the fury of "an army of occupation" and contended that such wayward approach to crisis remains "unacceptable when (done) on behalf of government that has asked to be judged by its human rights records and its sobriety". Calling for dialogue in the editorial which remains the sharpest and most indictive of government's bully tactics in recent times, the paper said: "at a time when the place of force in human affairs is under severe questioning, the challenge, surely, is to seek peaceable means of conflict resolution".

The government, *Citizen* reliably gathered, was not amused by this rebuke. As if this was not enough, the paper spearheaded a barrage of anti-police reports following the killing of Dr. Nwogu Okere, its former staffer. This culminated in the publication of a cover story "Police Merchants of Death" in *The African Guardian*, June 3, 1991. In that article, the police was heavily indicted. So when the news of the closure was broken, Thursday May 30, it was not difficult to allege victimisation.

Last year, two national newspapers saw red courtesy of Colonel Rasaki. *The Champion* and *Vanguard* were shut for publishing reports of the quarrel between the Alaba International Market Traders and the Lagos State Government. The Federal Government had to intervene on behalf of the two dailies before the governor was persuaded to reopen them. The present predicament of *The Guardian* is coming seven years after the famous decree No. 4 trial of 1984, when Tunde Thompson, then the senior foreign affairs correspondent, and Nduka Irabor were tried June 4, and jailed July 4, for publishing information that embarrassed the federal government.

By Bolaji Adebisi  
with Akinyele Aluko

## Showdown at the newstand

### Newspaper proprietors try vendors, distributors for size

The simmering dispute between the Newspapers Distributors Association of Nigeria, NDAN, and the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria, NPAN, came to a head last week as the former led its members on a four-day boycott of the media houses from Saturday, June 1, through Tuesday. In what turned out to be both a show of strength and weakness, NDAN forged a rare alliance with the vendors union to induce a print-media "news-crunch" in the Lagos metropolis by blocking established wholesale and retail outlets.

Not to be caught napping, NPAN, through its secretary-general, Dr. Yemi Ogunbiyi reacted by threatening to cut the ground off the feet of the agents by dealing with the vendors directly. In a press statement made available to media houses on Monday, June 3, signed by Ogunbiyi and NPAN president, Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola, the association urged members to mobilise their staff to sell to the public directly adding that it had already notified the police in case there was any threat to peace by "disruptive agents". According to the statement "rather than give in to blackmail of a few agents who act as parasites on

both vendors and newspaper houses, the NPAN is determined to break this monopoly and do away once and for all with these middle-men".

The battle line was drawn. What began as a muffled whimper of protest early last month when the distributors' association advised against increasing the cover prices of newspapers as was mooted by NPAN at its Abeokuta meeting had become a veritable storm. NPAN's decision to increase the cover price of daily newspapers to 2.00 Naira from 1.50 Naira and weeklies from 2.00 Naira to 3.00 Naira was hinged on the escalating cost of production.

NDAN under the leadership of Chief (Mrs.) Joko Ojomo argued, however that the price hike would further narrow down the readership base of the print media given the nation's present economic condition. Having anticipated lower sales turnover which would, of course, have debilitating consequences on the dwindling resources of its members, NDAN said that it would accept a price hike only if the interests of agents and vendors are duly incorporated into NPAN's scheme.

But the newspaper barons had other plans. According to the na-



Abiola and Ogunbiyi: fed up with NDAN

tional secretary of the Newspapers Distributors Association, Richard Oche, several news media wrote to inform their agents of the proposed price increases in the last week of May. Sensing a sidetrack, NDAN dispatched, on May 21, a terse list of demands to NPAN which was given up till month-end to react positively. The agents demanded an increase in the commission accruing to them from the sale of newspapers from 10 Kobo to 15 Kobo and that of vendors from 30 Kobo to 35 Kobo. For weeklies, the distributors wanted 20 Kobo out of 3,000 Naira for themselves and 50 Kobo for their vendors. NDAN also wanted media houses to give a firm commitment on the acceptance of unsold copies as well as take responsibility for "shortage packs" since as, Oche alleged, "it has become rampant for newspaper staffers to remove copies from parcels in transit". The distributors also advocated the incorporation of their body into the decision making machinery of NPAN and a halt to "arbitrary stoppage of agents". By evening of Friday, May 31, when the unionists met at their "Freedom Rendezvous" - Mayflower Hotel, Olorunsogo, Lagos, tempers had reached such boiling point that the decision to embark on a general strike from the next morning was unanimous.

Perhaps to underscore the determination of the newspaper proprietor to call the bluff of the distributors once and for all, *Daily Times* managing director, Dr. Yemi Ogunbiyi deployed his staff to the streets to sell newspapers to consumers. Openly disdainful of the NDAN members whom he saw as unhelpful in the newspaper production process, Ogunbiyi repeatedly hinted that modalities were being worked out to dislodge the agents from the distribution process.

In the interim however, NPAN members sought to break the strike by exploiting cracks within the ranks of the unions. At their caucus meeting at Mayflower Hotel, NDAN officials actually admitted

this much. They pointed accusing fingers at seven of their members (names withheld) and other agents belonging to the Nigerian News Vending Company (NNVC) and Newspaper Distributors Association of Nigeria. At the sales department of the *Daily Times*, officials made no secret of the fact that some agents had actually been coming forward to book orders.

If the unions were disunited, what obtained in most media houses was an uneasy calm. Magazine publishers most of whom are not members of NPAN felt particularly flustered by the situation. *Tell* magazine's editor-in-chief, Nosa Igiebor, could not understand why his magazine should suffer the misfortune along with the big newspaper houses since *Tell* "offers one of the most competitive commission in the business". His dilemma was understandable: packages of the latest edition of his magazine meant for the prime Lagos market lay in a heap on the floor of the circulation department.

*Citizen* which offers the same commission with *Tell* was also a

prawns, the team, caused quite a stir trying to do what vendors know how to do best.

By Tuesday afternoon, June 4, when NPAN president, Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola led the press barons to the negotiating table with NDAN, however, wise counsel prevailed. At the meeting, held at the conference room of the *Daily Times* at Agidingbi, agents and vendors agreed to return to the streets after NPAN firmly committed itself to retrieving unsold copies from them. On the issue of commission increment, NPAN executives agreed to put heads together in order to avoid differentials in the rate that might be quoted by different media houses. NDAN chairperson Chief (Mrs.) Joko Ojomo, who was jubilant after the meeting returned a "no victor, no vanquished" verdict adding that newspaper organisations are now more conscious of the vital role of members of the organisation in the newspapering business.

Industry watchers however, reckon that for the two combatants, the next few months may be a period of house cleaning. NDAN, they say,

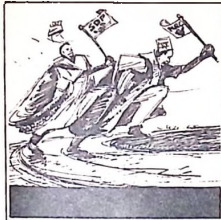


Concord staff out on the street to sell their papers

victim of the NPAN — NDAN face-off. Marketing executives of the company led by its marketing officer for the southern zone, Isiaka Ajibola, set up sale-points at vantage positions in the central business area of Lagos. Clad in vests, bearing the magazine's logo and

must grapple with its chaotic house which resulted in a situation where some agents refused to go along with the Association's decisions and sat at table with NPAN either to represent themselves, the NNVC or other splinter groups.

By Olayinka Tella



**P**olitics is generally seen as slippery, risky, and dangerous. That is even discounting military interference. If this is accurate, in Borno State, it is more so. In the run up to the governorship race, little of the old bitterness, narrow-mindedness and self-destruction has changed.

Now, as in 1979 and 1983, the same merchant class, the civil service and, the traditional structure are busy reaffirming their old positions, but in new garbs. In effect, this means that the governorship candidate, at least as for the National Republican Convention, NRC, must come from Borno Emirate. Generally referred to as "metropolitan," it had over the years, exclusively provided candidates for the major posts in the state.

The race for the Government House located in the old GRA, Maiduguri, started with a gentleman's agreement in the NRC which conceded the candidature to those areas that had in the past given solid support to mostly the northern establishment. That honour fell on Dikwa Emirate made up of Bama, Ngala and Dikwa. The emirate had produced a governorship candidate in the second republic in the late Alhaji Kam Salem, a one-time formidable Inspector General of Police.

Alhaji Kam Salem, contesting on the ticket of the NPN, lost to Alhaji Muhammadu Goni's GNPP. Kam Sakem's loss was not so much the unpopularity of the person, but the arbitrariness of his selection by

## Borno State In search of candidates

**In this arid zone not only is water scarce but candidates to vie for the top job too**

the merchant class, a choice disliked by the civil service and the traditional structure which saw in his candidacy, the revival of an historic dynastic squabble between Dikwa and Borno emirates. It switched support to the NPN.

