

Madaki at it again
India: End of a dynasty?

RSD

N10

MAY 27 - JUNE 3, 1991 VOL 2 NO 22

Citizen

Students on war - path

UNCOVERED:

- * Secret meetings by student leaders
- * Government plans to preempt them
- * Ghost of May 1989 anti-sap riot

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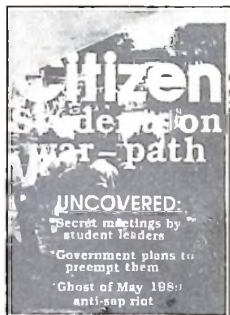
All the News in Perspective

May 27 — June 3, 1991

Vol. 2 No 22

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LIBRARY SECTION

Spoiling for war



The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) met in Ilorin April 27. Delegates from forty universities were in attendance. Their grudge: the deteriorating condition of the average student in our higher institutions of learning, but the government says the meeting was to destabilise the nation.

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Mother of all appeal funds

The gathering was that of who is who in Nigeria and by the end of the day the amount collected exceeded target by a whopping five million Naira.

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End of the dynasty?



Jawaharlal Nehru started in 1947 and within forty-four years of its independence, except for a break of five years, India has been ruled by one family — the Nehrus. The questions now being asked varies but one sticks out like a sore thumb: is this the end of the dynasty?

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PREFACE

As we went to press the ultimatum given the Federal Government by students under the auspices of the National Association of Nigerian students, NANS, drew near and would expire Sunday May 26.

The students issued a 10-point demand and a 30-day ultimatum to the government to meet. The demand ranged from the students' desire to have the vice-chancellorship and other principal offices of the university system democratised to the re-instatement of rusticated students and hefty increases in bursary awards to them. Some other demands don't sound as reasonable. The students said they wanted the transition and the structural adjustment programmes be scrapped. Students who wish to have elections when vice-chancellors are chosen apparently don't want to witness the election of the country's leadership. That, obviously, is what the scrapping of the transition programme will amount to. Somehow this was lost to them. The students also don't want schools to be shut down indefinitely after riots. If this desire is genuine, many argue, the easiest way to achieve it is for students to stop rioting.

For the first time, students are embarking on protests without much support from any quarter precisely because by their demands, timing and procedure, they have given an image of extreme unreasonableness. But what exactly do the students want? Is someone out to use them? The students are determined to go to war, and the government seemed unafraid. Is a clash inevitable?

To find out, our reporters went to various campus towns. From the reports of Mohammed Haruna, Mahmud Jega, Aluko Akinyele, Bolaji Adebiji, Tola Sunday and Isaac Umunna, Ike Okonta crafted the story that makes the cover of this edition. The story is revealing and indicative of the wide gulf that separates the rulers and the unruly. The question is whether the two can find common ground to cut losses and save faces

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LETTERS

Bauchi : A carnage, a massacre.

Sir,

So many magazines have made the incident in Bauchi their cover stories, but none hit the target like your cover story (*Citizen* April, 29-May 6, 1991 Vol.2, No. 18).

From all indications more exist than met the eyes as you rightly put it: 'mere innocuous quarrel over *tsire*'.

Coincidentally last year, the same 22nd April, 1990, there was an attempted coup with one of the reasons as religion. I am afraid, we are going "Bananas" over religion in this country.

What most people don't understand really is the effect of religion on our nation's psyche. Infact, what can easily bring war without end is religion *ala* Lebanon.

An issue as volatile as religion needs a careful handling. What happened in Bauchi is an oversight by the security network. The whole thing lasted over four days at Tafawa Balewa local government area, a distance of about 80km from Bauchi. Before the security agents were able to come and arrest the situation deaths and destruction had occurred. This is a grievous mistake as it showed the general level of our security consciousness and I daresay this requires a careful investigation.

Bauchi as a state had an unfortunate history of silent religious crises, depending on which governor is posted to the state. I think it is only in Bauchi State that religion played a significant role in who gets what and who does what during the reign of some Christian governors. It is obvious that the recent riot was directed at Governor Abu Ali simply because he is a Muslim.

It is also unfortunate that a 'small' riot like that of Bauchi was left to escalate to a level of the Maitasine saga 1 by the interference of the armed forces. Soldiers in any coun-

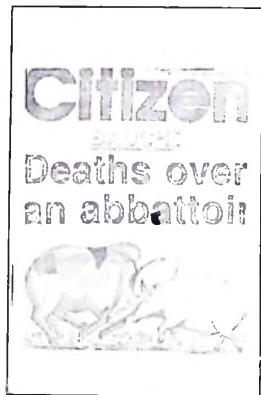
try are trained to defend the integrity of their country. However if the same soldiers turn round to shoot at innocent citizens then we have a dangerous problem in our hands.

The incident in Bauchi was fuelled by the interference of armed soldiers, who, in any case, were not trained to handle civilian matters, and therefore, fire at the slightest provocation. This government will do well not to deploy soldiers to situations that anti-riot policemen can handle.

U.T. Shua
Bauchi

Sir,

It is unfortunate that the recent religious crisis originated from one of the Christian dominated local governments in Bauchi State and proceeded to the state capital, Dass



and Ningi.

In the aftermath of the crisis religious, traditional, community leaders, government functionaries and other individuals have been paying sympathy visits. One among them is Arch-Bishop of Lagos and CAN president, Olobunmi Okogie whose visit was a threat to public peace rather than sympathy.

He went round the affected areas in Bauchi when peace and normalcy are fast returning to the affected areas. He told them that Muslims would attack again. He did not ask his people to stop interfering in the affairs of Muslims.

He refused to go to Tafawa Balewa where his people murdered Muslims to preach to them about how to live in harmony with their Muslim brethren.

He showed care for property but not lives lost. Are there no Christians in Tafawa Balewa?

Is he neglecting them or afraid of the truth?

All what he saw in Bauchi was caused by his people at Tafawa Balewa.

We Muslims are peace loving people we don't interfere with any thing that does not concern us except when we are mercilessly attacked.

At this time of transition Okogie should preach peace not war. He is a threat to public peace and the transition programme.

Once again let me remind Okogie and the public that, there was no Islamic fundamentalist group involved in the crisis as some people are saying. There was only religious riot between Christians and Muslims started by Christians in Tafawa Balewa. Many Muslims were killed and their houses burnt.

Nigeria is a multi religious country. Muslims and Christians should live in harmony. Each one has the right to worship and observe all his religious rights and obligations.

Nobody can force one to do something which is forbidden by his religion.

We pray that such crises do not recur and for those Muslims who lost their lives. May their soul rest in perfect peace and may God grant their families the courage to bear the loss.

Comrade Abu—Bakari
Bauchi.



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LEADERS

Stop it!

Once again students in our institutions of higher learning are at daggers drawn with the government.

Under the auspices of the National Association of Nigerian Students, NANS, which the government did not recognise, the students issued their ultimatum. The government must meet in by May 26 or they will embark on nationwide demonstrations that will probably be bloody.

Among the students' demands are that the federal government must declare a state of emergency in the educational sector; disburse a 2,000 bursary award to every student of a higher institution in Nigeria, and scrap WAEC's 350 Naira examination fee. The students are also demanding that the position of vice chancellor and other university principals be made elective; that schools should no longer be indefinitely shut due to student unrest, and that all expelled students be recalled. As if this isn't daunting enough, they also want the government to abandon SAP, abandon the transition programme, and refrain from deploying troops on foreign soils.

Looking at these demands, one begins to understand why government cannot take the ultimatum very seriously. Students are not the only ones in Nigeria who are against SAP and some aspects of the transition programme, but whoever gave a government thirty days to abandon its cardinal objectives? It is precisely this form of overzealousness and exuberance that undercuts students' legitimate demands.

In any case, it is now apparent that the student movement is far from united on this confrontational path. While leaders of the banned NANS are pressing on with the ultimatum, other union leaders are busy undercutting it. The latter group accuse the former of excessive zeal and of fighting other people's wars against the government. The former group, for their part, view the latter as paid agents of the government. What is certain here is that the movement is divided, and has been so since the failure of its Auchi convention last December. It appears that the more radical faction of NANS has embarked upon this action in order to legitimise its

disputed claims to leadership.

Nor has government response to the impending crisis been any more helpful. The threats variously issued by Oyo State governor, Abdulkarim Adisa and minister of information, Alex Akinyele to treat the student protesters as "public enemies" is unfortunate. Government ought to know by now that such threats help to mobilise students against it more than any NANS document can do. Besides, the idea that students are always instigated to revolt ought to be abandoned by now. Student unionism has its own dynamics and its own momentum, and no one has to plant any ideas into it, since many students are quite mature in age and have read all the books in the library.

We call upon the students to begin to be more mature. The first step in this growing up process is to call of their intention to stage the nationwide demonstration. It is more likely that, if they insist, they may only succeed in exposing their impotence and inability to show a united front. This will be a blow to the wounded unionism of students.

This must also be an occasion for the government to devote more attention to the daunting problems of the educational system of the country. If students are wrong in resorting to pointless protests, the government is culpable in direct proportion to its neglect of higher institutions. And surely our universities — and now even our primary schools — are not at their best.

We believe the cycle of student crises will only be broken when those in authority accept that students can think for themselves, and from there seek to understand why they never behave as they (the holders of authority) fervently hope they will.

This is not to say that most instances of such crisis are not ill-advised. They are. And this is no call for absolute freedom to students to engage in vandalism and other acts that hinder, rather than advance, their interest as students. They certainly should never have such licence. But it must be realised that the one and only way to check student crisis is through genuine sympathetic dialogue.

Arewa House

On Saturday, May 18th, the appeal fund for the expansion and renovation of Arewa House, the Centre for Research and Historical Documentation, affiliated to the Ahmadu Bello University, was launched at a spectacular ceremony in Kaduna. In one of the rarest shows of its kind, the appeal fund's ambitious target of 120 million Naira was actually exceeded, thanks to the generosity of several individuals and governments, notably the chief launcher, Alhaji Aminu Dantata, who donated 5 million Naira, and the Federal Government, which donated 35 million Naira.

While the expansion and renovation of research centres is a noble goal in itself, there is no doubt that the remarkable success of the Arewa House appeal fund is entirely attributable to the memory of Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, Sardaunan Sokoto and premier of the defunct Northern Region. The Sardauna has been dead for more than 25 years now, but in northern Nigeria, he is still seen as the symbol of everything that is held

dear. Even allowing for exaggeration on the part of his grateful proteges, there is little room for doubt that this was a man who had a vision, who had the courage and energy to pursue that vision, and who possessed the wisdom to create institutions that will perpetuate that vision.

Of particular importance in these troubled times is the Sardauna's well known virtue of religious tolerance. No internecine religious conflicts occurred when he led the North; no Maitatsine fanatics rose in armed rebellion. This, despite the Sardauna's equally well known allegiance to and promotion of Islam. This fact was well emphasised by President Ibrahim Babangida at the occasion; to live by the Sardauna's example is first and foremost to eschew religious hatred.

Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, a colossal influence in our national history, deserves to be remembered and his cherished legacy deserves to be preserved and documented. On this occasion, we salute Alhaji Ahmadu Bello and pray for the continued repose of his great soul.

Find them jobs!

Public outcry against the dissolution of the National Primary Education Commission, NPEC, in January this year, has been fuelled largely by anxiety about a fall in the standard of primary education that is certain to arise from the policy shift. Understandably so. Every Nigerian parent already has, at least, a child or will soon have one, in primary school. Teachers, benefiting from hindsight, are just as worried, though not so much over standard as over salaries. Will they come as regularly from the local governments as they did under NPEC?

Hidden under this thick fog of anxieties, however, is another problem just as serious. It is what to do with NPEC's over 300-strong staff. Decree 3 of 1991 which transfers funding and control of primary education to local councils says that staff of the defunct commission should be able to return to the supervisory Federal Ministry of Education or the state equivalent in the case of staff of

dissolved management boards.

On January 18, Education Minister Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa said that the responsibility which NPEC performed before its scrapping has been turned over to a "new office" in the Federal Ministry of Education. Workers of the disbanded commission who would not be required under the "new dispensation" would be "absorbed by other arms of the ministry". But four months have gone by, yet the staff are not any more certain about the future.

Meanwhile, NPEC's accounts have been frozen for auditors to work on them. What this means is that the workers cannot be paid salaries. Indeed, this has been the case since April. Some innocent, patriotic citizens are being made to pay for another of the government's "inconsistencies".

Who will bail them out of this predicament, ironical though it is to suggest, is the same government. It must do two things. First, it has to find a way of giving

LEADERS

these hapless Nigerians and their families immediate financial succour. Second, it must find them jobs.

The promise which the Minister of Education made to the NPEC staff, which has remained unfulfilled, begs the more fundamental question whether the government often knows what to do and does it right. What happened to NPEC, we fear, is about to happen to the Directorate of Food,

Roads and Rural Infrastructure, DFRI, in the next one month or so. The fact that it is still a rumour is no comfort to the staff who have peeped into the dimness of tomorrow and are visibly panicky.

Isn't it time, perhaps, that the government had a good look at its catalogue of inconsistent policies, which have tended to waste human potentials and, worse, deny Nigerians deserved means of living?

India: Death of a survivor

As India's 520 million voters went to the polls last Monday, there was widespread apprehension about the possibility — nay probability — of violence. And so everything possible was done to guard against this. There's a good reason.

India is the world's largest democracy — and threatening to become the bloodiest. If its many peoples are not fighting and killing each other, they find time to assassinate their leaders.

Now the worst has happened. Mr Rajiv Gandhi, India's former prime minister, who would almost certainly have been the next, has become the latest victim of the country's mindless, and apparently unstoppable, political violence. He was killed by a bomb blast Tuesday as he campaigned in the southern Indian state of Madras. For India, this was tragedy in a nutshell; and for the world the loss of a budding statesman.

The violent spree was on even before his death. Nine people had died in pre-polls skirmishes. Police had to be called out in at least two states, curfew imposed in one and fresh polls ordered in some states. When the assassin, widely suspected to be a woman suicide-killer, struck, more than 60 voters had been killed in various violent encounters across the country. More have been killed since the assassination.

Seven years ago, Rajiv Gandhi's mother and his predecessor as prime minister Mrs Indira Gandhi, was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards. Her death, though, was not entirely unexpected. She had ordered troops to capture Sikhs' holiest shrine in Amritsar where the popular Sikh separatist and fundamentalist leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was holding out.

Hundreds, including Bhindranwale were killed and the shrine damaged. More than a thousand Sikhs were later killed by Hindus in reprisal killings.

So far Rajiv's death has not elicited the same orgy of killing that succeeded his mother's assassination, but there is no guarantee that matters will remain this way. That, if it happens, will indeed be most unfortunate for it will have enabled the sponsors of violence to achieve their objective. They must be defeated.

The problems facing India today are daunting by any standard. They range from communal factionalism, terrorism, political, religious and caste violence to the economic problems of indebtedness and inefficiency. No one is about to solve these problems in a jiffy but clearly the path of sanity for India lies in making the attempt. This death will surely make it more difficult to achieve.