Trouble in the current race started once it was understood by a section of the elites in the NRC that Dikwa should provide the governorship candidate. The civil service and the powerful merchant class, had held a meeting in Maiduguri at which Alhaji Abba Gana Terab, an experienced civil servant whose father had once been

general manager of Borno Radio Television. For another, he was outrightly rejected by the "metropolitan" people of Maiduguri, especially the echelons of traditional power, for roughly the same reason Kam Salem was rejected. He was also seen, together with the merchant class, as a GNPP man in the garb of NRC, who wanted a return to power through the "back-door."

The kingmakers decided that there should be more names from Bama. A banker's name was mentioned and the Borno Emirate traditional hierarchy, feeling



**Jarma: One of the power players**

district head of Bama was picked. At the time, he was a director-general in the Borno State civil service. He resigned in March.

His name was forwarded to the Bama people by the merchant class, who in the wider interest of the area accepted his candidature. That was as far as his acceptability went. When his name was presented to the NRC kingmakers, several were aghast for a long list of reasons. For one, he was Goni's point-man as the



**Kingibe: SDP Chairman**

threatened by the Bama challenge came up with the name of Umar Abba Gana, a one time commissioner in the state and now managing director of African Petroleum. The introduction of the new candidates was fortuitous for Abba Gana Terab, because the Bama people now saw it as a move to split their loyalty and scuttle the chances of a Bama candidate. For now, the banker's candidacy is dormant, even though personally, the

kingmakers agreed that he is the best candidate. Umar Abba Gana, who recently lost his well-known father, Alhaji Abba Jiddun Gana, has since withdrawn for obvious reasons.

**E**ven though Abba Gana Terab's name is still top on the list, mainstream Borno Emirate people strongly oppose him. A powerful kingmaker held a meeting with the Bama people and told them that nothing personal, but he could not support Abba Gana Terab's candidacy. Despite these set-backs, it is becoming clear that he is far ahead of the pack. He enjoys a wide support of the people and kingmakers in the other areas of the state.

Of course many more names have come up. For instance, NRC chairman in Borno State, Malam Mala Alamai, a one-time commissioner in Major General Tunde Idiagbon's cabinet, has shown interest but he is getting strong signals not to even think about it. Alhaji Umar Lawan

Kareto, a member of the defunct House of Representatives on the ticket of the GNPP is also interested. He is Muhammadu Goni's cousin and brother to the chairman of the Maiduguri Metropolitan Council. A few others, not regarded by the party hierarchy as serious contenders have put up posters proclaiming their interest. One is Baba Mai Ali, a former administrative secretary of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital.

With the fast shifting political terrain, a Kano-based lawyer, Alhaji Mustapha Bulama, who works in the chamber of Kaloma Ali, a

governorship aspirant on the NPN ticket in 1983 himself, has put forward his name, but like Abba Gana Terab, he is not particularly a hot cake. Actually, his name had come up before, but things quietened down a bit until recently when he re-emerged with the backing of a strong businessman, Alhaji Umar Ali and Alhaji Asheikh Jarma, a junior minister in the second republic and Governor of Borno State for three months. He is from Munguno Local Government, the same with Alhaji Asheikh Jarma, but has largely been an absentee indigene.

Alhaji Mustapha is also being

known struggle between factions in the party. Struggle in the SDP has been straight-forward, between the PF and PSP. In Borno State there is an added dimension. Until recently, it seemed settled that Alhaji Maina Ma'aji, an PF favourite in the stable of the party bigwigs, would swing the candidacy.

However, he had to contend with Alhaji Ibrahim Ali, the strongman of "metropolitan" politics. Alhaji Ibrahim is his own man, neither PSP's nor PF's. He was a member of the defunct House of Representatives and chairman of the Maiduguri metropolitan council until stripped by a court.

An engineer, he commands the support of the ordinary SDP members. From day one, he declared his intention to run for the governorship of the state. The candidacy of course, is to be determined by the primaries, in which case, he stands a better chance. If the party ditches him, there will be a mighty split.

There is no love lost between him and the Kingibe people. Recently, his newspaper, *READ*, ran a scathing attack against the PF.

In the latest political development, the PF faction of the SDP has become far less enthusiastic about the candidature of Maina Ma'aji, preferring a retired senior police officer, Alhaji Ibrahim Abba. Whoever the SDP fields as its candidate, the "battle" should be interesting if only because of the twin issue of rivalry between the PSP and PF people and the chairmanship of Baba Gana Kingibe.

By Mohammad Bomo

Citizen, June 10, 1991



Ikimi: NRC Chairman



Umar, Managing Director, AP

backed by the NRC state officers. They hold the position that having worked so hard, they should have the first choice of whose candidacy to support.

Citizen learnt that two more candidates are expected to emerge soon.

The Social Democratic Party, SDP, has its troubles too, despite the party's fair showing in the December 8 local council elections. The party's national chairman, Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe, is from Borno State, a factor that is expected to smoothen things up even if to just show solidarity. One of the problems is the widely

## Industry

## Steel and Iron

## Experts jaw-jaw on the relevance of iron and steel to the national economy

**S**ave for the invited guests and journalists covering the event, majority of those present at the seminar were trade union activists, thus giving the impression that it was yet another labour activists' conclave. On the contrary, the Senior Staff Association of Iron and Steel's one day seminar which took place at Durbar Hotel, Lagos May 31, was more of a national issue than a union affair.

The seminar titled "The relevance of the Iron and steel Industry to the economy" was attended by government officials and representative of the private sector. The president of the association Alhaji Rabiu Mohammed wet the appetite of the participants at the seminar with a welcome speech that was more of a keynote address. Despite the importance of the Iron and Steel Industry to the industrial

growth of any nation, Alhaji Mohammed lamented that successive governments in the country have not paid proper attention to the industry. But Dr. B.A. Agbonifor, executive director of Centerpiece Consultants Nigeria Ltd Benin, thought it would be out of place to begin to consider the question of relevance or irrelevance of the steel industry in Nigeria, nearly a decade after the establishment of the major steel plants.

He therefore decided to speak on the relevance and challenges ahead of the steel industry in Nigeria. In terms of actual production, he observed that "Nigeria's performance in steel production is very low". The highest output of crude steel ever recorded in Nigeria was 341,000 tonnes in 1985 as against the total world output of 715 million

tonnes.

If properly developed, Dr. Agbonifor believes that Nigeria's steel industry would be a force to be reckoned with among the committee of nations. According to the consultant, a strong and virile iron and steel industry would provide the basis for industrialisation, promote the transfer of technology, create employment, conserve foreign exchange and promote self-reliance, and provide the basis for actual political and economic independence.

Unfortunately, the industry has been suffering from conceptual errors, lack of proper funding and poor management. Despite the myriad of problems facing the industry, Dr. Agbonifor believes that "we have the capacity and the competence to make the steel industry in Nigeria work". To him, what the nation needs is the will to succeed.

He therefore called on the government to show more commitment to the success of the steel industry which, according to him, should begin with adequate funding. Agbonifor also appealed to government to make experience and competence the yardsticks for appointment of top management staff of the steel industry.

In the face of the proposed plan to privatise government owned steel plants, the Benin based consultant suggested that "all the government-owned steel companies should be commercialised". This however, must be based on adequate funding and non interference by government. The managers of the commercialised steel companies would also be expected to be innovative and aggressive in marketing, for in the words of Alhaji B. Mohammed who represented the minister of mines, power and steel, Air Vice Marshal Nura Imam (Rtd) "government alone cannot develop the nation's economy or any sector for that matter. It requires the support and



Mohammed: government pay lip-service to industry

contribution of the citizenry and especially those that are directly concerned with the industry".

At the end of the seminar, the association issued a fifteen-point communique which called on the government to raise the equity base of the government owned steel companies to a minimum of 70

percent of the total capital investment at any particular point in time.

The communique observed that privatisation of such a vital sector of the economy would put the control of the industry in the hand of foreign investors which could result to loss of political and economic

independence by the country. It therefore favoured commercialisation of government-owned steel companies. The communique also call on government to complete the Ajaokuta Steel Project before handing over power to civilians.

By Tola Sunday

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### Turi honoured

Vitafoam Nigeria PLC recently played host to the new chairman of *Daily Times*, Malam Turi Muhammadu at the Mandarin Chinese Restaurant, Ikeja—Lagos.