As Rajiv Gandhi is cremated his name as a courageous and capable leader in India's modern history is assured. So is his family's. In deference to him, the Congress Party has chosen his Italian wife as its new leader. We think this rather incongruous. It won't do India any good to press the dynastic claim this far, and thus Sonia Gandhi must be congratulated for declining the offer.

While it cannot but be a tragedy Gandhi's death has now brought the dominance of the Gandhi clan in India's politics to an end. If handled well, the future will at last witness the flowering of its otherwise resilient and inspiring democracy. This future, appropriately, must start with the elections which must be free, fair and safe. If Gandhi didn't survive his mother for long enough, India must survive both of them into a glorious future.



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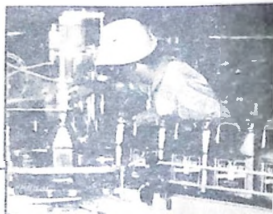
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Mengistu

In the terminology of the intellectual Humpty Dumpties on campus, Mengistu Haile Mariam was one of the progressives. There were many of them, all progressing but they never told you where they were going. It certainly didn't mean those so-called were engaged in progressive improvement of the standard of living of their people, because capitalist leaders were clearly better than them at it. But they were not complete failures: they at least improved their own — and their families. 'And their cronies!'

Nor were they experimental progressives about to break tradition or depart from orthodoxy. They always identified with it, even if only in theory. Nor were they opposing authoritarianism. They are the authoritarians. So what does progressive mean? Just what the humpty dumpties wanted it to mean. In other words, Mengistu is a good guy and you should like him. Or else you become a reactionary.

Many years ago, Emperor Haile Salessie (the Glory of Trinity) dropped the name Ras Makonnen to become emperor. Whether he worked for the glory of Trinity is another matter entirely. A man with a rather sad, old face who ruled, reigned, suffered exile twice — once to Britain and another time to a decrepit and derelict hut on the outskirts of Addis Ababa — and then died a lone, broken, sad, former

ADAMU ADAMU

emperor.

The 1972 drought ravaged Ethiopia for the next three years and took a toll of hundreds of thousands. Riots, army mutiny and student demonstrations sealed the tragedy. Monarchy became *marxarchy* and royal repression was replaced by military suppression.

At the head of it all was General Aman Andon. Uneasy lay his head, but more uneasy lay the head that snatched the crown from his head. General Teferi Benti deposed Andon. His own acts were undone by Haile Mariam (the Glory of Mary) and Atnafu Abate — the duo.

The neglect by the Selassie era was very real and widespread; the people's desire for reform and even revenge was deep and deep-seated. The duo seized the opportunity and wove the passion and hatred in the people into a base on which they built their so-called scientific ideology. The socialism of Teferi Benti became the marxism of Mengistu — in the absence of Atnafu Abate who, Mengistu decided, had more important service to render in the hereafter. And so he sent him there. He ruled alone; his only companion was an iron fist, and it was very useful to him.

The story of Ethiopia and Mengistu is one of despotic misuse and magisterial uncreativity. Despotic initially, disappointing as it unfolded and disgusting as it ended. He presided over a most insensitive administration that put concern with doctrinaire marxism — even as it disintegrated everywhere else — above bread and butter. Throughout most of his reign, civil war and a humiliating famine ravaged Ethiopia. At least you can't accuse Mengistu of tempering with anything. Honest man. When he took over power, there was famine; when he returned it there was famine.

It was classic poetic justice. He and his dead colleagues used the famine of 1972 to justify the removal of Haile Selassie. They made much capital (or was it labour?) out of the emperor's lack of concern as his people died. That was in 1974. Ten years later, the lot of the people was much worse — hunger, deaths and desolation everywhere. Defence expenditure grew and today stood at 10% of GDP.

And why not? There were very many Eritrians to kill, Oromians to slaughter, Tigrean towns to bomb, and the Somali and Sudanese to shell. All these of course required resources — money, arms and ammunitions, didn't they?

Haile Selassie had billions in Swiss bank vaults and owned luxurious resorts in Europe. Mengistu — not a fool — also made preparations for his retirement. A villa and a farm in Zimbabwe, that's an open secret. And so where are his billions — in Belgrade or in Moscow?

Thank God the struggle and dispute over ideology — time-consuming, energy-sapping and without visible, tangible result — is over. Dead and buried, never to be exhumed. Though capitalism has not won, communism has clearly failed; and it takes two to tango. While capitalism waits for its new antagonist, which may have no time for dispute, Africa's leadership class will have time to devour its food for thought.

The first serving is that the people know better than any messiah. The second is that if Africa's politicians have failed, soldiers are not the solution. Mengistu's case is one of failure unadulterated by success. Just like all the others. The third is that the wind of change is not likely to be changed. It is very strong. The posters must come down. The messiahs have messed up.

Students' Unions

Spoiling for war

Government and students are once again at daggers drawn

The National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS) delegates meeting began on a normal, ordinary note. The venue was the University of Ilorin and the day was Saturday, April 27. In attendance were about sixty-seven students, drawn from forty universities and other higher institutions in the country. Also in attendance were a

sprinkling of past NANS leaders and human rights activists. The agenda was a simple and straightforward one: the deteriorating condition of life in the nation's universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. What to do about it?

No sooner was the floor declared open than a babel of voices filled the arena. One group wanted the delegates to disperse

immediately, return to their various campuses and mobilise their fellow students in a massive demonstration against the government and its policies. A second group wanted NANS to table a list of demands to government and give it a specific period within which to implement them, failing which students would feel free to demonstrate their grievances in whatever way NANS



Demonstrating students during the 1989 SAP riots

decides. The third group wanted none of this. Its position was that the Federal Government was at the tail-end of its transition programme and that care should be taken not to disrupt it in any manner. This group was immediately shouted down as cries of "traitors!" and "paid agents!" rent the air.

After five long and arduous hours of arguments and deliberations, the conference rose with a consensus. A ten-point demand was drawn up and the federal government was given thirty days within which to implement them or else be prepared to face the collective wrath of Nigerian students. The major points of the ten-point demand were: that principal administrative officers of academic institutions be chosen via elections; that the political transition programme should be scrapped; that schools should no longer be shut down due to students unrest; that all students of higher institutions be paid 2,000 Naira while all senior secondary school students be paid 500 Naira; that all expelled and rusticated students be reinstated; that SAP should be scrapped and that Nigeria should stop sending peace-keeping troops to Liberia or other international assignments.

NANS has already presented its ten-point demand to officials of the federal government but for two weeks nothing happened. *Citizen* was reliably informed that during this period, government mapped out its own strategy on how to counter the students' move. The strategy, *Citizen* learnt, involved identifying some key NANS officials who would be sympathetic to government's position, convincing them of the preposterousness of the ten-point demand and then using them to sow seeds of discord and disunity within the organisation. The plan was put into action immediately. Selected NANS officials were invited to a meeting with two key ministers in the second week of May ostensibly

to discuss NANS' ten-point demand and arrive at a position acceptable to both sides. The meeting, which began in a genial and amicable atmosphere, ended in a deadlock, *Citizen* learnt. The



Akinyele: subversive



Adisa: "fire for fire"

NANS officials stalked out, promising that government would hear from them "soon".

On Saturday May 17, NANS officials met again, this time in an old bungalow near the Ugbawo Campus of the University of Benin. In attendance this time were members of the special committee set up at the Ilorin meeting in April

to sensitise the students on the need to demand for a 2,000 Naira bursary award. The meeting was held in the early hours of the morning under tight security. A NANS official who attended the meeting told *Citizen* that the major issues that were deliberated upon were: what appropriate response to make when the ultimatum expires on Sunday, May 26; how to mobilize the various higher institutions to ensure that NANS directives are promptly implemented nationwide; specific strategies to counter government in case it resorts to violence as it did during the May 1989 anti-SAP demonstration. *Citizen* learnt that the delegates left Benin City with specific instructions on what to do after May 26, when the ultimatum expires.

It was obvious however that government officials, after they had failed to reach an agreement with NANS officials in the second week of May, were keeping a close tab on their activities. Last week, government played its first joker. Addressing the second annual meeting of the Oyo State chapter of the Nigerian Youth Caucus in his office in Ibadan on Sunday, May 19, Colonel Abdulkarim Adisa, governor of Oyo State announced that government had detected a plan by students to stage nationwide riots on May 26 and 27, and warned that the action would only lead to unprecedented blood-bath. Said Adisa, "We are ready to meet them fire for fire if that is the language they choose to understand". The governor did not stop there. He also alleged that government had uncovered plans by the students to manufacture and amass fire-bombs at both Obafemi Awolowo University and the University of Ibadan for use on May 26.

Governor Adisa's warning was clearly the prelude to a more elaborate and detailed announcement by Chief Alex Akinyele, the minister of

information. Akinyele told a gathering of foreign and Nigerian journalists in his office Tuesday May 21 that the NANS plan to cause chaos was being sponsored by well-known subversive elements in their bid to destroy the international image of Nigeria. The information minister had first alerted the nation on the planned strike on December 27 last year. According to Akinyele, the few students who are fomenting trouble have made such an impact because they were backed and financed by certain disgruntled elements who had tried unsuccessfully to confront government and the authorities on the very issues which the students were now advocating. Warned Akinyele, "Security agencies are fully aware of their (students') day-to-day meetings, programmes and machinations. That they have not been arrested is not that government does not know what they are up to, but because they are being given the chance to reflect on the foolery and most tragic consequences of their plots", adding, "if they refuse to utilise this opportunity to back down, they will be dealt with as public enemies deserve".

And as proof that government is indeed aware of these subversive elements "sponsoring and financing" the students, the minister of information, reeled out a list of names: Sylvester Odion (NANS public relations officer and presently under rustication at the University of Lagos); Mike Igaga (ex-student of the University of Benin), Bamidele Aturu (ex-student of the University of Benin now reading law at Ife); Gbenga Olawepo (expelled student of University of Lagos); Opayemi Bamidele (Ex-NANS president); Albert Adeola (rusticated student of the University of Lagos); Emmanuel Ezeazu (ex-NANS president); and Ogaga Ifowodo (ex-student activist now at Law School). These young

men, according to the information minister, were behind the would-be rampage which in his own words, is intended to "be worse than the 1989 riots by several folds".

It was clear that government had intended the public "unmasking" of the student activists to be the ultimate *coup de grace*. The thinking, an impeccable government source informed *Citizen* last week, was that with the main brains behind the planned demonstration unmasked, other



Hassana: NANS treasurer



Abisoye: Probed 1986 ABU riot

leaders of the movement would develop cold feet and disperse peacefully. However, even as the minister finished his announcement, it had become clear that the plan had misfired and had only succeeded in pouring more fuel into an already smouldering volcano. Even worse, Akinyele's announcement revealed gaping holes in government's security network and intelligence capability in regard to the planned students unrest. For one, Bamidele Aturu is not an ex-student of University of Benin. He graduated from the Adeyemi College of Education, Ile Ife. Similarly, Ogaga Ifowodo who according to the minister is a student at the Law School is actually doing his National Youth Service in Makurdi, Benue State. Nor was Mike Igaga ever a student of the University of Benin. He is actually at the University of Ibadan where he held the post of Speaker of the House in the recently dissolved student union.

Citizen investigations last week also revealed that some of the "subversive elements" whom the minister of information mentioned in his press conference may well be ignorant of the planned demonstration. Emmanuel Ezeazu who is presently the National Secretary of the Civil Liberties Organisation, a Lagos-based civil rights organisation is currently away in Kampala where he is participating in a conference organised by the African Leadership Forum.

Ogaga Ifowodo was in far away Makurdi doing the national service until last week when he was rushed to the University College Hospital, Ibadan for treatment of a hiernia ailment. *Citizen* attempted to reach Sylvester Odion, the current NANS' public relations officer and Mike Igaga, western zonal co-ordinator of NANS in their rooms at the University of Lagos and Ibadan respectively but they were nowhere to be found. Fidelis Omenka, Odion's friend and classmate told

Government is chasing shadows — Chima

On government's allegation of impending students unrest:

Government is in a state of frenzy and its utterances go to confirm that it feels rattled by whatever it conceives the students intend to do after the said ultimatum expires. I think there is something fundamentally wrong with the way government is going about it.

On incessant student unrest:

It is all a problem of democracy — the involvement of students in the formulation of policies that directly affect their daily life on campus. There is the problem of SAP and its effect on the students. Then there is the transition programme which students think is inherently undemocratic. The government just cannot impose a two party system on the populace. These are issues which the students are agitating against.

On NAN's grievances:

In my opinion, the students have raised very valid issues. My advice to government is to negotiate with the students. Government should recognise NANS which is the legitimate representative of students and dialogue with it.

On allegations that students plan to burn down public buildings:

I am not speaking for NANS on this issue, but what is happening is a prototype government

propaganda to conjure up very frightful scenarios about what the students want to do. The whole idea is to whip up public apprehension against the students and in the process sweep under the carpet the legitimate demands that lie at the root of their protest. If government had gone as far as identifying this alleged plan to burn down strategic government installations and the people behind it, one would have expected that government would arrest and try them for treasonable felony which is what this whole thing amounts to. Government should also tell the world where the students positioned the catchment of arms with which they hope to effect the plot.



Government alleged that some universities have made available their laboratories for students to manufacture bombs. Obafemi Awolowo

University was specifically mentioned. However, the Vice-Chancellor of that university has come out to say that there was no such thing in his university. This means that government lied. What is simply going on is a frenzied propaganda designed to blackmail students to stop them from pursuing their rights. We do not think it is fair for the government to feed the Nigerian public and the international community with lies.

On Akinyele's attempt to dialogue with NANS:

The issue is simple and straightforward. Akinyele said he invited the students to dialogue but they countered with

"impossible demands". What are impossible demands? Is students' demand to lift the ban on NANS an impossible one? The demand for the democratisation of education including the election principle in the selection of university administrators?

Interestingly, Akinyele considers this idea particularly outrageous. What is simply happening here is a conflict between the

students' demand for democracy and better conditions of living and a government which does not believe in the entitlement of the people in the first instance to decent living. That is the crux of the matter.

On students' living conditions and government's attempts to improve them:

The available evidence all point to the fact that the living conditions of students presently are deplorable. Such issues as feeding, transport and other aspects of personal maintenance including books are threatened. We wont overlook the fact that in the past two years government has tried to ameliorate the conditions in the universities but the extent to which this has addressed the problem is open to debate. Again the whole issue comes down to democratisation. Who decides who manages the finances of the universities? Who decides what proportion of it goes to improving the living conditions of the students? These decisions are taken without students being represented. This of course has led to such things as embezzlement and the construction of white elephant projects which have little or no bearing on the living conditions of students.

By Ike Okonta

Citizen last week that the NANS PRO went into hiding the moment he heard his name over the radio as one of the "subversive elements" behind the planned demonstration. Omenka told *Citizen*, "Strange-looking men whom we suspect are security agents came looking for Odion throughout last week. They did not say what they wanted him for, but it was obvious they wanted to arrest him".

The Civil Liberties Organisation is particularly outraged at government's attempt to link its National Secretary with the planned demonstration. According to Unabi Chima, CLO's assistant national secretary, Ezeazu has been away in Kampala since May 18 and that at the time the minister of information was making his announcement to Nigerians about his alleged involvement in the said plot, Ezeazu was not even aware. We are challenging the information minister to substantiate his allegations against Ezeazu otherwise we will be at

liberty to institute necessary legal action for the defamatory and false announcement".

Going by the relative ease, and indeed clinical efficiency, with which NANS set in motion the current face-off with government, Aghanenu may well be right. *Citizen* has it on good authority that government attempted several times in the past one year to hijack the leadership of NANS and rid the organisation of its "extremist" posture. The first attempt manifested itself in the shape of a protracted war between the various higher institutions over where the NANS secretariat for the current academic year would be located. *Citizen* learnt that Kaduna Polytechnic actively lobbied for it but was turned down when other NANS officials suspected that there was more to KadPoly's request than met the eye. The secretariat was moved to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria instead. Hardly

had this problem been solved than a few NANS officials broke away from the parent organisation and declared their autonomy. Again, feverish attempts were made to resolve the crisis, and by April 27 when NANS delegates met in Ilorin, the problem had been more or less resolved.

Observers see government's recent public warning to the students and Chief Akinyele's hasty conference to which foreign journalists were

invited as an indication that its attempts to take control of the NANS leadership has come to nought. The real test of the unity of the students and NANS' leadership capabilities would however come when the ultimatum expires on May 26. Already, cracks are beginning to appear on the students' seemingly compact and impregnable wall. Last week, the acting president of the University of Ibadan, Toyin Adegbola, dissociated the union from the planned demonstration. Adegbola told *Citizen* in Ibadan last week, "In as much as we recognise NANS as the major umbrella protecting Nigerian students, we are not in support of the May 26 ultimatum because of the 2,000 Naira bursary issue". While Adegbola dismissed Governor Adisa's recent declaration of war as extremely un tactful, she insisted that the payment of 2,000 Naira to every student in the country would impose an intolerable burden on the fragile national economy. Declared the acting president, "Based on this premise, we hereby wish to assert that we are fully in support of timely payment of 500 Naira. We are not in support of the May 26 ultimatum, and any attempt by any group of individuals or syndicate to cause an uproar in this university will be resisted with equal might". Most students and indeed campus organisations in the university seem to share Adegbola's opinion. Franklin Ojanomare, president of the Union of Campus Journalists told *Citizen* that as far as the students of the University of Ibadan are concerned, NANS does not exist on the campus. Said Ojanomare, "if ever it exists, it does so only in the name of two or three people who in conjunction with others outside the country, want to re-enact the 1989 anti-SAP riots. It is Bunmi Olusona and Mike Igaga, former student union officials who describe themselves as zonal representatives of NANS that are the brains behind the whole thing".

When *Citizen* called at the



Jega: no comments but...

secretariat of the Obafemi Awolowo University students union last week, the whole place was deserted. None of the officials was on seat. The reason, *Citizen* learnt, was the fact that the old executive is on its way out and a new one already elected in its place. A small notice put up by the Association of Campus Journalists directed all students to gather at the AWO Hall Cafeteria for a symposium on the topic, "2,000 Naira bursary: Right or Privilege?" The list of speakers included Tunde Fugbounge, the president-elect, A.A. Soetan, outgoing president, Bamidele Aturu, chairman, NANS National Mobilisation for 2,000 Naira bursary award and Kola Odetola, NANS Zone D Co-ordinator. Unlike the University of Ibadan, student leaders in Obafemi Awolowo University did not mince words in throwing their weight behind the May 26 ultimatum and the payment of the 2,000 Naira bursary award. Also, they seem to have succeeded in winning the sympathy of a considerable number of students. Oye Adetunji, an undergraduate, told *Citizen*, "If government does not pay us the 2,000 Naira bursary award, then we are prepared to go home".

The situation at the University of Lagos last week was relatively calm. However, following the minister of information's warning last week, students union officials seem to have absconded from the campus for fear of arrest. The majority of students went about their normal business without showing any sign of impending unrest, though. In fact, the campus was agog with campaign slogans as candidates canvassed for the mandate of the students in the Union's central executive council election which was supposed to come up May 31. The election has however been postponed. Dapo Sogbesan, the out-going clerk of parliament and a member of the executive caretaker

committee believes that NANS should first of all consolidate its gains on the 500 Naira bursary award before pressing for other demands. Sogbesan told *Citizen* that only a handful of states have paid the 500 Naira bursary award and that even though the demand for 2,000 is legitimate, it is not a realistic demand at this point of the national economy.

Indications are that the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, (UNN) may remain calm when, and if, university campuses around the country finally erupt in answer to the federal government's failure to meet the demands of NANS. *Citizen* investigations in Nsukka and Enugu show that students of the nation's premier university are not in the mood to riot.

Although the rumour mill has it that some students and lecturers of the institution have been picked up by men of the State Security Service (SSS) in a bid to pre-empt any planned riots, a visit to Nsukka presented a totally different picture.

"In as much as we recognise NANS as the major umbrella protecting Nigerian students, we are not in support of the May 26 ultimatum because of the 2,000 Naira bursary issue". She insisted that the payment of 2,000 Naira to every student in the country would impose an intolerable burden on the fragile national economy.

The atmosphere was calm and devoid of tensions as students went about their activities peacefully when *Citizen* visited the main campus at Nsukka on Wednesday. Those interviewed admitted being aware of the intended nationwide showdown by students but said that they at the UNN never considered getting involved, as they had no properly constituted union.

Contacted on Tuesday, Mr Boniface Onyebor, the Police PRO in Anambra State, confirmed that there was no likelihood of the

outbreak of danger either at UNN or at the other institutions of higher learning in the state. "Our area has been calm", he told *Citizen*. "I am not anticipating any danger, but we are not resting on our oars. So far there is no indication that there will be trouble, but (if there happens to be trouble) we are equal to the task".

Students of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, the nation's largest, have split into two camps as NANS' May 26 deadline approached. A NANS mobilisation committee has been active on the campus for several weeks, regularly informing students of developments in the protracted struggle against the government. A document published by the committee last Thursday charged that the federal government cannot claim to lack the resources to meet the 2,000 bursary demands "when it recently bought 54 Mercedes Benz cars and 2,000 motorbikes for the OAU summit meeting". NANS' treasurer, Hassana Garba, a political science student at the ABU, told

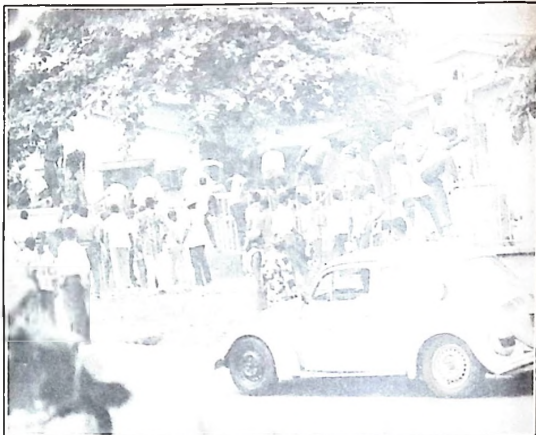
Citizen that "government has used all sorts of tactics to demobilise us. Last week, the SSS arrested our vice-president (internal affairs), Nasiru Kura, at the Bayero University. They later offered him 3,000 Naira to go and demobilise students".

Even as the treasurer spoke "demobilising" forces were at work. A right-wing student organisation, the Gamji Memorial Club, widely circulated a letter urging ABU students to ignore the NANS' "confrontation". The release, signed by Nura Shehu Giwa and

seven other students, charged that a group of "expelled students and those caught cheating in exams" are behind the NANS action. The Gamji Club letter darkly warned that "people are often compelled to go to war in order to preserve the peace. We are ready to counter any demonstration." Hassana Garba, NANS' treasurer, told *Citizen* that Gamji Club was in the pay of the ABU authorities. "They receive their orders from the Vice Chancellor," she said. It appears that some other students agree with her contention; graffiti scrawled on Gamji Club's letter asked, among other things, "Why not use VC's letterhead?"

NANS' planned demonstrations also face difficulties at the Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto. The union's president, Suleiman Yusuf Wushishi, was the leader of the "Eleven Northern States' Caucus" within NANS. This was the group that succeeded in thwarting NANS' convention at Auchi last December, after which the group retreated to Kaduna for a meeting while the rump convention went to the University of Benin and proceeded to elect the current NANS leadership. In Sokoto last Thursday, Wushishi told *Citizen* that the Benin convention was illegal and its leaders have no authority to call out students to protest anything. Wushishi also said that his faction has attempted to legalise the leadership of NANS by inviting its opponents to a fresh convention at Jos last March. When they failed to turn up, elections were held and Wushishi was formally elected NANS' president.

Other members of the Wushishi faction are also out to wreck the May 26 protests. A statement issued in Kaduna by Mustafa Aliyu Tsanyawa, students' leader at the Kaduna Polytechnic, accused the NANS leaders of planning to "create confusion, chaos and confrontation with the



Students scaling walls during a riot

government".

A similar charge was made in Jos by the controversial president of the University of Jos students' union, Luka Dalang. Dalang's statement urged students to "resist being used to cause crisis by those who are out to satisfy their external sponsors". Many students in the

students'.

NANS' treasurer, Hassana Garba, told *Citizen* that Wushishi's pro-government faction of NANS is well-financed and very boastful. "At Auchi last December", she said, "they came in a federal government-owned station wagon and offered monetary inducements

Contacted on Tuesday, Mr Boniface Onyeabor, the Police PRO in Anambra State, confirmed that there was no likelihood of the outbreak of danger either at UNN or at the other institutions of higher learning in the state. "Our area has been calm", he told *Citizen*. "I am not anticipating any danger, but we are not resting on our oars. So far there is no indication that there will be trouble, but (if there happens to be trouble) we are equal to the task".

University of Jos do not however recognise the legitimacy of Dalang, who was impeached by the students' parliament last year on charges of being "pro-government, pro-SAP, anti-NANS and anti-

to persuade the convention to shift to Kaduna. They told us that if Wushishi is elected president, they will donate 50,000 Naira to NANS and will guarantee that it will be unbanned within forty-eight

hours".

As May 26 approaches, the dominant mood in homes across the nation is one of anticipation. Mrs Folake Adegbite, a Lagos house wife has two children in the University of Ife and Ilorin. "I sent word to them to come back home immediately," Adegbite told *Citizen* last week. "It seems to me that the SAP riots of 1989 is about to repeat itself. I don't want my children to be out in the streets when the bullets start flying". Interestingly, most student leaders whom *Citizen* spoke to last week were quick to deny any link between the May 1989 riots and the present one. Luke Aghanenu, former secretary general of NANS told *Citizen* that it is merely a coincidence that the students chose May to demonstrate. "If there is any link between the two at all, then it is purely a question of fundamental issues. The national economy today

ultimatum. Attahiru M. Jega, ASUU president declined to comment specifically on the impending student demonstration but acknowledged that living conditions on most campuses has deteriorated drastically in recent years.

A Lagos-based magazine conducted a special survey of the nation's higher institutions last March and the portrait it painted was one of endemic moral, social and economic decay. Rape, robbery, drug addiction, homosexuality, exam malpractices and secret cults seem to have taken the front seat in the nation's universities and polytechnics. Concluded the *African Concord* report, "Unless parents, guardians, lecturers, authorities in the universities and government all agree that there are

Navy Captain Abiodun Olukoya, governor of Ondo State, held a one-hour meeting last Wednesday with heads of tertiary institutions in the state. In attendance at the meeting, held at the Cocoa Conference Centre Annex of the governor's office were Professor Peter Bodunrin, Deputy Vice-chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Akure and Professor Abiodun Ipaye, Vice-Chancellor of Ondo State University among others. This conciliatory strategy, *Citizen* gathered, was informed by government's fear that an undue demonstration of coercion would plunge the nation into chaos and thus scuttle the conference of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) ministers and heads of states which kicked off last Friday. Still, anti-riot policemen maintained a strong presence at such strategic locations as the Lagos State secretariat at Alausa, Ikeja, NTA Victoria Island and the Federal Rakio Corporation of Nigeria in Ikoyi.

NANS officials who spoke to *Citizen* last week explained that government had mistaken Sunday May 26 when the ultimatum will expire as the day they intend to call out students on the streets. "The ultimatum merely expires on May 26", Luke Agbanenu told *Citizen* last week. "What NANS intends to do after that is strictly confidential. And the government will find out in good time if it refuses to accede to the students' legitimate demands".

Going by the utterances of government spokesmen so far, it would appear that the Babangida administration is not willing to meet NANS' ten-point demand, at least in its entirety. Is the nation headed for yet another orgy of mayhem and blood-letting?

By Ike Okonta, with reports from Aluko Akinyele in Ife and Ibadan, Bolaji Adebisi and Tola Sunday in Lagos, Isaac Umunna in Enugu, Mohammed Haruna, in Sokoto and Mahmud Jega in Zaria.



Attah: his men are ready

is no better than it was in 1989. Nigerian students are aware of this and they are not happy".

Coincidentally, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has scheduled its eighth national delegates conference for Friday 24 May at the Lagos State University Conference Centre in Badagry, two days to the expiration of NANS'

serious moral and ethical problems that require urgent solutions in the nation's higher institutions of learning, our universities will continue to be a citadel of shame".

By the end of last week, government seemed to have toned-down its tough guy approach. In what is clearly a prelude to round-table discussions in all the states,

Arewa House

Mother of all appeal funds

Arewa House wanted a staggering 120 million Naira, and got more than that

It was the greatest occasion of its kind in recent memory. The president of the Federal Republic, General Ibrahim Babangida, flew into Kaduna early on Saturday, May 18th, to grace the occasion. The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, who was to be the chairman, was unavoidably absent, but the Shehu of Bornu and virtually every leading traditional ruler in the northern states was present. Also present were the eleven northern governors, ministers, top civil servants, retired generals, clergymen, businessmen and thousands of ordinary citizens. Dignitaries also came from the southern states to grace the occasion.

The stated purpose of the gathering was to launch an appeal fund for the renovation and expansion of Arewa House, official residence of the premier of the defunct Northern Region. Upon the death of its last occupant in January 1966, the house at Unguwar Ministoci, Kaduna was taken over by the Northern Nigerian Development Corporation (NNDC) and was later developed into a research centre affiliated to the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. To coincide with the 25th anniversary of the premier's death last January 15th, Arewa House's indefatigable director, Dr. Bashir Ikara, proposed that an appeal fund be launched to transform the centre to meet "international standards". Among the facilities to be revitalised, expanded or added anew were a



The Sardāuna, the pillar of northern consciousness

museum with eleven satellite galleries, each representing a northern state; a museum kitchen; and a 350-seat auditorium with an audio-visual unit for presentation of films on the late premier. Also to be provided are a library, an archive, an administrative block, a printing press, photocopiers, bindery, photographic and microfilming equipment. The late premier's private rooms and office, as well as the spot where he was shot by mutinous troops, are also to be

preserved. In addition, lectures, seminars, research, staff development and publications are also to be financed from the fund.