The dinner party was attended by close friends and business associates of Malam Turi Muhammadu among whom were Chief Sam Bolarinde, chairman and managing director, Vitafoam Nigeria PLC; Dr Yemi Ogunbiyi, managing director, *Daily Times* of Nigeria PLC; Chief J.J. Ajatta, general manager (Finance), UTC Lagos;

Malam Kabiru Yusuf, executive director, *Citizen Magazine*; Malam Yakubu Mohammed, executive director, *Newswatch Magazine* and Ms Duro Onabolu, public relations adviser, UAC PLC among others.

Speaking at the occasion, the chairman and managing director of Vitafoam Nigeria PLC, Chief Sam Bolarinde, described Malam Turi Muhammadu as a gentleman of transparent honesty, and that Nigeria is indeed lucky that she has people of the calibre of the new *Daily Times* chairman.

Responding to the toast in his honour, Malam Muhammadu thanked the management of Vitafoam for the honour done him. He said he had learnt some

invaluable management lessons from his association with Vitafoam PLC and promised to live up to expectation in his new position.

### Business hall of fame

The Imperial Chinese Cuisine restaurant of the Federal Palace Hotel, Lagos literally glittered last week when the shakers and movers of the business world converged there to toast the honour of *Business Magazine's* "Twenty five Distinguished Business Personalities". They were inducted into the monthly magazine's Hall of Fame in a most colourful ceremony.

The list of recipients read like a who is who in Nigeria's industrial and financial scene: Otunba Michael Balogun, pioneer indigenous merchant banker, Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola, the newspaper baron, Sylvester Moemeka, crown prince of advertising practitioners, Garba Hamza, merchant extraordinary. Others include Chief Augustine Ilodibe, proprietor of

Ekene Dili Chukwu Group of Companies, Mohammed El Khalil of 7Up Bottling Company, Chief Adeyemi Lawson, Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu and the late Dr Mobolaji Bank-Anthony.

The publisher of *Business Magazine*, Mr Ted Iwere told *Citizen* that the ceremony which would be an annual event, was motivated by the need to bestow honour and recognition on people who have contributed to the growth and development of the Nigerian business environment. Explaining the criteria for selecting the award recipients, Iwere said, "the house settled for tangible investments owned, Naira value-added generated by investments, intellectual inputs of direct relevance to the economy made by the potential inductees and social responsibility contributions made".

By Ike Okonta



Turi with friends

## Atlas to diversify

**A**TLAS Nigeria PLC has planned to diversify into fasteners and foundry. Towards this end, the company has acquired eight hectares of land at Okene in Kwara State where the proposed factory would be sited.

The chairman of the company, Alhaji Ado Ibrahim, disclosed this at the board meeting held in Lagos recently.

Also, the company is offering for subscription 9,000,000 ordinary shares at 60 Kobo each to its existing shareholders. Simultaneously, there would be another

9,000,000 ordinary shares for subscription to the general public.

The offer for subscription is aimed at enhancing the capital base of the company and to part-finance the implementation of the company's diversification programme, estimated to cost approximately 54 million Naira. The programme has the official backing of the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) as the main financing institutions.

By Tola Sunday



Ibrahim: (first left) displaying the share document at the ceremony

## Winners at Jeleen supergifts draw

**A**.J. Seward, a division of UAC of Nigeria PLC and a leading manufacturer of personal products held the Lagos/West zonal draw of the Jeleen supergifts promotion it organised recently. The draw which was held at its Oregon complex in Lagos saw Lander A. Amusa emerge the winner of the star prize of a giant deep freezer. Other prizes include a large grinding machine for the second winner and table-top gas cookers for the third. There were also 100 consolation prizes of 20 Naira each.

The objective of the promotion is to strengthen the interest of consumers

in Jeleen and to further generate increased level of awareness for the brand. A.J. Seward's success this

few years had been largely due to the abundance of strong brands in its portfolio. These brands,

include Fresh, Shield, Lotus, Elida, Nku among other beauty and body care products.

By Ike Okonta



Winners at Jeleen supergifts draw

## AFRICA

## Algeria

## Islamic Republic of Algeria?

As fundamentalist take to the street, Benjedid calls out the troupes in a desperate bid to stem a revolution

**T** rue, three-quarters of the world is in a sort of political transition. Algeria's brand of transition certainly transcends the simple idea of a nomenclatural dropping — from Socialism, or any political idea system that is not Western, to Capitalism. The celebration, is however, at any level being challenged by the looming influence of Islam. Is it not said that the West loathes Islam more than she does Socialism, Marxism, and all that? Now, they may have a cause to worry. Algeria, perhaps, the most influential Arab nation in Africa, may as early as this year be transformed into a fully Islamic state.

Algiers was almost in a state of anarchy for the whole of last week as security forces clashed with members of the main opposition party, the Islamic Salvation Front. However, when considered in its proper perspective, the underlying undertones are that Algerian people have had enough

of any pretentious ideology for governance, and want a return to basics. Most of the reports say majority of the protesters are youths armed with axes and stones — and well, the dependable faith in Islam.

In the first day of the clashes, six people were reported killed. The riots, said to be the biggest, was organised by the Islamic Salvation Front ISF, to demand for changes to the electoral laws formulated by the National Liberation Front Party government as guide to the general elections formerly scheduled for the end of the month. The ISF is protesting that the laws favour the ruling party; to be sure, when the laws were first made public earlier in the year, the ISF protested and even vowed to boycott the polls. Now that the elections are few weeks away, they certainly made good their promise. After three days of violent rioting, and two additional human casualty, the government reacted swiftly.

President Chadli Bendjedid announced the sacking of his government, the postponement of the general elections and, the worse — the introduction of a state of seige. And, following the complete take-over of the streets of the major cities, the ISF called off the strikes. Later, they called for systematic rioting, which meant that the people should not confront the security forces.

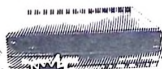
The elections are postponed. Not forever, of course. The government may just be postponing the day of reckoning; operating on borrowed time, to seek a way out of the fundamental threat of the people under the able leadership of ISF. Already, ISF is the clear favourite to win the elections — they won, comprehensively, the local elections, last year. And in this era of change, it may not be long before Algeria's background, unofficial Islamic strength takes the centre stage.

By Rabiū Barde

Score... in the  
**LIPTON**  
**TREE TOP**

**DUO-SCOOP**

March 25 - June 28, 1991



Star Prizes

2 VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDERS



Star Prizes

4 REFRIGERATORS

Mid-way draw  
Kaduna-May 1991

## Lebanon Turning on the heat

Arguments raged back and forth between the Israeli and Lebanese authorities on who should be held responsible for the former's attack on Palestinian positions in Southern Lebanon last week. The Lebanese prime minister, Mr Karami denounced the raids and called on international community to stop supplying Israel with weapons. The country's ambassador to the UN, Mr. Ghaleb in protest to the UN secretary-general described the attack as an "unprovoked aggression". He said the attack is meant to sabotage the process of national reconciliation in which the government has been trying to bring together all the factions in the country. Israel, he said is not happy with on going peace process which would require her to implement resolution 425 that will see the Lebanese army take from Israel southern Lebanon.

Israeli authorities countered saying they attacked the base of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) where Palestinian groups have been

launching attack over her northern border. Israel appeared to have vindicated the Lebanese position when it maintained that it attacked because Beirut government has no intention of disarming anti-Israeli guerrillas. Observers said the message is a clear warning that Israel is not likely to give up the Southern Lebanon it controls.

Israeli's continued occupation of the South-Lebanon is in violation of several UN resolutions as well as the 1949 Lebanese-Israeli truce. Her refusal to leave had complicated the government's plan to disband the various militia units including the Israeli's surrogate, the South Lebanese army including attempts at peaceful resolution of the 16 year conflict in Lebanon. Incidentally, the Palestinians who were expelled from Jordan in the 1970s have always served as pawns in the Middle East political chess board, Israel obsessed with fighting the Arab terrorists attacked at will. In 1982, thousand of defenseless Palestinian refugees were murdered in Israel air raids on the Palestinians bases deep inside

Lebanon. With the removal of General Michael Aoun last October by combinations of Syrian and Phalangist forces, the Syrian-backed President Elias Hrawi became encouraged to make further peace move to all the factions in the conflict.

But Israeli continued belligerence to its Arab neighbours which it takes on at will put question mark the whole Middle East peace process conceived in the wake of the Gulf crisis, America and its allies hoped to settle the Middle East problem once and for all. Embodied to be tackled in the proposed Middle East conference, are the issue of homeland for the Palestinians and return of the occupied territories Israeli seized in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

But disagreements by the Israel and key Arabs on the form the conference would take has made its realisation impossible. The main point of disagreement remains: what role the UN would play in the peace process. While the many Arab states notably Syria strongly supported that UN play active role in the peace conference, Israel wants only limited UN role and favour only direct talks. Analysts are believe that as long as America keeps arming the Israelis it will be difficult to tame her arrogance.

By Abu Momoh



Star Prizes

40 TABLE FANS

Consolation Prizes

4000 T-SHIRTS

Final-draw  
Lagos-July 1991

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Buy Tree Top/peel off the Label. Or a pack of Lipton Tea and cut off the top panel.  
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Entries received by May 7 qualify only for the mid-way draw

Entries received between May 7 and June 28 qualify only for the final draw

The draws will be public events supervised by eminent persons in the community

### Disqualifications:

Only entries received by June 28 and accompanied with one Tree Top Label or one Lipton Tea top panel would qualify for the draws.

Employees of Lever Brothers, Lintas, as well as the pack and label printers and their relatives do not qualify to enter.

Hurry send as many entries as you wish accompanying each entry with either a Label from Tree Top or the top panel from a Lipton pack as you could win a fantastic prize in the LIPTON/TREE TOP DUO-SCOOP.



LBN

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# To zone a president

The arguments for the formal zoning of the presidency of the country to a geographic region are the same as those for reflecting federal character in the appointment of public officials, that is, to create a sense of belonging in all components of the federation. Of course, many Nigerians are opposed to the practice, if not the principle, of federal character; they see it as enthrone mediocrity, combating merit, lowering standards and unduly frustrating the careers of some officials. Gray Longe said as much back in 1980.

The irony of the Nigerian situation today is that those who have opposed federal character are now pressing for the zoning of the presidency. There is some logic in this; the establishment of federal character as a major constitutional principle is by-and-large attributed to "northern domination" of political power. In that case, a southern president should destroy or whittle down the principle. Professor Afigbo has written that federal character suffers from "overgeneralisation" and is likely to "overload and overburden" the public service. Perhaps, but since a northern politician (civilian or soldier) is unlikely to see things that way, it may well require a southern president to do so.

Almost to a man, northern politicians in both political parties see no need to zone the presidency to a geographic area. There is logic in this, too, since the result of his exercise may well be a southern president. Some of them have said that the president must be "the best that the party has to offer", an ironical position for anyone who supports federal character to assume. In any case, who said only "the best" should be president? The seven presidents Nigeria has had since 1960 cannot be said to be the best that their respective constituencies had to offer. Nor is it easy to quantify "best" in politics in the same way one can judge a sprinter, a pilot or an artisan. Possibly, the best material for president is

he or her who gets there by means fair or foul.

To take matters back, has the principle of zoning got any merit? The most comprehensive argument by any Nigerian I have seen on this matter was by Godwin Sogolo, who supports the broad principle of quotas. Quotas are near-universal in their application, variously called "reverse discrimination" or "affirmative action". The practical import of the principle is to create a sense of belonging in all component groups. Its operational code is to enhance the position of disadvantaged groups by neutralising historically acquired advantages of some groups. In other words, the advantages an individual may have in society due to the good luck of being born into an advantaged group will be removed. For example, a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant American has, due to good luck, been born into a segment of the society that still reaps dividend due to the historical fact that their ancestors enslaved others. Conversely, a black American still suffers from the fact that his ancestors were slaves. It is therefore imperative to take away, by means of quotas, the advantages that a WASP American will have over a black one.

Sogolo will not accept the thing about "merit"; talents are arbitrarily distributed by nature and no one deserves what he gets. One should not therefore ask to be rewarded for what he was not responsible for. Nor is "qualification" admissible; having been once favoured to acquire it one should not now use it, to seek further advantages over others. Sogolo even summarised, "Let all persons use their talents to the best of their ability, for that is all that they deserve and nothing more". As for injustice to some persons, well, there is as yet no system of distributive justice that is without



Presidential aspirants (clockwise) Shinkafi, Balogun, Ubeku, Falae

some injustice.

If these philosophical arguments (badly condensed here) justify the use

of quotas for appointment of public officials, how do they apply to the choice of a president? I am aware of the complaint by Nigerian radicals that newbreed politicians have ignored the country's real problems and are arguing about whether the president should come from "the Middle Belt, Sokoto Caliphate, Kaduna Mafia, Yoruba Axis or CARJA states". I sympathise with this concern, but what to do, since they have sucked us into this debate?

As far as one can determine, and to the extent that every northerner as president is a "northern president", their preponderance in the office can be attributed to some factors of history. For civilian presidents, the important factors are a large population and a measure of political unity among northerners. As for military presidents, the forgoing factors partly apply, and the outcome of the 1967-70 civil war is also important. For the purpose of neutralising undue advantages, we should identify who is to blame for what, and mete out punishment, ie quota, accordingly.

The north cannot be blamed for having a large population. In fact, given the available land area, southerners have put in more effort to "go forth and multiply" than northerners have done. Northern demographic advantage is slight; in terms of the 1963 census, it is 54% of the country's total. For the sake of stability in the Federation, this advantage can be neutralised by granting equality of representation to all 21 states in political conventions to elect a presidential candidate. This is probably the furthest we can go on this account without tempering with one-man-one-vote, a fundamental democratic principle.

In political terms, it is not so much the size of the northern population, but its relative unity of political purpose that is a problem. Peter Ekeh says that the consciousness of a one-North is "due to the personality and activities of Ahmadu Bello in the years 1954 to 1966". If that was the case, then the legacy of Alhaji Ahmadu Bello has to be neutralised. There is no constitutional, legal or administrative way of doing this. The only feasible way is for a newbreed politician to propound and bring to the fore issues on which northerners cannot unite. A sample of this issues will include exchange rate of the Naira, privatisation of public firms, WAEC fees, school calendar, stationing troops abroad, prison decongestion, private television stations, secret ballot and funding of primary education. The only snag here, for an opportunistic southern politician, is that these issues will disunite the South as well.

The preponderance of northern military officers as presidents is best contained by stopping military intervention in politics altogether. Lopsidedness in the mili-

tary hierarchy as a consequence of a civil war will ordinarily require a generation to remedy. While enforcing quota at entry points, this alone cannot guarantee a balance among the top brass. Bayo Adegkanye has argued that quota systems introduced into an army will negatively affect its "total organisation, unitary command, centralised authority, discipline, communications network, *esprit de corps*, concentration of force, rank structure, combat performance and military-social relations". Clearly, an army cannot pursue quota too far beyond the entry point. But since the appointment of service chiefs is more a political than a military decision, the solution to any perceived lopsidedness will have to be settled in the political arena. If, as said above, an astute politician succeeds in creating political cleavages along lines other than the primordial, then solidarity within the military establishment will have to be realigned on the basis of new political realities. We will then

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**Professor Afigbo has written that federal character suffers from "overgeneralisation" and is likely to "overload and overburden" the public service. Perhaps, but since a northern politician (civilian or soldier) is unlikely to see things that way, it may well require a southern president to do so.**

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have, for example, right-wing officers pitched against left-wing officers. Not that this is itself safe for the country, but it is better than geographic cliques.

Why can't the newbreed politicians force a realignment of political forces in Nigeria? Are politicians more inept than other groups? Be reminded that politicians are not the only ones who must elect a leader on a regular basis: every labour union, professional body, village association, school alumni, youth club, student society, robbery syndicate, aristocratic council, producers' cartel, secret cult and palmwine-drinking confraternity have to do the same. The majority of these groups in Nigeria have transcended primordial sentiment. One recalls, for example, the struggle between ICAN and ANAN among accountants; NLC "Democrats" against "Marxists"; HND holders versus degree holders in COREN; radicals versus conservatives in ASUU, NANS and the Bar Association, and pro-government editors against independents in the Guild of Editors.

We should refuse to use any constitutional or administrative means to zone the presidency. If politicians cannot find a way to choose a president, well, we can always extend good old military rule.

By Mahmud Jega

## Uganda

## A reporter's diary

In March, an invitation from General Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman of the African Leadership Forum, ALF, was sent to various organisations, individuals and professional bodies from different countries in Africa to attend a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA). It was scheduled for May 18-23 at Kampala, Uganda. Jointly sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, Economic Commission for Africa and World Bank, the conference was attended by five African heads of state and scores of diplomats. An account of the trip to and from Kampala is reflected in the 2-part diary of a Reporter beginning this week.

from where we plan to catch the flight to Entebbe, Uganda the following day. With all airport formalities completed, we approach some cheerful air hostesses who issue us a coupon to cover our stay at the Addis Ababa Hilton Hotel. We are joined by about 12 transit passengers on a bus that takes us through the outskirts of the town to a hilly crest on which the Hilton Hotel stands. As we drive past I take in the sleepy look of Addis Ababa and can't help comparing it with the bustle of Lagos in the rush hours. The town is serene as shopkeepers open their shops and the citizens move around. They don't seem to be in a hurry for anything, not even to make money. War, I thought must have sapped their morale.