Dr. Ikara's proposals were placed before a meeting of the eleven northern governors sometime last year, and they approved the idea of an appeal fund. They also set up a high-powered committee under the leadership of Alhaji Yahaya Gusau, a retired permanent secretary and federal minister, to organise the

launching of the fund. The project's ambitious target, set by the committee, was 120 million Naira.

The launching of the appeal fund turned out to be a command performance extravagantly staged by the cream of the northern establishment. Observers were quick to point out that the performance was necessitated by creeping divisiveness in the northern political house. In particular, the recent religious riots in Katsina and Bauchi alarmed northern leaders and sent them in a frantic search for renewed unity and solidarity in the region. The handiest tool for this purpose is the towering image of the late premier, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto and president-general of the defunct Northern People's Congress, who was killed in a military coup on January 15th, 1966. Some historians have maintained that the rise of northern consciousness was entirely attributable to the "personality and activities of Ahmadu Bello"

between 1954 and 1966. It was his strong political personality and zealous sense of mission that created the political feeling of a "northerner", by-and-large obscuring the North's ethnic and religious heterogeneity in the process. Even after his violent death in 1966, the Sardauna remained the only symbol that most northerners will flock to, and it is for this reason that his memory is invoked whenever disunity creeps in.

The Arewa House appeal fund's launching quickly became a who's who. Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule, a federal minister in the First Republic and formerly Nigeria's Permanent Representative at the UN, delivered a rousing speech at the occasion extolling the Sardauna's legendary virtues. When it came time to donate money, the fund was launched by Alhaji Aminu Dantata, who donated 5 million Naira. Alhaji Aminu's generosity was no doubt in memory of his late father, the legendary Kano merchant Alhaji Alhassan Dantata, who was

carefully nurtured by the Sardauna into a leading position in modern commerce as part of the comprehensive policy of preserving "the North for the northerners". The Bank of the North, created by the Sardauna in 1958, donated 5.5 million Naira to the fund. An Arab merchant who reportedly heard of the launching at an airport sent one million Naira. Chief Moshood Abiola, generally allied to the northern establishment, donated one million Naira. Chief Gabriel Igbenidion and Chief Arthur Eze also donated one million Naira each.

Governors of the eleven northern states, who authorised the event, made a spectacular show. Ten of them arrived together at the Murtala Muhammed Square, venue of the event, in a Hiace bus, abandoning their long motorcades that had paralysed the city for most of the previous day. For their symbolic show of unity, and probably for



The past and present, Babangida and Shagari at the launching



Dantata: ready generosity

their logistical economy too, the governors got a loud cheer. The governors also went to great lengths to beef up the fund. Colonel Alwali Kazir, governor of Kwara State and present chairman of the conference of northern governors, announced that each of the eleven states would donate 2 million Naira to the fund. In addition, Colonel Kazir announced that each of the local governments in the eleven states will donate 150,000 Naira. The state and local government contributions amounted to 58 million Naira and brought total contributions to 90 million Naira, although the federal government had not yet donated.

When President Babangida rose to speak, anticipation was high. In fact, the occasion had been put off from its initial date in January at the request of the president, who wanted to attend. General Babangida is widely said to have been a beneficiary of the Sardauna's policy of encouraging young northerners to join the armed forces. Indeed, some wags said at the launching that when the young Babangida went to enlist in the army in the early 1960's, he was rejected on account of his height, but that the Sardauna intervened to say that he guaranteed the young man's height. General Babangida did not himself comment on the wag's claim.

The President's main concern, it soon transpired, was to promote the Sardauna's tolerant legacy as an insurance against religious clashes. His speech recalled Ahmadu Bello's well known ability to accommodate Christians in his innermost councils, despite his status and reputation as a scion of the family of Usman Danfodio and a vice president of the World Muslim League. The federal government is clearly hoping that a political solution can be found to the Muslim — Christian conflicts, since security agencies have not been successful in checking these. President Babangida announced a federal

government donation of 35 million Naira to the fund, thereby exceeding its target by 5 million Naira. Although the sum appeared to be huge, it may well be a fraction of the sum required to contain a religious conflict by physical means. To dramatise inter-religious harmony, an Islamic cleric Sheikh Abubakar Gumi was joined by Archbishop Peter Jatau, head of the Roman Catholic Church in the northern states, to offer prayers at the occasion.

The glamorous success of the event soon produced a political fallout. Speaking in Lagos on his return



Host Governor, Ayuba of Kaduna State



Kaita: extolled the virtue of the Sardauna



Governor Kazir of Kwara State



Sule: mother of all appeal funds



ABU VC, Nayaya

from the appeal fund launching, SDP national chairman Ambassador Babagana Kingibe told reporters that if the Sardauna were still alive, he would join the SDP. That is debatable. What is not in

doubt is that the Arewa House appeal fund was the mother of all appeal funds.

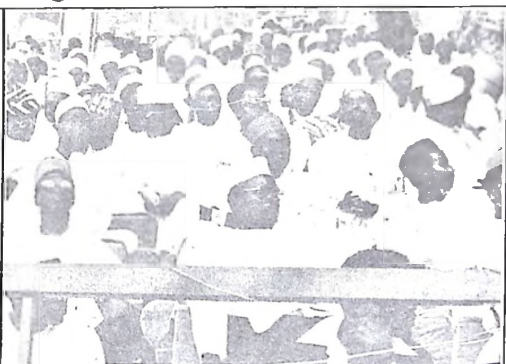
By Mahmud Jega with reports from Rabi'u Barde and AbuMomoh

Citizen, May 27, 1991

AREWA HOUSE 120 Million Naira Appeal fund at a glance



General Babangida delivering his address



A cross section of guests at the ceremony



Emir of Kano Ado Bayero and the Shehu of Borno



Gov Ayuba welcoming the President to the venue of the launching Murtala Square Kaduna



Abiola and Emir of Daura in a chat



The master of Ceremony, Alhaji Maitama Sule consulting with ex-president Shehu Shagari

NPEC

Politics of primary education

Aikhomu's soother is not enough to stop a teacher's strike

Gabriel Onoh, chairman of Enugu local government in Anambra State has just snatched back his job from the jaws of the opposition. But he has hardly had time to savour his second "win", this time in an appellate court. The week he returned to his post was the week the council's 3,500 primary school teachers were out on strike to protest against non-payment of March and April salaries. Their spokesperson, Mrs. Nebo Ezenbasili, announced the strike in a terse statement: "from today (May 8) we will just sit down ... and won't teach..."

Before them had been 12,000



Dasuki: so much thrown away



Fafunwa: as act of statesmanship

teachers in eight of Rivers State's local governments. National Union of Teachers Secretary Tai-Elemente Etche said the delay in paying teachers' salaries set in last January, when President Ibrahim Babangida annulled the National Primary Education Commission, NPEC, and transferred funding and control of pri-

Kaduna. On the first day, union leader Israel Nwokocha described the transfer of responsibility for primary education to the councils as "most tragic". The "shock" was all the more "rude", he said, because NUT was not consulted.

To Abdulwaheed Ibrahim Omar, Kaduna State NUT chair-

man, the government's new thinking on primary education means "we now have 453 standards of primary education. Different local governments will set different standards, depending on which of the two political parties is in power". It was precisely to smoothen this chaos which in 1980's was seen to have been the ruin of primary education, that the government in the 1988 established the NPEC, to provide "a uniform management structure" for that level of education. During the commission's inauguration in April 1989, its first chairman, Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa, now Minister of Education, said what the government had done was "an act of statesmanship". The commission, he said, was the hope of "every Nigerian child ... for good primary education with better, sounder value".

But barely two years later the same government was to say, "no, what we did was no longer statesmanlike". Politically, it contradicted the devolution of powers and responsibility inherent in the three-tier structure of government. In any case, the councils have had their share of nationally collected revenue raised from 10 to 15 per cent. It is only logical that they take on additional responsibility. It was convenient to return the 'baby' they had been used to nursing, even if they only managed to make a mess of it.

Reactions to the government's about-face have ranged from the purely selfish, like that of teachers who despite all else are saying are more concerned about their salaries, to the altruism exemplified by the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki. You don't just throw away a body on which you have spent so

much public money! NPEC's 1989 annual report says that year, its subvention and investment income came up to 11 million Naira. It spent 9.125 million Naira leaving "a surplus of 2.04 million Naira".

There has been no lack of support for the new policy, either. Alhaji Iguda M. Inuwa, chairman of the governing council of Katsina State Polytechnic described it as "the most appropriate step" that the government took. "After moving in circles for many years, responsibility for primary education is back with the local governments", he said. All the noise-making about their inability to cope with the new responsibility is crying wolf where there is none. The councils, Alhaji Iguda said, have a social contract with the electorate and they should accept the responsibility that goes along with their new found financial strength!

The government is not insensitive to the increasing criticism against its new stand on primary education. Vice-president Augustus Aikhomu while in Kano re-

"review" the new law giving local governments sole responsibility for primary school. They wanted the law read that they should take charge of capital projects while state governments pick up teachers' wage bills.

The state governments are not likely to agree. They are more likely to argue the way the federal government has done. "You now have a bigger share of the federation account", they will say. "So get on with the job that you have been given"! That was exactly what Benue State deputy governor Bur meant when he told the state NUT leaders last week in Makurdi that transferring responsibility of funding primary education to local governments "is a constitutional issue, which nobody can do anything about".

The state governments would not agree to bail out insolvent councils either. Rivers state government, for instance, has refused to help the eight financially-strapped council areas out. According to one report, PortHarcourt and Obio/Akpor councils shared between them 1.20

State's 22 councils have taken their plight direct to the federal government. They are requesting it to alter the revenue allocation formula to give local governments 35% instead of the approved 15%. David Akinbohun, chairman of Ondo council thinks 35% is just about adequate for the councils. "The burden we are now asked to shoulder outweighs our capacity by a long distance", he said.

The federal government is about to throw a life-line their way. Professor Akin Osiyele, a top ministry of education official, announced in Lagos last week that a six-year "gigantic" programme for improving primary education was under way. It will be financed with a \$120 million support loan from the World Bank. Its main components include supply of books in the core subjects and teacher training. But it is only a breather.

Meanwhile the issues which NPEC's abolition has thrown up are yet to be discussed. First, is what to do with the 10-year plan for the development of educationally disadvantaged states. The government listed 12 of them: Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Cross Rivers, Gongola, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Plateau, Rivers and Sokoto. Under the 10-year plan, they were to receive about 160 Million Naira annually.

Second, the fate of the staff of the defunct NPEC and the state management boards is uncertain. At the time of NPEC's disbanding, Education Minister Aliu Fafunwa said a number of its staff would be absorbed by the parent body. But this has not been done. Its account and those of the state boards have been frozen, meaning that the workers cannot be paid their salaries while they await redeployment or the sack, whichever the government decides. Meanwhile the slide into the chaos of the 80's seems unstoppable.

By Tawey Zakka

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cently, threw a soother in the way of the critics. He said it was too early to start doubting the ability of the councils to take charge of primary education, pleading for time for them to "prove their mettle". A reply came sooner than he might be expecting. Last week council chairmen in Kano State rose from a seminar with a communique which pleaded with the government to

million Naira from the government of Col. Godwin Abbe in January which they have not paid. The governor is reluctant to give out any new loan; instead he has directed that the councils pay teachers before contractors.

The councils are not in a pleasant situation. NUT's threat to call out teachers on strike is making them all the more squirmy. Ondo

Katsina Police day

Governor Madaki of Katsina State called in the police to stop widespread abuse of government cars but they did an overkill

May 9 had all the marks of the April 19 religious riot in the historic city of Katsina. Policemen in anti-riot gear took up positions at crossroads. Sirens blared nonstop.

Many thought that another riot had broken out and took cover behind broken walls, others leapt into doors of homes and shops. Traders closed shop early. It was 4 pm, half an hour after closing time for government workers.

Police said the call to duty came from Governor John Madaki, who on occasions, has had cause to match tongue-lashing with fistful blows. This time he wanted the police to stop what has become widespread abuse of government vehicles. They dutifully went to work.

Government House spokesman Abubakar Sadiq Yar'adua, showed his surprise: "The governor said the operation should start at 7 pm. Why the police chose to do so three hours before, I don't understand". As it turned out, he was one of the very first victims of their overzealousness. He told *Citizen* that shortly after 3.30 pm he was returning to Government House having "dropped off" some journalist friends when the police demanded the key of the Peugeot 504 station wagon, GHKT 69, he was driving. His protestations were ignored. He was "saved" by a senior state security service officer who recognised him.

Well, nobody recognised Alhaji Bello Dankano, Commissioner for Information. He "surrendered" the key of his official car, gave the driver the fare for a taxi and took a cab home. Hassu Iro Inko, Director-

General, Women Affairs and Ibrahim Abdullahi, General Manager of the state television station also 'surrendered' to the police. For Ibrahim, it was more than personal humiliation. That day the station's news crew could not go roving for news because there was no car. The health commissioner, *Citizen* gathered, was the luckiest of the lot — but only through sheer bravado.

Abubakar, the spokesman, confirmed that few commissioners and directors-general stayed late in their offices because their official cars did not come to take them home at 3.30 pm. Some of them went home at about 7 pm either in a paid cab or they hitched a ride on motorbikes.

The police did not distinguish between ordinary government vehicles and those out on "essential duties". This later category comprises vehicles used by the water board, the fire service and hospitals. That day, *Citizen* learnt, fire-fighting vans and ambulances were impounded. By the time government realised its own 'blunder' and issued a clarification it was already nightfall.

The police announced the exemption in a special bulletin the next day, a Friday, which also said that they were holding 105 government vehicles — a disputed figure — because their drivers had contravened the anti-abuse order. They would not say why they went into action three hours before the order took effect. Assistant Superintendent of Police Lawal Badamasi distanced himself, saying that the operation took place while he was away on course in far-away Jos. Commissioner of Police

Mohammed Ali-Jos was down with a toothache and would not talk. His deputy Hamzat Bello only had a glance at our questionnaire and returned it without any comment.

Citizen gathered that Governor Madaki called in the police after previous orders had gone unheeded. The May 9 order was his third since becoming governor of Katsina State in January 1990. His immediate predecessors, Lawrence Onoja and Sarki Mukhtar, had tried to end the abuse but did not succeed.

Aside from the overzealousness of the police which they roundly condemned, many Katsina residents welcomed what Colonel Madaki has done. They said that somebody had to do something fast



Madaki: the magic wand?

about the abuse of government vehicles which had become quite widespread. One asked to know what a KTARDA car would be doing in front of a liquor house where he saw it at 1 a. m. The governor was said to have remarked about the "huge expenditure" on official vehicles in his budget speech earlier in the year.

By Tawey Zakka

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ALL THE NEWS IN PERSPECTIVE

Private Hospitals Under the hammer

Danger signals bleep for private hospitals

When in March, Vice President Admiral Augustus Aikhomu dropped hints that doctors would earn more money, many thought it was just one of those routine statements.

But the council of ministers approved the Atanda Fatai Williams recommendations on the new wage last month. Under the new Medical Service Salary Structure, MSSS, the least a doctor will earn is 22,060 Naira per annum while the highest paid will receive 90,000 Naira.

However, the new salary scale for doctors may prove the undoing of private hospitals which sprang up in the wake of waning services in government hospitals. Young doctors who got jobs with private hospitals because of poor pay, are now scrambling back to the stone which they had—rejected.

The Chairman, Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) Management Board, Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti, told *Citizen* that "If the private hospitals want to keep the doctors, they may have to raise their salaries which may mean patients paying more".

Dr. Alex Eneli, of EKO Hospital, disagreed with Dr. Ransome-Kuti. He said the pay rise will not lead to exodus from private hospitals, because "if it is important that one is well paid, it is also important that one has job satisfaction". Dr. Ransome Kuti, gave credit to government saying that in LUTH, though patients have to pay more, medicaments are available.

But considering current

economic problems, job satisfaction might not be the prime issue, said Dr. Arthur Umoh, who is "managing" a private hospital at Bariga, Lagos. Said he: "I work round the clock to secure employment with a government hospital. Only a few private hospitals can afford to pay the new salary, and while we cannot all be working for the few private hospitals, we can find our way back into government service".

However, Dr. Ransome-Kuti said if services improve in government hospitals, private hospitals may lose patients to the government hospitals. But Dr. Eneli said patients always decide on the doctors they go to for various reasons. If the amenities in the government hospitals improve, he said, more patients may go there but that will also make the private hospitals provide better amenities. In the plush gynaecology obstetrics and section of the EKO hospital, an ante-natal patient told

Citizen that she started using a certain private hospital in 1983 but in 1986 she decided to try LUTH, with regret. She said, "on the night of my delivery, there was nobody with me, and I delivered my baby alone". Her verdict was short and simple, "I can never go back there because they did not impress me the first time". Two other ante-natal patients in the hospital also said that they have not thought of changing to government hospitals, even if the conditions improved.

While observers of the health sector wait for the exodus from the private hospitals, doctors in the making are shouting Eureka. At the LUTH medical hostels, John Ifeanyi told *Citizen*, it is now that medical education has meaning. He promised to join a government hospital.

The new problem is that pharmacists are also calling for an upward review of their salaries. President of the Pharmaceutical Society

of Nigeria (PSN), Julius Adelus-Adeluyi, said that it was not in the interest of the health sector that only doctors should benefit from the pay rise. He argued that it would dampen the morale of other health workers.

The Senior Staff Association of Teaching and Specialists Hospitals have given a 21-day ultimatum to the government to raise the salaries of other professionals in the health sector.

Dr. Ransome-Kuti thinks the pay rise may stem brain-drain and induce those abroad to return home. So does Dr. Alex Eneli.



Beko: a boon for government hospitals

By Aluko Akinyele

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Insurance

New dawn

A new decree is poised to change the face of insurance

In recent years, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has had cause to increase the statutory deposits of both the commercial and merchant Banks. Similarly, there are strong indications that government may soon review the Insurance Decree No. 59 of 1976. The new Decree, *Citizen* learnt, would among other things raise the capital base of insurance companies in the country.

According to the 1976 Insurance law, the minimum paid-up share capital for life insurance (composite) business is 500,000 Naira, insurance business, the amount is 300,000 Naira. The proposed Insurance Decree may however raise the capital base of composite insurance companies to five million Naira from 500,000 Naira while that of non composite would be raised from 300,000 Naira to three million Naira.

Dan Okehi, the General Manager of African Development Insurance Company, believes that an upward review of the capital base of insurance companies would increase public confidence in insurance, and moreover "it will give insurance companies the opportunity to write bigger risk than they used to write before". According to Okehi, as the society and the economy is growing, insurance being part of the economy has to grow alongside and at the same pace.

Pete Daramola of ACEN Insurance Company Ltd., agrees with Okehi. According to him, an increase in the paid-up share capital of insurance firms would enable them to have a solid foundation. Also, it

would erase the fear of claim settlement by the insurance firms.

Not only that, Daramola argued "unlike now that everybody is in the business, it will ensure that only serious-minded people will be in the insurance business". Daramola however observed that if the capital base of insurance companies is increased, it could prevent other people from entering the business. This he argued, "will not give room for competition and efficiency in the industry". According to him, the more the number of insurance firms in the country the better for the industry so as to give room for the survival of the best. Said he: "there are new insurance companies that are more efficient than the so-called old ones". As such, he said there should be no attempt to prevent new entrants into the market.

If Okehi and Daramola see some good in the plan to raise the capital base of insurance companies, John Falegan, a lecturer at the department of Insurance and actuarial science, University of Lagos, thinks different. According to Falegan, "all this noise about increasing the share capital to 10 million Naira is nonsense, and irrelevant in insurance". He told *Citizen* that a new insurance company does not require a huge capital base to set up shop. According to the lecturer, insurance companies spread risks among themselves in form of re-insurance. Moreover, there is a method of regulation - the merging of solvency, which stipulates that the asset of the company must exceed its liability by a certain percentage no matter the size of the insur-

ance firm. These two in-built mechanisms Falegan argued, renders any attempt to increase the capital base of insurance firms unnecessary and superfluous. To him, "it is merely a selfish campaign by those who are already in the market to protect themselves and a conspiracy to prevent new entrants into the business", adding "in England where we take our example from, the share capital of insurance companies is



Alhaji: minister of finance

still 50,000 Pounds whereas the risk that it takes can amount to billions of Pounds".

If the government want to reform the market, said Falegan, it should make a law preventing insurance intermediaries from holding back the premiums collected from individuals and companies that undertake insurance policies.

By Tola Sunday

Counter, sorter for coins

With the introduction of a new set of coins into circulation by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) the various money-counting machines manufacturing companies in the country have been trying to advertise their products for prospective customers.

Throughout last week, visitors to the auditorium of Commerce House, Idowu Taylor Street, Lagos, were treated to an exhibition of CASE-ICC coin-counting machines by Interprods Nigeria Limited. The machines, in various models included MCC 500 for mixed coins TITAN 2408, coins sorter

and bagger, MODEL 305 and Sachet 5200 which is a heavy duty coin-packaging machine.

The machines are products of CASE-ICC of United Kingdom. The chief executive of the company Yemi Akeju said that he decided to import CASE-ICC coin-counting machines to the country because of the wide acceptability of the products throughout the world.

Akeju who is the sole distributor of De La Rue note counting in the country said that CASE products have been in Nigeria for a long time while the spare parts are readily available.

On maintenance, the chief engineer of the company Gbenga Adanri said that they normally give its customers six months guarantee on the machines purchased after which the customer is put on a contract for the maintenance of the purchased machines.

Akeju believes that the coin-counting machines would help Nigerian banks and other companies that deal with large amounts of money to facilitate

the counting of their coins.

One of the machines MCC 500 can count coins

of different denominations and give the result for each denomination.

By Tola Sunday

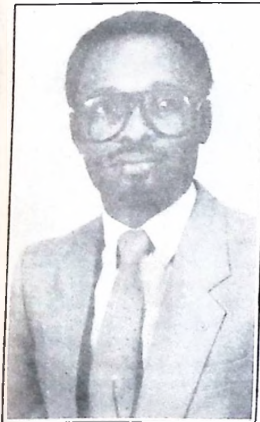
NPDC study out

The Nigerian Engineering and Technical Company (NETCO) has completed a feasibility study for the Nigerian Petroleum Development Company's mini-flow station for its Abura Oil field near Warri. According to the latest edition of *NNPC News*, the study which is for a 10,000 barrels per day flow station that can be expanded to 15,000 barrels per day also included an order, of magnitude cost.

The managing director of NETCO, J.J. Akpiewi said that it had in determining the optimum location and configuration of the flow station, carried out both the technical and

economic analysis of several alternatives. Akpiewi said that NETCO finally recommended the best alternative on the basis of highest product yield, flexibility of operation as well as utility costs.

The flow stations will be tied into Shell's flow at Utorogu for delivering into the Ughelli Quality Control Centre (UQCC) and subsequently to Forcados thermal station for export. The study for the flow station was undertaken by Area NNPC engineers, one from NETCO and two from NPDC, alongside two others from BECHTEL of USA, NNPC's partner in NETCO.



Akeju: making coins easier to count



Petroleum Minister Aminu

Bolanle Awe's cross

National Commission of Women (NCW) boss Professor (Mrs) Bolanle Awe laments the underdog position of Nigerian womenfolk in an interview with *Citizen*.

On the guiding concept of the NCW

The guiding concept of the commission is informed by the very first objective of Decree 30 of 1989 which is to "promote the welfare of women in general. To remove the various disabilities in their ways which make it impossible for them to be integrated into development with equal opportunities and responsibilities of making policies in that regard. The board decides on what should be done with the commission. How much money we should spend and in what direction we should focus attention. Once we've made such policy decisions, it is left to the management to implement. For instance, we took decision that we would have this workshop and we could simply have asked the management to go and implement. Myself and some other members of the board are here (Ilorin) because the enormity of our task is such that we have to show keen interest. But if it were a question of policy decisions, all board members would be present.

On the status of women in Nigeria

Although they constitute at least 50% of the population, a large proportion of them live in the rural areas. The president, General Ibrahim Babangida at the very inception of his administration admitted that the rural areas have been badly neglected. He set up DFRRRI for instance. We are conscious of this fact. We realise that a woman has to look for water, she has to look for fuel, firewood, she goes long distances to do that. She has to fend for her babies. She has to cope with the problems of health for her babies. She has to care for her children and for herself. We have in this country one of the highest incidence of maternal death almost in the whole world and that is because our women do not have access to ante-natal care, satisfactory delivery system and post-natal care. And, of course, she is also the backbone of food production in this country. When you talk of agriculture, the women are fully engaged. Some of them plant the food, some process the food, some market it and, of course, they prepare it for consumption so that the full cycle of food production rests very heavily on them. But we also know that at one time agriculture was neglected and if you neglect agriculture, there is no way you can do without it affecting the women. The women are the major food producers in this country. A lot of



Awe: Women have limited access



Mrs. Babangida: Women's Champion

help that should go to women go to men. Women have been denied many of the extension services that they should have. When you look at the condition of women, you discover that all over there are problems—no access to facilities for the development of their being as the

men. For example, there is limited access to education not because government is discriminating against women but because our customs and traditions debar them from having such access. There is the practice where by girls in their teens are given away in marriage, thereby preventing them from having educational access. This has negative effects in at least two ways. They become mothers when they are least prepared to become so, physically and psychologically. They produce babies and in the process some of them get physically damaged in such a way that they become outcasts of society for the rest of their lives. Apart from that, a girl who is taken away at that time has lost a lot of opportunities. The country may have lost a doctor, engineer, or a professional of good standing. One is not exaggerating.

Most of the women of good standing today were weaned with silver spoons and were lucky to have had opportunities for personal advancement. Most of the brilliant females in the villages are still to be brought out but we have denied them the opportunity. This is just an example. When you look at our laws, the constitution says there should be no discrimination. There was a big discussion in the press sometime ago as to the right of a woman to stand bail for an accused. Again, the tax laws are discriminatory because it assumes that the man is the breadwinner. When you look at our custom and tradition, there are so many ways in which they are discriminatory; like

For a very long time, women have been excluded from the decision-making process. There have also been legal encumbrances. Women, for instance, did not have franchise until 1976. Women had fought on the side of men but when it came to sharing the fruits of victory, they are jettisoned. So, the overall picture that one gets is one of neglect.

giving girls away in marriage without seeking their consent. The one that the commission is looking at right now is the treatment of widows who, following their husbands' death, receive very dehumanising treatment. One should not get carried away; although there are few women achievers here and there—it is like a dot on a big map—has infinitesimal impact. For a very long time, women have been excluded from the decision-making process. There have also been legal encumbrances. Women, for instance, did not have franchise until 1976. Women had fought on the side of men but when it came to sharing the fruits of victory, they are jettisoned. So, the overall picture that one gets is one of

neglect. Also, when one talks of income generation too, some go into industries, they produce textiles, household goods but until recently they had been handicapped by the fact that funding for their enterprises had been difficult to come by. Banks insist on collateral but most women have no collateral—no access to lands, don't own lands. In building up their abilities to earn income they are handicapped. The women in the rural areas bear the brunt of the hard and difficult living conditions.

On the better life programme

Better Life Programme is a programme which is under the commission. At the inauguration of the board of the commission in Lagos, the president did stress that. In fact, we have a deputy director of programmes whose responsibility is primarily better life programme. Many members of the board are also members. But the programme has not been handed over to the commission. We are getting ourselves ready to receive it by erecting structures at all levels of government. I have no doubt that the programme would ultimately be an effective unit of the commission and the law is clear on this. But let me stress that it is not operating now fully as a unit outside the commission as we are financing it and have an officer servicing it. People should understand that the BLP antedated the commission.

On Chinweizu's anatomy of "Female Power"

Chinweizu was just being Chinweizu, always contrary. I think it is unfair to start thinking of women as always manipulating men. If you love a man, that man could wield a lot of influence on you and vice-versa. The danger of what Chinweizu is trying to do is to use that as a point to reverse the position of women in society as if there is already an institution through which women can dominate men. If they are so powerful, why are they so repressed? Does it have to do with a lack of grey matter? Or, as human beings, are they ready to accept second-class position which puts them through so much drudgery? I expect that he was only being provocative, clearly expecting us to be more articulate as to what our problems are. In which case, he is only helping us. What are we asking for? What is our position in the scheme of things?

On the absence of WIN at the workshop:

I am surprised, really surprised I wasn't at the proceedings when the other organisations were presenting their reports. I am a member of WIN—dormant sort of. I was a founding member of WIN—in Oyo State. It is a radical grassroots organisation All along, I was insistent that WIN should be invited to the workshop. I am taken aback that somehow, that intention has obviously not been translated into reality.

By Olaide Tella



Babangida arriving Minna airport



In a hearty discussion with the Emir of Minna, Alhaji Faruk Bahago

Babangida goes home to Niger State



Members of the Niger state council of chiefs lined-up to welcome Mr President



Major Generals Kontagora, Nasko and Duba where also in Minna with the President



Traditional dancers were also there to grace the occasion

Mengistu Gone at last

After 14 years in the saddle, the "strongman" leaves Ethiopia in a hurry

Last week President Mengistu Haile Mariam became the latest addition to the growing list of Africa's dictators to fall. After 14 years of unremitting iron rule, Haile Mariam relinquished power and fled the country following an upsurge of fighting between the rebels and government troops. In a broadcast on the national radio, the prime minister, Lt. General Tesfaye Gabriel Dinka said Mengistu left for the good of the country. Meanwhile General Kidan has been appointed acting president.