We arrive at the Hilton which looks like a 3 star hotel.

May 14, 1991: I leave Lagos for Addis Ababa on board Ethiopian Airlines flight. My companion on this trip is Hajjia Fatima Abubakar, the Director-General in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Yola, Gongola State. Check in time is 9.00 pm and flight departs Murtala Muhammed International Airport at 11 pm. Nigeria Airways does not ply that route but operates an irregular flight to Nairobi, Kenya, where local connections can be made with Kenya Airways to Entebbe. To avoid being stranded at Nairobi we opt for Ethiopian Airlines known for their efficiency and hospitality. As soon as the flight takes off, I go to sleep before I am asked by the air hostess to help myself to a cold dinner. We stop briefly at Douala, Cameroun. It's too dark to see much of the airport except the control towers and service crew milling around the aircraft. I go back to sleep.

May 15: We arrive Addis Ababa at about 7 o'clock



Transit in Ethiopia: Addis Ababa Hilton

It is no where near the Abuja Hilton in splendour. We are allocated rooms on the third floor. I settle down, pulling back the sliding door which opens on to a small balcony from where I survey the city. To the east of the hotel is an unplanned settlement with old houses and rusty corrugated roofing sheets. Opposite the main entrance are dual carriage ways, modern buildings, one

## TRAVELOGUE

of them houses the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Cool, shady parks and gardens.

After lunch, Fatima and I take a stroll around the town. The weather is fine as we go past a main street in a business section of the town, a car sales and renting office, some banks, offices, the Agricultural Development Bank and its small scale industries department occupy a huge building. We end our stroll at the park in front of the hotel where we sit watching teenagers hawking peanuts and shinning shoes for workers who pass through the park. The ravages of prolonged war have stifled development and poverty is reflected in the ragged look of these children. Of Ethiopia's 42 million people, over 50 percent are under 20 years of age thus sentencing the nation to the reign of the youth, who do not have very much to look forward to until the war is over.

On our return we conduct a tour of the hotel. It has most facilities available at 5-star hotels within the modest building, a health centre, Sheba lounge bar, lobby bar, Harrar Grill which became our eating spot, Jacaranda restaurant, a coffee shop, swimming pool, snack bar, beauty saloon, and terrace shops. The shops stock a variety of Ethiopian handicraft, liquor and cigarettes. The exchange rate is

were wondering where to go in Kampala, two Ugandan officials standing behind us as they lead us to the VIP lounge. We collect our passports for stamping, visas for entry into Uganda so we get to proceed to Botswana and Ethiopia and luggage is stacked in another vehicle. Three Israeli soldiers are recalled in a book titled "The Entebbe" are recalled. Fatima and I recall their mission in such a short time.

The journey by road from Entebbe to Kampala takes 45 minutes. I watch the countryside with interest as we drive past an old colonial building housing the Municipal Council, a pottery and red bricks of roadside markets displaying huge bunches of green bananas, tomatoes and hot pepper. A huge ceramic tile factory and the Ugandan government prison at Kigo are located on our route. A huge board "Welcomes Visitors to Uganda, the home of the world's best coffee".

Downtown Kampala is busy. A beautiful city it is, a couple of skyscrapers that give the skyline a cosmopolitan look. I am situated on the shores of Lake Victoria and surrounded by several hills that give Kampala its scenic beauty. We arrive at the International Conference Centre, the venue of the conference and are received by the Director of Africa Leadership Forum, Mr Felix Masha, Mr Tunji Lardner, an associate editor of the defunct *This Week* magazine now a New York freelance journalist. As staff of the secretariat, they came earlier to complete arrangements for accommodation, documentation and transportation for delegates.

We are some of the first to arrive and most delegates are lodged at the Sheraton Hotel, five minutes walk to the Conference Centre. We check into our rooms and plan to read background papers on the conference before it opens.

By Bilkisu Yusuf



A busy street in Kampala

one Dollar to two Birr, the local currency. A quick conversion to Naira tells me its not worth the bother.

May 16: We leave Addis Ababa at 12.45 and arrive Entebbe International Airport at 2.15. The executive secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Professor Adebayo Adedeji, is on board. As soon as the aircraft taxis to a stop, a crew of camera men surround it to cover his arrival. Since our invitation did not specify the venue of the conference, Fatima and I



## KABIRU YUSUF

impassioned appeals about the need for unity and cooperation in solving the myriad problems of the continent, don't even bother to pay their dues. They have turned the meetings into jamborees, where they gather to embrace and flatter each other, enjoy the hospitality of whoever is generous enough to offer it and go back home to (for the

world to maintain sanctions against Pretoria.

Outgoing OAU chairman Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, was equally forthright. His speech at the opening session was the most delightful and thought-provoking, especially since he made most of it extempore. Museveni said he learnt two things as OAU chairman. The

# EAU Summit: show and substance

Senior African diplomats are apparently too busy attending long meetings to do any exercises. Since these marathon sessions are invariably held in five-star hotels, in-between sumptuous meals and tea and biscuit breaks, the result is predictable. Last week they descended in their hundreds to Nicon Noga and Sheraton hotels, Abuja. There is this strange custom in their circle, that when one plump diplomat meets another, they drop their briefcases and rush into each other's embrace. Sometimes their stomachs get in the way, but there can be no doubting their delight in their periodic get-togethers in salubrious settings. "My brother, how are you?", they greet each other. For the pretty Ethiopian women who adorn OAU gatherings, you kiss them twice on the cheek as it is done in their country. It is quite a spectacle to watch the show of love and brotherhood among Africans!

But all that camaraderie hides one sad truth. There is more show than substance in OAU meetings. Every year, heads of state and their delegation meet in Addis Ababa or another African capital to deliberate and pass resolutions. This in itself is perhaps important, since at least once a year a forum is created for African elites to share ideas. But the very countries that make

most part) oppress their own people.

But I observed three positive things about the Abuja summit. The first is that in Salim Ahmed Salim, the OAU has a Secretary-General who takes the job seriously. Last week, he told "the excellencies" gathered in Abuja a few home truths. That most of them sitting there and looking pompous (he did not of course as a diplomat use that language) have not been paying their dues to the organisation, amounting to a staggering arrears of 52.2 million dollars. He said his secretariat had to make do with less than 25 per cent of the regular budget for the 1990 - 1991 financial year, because members simply refused to pay even that meagre amount. How can the OAU cope with its responsibilities, when yearly budgetary contributions are not honoured? For the smaller countries, the amount is not more than what some presidents would put in their pockets on "State Visits" to London, Paris or Washington! The OAU Secretary-General also told the dignitaries that "it is no secret" that some countries they represent already have commercial links with South Africa (indeed Arap Moi left Abuja to go back and receive De Klerk who went on an unprecedented visit to Kenya) when one of the issues discussed at the summit was how to convince the

first is that the chairman is "powerless" in the sense of getting anything done. But he added that perhaps the next chairman (Babangida) "would be more powerful than me". Secondly, he said even when African countries agree to contribute to special funds for a peace-keeping mission in Liberia, few honour the pledge. Turning to the Secretary-General, he said to his knowledge no money had been collected, so the burden fell on Nigeria "who was able to move a few ships and battalions around".

In accepting to be chairman of the OAU, it seems an extra burden will now be placed on President Babangida and on Nigeria. Whatever else other African countries may say about Nigeria (and a lot of it is negative) they know we have the resources and the desire to be "the leader of Africa". Well, here's another chance to prove it, and from the near-flawless way the summit was organised in Abuja, Babangida seems to relish the challenge. Many Nigerians will question if it is worth it to give more than we have already done to the cause of Africa, especially since we have urgent needs at home. After all this is the kind of opportunity the Nigerian foreign policy elite are looking for to go junketing on behalf of the reawakened giant of Africa.

# Citizen

All the news in perspective

June 10 — June 17, 1991

Vol 2 No. 24

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*A policeman boarding a bus, will he pay? Page 46*

HIP! HIP!

HURRAH!!!

OAU  
ABUJETA  
27<sup>th</sup> SUMMIT

...AND TO OUR BROTHERS IN SOUTH AFRICA...

HURRAH!!!

OAU  
ABUJETA  
27<sup>th</sup> SUMMIT

...AND TO THE GENERAL WINDS OF CHANGE BLOWING ACROSS THE CONTINENT...

HURRAH!!!

OAU  
ABUJETA  
27<sup>th</sup> SUMMIT

...AND NOW A TOAST TO OUR NEW CHAIRMAN...



## PRIVATE EYE

## CAN conspiracy

I think one can now understand why peace has eluded this beloved country of ours. There are just too many saboteurs working round the clock to create mischief. When they are not "Orkanising" the far northern states via a middle belt dominated *coup d'etat*, they are busy hatching how to slaughter Hausa/Fulani Muslims at Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi State. When they go scot free with the massacre of Muslims they start infiltrating political parties to sow the seeds of religious discord. I know them, by the power of my very private eye and they know themselves since they have now formed a *Committee of Concerned Citizens* nationwide to create chaos and breed anarchy. For those of you who are not aware of their ruinous antics I will expose them for all to see. For by their deeds thou shall know them.

In a release signed by one Mr

Samson, Secretary of the Concerned Citizens Committee, (CCC), Zaria, all members of the CCC were informed that the SDP will be holding their ward congress throughout the country on Saturday, June 1, 1991 by 8 am.

Members are also urged to "assemble at their various ward offices by that time. We also want the Churches to help in organising a free will offering for a purpose which the bearer will explain to every Church member. We cannot afford to be left behind". Makes you wonder what the bearer of the release told every Church member about the reason for collecting the "free will offering".

The release according to a sentence inserted under the page was approved by Pastor Stanley, the C.A.N. boss of the city of Queen Amina.

Holy cow! The two political par-



ties we are told are non-religious, what the hell do they need "a free will offering" from Church members for? Unless someone tells us what all the CANish conspiracy is all about, the country will be sitting on a keg of gun powder. I have spoken.

## The Barons

**T**he barons continue to plan their way to power all in an attempt to beat the blanket ban on the old breed.

Baron Maisaje. Thank you Mr. Chairman for reinforcing my stand. We simply have no alternative but to continue the struggle until victory is won — In Sha Allah. Obviously we cannot confront the military openly. They possess a formidable array of sophisticated arms whereas we have only our bare arms. However, Allah is our armour. The people are also with us. We must devise a strategy to thwart the military's onslaught on the political class.

Baron Maitumbi — Let me start by saying that I do not wish to go back to prison. Confronting the military at this stage is out of the question — human arms are no match for military armour. The people of Nigeria,

unlike some others, will not face guns just to protect Maitumbi or Maisaje or other heavily clad or over pampered barons. Let us be realistic and beat the military in a game we know better than they do — politics. Let us "capture" the new breed and manipulate them to meet our wishes. After all most of them are nonentities in their areas and require our support or blessing to get along.

Baron Maiyasin — I agree with the last speaker. After all the new breed are our junior brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, wives, mistresses and what have you. We exercise great influence over them and can therefore make them act as our surrogates. Many of them who contemplate going to the Constituent Assembly to deliberate over our so-called new constitution should be sponsored by us (illegally) to do our bidding there. We should start planning right now to achieve our objectives.

Baron Nanene — I would like to

speak on behalf of the members of the strategic committee of which I am the humble chairman. Since the inauguration of the committee we swung into action and assigned territorial responsibilities to members as follows:-

Baron Nakawu — to oversee Kwara, Sokoto and Katsina States;  
Baron Nababa — Borno and Gongola States;  
Baron Nagogo — Benue, Kano and Bauchi;  
Baron Nanene — Plateau, Kaduna, Niger and Abuja, FCT.

I seek your endorsement of this proposal which will form the basis of our operation.

Chairman Mardauri — Any comments on the proposals made by the committee?

As there was no comment the proposal was formally endorsed by the conclave of Barons and Super Barons or the Nawabs of Northern Nigeria.

# Family of mankind

**T**here is no limit to what people can do with knowledge. Science and Technology serves human beings but they also use them to annihilate themselves. So destructive are the weapons they produce that life on earth is threatened in the name of civilisation. In the midst of this a heavenly father gives solace to those who despair while others recall their childhood dreams to relieve those carefree days.

## My heavenly father

In times of dire stress  
When sweet dreams turn sour  
Like the violent splash of waves  
Against the rocks  
When the darkness never seems to wane  
Whose words are as soothing as  
The balm soothes the injured finger  
I always remember  
My heavenly father.

At times problems descend on me  
like a tiger descends upon a helpless  
goat  
weighing my tired body down  
Tribulations tower above me  
Such that I can not look up  
My heart is full of sorrow  
I seem to be sinking further  
Into the pool of despair  
But at that darkest moment  
There is always a divine hand  
To pull me up  
And set me upon the solid rock  
I always remember my heavenly  
father.

When I glide fearfully  
Through the dark corridors of doubt  
Eyes darting like those of a frightened rat  
In times of loneliness when the world  
turns it's back on me  
And foes deadly vampires  
Then I can always rely on

A supernatural being  
whose unconditional love  
And divine grace  
Has kept me alive  
In this tempest tossed world  
I always remember  
My heavenly father  
For by strength  
shall no man prevail.

Ifeanyi Omeni

## Childhood dreams recalled

A child I was, a child to fancy bred  
Tightly shutting my eyes from reality  
Falling back now, groping for  
dreams dead:  
Dreams amplified by life's vanity.

Reality... my heart once did quake!  
When at its full nakedness it did  
stare;  
Once I trembled to swim your burning  
lake  
Under all the world's rabid state.

The dearest longing in my breast  
Did often times flare:  
To find before I decided to quest —  
That was my infant desire.

Dwell beyond the point my line's  
drawn  
In ceaseless joy, ne'er to feel a pain;  
Sit on my brow blessing's crown —  
All these were desires, then.

To play songs of forever rapport  
On air-soft bed to lie my limbs;  
To eat without the simplest effort —  
All were my childhood dreams.

To play bugles of forever joy  
And live, never feeling pain;  
And live till eternity, an innocent  
boy, Never to grow ages more again.  
But alas, the dream's sun went setting



Beyond the mute, jutting knolls;  
Life's challenges started unknitting,  
Surrendering to reality's fiery balls  
Now my heart could no longer dose  
It challenges life's strict vanity;  
Since my age-cucumbered brain was  
Recharged and soaked with sanity.  
Ibrahim Sheme

## Man

Thou soil of creation  
The waters of the space  
Seeds of a season  
Fruits of some REASON

The reality of your realms  
Are the clouds of existence  
The abysm of your damnation  
And the heights of your glory  
Are the minutes of your sweat  
Are the hours of your grief  
Are the weight of your faith

Alone to your grave-path  
The beginning of your plight  
Deep in a sea of choice  
Your light must be in your belief  
That must shine your palms  
To your eternal destination

The gloomy haze of your days  
And the light-out of the epochs  
Are a scream in your prime  
Thick curtains over your fame  
Must not seduce your thought  
And hoodwink your history  
And play back your realisation  
That man to man is man  
And to GOD but bondsman  
Maikudi Sambo Z.S.S.

## Backache (II)

**W**hether the patient will have to lie in bed on a firm supportive mattress or will be able to hobble around depends on how bad the tear is, but several recent studies have shown that two or three days of bed rest is all that many patients really need. Getting around with little or no bed rest may be painful, but the patient isn't likely to aggravate the injury or slow down healing time by doing so. Meanwhile, they don't have to miss out on normal activities or take time off from their jobs. If a patient in a great deal of pain simply has to be up and about, a back brace may provide useful support.

Sometimes, if there is one particularly tender area, I will inject the muscle with one of the longer-acting local anesthetics. I may even add a small amount of cortisone to the anesthetic. Such injections may bring quick relief, and if they do, they can be repeated with the doctor taking care not to use too much cortisone, which may cause stomach inflammation and transient high blood pressure.

But if the low back pain radiates down one or both legs, and particularly if it is associated with numbness or reflex changes in a leg, then I have to consider a ruptured disc, even if it doesn't appear on the X-ray (ruptured discs don't always show).

It's a rare doctor who would recommend an immediate operation for a ruptured disc. The conservative treatment is bed rest with traction to the pelvis or leg. The traction will usually tire the back muscles so that they can relax (torn muscles tend to go into spasms), and pressure on the disc will be relieved. Sometimes muscle-relaxing medicines will also help. A few days to a few weeks of traction may reduce inflammation around the disc so that the patient can get back on his or her feet and, gradually, return to full

By William A Nolen

activity.

If bed rest and traction don't bring relief, and particularly if there is evidence of an increase in nerve damage, then I have to establish an exact diagnosis. This can be done with a myelogram, a procedure in which dye is injected into the spinal canal and X-rays are taken. A herniated disc will show up as dark spot where the dye cannot go.