In numerous broadcasts General Kidan repeatedly called on the rebels to hold their fire and promised to form a transition government made up of all the factions.

Although Mengistu's "resignation" has been at the top of the rebels agenda, they have rebuffed the new government's offer for ceasefire. While the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front, an umbrella for all the rebel groups has reacted cautiously to the offer, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) seeking independence for the northern Ethiopia said the dictator's departure would make very little difference and vowed to fight on. It expressed disappointment in the appointment of the acting president, General Kidan who they said is discredited because of his ten-year long association with the former government. General Kidan was at various times commander in the Eritrean region, minister and chairman of the tribunal that tried alleged coup plotters in 1989.

Lt. Colonel Haile Mariam, a career army officer, came into limelight in 1974 when he and a group of army officers toppled Emperor Haile Selassie, but stayed in the background. By 1977 he had replaced the original junta and ruthlessly set about consolidating his position. His government, identi-



Mengistu: an end to terror

fied with hard core Marxist ideology, mercilessly crushed all opposition. Thousands of suspected opponents were executed. About 30 army officers were executed following the failed coup in 1989.

His human rights record was also embarrassing. Political prisoners were either executed or left to rot in detention camps. To step up his campaign of suppression and repression, he relied heavily on the support of a well organised politi-

cal structure formed in the 1980s in which he had an absolute command. His economic policies also further worsened the suffering of the people. With centrally planned economy, numerous co-operative farms were formed. Compulsory quota on agricultural produce, which stipulated what farmers had to produce and sell to the government, were introduced. With official corruption, little interest from the farmers, and drought, the country witnessed the world's worst famine in 1984 in which about one million people died. Mengistu's handling of the situation earned him international condemnation.

By 1990 however, his internal position had been considerably weakened having lost vital supplies of arms from the Soviet Union as a result of the end of cold war. Meanwhile the rebels have been making steady progress.

Last month, they captured Ambo, about 120 miles from the capital, Addis Ababa. The government, however, recaptured the town but the significance of the war was not lost on the residents of the capital who have continued to leave it in droves. The capture of Ambo led to panic as American and other western embassies began evacuating their staff.

With the rebels controlling a third of the country, efforts to distribute relief materials have been hampered. Last week, a convoy taking food to northern Ethiopia was halted because of the fighting. About seven million Ethiopians are said to be facing starvation. Relief workers are hoping that the peace talks would put an end to the war which is the main obstacle to the distribution of relief materials.

Meanwhile, peace talks are scheduled for today between the rebel groups and the caretaker government. Many hoped it would be the elixir that would bring about peace in the strife-torn country.

By Abu Mommoh

Cameroun

It's final countdown

President Paul Biya and the opposition head for a clash on political reforms

By the end of this week, one side must give in. President Paul Biya is still in control—if not of the people, then of the government. The opposition is daily gaining what the government is daily losing. But both are still unyielding. Biya's government and the opposition are therefore keeping faith with what they regard as the best way(s) to a more democratic Cameroun. None wants to compromise. It is a deadlock that is not getting the nation anywhere. That is why a quick solution has to be found this week. With both sides stubbornly sticking to their positions, the situation can only degenerate.

Opposition groups, last week, only stopped short of calling for military intervention. That should have worried the government. The opposition, which is in search of democracy, openly called on the military to support the campaign for multi-party democracy. The other programmes for the national campaign are the organisation of strikes, stoppage of water and electricity, the suspension of classes at all levels of education and the closure of shops. After seven days of strikes, boycott of classes and demonstrations by students and the partial closure of shops, the government is still holding on. The opposition has vowed to stop only

when the government agrees to hold a national conference on the issue.

The government warned the opposition that there are nationally accepted rules guiding campaigns in the country, adding that their actions would be met with the state's might. The government is still insisting that the only hope for a better future lies in peaceful dialogue. But it did not stop there.

into continuing with the strike. The stepping up of security by the government is regarded by the opposition as the next step towards imposing a state of emergency.

Unfortunately for the government, the opposition, with the support of the people and the strong backing of students, is waxing stronger. About 30,000 students in Bamenda, Doula, Yaounde and Bafoussan, went on a peaceful demonstration, organising a mock funeral ceremony in memory of their colleagues, victims of the multi-party democracy. The students still reiterate their demands for the resignation of the minister for higher education and the vice-chancellor of the national university in Yaounde. They are also calling for the setting up of an independent commission of enquiry to investigate the death of students.



Biya: Time is running out

By Thursday last week when the opposition-led strike and demonstrations continued in most towns, the government sent in troops. It was reported that security forces have taken over the place; they were seen trying to force traders to open up their shops. That was after the government's ultimatum that traders who refused to open their shops would lose their licence, went unheeded. The government still believes that the opposition is not in control of the people, rather they are just intimidating the people

Right now, the government's only means, it seems, of clinging to power is the big take-over of the streets by security forces. The opposition is certainly worried about the large presence of the forces, but they are undaunted. Their reform train, they insisted, will only stop after a successful voyage. About 22 opposition groups have agreed to organise the national conference, whether or not the government gives its blessing. The picture ahead is gloomy.

By Rabiou Barde

India

End of the dynasty?

Rajiv Gandhi is killed, thus ending the 44-year reign of the Nehrus

No one, as yet, is sure how it happened. The shocked police of the Indian city of Madras initially said that the assassin(s) had exploded a bomb by remote control. This theory was soon abandoned when forensic experts discovered the remnants of a triggering device and a belt thought to be stuffed with explosives. Police now think that a Tamil woman bowed to offer a bouquet of flowers to Rajiv Gandhi, scion of the legendary Nehru-Gandhi family, president of the colossal Congress Party of India, former prime minister, international statesman, and leading candidate in the general elections began 24 hours before. As Gandhi stopped to acknowledge the honour, the woman pressed a device that exploded a bomb strapped to her waist. The explosion killed the politician, 20 other people and left a 30 feet wide

in the vicinity.

Indian President Venkataraman and caretaker Prime Minister Chandra Shekar immediately appealed for restraint. They were clearly anxious to avoid a repeat of the events of 1984 when, following the assassination of Rajiv's mother, Indira Gandhi, irate supporters of the Congress Party attacked and massacred thousands of Sikhs. Although Indians were equally enraged by Rajiv's assassination, there were only sporadic incidents of violence, almost certainly because no one was sure who the assassins were. The Indian government declared a week of national mourning and suspended the remaining two rounds of the general election until next month.

Gandhi's wife, Sonia, departed New Delhi for Madras as soon as she heard the news. She later accompanied his battered body to Delhi, where it lay in state at the

home of his grandfather, India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Rajiv's body was cremated by the river Ganges Friday, at the same spot where, seven years ago, he lighted the pyre to cremate his mother.

World leaders unanimously condemned the assassination. President George Bush described it as a "tragedy". Mikhail Gorbachev said he was "shocked by this terrible crime". UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar regretted that the murder came at a time when "Indians are renewing their faith in the democratic process". British Prime Minister John Major also condemned the killing, as did Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

Only 24 hours before the horrific explosion, Gandhi had appeared, cheerful and confident, at a polling booth in New Delhi to cast his vote. Observers quickly noticed that his mood differed greatly from the day he voted in the general elections of December 1989. Then, Gandhi looked gloomy unwell and short-tempered, clearly because he expected to be voted out of office. Last Monday, in contrast, he expected to return to power after 17 months in opposition. In that short space of time, India has had two prime ministers. Gandhi's immediate successor, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, leader of the Janata Dal party, was brought down last November by the defection of his coalition partner, the Hindu Fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata



Rajiv and mother both killed by the assassin

Party, as well as 56 MP's of Mr Singh's own party. Chedra Shekar, leader of the Janata rebels, then formed a minority government with support from Gandhi's party. Last March, however, Gandhi withdrew his support and elections were called for this month.

The Congress Party's trump card in this election is its claim to be the "party of stability". Only a day before his death, Gandhi told reporters that only his party "can keep the country together. Who else has the guts to fight communalism?" This boast was made plausible by the fact that Congress has ruled India for all but five years since independence in 1947. Congress preeminence was due both to its stature as the original anti-colonial movement, and more recently to the legend of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. Back in the 1940's and 1950's, these twin trump cards were embodied in the awesome personality of Jawaharlal Nehru, a close associate of the Mahatma Gandhi during the struggle for independence. Nehru's charisma was also enhanced by the many years he spent in British colonial jails. His charisma was further enhanced by his extraordinary vitality and endurance, his establishment of a democratic parliamentary system; his promotion of socialism and centralised planning; his championing of secularism and social justice, and his non-aligned foreign policy. It was also Nehru who abolished the notorious social stigma of "untouchability" and emancipated the *harijans*.

Under Nehru, the Congress was more than a political party; it was a national freedom movement with mass support in the rural areas, but it was also supported by businessmen and landlords. Most Hindus supported it, since Hindu fundamentalist parties were discredited when the Hindu fanatic assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1949.

Minorities also looked up to Nehru for protection; the Muslim League was disbanded in the early 1950's and Muslims and other minorities supported the Congress Party. Thus, in the 1952 general elections, the party won 362 of the 389 seats to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament. In 1957, Congress won 366 of the 494 seats, and in 1962, 355 of the 516 seats. Nehru died in May 1964 and was succeeded by Lal Bahadur Shastri, a distinguished but weak politician. He who died in Tashkent in January 1966 while attending Indo-Pakistani talks on the future of Kashmir.

Shastri's death marked the beginning of the establishment of the Nehru dynasty. Nehru's only daughter, Mrs Indira Gandhi (her husband was not a relation of

Narayan and Morarji Desai, were thrown into jail. Mrs Gandhi used the powers to tackle some of the pressing economic problems, which won her some support. However, the emergency powers were widely abused, especially by her younger son and close confidant, Sanjay Gandhi, who instituted forced sterilisation of families as a population-control method.

Early in 1977, Mrs Gandhi suddenly relaxed the emergency, freed political prisoners and called general elections for June 1977. Her opponents, grouped together under the Janata (people's) party alliance, and won 270 seats. Another opposition party, the Congress for Democracy, led by the political leader of the *harijans*, Jagvijay Ram, won 29 seats, while Congress itself

Only a day before his death, Gandhi told reporters that only his party "can keep the country together. Who else has the guts to fight communalism?" This boast was made plausible by the fact that Congress has ruled India for all but five years since independence in 1947.

Mahatma Gandhi) was a minister in Shastri's cabinet and upon his death, contested and won the leadership against Mr Morarji Desai, a colleague of her father and assumed leadership. In 1967, the party won 278 seats of the 520, only just retaining power. In 1971, Mrs Gandhi called a snap election and got 350 seats out of 440, Congress' biggest-ever victory. Complications soon ensued, however, over domestic and especially foreign policy. Mrs Gandhi's popularity began to wane, and in 1974 the veteran socialist Jaya Prakash Narayan launched a campaign against her "despotic rule". Things came to a head when a court ruled in 1975 that Mrs Gandhi's election in 1971 was illegal. She responded by declaring a state of emergency. Political opponents, including

secured only 153 seats. Of these, 92 seats were in the south, ironically including Madras, where Rajiv was killed.

The new prime minister, 82 year-old Morarji Desai, immediately began to probe corruption and abuse of emergency powers by Mrs Gandhi and her son Sanjay. The probe soon acquired the character of persecution, and Mrs Gandhi began a steady political come-back. Her increasing successes soon destabilised the Janata alliance, leading to the fall of Desai in 1979. Mr Chaudhary Charan Singh, who succeeded Desai, fared no better, and in the 1980 general elections, Mrs Gandhi secured over two-thirds of the seats and returned to power.

Prior to this comeback, the cantankerous Sanjay Gandhi had

died in an air crash when the stunt plane he was piloting veered out of control. Sanjay's death left a huge vacuum in the party; he had personally chosen and sponsored numerous candidates in the elections, and these were loyal to him. A feeble attempt was made by Sanjay's widow, Maneka Gandhi, to fill his shoes, but this was rebuffed by Mrs. Gandhi, who then encouraged her eldest son Rajiv, then 36, to replace his brother. Rajiv Gandhi, an airline pilot who had studied at Cambridge and married an Italian, had previously shown no interest in politics. Once drafted, however, he rose to become the party's secretary-general and worked quietly in his mother's long shadow.

Tragedy struck, however, when Mrs. Gandhi was shot in September 1984 by two of her bodyguards, both of them Sikhs. In the chaotic aftermath of Indira Gandhi's death, then — president. Zanaail Singh appointed Rajiv to succeed his mother. At the start, this seemed an impossible task. The young prime minister was expected to restore order and terminate the reprisal killing of the Sikhs. He also had to placate Sikh militants, who were angered by Mrs. Gandhi's decision to send troops into the Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar to flush out dissidents. The militant leader of the All-India Sikh students Federation, Jarnail Singh Bindranwale, had been killed in the army operation, leading to the Sikh thirst for revenge. Rajiv Gandhi also had to face a general election, which his late mother had called for December 1984. He also had to take over as president of the Non-aligned Movement. Rajiv Gandhi surprised all observers by moving decisively to quell the reprisal killings, win the election, placate the Sikhs and establish himself as an international statesman within a short period of time.

With time, however, his leadership faced serious challenges. One of these was the Bofors Scandal; the Swedish arms manufacturer Bofors allegedly paid kickbacks to senior congress officials as part of a one billion arms deal. Communal conflicts were also a problem; in the Punjab, Kashmir and Assam, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs engaged in ceaseless warfare, severely testing Gandhi's leadership. He also faced instability in many of the country's 22 states; several times, Rajiv Gandhi suspended state governments and imposed direct rule from New

the Sri Lankan government imposed a naval blockade of the Jaffna peninsula in order to interdict the arms flow, the Indians responded with an aerial resupply effort. Later that year, Gandhi forced the Sri Lankan government to sign a generous peace agreement with the Tamils, reserving two of the country's northern provinces for them. The agreement was so much resented in Sri Lanka that the Sinhalese majority began a guerilla war of their own through the JVP. On a visit to Sri Lanka that year, Gandhi was struck with the butt of a gun by an angry Sinhalese Soldier.

India sent some 50,000 troops to Sri Lanka to enforce the treaty and protect the Tamils. But when the Tamil Tigers refused to lay down their arms, the Indian army gradually turned against them and was soon embroiled in a major war. By 1989, the Tigers were defeated and forced to sign the agreement, after which the Indian army gradually withdrew from Sri Lanka. This ill-fated adventure left permanent bitterness and it is now believed that the Tamil tigers killed Rajiv Gandhi last week. Their spokesman in London has however denied the charge.