A newer method of establishing the diagnosis is to do a CT (computerised tomography) scan, a highly sophisticated X-ray procedure that is being used more and as



a diagnostic tool. This is easier on the patient because it doesn't require injections of dye into the spinal canal. (The dye injection sometimes give patients a headache that may last a day or two. Rarely, it may cause irritation of a nerve, which can last several days or even weeks.) Moreover, many radiologists now think that the CT scan is more accurate.

If a ruptured disc is present, and you haven't gotten better with conservative treatment, you should

consider surgery. Removal of a herniated disc is a relatively simple procedure. If the diagnosis is accurate (as it usually is) and if all of the herniated disc is removed, the patient will get almost immediate relief of pain, and unless it had been necessary to remove several discs, the patient is usually back to full activity quite quickly. In about 10 percent of cases, more than one disc is removed (very rarely more than two). These patients may be off their feet for a few weeks, but within two or three months, they too can resume normal activity. A patient can still lead an active life with one or two discs missing.

Surgery for low back pain ought to be the treatment of last resort. Based on my experience, I would say that at least 90 percent of patients who have an acute episode of low back pain will get better without surgery.

What about chronic, recurrent low back pain? In most cases, despite intensive investigation, the doctor won't be able to pinpoint an exact explanation. The pain can be caused by arthritis, by recurrent muscle injuries or by scarring from operations.

Some hospitals, usually found in large cities, have clinics that treat only patients with chronic low back pain. They are usually staffed by orthopedists, neurologists, physiotherapists, psychotherapists and possibly even acupuncturists. Most of the patients can be treated on an outpatient basis, and while the treatment is not different from what they might receive elsewhere, it is more intense. Patients often spend six to eight hours a day receiving heat, exercise, hypnosis, and other forms of therapy. These are almost always patients with debilitating low back pain that has lasted two years or more.

*Culled from 50 plus*

# Wear a uniform, take a free ride

Policemen and other uniformed personnel ride commercial buses in Lagos and refuse to pay

"Enter with your one Naira", said the bus conductor of the C20 commuter bus plying the Oshodi—Ikeja route. Two policemen were among the passengers that rushed inside the bus to take their seats. The conductor eyed the policemen momentarily, and then said, "oga, we cannot carry two 'staff' at a time; one of you should come down o". The policemen remained quietly seated, looking at the bus conductor scornfully as he began to collect the fare from the other passengers, neither of the policemen gave him money. The conductor grumbled loudly but was not bold enough to accost them. The bus moved on.

Such is the fate of commercial drivers at the hand of uniformed men in Lagos. In fact, the police are not the only ones who enjoy free rides but they are in the majority in this kind of behaviour. Commercial drivers seem to have resigned themselves to fate since all efforts to make these uniformed men pay their fare has proved abortive.

Bassey Okon, who has been driving a commercial bus in Lagos for the past three years told *Citizen* that

there is nothing the drivers can do about it. "Sometimes about two, three, or even four uniformed men will enter a bus and still refuse to pay", said Okon. According to him, complaints have been lodged with the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) but, in his words, "what can the union do? Since you cannot fight a foreman, you reluctantly allow them to go". Okon, however, explained that, there are certain advantages derived from giving policemen and other military personnel free rides: "when a driver gets into trouble on the way or breaks traffic law, and there is a policeman in his vehicle who did not pay, he would be released because the policeman will plead for him. But if you collect money from such a policeman then you are in for bigger trouble".

The non-payment of transport fare by uniformed men is not drivers only woe in Lagos. Suleiman Adam plies the Oshodi — Yaba route with his Toyota bus. According to him, motor park touts (Agbero) are even worse than the police, Sulciman told *Citizen* — that these touts collect two naira each day from buses while

the *molue* drivers pay eight Naira at Ojota daily. Failure to pay means trouble for the drivers.

Getting the Police Public Relations Officer, Lagos State Command Head-quarters, Ikeja, C. Ogar Ola to speak on the matter was a harlequin task but when he agreed to talk, his words were caustic said he "what's the fuss about policemen, not paying transport fare? Is that the nation's problem now? He called in to his office three policemen and asked them one after another, "Do you not pay transport fare when you board a commercial bus"? "I do sir", answered the officers promptly. A visibly angry Ogar told *Citizen* that the "Police are not appreciated in this country. When there are cases of robbery, the police are called, not the journalists. The police risk their lives to protect the society and people later turn round to blame and insult the police".

Mr. Ogar told *Citizen* that he is not against the idea of policemen paying transport fare. "In fact, they have been paying transport fares and will continue to do so". He said the police would always do their job in the face of all hazards. The police public relation officer said in advanced countries, if a driver sights a policeman looking for vehicle, the driver will slow down and will ask the policeman if he could be of help. In this country, the reverse is the case. He added that people should be humane. He added that if a policeman refuses to pay his transport fare, he should be reported to the nearest police station. Explained the police PRO, "when drivers fail to lodge such complaints and could not get their money, then, the police are not to blame because the drivers have not reported such an officer".



A policeman (second left) boarding a bus

## Flying Eagles

# Shaping up for Cairo

A convincing victory for the Flying Eagles but coach James Peters still has some homework to do

**W**hen both teams walked into the main bowl of the National stadium, Lagos that mild Saturday afternoon of June 1, amidst cheers and cat-calls from the fans, there was a fifty-fifty chance that either side could clinch the all-important victory.

The Young Elephants of Cote D'Ivoire were even tugging at an advantage that could decide the crucial match in their favour: they were carrying a one goal advantage to the last qualifying match of the All-Africa Games soccer event, having won the first leg played in Abidjan a fortnight earlier through a controversial penalty awarded to them in the dying minutes of the match. Not so for their Nigerian opponents. The Flying Eagles were under pressure from two fronts: from their Ivorian opponents and from the over-enthusiastic legion of soccer fans at home who were eager to see the junior team qualify for the football event of the All-Africa Games.

That explains the high sense of importance and intense emotion that surrounded the match. The Young Elephants left no one in doubt of what their mission was. Revelling in the slim win his boys recorded against the Flying Eagles, coach Yew Martial had boasted at the end of the first leg show down in Abidjan that his boys would easily pick the Cairo ticket in the return leg by handing a stunning defeat to our boys in Lagos. Psychological war fare one might call that. But Flying Eagles' chief task master, James Peters, did not dismiss that with a



Babangida: deft touch of an eagle

wave of the hand. The Ivorian junior team displayed enough savvy and guts in their approach to the round leather object during the first leg in Abidjan to warn charismatic coach Peters not to under-estimate what they could do in Lagos in the decisive encounter.

When the battle drum finally sounded and the two teams closed in on each other with blazing eyes hunting for victory and the adrenal-

ine of ambition coursing through their veins, the all important question that constantly agitated the minds of thousands of football fans in the national stadium was: who gets the ticket to Cairo between the two teams? The answer came however before the 90 minutes game ran its course. Three goals from the Flying Eagles put Nigeria through to Cairo and sent the Ivorians back home to go and prepare for the next edition coming in four years' time.

Flying Eagles' qualification for the All-Africa Games did not come easy however, and a lot of fine tuning still need be done by Peters and his assistant, Ismaila Lulu, if the junior team is to

outplay the cream of Africa teams in Cairo for the soccer gold medal. Two major faults are still very glaring with the Flying Eagles. The boys are no doubt very skillful; they are quite enterprising and could be highly entertaining with their tantalising dribble runs, but they sometimes do not play as a team. They still need some lessons in team work. Some of them, especially the very young ones like Precious

Monye, John Zaki and Bobolayefa Edom who graduated from the under-17, sometimes allow the temptation to go solo or play to the gallery get the better part of them. This individualistic approach was quite glaring during their first home match against Togo which they won by a lone goal. Against Cote D'Ivoire in Lagos, there was a lot of improvement in terms of blending, but there is still much ground to cover.

The second fault which is more severe and could prove very damaging to the over-all success of the team in Cairo is their finishing or goal scoring ability. Coach James Peters is yet to come to grip with this problem that has been tormenting his squad since they began the qualifying matches against the junior national team of Togo. Against Young Elephants in Lagos, the Flying Eagles were quite enterprising; the defence was solid enough to ward off threats from the Ivorian attack, just as the boys in the midfield repeatedly outsmarted their equally brilliant and determined opponents. But up-front, it was a different story all together. The strikers just could not put their act together to slot home scoring chances that came their way. Peters still has a lot to do to brush up these weak sides of his boys before the Cairo show down.