In the aftermath of Rajiv Gandhi's death, the Congress Party faced an uncertain future in the light of the sudden end of the Nehru dynasty, a feeble attempt to perpetuate it was made when party leaders met in New Delhi last Wednesday and offered the leadership to Rajiv's wife, Sonia, an Italian and Christian. The next day, Thursday, Sonia Gandhi declined the offer stating the tragedy of three family deaths (Sanjay, Indira, Rajiv) within a decade made it impossible for her to accept. In that case, Congress Party will have to live with the bitter fact that the magical Nehru — Gandhi dynasty has at last come to an end.

By Mahmud Jega



Nehru: head of the dynasty and a charismatic leader

Delhi.

The most gruelling (and ultimately the fatal) challenge, however, was in Sri Lanka. In 1987, the country's Tamil minority, descendants of coffee labourers from the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, took up arms against the Sinhalese majority. Since the Tamil's case was very popular in Tamil Nadu, a congress stronghold, Rajiv Gandhi could not afford to ignore it. His government clandestinely supplied the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the Tamil Tigers) with weapons; when

Kuwait

Full circle

Kuwait leadership is in tatters and is making worse its image by visiting horror on migrant workers and citizens

Six men were last week sentenced to jail terms ranging from one to 15 years having been found guilty of collaborating with Iraq in the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait that led to a brutal and genocidal war. The harshest term of 15 years was imposed on Adnan About Hassan Ali, who was charged with having worn a Saddam Hussein T shirt.

During the trial, defence lawyers had charged that they had been denied access to the convicts and court documents and that the six men were convicted on mere hearsay. No witnesses were allowed to testify. In all, 200 alleged pro-Saddam activists, mostly migrant workers, are to face trial. The maximum sentence for collaboration is death and under the current martial law in Kuwait, the courts' verdicts cannot be appealed. Only a review can be made by the martial law administrator, who happens to be Crown Prince Saad Al-Abdallah Al-Sabbah.

The conduct of the trial has elicited widespread anger and charges of revenge, not the least, ironically, from American President George Bush. After a meeting with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany, Bush said evidence had emerged that the trials had not conformed with international "ethics of justice and democracy." He asked the Kuwaiti authorities to show "compassion."

Bush's call for compassion can only be for the American audience, not after he has killed and maimed

thousands of Kuwaitis and Iraqis and then urged the unfortunate Kurds to their deaths all in the name of "freedom" and "democracy" for which few can claim any legitimacy in the region. At the same talks with Kohl, he also explained that economic sanctions against Iraq would continue as long as Saddam Hussein remained in power. It was also made amid reports that American and British forces operating on the Iraq's border with Turkey in the "safe haven" zones, are supplying arms and ammunition to Kurdish rebels inside Iraq.



A Kuwaiti kissing the American flag: A new god?

Turkish officials said they saw American troops and 15 British lorries loaded with ammunition being sent into Iraq. Neither country has denied the charge.

Anti-war activists, led by a former American Attorney-General, Ramsey Clark, two weeks ago, convened a tribunal and accused Bush and American military leaders of war

crimes against Iraqi civilians. In a nine-hour forum, 500 people gathered in a school auditorium chanted that the "transgressors be brought to justice." Dozens testified that America had waged an unjust war against defenseless Iraqi soldiers and thousands of innocent women and children. Clark said that it had never happened that a nation that has won a war is held accountable.

In "liberated" Kuwait itself, long before the smoke cleared, mobs had gone on a rampage, especially against Palestinians, whose main body, PLO, had supported Saddam

Hussein. Reports are emerging now of how Kuwait soldiers were maiming, torturing and raping migrant workers who formed 60 per cent of the population. A majority of the 70,000 foreigners in the civil service were Palestinians. In April, 11 Filipino women wrote a letter to Bush protesting their molestations.

The ruling Al-Sabbah clique's image is so tarnished both at home and abroad that it has had to hire an American public relations firm, the Rendon Group, to help polish it. The lack of confidence shown

everyday by Kuwaitis in their leaders is so evident that the emir ventures out only in armour-plated cars in company of more than 20 bodyguards. Events are reaching their full circle in Kuwait in a manner that belies most of the reasons for the American escapade in the Gulf.

By Mohammad Bomoj.



KABIRU YUSUF

about these unfortunate men and their families. From the newspaper reports their names did not feature in the thanksgiving service. Sagbo was said to be about 40 years old, but where is his family? When and where was he buried? *The Guardian on Sunday* did try to find out, but Mrs Yeke Makinde, to whom the driver was attached, was too en-

me a different version, but I found it hard to believe them, because they did burn churches and shops. Then when Governor Abu Ali and his entourage of officials and Journalists went to Tafawa Balewa, where the whole thing started, I was shocked by the testimony of Habila Bako Lumana, a Christian and chairman of Tafawa Balewa local government. While there were various factors that led to the clashes, most of the people killed in Tafawa Balewa were Muslims. In the house of the village head alone, Lumana said 75 women, men and children who sought refuge there were slaughtered in cold blood! They were buried in a mass grave right there in the town. But other corpses were taken to Bauchi in an open truck and that was what sparked the burning and hunting of people from Tafawa Balewa. Police and soldiers were drafted in, but instead of reducing, they increased the fatalities.

But that was not what much of the media reported since it was a few days after Katsina riots, editors decided that "The Shiites have struck again!" and sent out reporters to do a "quickie" and file a story that will sell the two Naira newspaper or the ten Naira magazine. To be fair, the press more often than not, merely reflects societies pet hates and loves, but some times it reinforces or renews it. That is the route to becoming "the market leader". But with so many newspapers and magazines fiercely competing in the streets, with political and religious passions rising, we the eyes and ears of the people need to be constantly reminded about our responsibilities. Perhaps the NUJ, Guild of Editors and Newspaper Proprietors Association, might consider evolving some sort of loose code of conduct for the press. Otherwise, I fear, that for the price of two or ten Naira some "smart" guys might succeed not in leading the market, but destroying it.

Rest in peace, Sagbo

bet you don't remember the name Sagbo Fransua, nor for that matter Lance Corporal Yusuf Adabara. But of course you have heard all about how two little girls Tomi and Bisola, were forcefully abducted and taken across the border to Benin Republic. It was a story that touched the heart, twice. First because what sort of devils would like to harm such little angels and second, thank God, they were found hale and hearty after two weeks of determined search.

The whole nation paused to celebrate. The governor and the commissioner of police of Lagos posed for pictures with them. President Babangida sent in a word. The wife of vice-president, Mrs Rebecca Aikhomu attended a thanksgiving service at the Anglican Church in Festac Town, while a Muslim leader, Alhaji Abdul-Azeez Ankwuwo of Ansar-Ud-Deen society of Lagos, offered a special prayer for the kids before they left for the Church service. For two weeks the nation was treated to Tomi and Bisola stories, right up to the day they returned to school.

A real human interest story which got the treatment it deserved. Except that we did not get the complete story. To kidnap Tomi and Bisola the bandits had to commit a more heinous crime. They killed Sagbo Fransua, the driver conveying the kids to school and shot Corporal Adabara who tried to intervene. Very little had been reported

grossed with preparations for a party to help the reporters. Corporal Adabara was at Yaba military hospital nursing a dislocated jaw after raising 1,008 Naira from colleagues and relations, to treat himself. Concluded *The Guardian* reporters "in fact, no thoughts, it seemed, were spared for the family of the unfortunate driver and other victims of the kidnap saga by the merry-making parents of the recovered children."

Dead right. But I think part of the reason is the way the media itself "played" the story. With the exception of one half-hearted effort, we forgot Sagbo and Adabara and fastened on the sentimental story of the two kids. A much sadder example of selective media amnesia happened during the Bauchi riots. As a Lagos-based journalist, I read and believed reports, that over what one newspaper said was "One naira Suya" dispute, Muslims went on rampage, killing and burning churches and shops. One Sunday magazine had pictures of dead corpses, supposedly of the killed Christians and its editor, in an emotional preface, asked us to look at the picture and cry. I did. But I also did something else. I went to Bauchi, where I have sisters, brothers and nephews to find out what happened.

Killing Christians peacefully living among Muslims is a monstrous thing to do. Burning their churches is senseless. Yet this is what the press said had happened. At Bauchi my sister and brother-in-law told

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All the news in perspective

May 27 — June 3, 1991

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Referees in the thick of the controversy. Page 47

Citizenship

by Dickon Atchley



Dickon Atchley, 1967, 1971, 79.

Aspirational blues..

The former super secretary to the federal government, Chief Olu Falae, like others before him, is just discovering his nationality. Of recent he has been telling anyone who cares to listen, but especially political detractors, that he is gunning for IBB's job because he is a raging nationalist among other apparent qualities.

The chief priest of SAP who had been very coy about his presidential ambitions, is now on a full-blown campaign tour to spread his new found love. Samplers: "I am running not because of where my father comes from...poverty and hunger have no regional, religious or ethnic considerations..." Good campaign lines, but apparently not enough to impress the SDP people of Katsina.

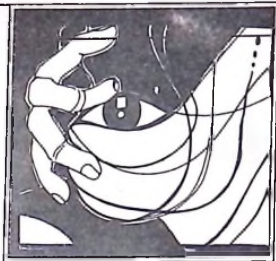
An emotion-laden news report said the chief was "literally chased out of Katsina as no official or party supporter came to welcome him. For the two hours that he spent in the old city, no party official came to welcome him." The report also alleged that "he met a bigger shock on arri-

val at the party secretariat where no one was on hand to receive him. But for the presence of members of the chief's entourage, most of whom were women and a handful of journalists, he could have addressed an empty hall."

The disappointed chief wrote an open letter to the party officials in which he recounted the people-less visit and expressed the hope that when next he is in Katsina, "it will be both possible and expedient for us to meet as members of the SDP and citizens of the same country."

A dispirited Falae had to take a 20-minute refuge in an uncompleted building "in a cement block moulding factory on the outskirts." The SDP people in Katsina for now have missed the chance of rubbing shoulders with a man who not only wants to be president, but has diligently served his country for 31 years.

This is a man who is a federalist all his life. He has never worked at the regional level; has strenuously distanced himself from tribal politics, even the Ooni; has perfected SAP such that the value of the Naira



daily enables us to go to work in air-conditioned cars, live in rent-free houses and buy a *mu* of *gari* at 20 Kobo. This is a man who has ensured that MAMSER, DFRI and, NDE have become such perfect vehicles for self-reliance that governance itself is in danger of extinction. The quest for presidency is merely a swan song. Oh, Katsina SDP people, you are so unlucky.

Perhaps the chief ought to listen to my people. They have a saying that if you want to go into the lion's den, you don't start by snatching the lion's dinner. Not so appropriate, but you can't move about with PSP and Ooni's smoke billowing from your *Sokoto* and *Danshiki* and then expect to enter a room full of PF smoke.

The Barons

Baron Maisaje: Thank you Mr. chairman for reinforcing my stand. We simply have no alternative but to continue the struggle until victory is in sight. Obviously we cannot confront the military openly. They have guns and things and we have only bare arms. However, the people are with us. We must devise a strategy to thwart the military's onslaught on the political class.

Baron Maitunbi: 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.

The people of Nigeria, unlike others, will not face guns just to protect Maitunbi or Maisaje. Let's beat the military in a game we know better than they do - politics. Let's "capture" the newbreed and manipulate them to our wishes, after all, most of them are nonentities and therefore require our blessing and support to get anywhere.

Baron Maiyasin: I agree. After all the newbreed are our junior brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, wives and what have you. Let's make them our surrogates. Many of them who contemplate going to the constituent assembly to deliberate our so-called new constitution should be sponsored by us to do our bidding. We should get busy right away.

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 have assigned territorial responsibilities to members as follows: **Baron Nakawu** to oversee Kwara, Sokoto and Katsina states; **Baron Nababa** is assigned to Borno and Gongola states; **Baron Nagogo** is to look after Benue, Kano and Bauchi states, and **Baron Nanene** to oversee Plateau, Kaduna, Niger states and Abuja. I seek your endorsement of this proposal which will form the basis of our operation.

Chairman Maidauri: Any comments on the proposals made by the committee?

Grim words

Fury gives vent to grisly thoughts. Melancholy verses stir the heart to heights of sadness when dark moments are revisited

Martyrdom in Mecca

In the morgue
I stand witness,
I stand witness along with those
demanding blood for blood,
Women volunteers all,
Calling for revenge
For the blood spilt at the threshold
of God's House of Peace
This House of Peace has been hit by
scorching simoon winds
Plowing form the turbulent chorse
of uncle Sam's abode
in the form of
Suffocating poison gases
And exploding bullets
Fired by demented Saudi Guards'
Blows as unmerciful as these
Have distorted the flowerlike faces
Of the Muslim women
Who had come to worship
Have blackened those fair faces
And smashed them in
Beyond recognition,
Covering them with soot and gore!

In the morgue I stand witness along
with others of my kind
All calling for Revenge
For the bodies crushed and broken;
For the skulls cracked;
For the limbs smashed;
And the blood spilt mercilessly
At the threshold of God's House of
Peace.
This being the lot of Muslim women
Who have been made to pay
For the foundering
Of American policies
In the depths
Of the Persian Gulf;
For the mauling of the ferocious
American bear by fleet-footed Pasdar
antelopes;

For the hunting down
Of infidel warships
By the speed-boats of faith!

Agony of Silence

Some of us are locked up
Some are forced to shut up
Some are killed
Others are bought at a price
that cannot buy freedom
We are not allowed expressions
Truth is being hunted for
To give raiment to injustice
Everything is done
To instal silence which depicts con-
sent
These souls refuse
They refuse to keep silent
For the agony of silence is the proffer
of freedom
In bondage.

Olawale Okunade

Fear

Fear breeds hatred.
Hatred breeds more fear.
Increasingly, voices of warning are
seen as voices of incitement voices
of dissent are seen as voices of treach-
ery and treason.
Increasingly moderation is seen as
extremism.
The peacemakers are being por-
trayed as the advocates of violence.
So why fear?

Clara C. Uwajie

Tears

Elicitation of the eyes.
Is but a manifestation
Of two extremes of life
Which are opposed by nature
showing both sorrow and joy
Wearing a uniform garb
You are either warm or hot
As you flows
Why not wear black for sorrow?
White for joy?
Why not flow hot for sorrow?
And warm for joy?
I question your dual role



As messenger of most distaste
And bearer of bliss.

Moh. Adamu Nababa

The run away son

After those tedious times at college
I went home with a pocketful of
dreams
Of a sweet warm welcome home
At the village square;
Instead
I met the village with its palm
trees
Opening their greeny wild teeth
Laughing at me, not me
Laughing at the textbooks
Stock - piled in my brain,
Wherever I go the echoes are same
"Hi bookmen. "Text juggler", and
away they ran
Leaving me without even a friend
Except thoughts in my mind:
"Run away, run to the cities
Run to where the mocking laugh-
ter from the palm trees
'I'll never reach your earlobe."
To the cities I run, from city to city
Self-exiling myself from the palms
That owned me before those
tedious times.