But the junior national team coach, a man of many years of coaching experience with top clubs within and outside the country, believes he will get a crack team that will be able to win the gold medal of the soccer event for the country in Cairo. He told *Citizen* in Kaduna that he was doing everything possible in conjunction with his assistant to build an enduring junior national team. "We are building for consistency now. We are building a stable junior national team that can stand the test of time. And I can say confidently that we are getting positive response from the boys", he said.

Indeed, Peters and Lulu can be



Peters and Lulu: sleepless nights ahead?

said to be quite lucky to have got the present set of boys they have in camp. The boys are responding to the rigorous drilling and football tutorial that the two coaches are instilling in them. They also have in them that irrepressible ambition to go out there and conquer Africa and make their country proud. Two weeks before their first leg match against Cote D'Ivoire, Flying Eagles midfield marvel, Batureh Saleh, spoke the minds of his colleagues when he told *Citizen* that "we are not thinking so much about the Cote

D'Ivoire matches. With the current form of the team, I am very confident we would beat them". Their main concern, said the petite midfield sensation, "is about the football gold medal of the All-Africa Games. We are all in high spirit for it and we are very determined not to let the country down". With a little fine tuning, the Flying Eagles can make their return to major international tournament since FIFA hammer silenced them some two years ago a resounding success.

By Joe Olajuwon

## Hearns, six times a cobra

Thomas 'hit-man' Hearns proves everyone wrong as he captures his sixth world boxing title

A taste of legendary slugging can, often times, be counted upon to contain youthful exuberance. Sugar Ray Leonard believed this and lost to Terry Norris. Virgill Hill thought he could repeat the feat against another veteran. But, the 'Detroit hitman', Thomas Hearns was in his old form that got him an express entry into the

fraternity whose membership boasts of Sugar Ray Leonard, Marvin Hagler and Roberto Duran and who are a reference point of boxing in the early 1980's.

When Terry Norris disgraced Sugar Ray Leonard in February, it was regarded as a fitting, albeit cruel farewell. And people expected that Virgill Hill will also be Thomas

Hearns' undertaker. Thomas Hearns was therefore not favoured going into the fight. It was believed that he was not in the form that saw him fight toe-to-toe with Sugar Ray Leonard in 1981. And unlike in the early 80's, as a welterweight, he didn't look quite like "the motor-city Cobra". But boxing writers also believe that legends always have a way of making history. Therefore despite his loss to nonentities like Iran Barkley and his uninspiring performance lately, he was believed to be capable of rising to the occasion.

**A**t the end of the maximum twelve rounds, 32 year old Thomas Hearns had captured his sixth world boxing title with a unanimous decision against previously unbeaten WBA light-heavyweight champion, Virgill Hill. Hearns was celebrating his 14 years of professional career. That was also his 50th professional win as against 3 losses and a draw. Virgill Hill who has a reputation for being a smooth ring technician tasted defeat for the first time since winning the title in 1987 with a knockout victory against Leslie Stewart.

At 32, Thomas is certainly at the end of an illustrious career. He even accepted the fight just to prove that he has something left in him. Hearns fought unusually; as a boxer who's well known for powerful punches that ensured the dispatching of opponents in the early rounds of his fights, he, surprisingly held on to the end and winning almost every round on the judges' cards. One reporter said he out-boxed, out-brawled and, even out-defenced the 27 year old Hill who was defending his title for the 11th time. Hearns made up for his weak chin and long bad legs by using his lethal left jab which was most effective.

Thomas 'hit-man' Hearns burst into the centre stage of the boxing world in 1980; presiding over the WBA version of the Welterweight zone at a time Sugar Ray Leonard was the main man, despite being



Hearns: Still the motor-city Cobra

only the holder of the WBC title. He became popular for his punching prowess. Unfortunately, he was most of the time betrayed by his staying power, weak legs and chin. That singularly accounted for his loss to Leonard in their unification bout in 1981. Hearns was ahead in all the judges' cards, until the penultimate (14) round when a late rally by Leonard sent him gasping for breath. That he lasted 12 rounds and still won against Hill should mark the arrival of a new hit-man. He must also be remembered for the comprehensive beating of Roberto Duran. And even though he lost to Marvin Hagler in three rounds, the first round of that bout still rates as the most brutal and entertaining. By this victory, he has therefore won all the available titles ranging from the Welter to the light-heavyweight. He has also proved, once again, that he is a fighter for the big occasion;

his insipid performance, lately, against Iran Barkley, James Kinchen, Michael Olajide and Dennis Andries must have been as a result of the quality of the opposition. In 54 fights, he has a 50-3-1 with 40 knockouts. His 3 losses were to Marvin Hagler, Sugar Ray Leonard and Iran Barkley. They fought to a draw in their second meeting with Leonard in 1989.

There is an irony in this victory. Anyway one looks at it, Hearns is at the sunset of his career. So, what now? Like his contemporaries, Sugar Ray Leonard, Marvin Hagler and Roberto Duran (who's still fighting) he has to make that painful career decision: To quit or not? Certainly, there is nothing wrong with taking a couple of fights. But what should be at the back of his mind is the issue of quitting amidst applause.

By Rabiur Barde

ADAMU ADAMU S

DEFINITIONS  
IN HUMOUR

## Brave new system

**R**ecently I visited a secondary school. It has 500 students, 48 beds and 15 chairs. And if you are looking for more furniture you may have to go to a carpenter's showroom.

Well, come to think of it, 48 beds is not a joke, and isn't 15 chairs a luxury? Congratulations.

Our educational system is excellent — and improving. More people get in than out. Others will say the majority are repeating. They are not: they love the environment and wish only to prolong their stay.

Our teachers are trying and becoming more hardworking. They love the challenge of teaching and detain students longer than necessary. Others will say they are no longer able to make them pass at first attempt. Nor at second, nor yet at third. Do you know the eternal schoolboy?

I have always hated to see a 20-year-old graduate. What does a 20-year-old boy know about the world — or indeed about the hereafter — to be responsible enough in it. I have always criticised our new national policy on education — 6-3-3-4. You can therefore imagine my delight when our teachers decide to unilaterally change it to 8-4-4-6. Excellent. They will need two years extra to

repeat primary school, one year each for junior and senior secondary school. At university level, they will need nothing less than two years for strikes, demonstrations and cult-related activities. Perfect. We must not interfere with their freedom. Do you know freedom?

If a kingdom is where a king rules, freedom is where "free" rules. So now you know who is king on campus. As if you didn't already know.

**School Calendar** — *Schkul Katsaladan* is a cultural marriage be-

tween Hausa and German. Incessant changes interfere with the skull.

**Girl's Guide** — Girls guide. Who then leads?

**Adult Education** — Something that will continue as long as children bring their homework home.

**Nomadic Education** — Education that goes from place to place, never settling in any.

**Examination** — A process used to find out how much students have forgotten. It is also a useful guide of how much teachers have failed to impart. Some fail, many don't pass; the majority sail through by blackmail.

**Result** — Result is the result, and you what to know.

## Nobel Price

Everything has its price nowadays, and the Nobel may not be among the costly commodities around. Time was when you only needed to be a Soviet citizen and make audible enough noise. And the prize is yours at the apparently incredibly, cheap price. If you

thought it cheap it was probably because you had never been inside a gulag archipelago.

And now after pressing matters to the *maximum*, being a Soviet citizen is fast losing its meaning and relevance. You never knew which portion of Reagan's evil empire (and Bush's devilish republic?) was not struggling to be independent.

Making noise too no longer paid. It really paid differently. Instead of being sent to the gulag you might end up with a Supreme Soviet seat. And you would spend all your time trying to figure out who, what or which is supreme, over whom. Is it Mikhail Gorbachev, the Supreme Soviet or the Kremlin that is supreme over Boris Yeltsin? Or what?

So who to give when everyone qualifies and there is no hostile Kremlin to embarrass by awarding it to someone they will refuse exit visa? And especially an information-loaded refusenik. The next best — the one who made everyone qualified. Gorbachev.

## Oh! Eh! You?

Sir Rex Niven once told me that the British never took a penny out of this country. I was surprised.

What we did, he said, was exploit the resources of the land and develop it.

Why did you come then, sir, I asked.

He said it was to facilitate trade.

Now suppose they even did take something out. It couldn't have been more than 50%.

The same cannot be said today. If 20% trickles down to the local government, the chairman and other officials will thank their stars which will begin to shine as that of the people darkens.

Does cynicism breed lack of patriotism?

**O.A.U** — *Oh! Eh! You.* Was it you who took over from the white man? For God's sake, why?



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