Obinna Chilekezi

Bedwetting

Bedwetting is a developmental disorder poorly understood by both its sufferers and clinicians in Nigeria. It arouses tremendous emotional and other inconveniences for the bedwetter, his family as well as friends. The regular washing of soiled, smelly cloth is distressing for the family and the bedwetter does not smell good in class. This has several repercussions including the child being castigated, ridiculed and unable to spend nights outside his home. All these affect the child's learning and socialisation with pathological concomitants.

The age at which bedwetting is regarded as a problem varies from one culture to another. In Nigeria, bedwetting does not worry many parents until it ceases to be a family secret. Cases of bedwetting often seen in enuretic clinics are those from ten years and above. Many parents believe that their children can overcome the disorder without any active form of treatment when they are younger. The prevalent figure in other parts of the world showed that 20% of children between three and five years bedwet while about 7% of children bedwet between five and ten years. Adolescent and adult bedwetters are about 3% of the population.

The majority of bedwetters bedwet only in the night while some wet their bed both day and night. Bedwetting is different from other forms of urgency and excessive urination that are associated symptoms of some systemic illness. However, it is necessary to screen all bedwetters for urinary tract infection and other organic pathology.

There is no agreement among clinician about the cause of the disorder. As a result of ineffectiveness of drugs and efficacy of some behav-

By Kayode Ogungbemi

our therapies, the cause of the dis-



order is assumed to be behavioral. A simple behavioral explanation is that a normal person will experience a certain signal in form of irritation in the bladder as soon as it is full. The signal is experienced both during sleep and waking period, bedwetters are unable to recognise the signal which leads to lack of inhibitory control between bladder fullness and emptying. Simply put, bladder has been conditioned to void as soon as it is full. An awareness of bladder fullness would not occur until major bladder contractions had begun.

The following facts have emerged as a result of clinical experience with the disorder.

1. **Bedwetting beyond the age of ten requires therapeutic intervention.**
2. **Bedwetting frequently runs in families and a father or mother who bedwets as a child may often provide inadequate toilet training.**
3. **Poor toilet training often causes bedwetting. Bladder control usually develops without any specific training. Training speci-**

cally directed at bladder control may interfere with the control process and result in bed wetting.

4. **Sibling arrival, temporary or permanent separation from mother, family break up, change of environment can interfere with bladder control process if it occurs between the ages of one and four.**

5. **About 30% of adolescent and adult enuretics manifest some emotional problems.**

Attempts to treat enuresis date as far back as 1500 BC because of its psychosocial distress and prevalence. Some of the methods used in Nigeria include limiting the child's fluid intake, waking the child every two hours and taking cold bath before going to bed. The use of alarm clocks to wake the child at regular interval was introduced by some clinicians. A wide range of medications have also been used to treat bedwetting. All these efforts have been made to resolve a pressing and nasty problem but they have all been unsatisfactory. It is not just enough to make these therapeutic efforts, it is as well important to assess the efficacy of such efforts. The situation in Nigeria is such that all the available therapies on bedwetting (western or traditional) are either too sophisticated and costly or brutal and untherapeutic.

Two techniques have been found effective in training enuresis world wide. The techniques are urine-alarm technique and dry bed training. The service is available only in enuretic clinics but unfortunately there are very few of such clinics in Nigeria.

Bedwetting presents a nasty problem and constitutes a nuisance to the families and the sufferers in particular. It needs early active intervention if the late emotional problems are to be avoided.

MEDIAWATCH

New voices in Benue

The Benue Printing and Publishing Corporation adds two new editions to its stable

Thursday May 16, was a day of "voices." That day, the Benue State Printing and Publishing Corporation, publishers of *Voice* and *Sunday Voice* added two new publications, *Weekend Express* and *Voice Sports* to its stable. The occasion was graced by important dignitaries from within and around the state. The special-guest was Mr. Ason Bur, Deputy Governor of Benue State. Mr. Audu Ogbeh, a former minister of communications was the guest speaker. It was chaired by Col. Hassan Yakubu (rtd), chairman, Colhay Associates, Ankpa. The chief launcher was Mr. Barnabas Gemade, Managing Director, Benue

Cement Company PLC, Gboko.

In a paper titled "The role of the media in developing societies," Audu Ogbe said that since the media is part of the developing society, "it must firstly lead, open our eyes and ears, sensitise us to the fast changing world of technical and technological advancement". The media, he said, must lead us away from the present "pleasant and dangerously emotional frame of mind to a state of critical alertness".

About 50,000 Naira was collected at the launching. The Benue Cement Company whose managing director was the chief launcher donated 10,000 Naira.

The Benue Printing and Pub-



Bur: Deputy Governor Benue State Publishing Corporation is fast becoming a printing empire with four publications to its credit. And as guests wished them a fruitful voyage—for the *Weekend Express* and *Voice Sports*—the slippery media terrain is only glad to have them in the fold.

By Rabiū Barde

THEATRE

Theatre in bondage

The play "The operators" is an indictment of our society's current moral tone

Friday May 3. Time: 8.30 pm. The Ahmadu Bello University drama village was seductively quiet as a sprinkle of guests sat around an open air stage and the thatched-roof auditorium reminded one of a typical village square meeting of yore. The soft melodious voice of Don Williams floated invitingly in the clammy night. But absent was the usual boisterous university community crowd that throng the theatre as the fun loving 'Abuiles' catch the examination bug. For members of the Society of Nigerian Theatre Artists (SONTA) who converged in the ancient city of Zaria for their 8th annual convention, however, the

stage performance of Professor Zulu Sofola's "The Operators", was a welcome relief from the confines of the venue.

Directed by Sofola herself, the play revolved around Chief Onireke, a businessman known as mafia in the underworld criminal syndicate who engaged three notorious criminals to rob a Lagos bank of 1.5 million Naira.

The operation master-minded by Casino and executed with unremitting violence failed as a result of the accidental loss of Bobby Kunle's purse at the scene. Police unlocked the network which roped two officials of the bank: the assistant manager, Olakunle; the chief account-

ant, Ekechukwu and a police officer.

In a shoot-out between Onireke and the police, Bobby Kunle, the most innocent of the syndicate lost his life.

No doubt Sofola's dramatisation of the rapid erosion of the national conscience and dehumanisation of humanity is no less relevant today than when the play was first performed in 1973. Immorality and violence which reared their ugly heads at the end of the civil war have grown steadily in sophistication and scope. Rather than abate, organised crime has escalated.

Though the cast was made largely of students, they were able to give colour and reality to the play.

From the enthusiastic applause of the scanty audience which followed the end of the play, it would be modest to say it was a night well spent.

By Abu Mommmoh

SPORTS

Pro-league Trouble brews

Soccer violence and constant disruption of matches may take the shine off the on-going professional league

The venue was Ogbe stadium in the ancient city of Benin, Bendel State capital. On Saturday, May 11 two rival city teams,

dium could realise what was happening, irate fans had spilled into the pitch beating up the centre referee Mr. J.E. Eyeregba. The hooligans



Referees: at the centre of the controversy

Bendel Insurance and Bendel United were billed for what was anticipated to be an explosive but exciting local derby in week ten of the on-going professional football league. Palpable tension held the famous city prisoner right from the time the first ray of light hit it. Enthusiastic football fans, yearning to witness the widely advertised "soccer war" between two great rivals, filled up the stadium two hours before kick-off.

But as fate would have it, the fun-seeking and football-loving fans were to curse their luck 72 minutes into the game when the lone goal of the match, scored for Bendel United by Mike Usen, became a subject of hot controversy between Bendel United supporters, the referees and one of his linesmen. Before unsuspecting fans and officials in the sta-

premises. By the time a combined team of army and police able to silence the rioters, more than 30 people were injured and a retired army major died in a car crash when he was taking the match officials to safety in his personal car.

The incident at Ogbe stadium presents a grim picture of the simmering threat of soccer hooliganism to the survival of the fledgling professional football in the country. The Benin incident, though the most serious in the 12-week-old football season, was not the only one to have disrupted a league match. In Jos on the same Saturday when Ogbe was boiling, Jos township stadium knew no peace as the pro-league match between host Plateau United and visiting Ranchers Bees of Kaduna had to be abandoned after 72 min-

utes of action following a controversial goal scored by Plateau United. Security men had to use some canisters of tear gas to suppress trouble from the fans.

In Gboko on Wednesday May 15, some football fanatics were alleged to have damaged a luxury bus belonging to visiting Shooting Stars Sports Club of Ibadan shortly before the end of their week 10 rescheduled match against BCC Lions. And on Saturday May 18, the week-11 pro-league match between Ranchers Bees and Rovers of Calabar in Kaduna was held up three times by controversy over officiating and unruly fans who hauled stones into the pitch in protest against what they regarded as unfair decisions by the officiating referee.

While the fans' unruly behaviour is depriving weekend matches of their excitement and beauty, the nation's soccer ruling body, Nigeria Football Association (NFA) is in quandary as to how to tackle the problems. Following the Ogbe incident, NFA hastily convened its disciplinary committee meeting. A six month ban was imposed on the stadium and the Bendel Insurance, whose supporters were believed to have sparked off the trouble, were banished to Ilorin for the rest of the league season, while Bendel United were to play their home matches in Warri. Other visible actors of the professional league, however, believe the disciplinary measures against Ogbe Stadium and the two teams would not curb the bouts of hooliganism that is sweeping across the country unless the association addresses itself to the root cause of the problem.

Ex-International Coach Segun



Pam and Oliha, Contesting ball during a league match

Olumodeji, who is now a senior football coach with Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, attributed the ugly incident of football hooliganism that is fast becoming a common occurrence during weekend matches to the unsportsmanlike attitude of clubs and their supporters who usually insist that they must win whenever they are playing at home. This attitude, according to Coach Olumodeji, leads some clubs' supporters and their officials to intimidate referees so as to force them to give their clubs some undue advantage over their opponents.

Another football veteran, Idi Marshal, a football chief coach with Kaduna State Sports Council who is now on loan to Ranchers Bees, puts the blame at the feet of the match officials, especially the centre referees. He said a lot of Nigerian referees are men with itching palms who are always eager to take bribe from some clubs' owners or officials who want to win matches at all cost. The chief coach who was in Jos when the week 10 match between Plateau United and Ranchers Bees was abandoned, believes that fans are sometimes forced to react in an unruly manner be-

cause of the way some referees sell their conscience to rob some clubs of victories or force others to taste the undesired agony of defeats through questionable decisions. He predicted that the current disruption of matches and eruption of violence in some stadia could escalate unless our football referees learn to shun bribery from clubs who want to reap where they do not sow, and use their whistles with impartiality.

Referees are also seen as the trouble formatters by Martin Onwuhai, chief coach of amateur league division one club, Nigerian Port Authority (NPA), Warri. While blaming ignorance and over zealousness on the part of some clubs supporters for some of the recent outbreaks of trouble during league matches, Onwuhai said referees are chiefly to be held responsible. "Some of them are not only partial; they are also too old to cope with the strains and rigours of the professional league". To wipe out the problem, he said that the NFA should mete out punishment to referees found guilty of misdemeanour in handling matches to serve as deterrent to others, while old referees should be replaced with younger ones.

But are the referees really as black as they are being painted or are they actually the chief causes of the series of ugly incidents threatening to abort the professional league which is barely one year old in the country? Ahmed Mohammed, a Kaduna based grade one referee currently officiating matches in the on-going professional league spoke in defence of his colleagues. The Nigeria soccer ruling body, NFA, and not the referees, is the chief cause of the sweeping crisis rocking the league boat, according to him, he gave several reasons to back up his claim. Among them is the decision of NFA

to choose match officials from states very close to the ones where the home clubs are based. This practise by the NFA sometimes makes the referees susceptible to pressure of tempting offers from people with whom they are familiar. Such a situation, he observed would not have happened if the referees were chosen from states very far away from the venue of the match.

The grade one referee also blamed the state F.A.'s and match commissioners for allowing matches to hold in stadia where there are inadequate security arrangements. He said NFA also stands blamed for failing to take necessary actions against state F.A.'s or clubs failed to make adequate security arrangements during their matches. Mohammed explained that referees are sometimes intimidated and forced to rule against their conscience in stadia where security is inadequate in order to save their lives, the lives of the visiting team and those of the spectators from irate fans. One of the best means of curbing the wave of ugly incidents, according to the referees, is that NFA should allow the Nigerian Referee Association (NRA) to appoint referees to handle pro-league matches instead of the current practise whereby the NFA appoints the referees. He said NRA knows all the referees inside out and as such would know who is competent to handle what matches.

The Kaduna State F.A. secretary, Mr. Musa Aboh also shares the same view with Mohammed on the issue of picking match officials from a state very close to the place where they are to officiate matches. He said NFA is doing more harm than good to the professional league by picking match officials for a match taking place in Jos from Bauchi State or appointing officials from Niger State to handle a match to be played in Jos. "I think NFA should stop this idea of zoning referees to handle matches in their adjoining states. If the association stops this zoning, all these problems would be completely wiped out", said Mr. Aboh.

AAAF re-admits South Africa

Barring any relapses from the political changes sweeping through South Africa, the country which was once shunned by civilised nations for its obnoxious apartheid policy will almost certainly become a full-fledged member of most of the global sporting associations from where it was expelled many years back.

The most significant step towards South Africa's return to international sporting arenas was taken last week when African Amateur Athletic Federation (AAAF) granted a provisional membership to South Africa. South Africa was expelled from International Amateur Athletics Federation 15 years ago and has not competed in any Olympic since 1960.

The AAAF provisional membership granted South Africa was based on the report of a delegation it sent to the Republic. The president of AAAF Mr. Lammy Mbiya said the

decision would allow athletics to play a key role in the changing political situation of South Africa. The provisional admission was granted to South Africa Amateur Athletic Federation (SAAAF) on the condition that it continues to promote competition in sports.

Another delegation of the Federation will visit South Africa in July to assess the situation. If AAAF is satisfied with recommendation it will recommend the readmission of South Africa to the IAAF, and there are clear indications that the world track and field governing body would accept the recommendation.

Meanwhile, the International Tennis Federation said it would propose readmitting South Africa to international play as soon as it is readmitted into the Olympic movement. In a statement issued last week the ITF said the recommendation would be made to its annual meet-

ing in July. The federation is hoping that three South African tennis bodies would have been unified before the meeting. South Africa last played in the men's Davis Cup in 1978 and the women federation Cup in 1977.



De Klerk

Lendl leads money chart

Former number one tennis sensation Ivan Lendl slipped from the Association of Tennis Professionals top spot to the third position, but that has not affected his earning. He still remains the highest prized money earner in the tennis world.

Lendl, who is now ranked third behind Stefan Edberg (No.1) and Boris Becker (No.2), led the prize money chat with \$496,909 (about 4,969,090 Naira) as at April, 22 this year. Lendl, whose main agony in his tennis career is his unsuccessful attempts to win Wimbledon Championship, the only Grand Slam that he is yet to win, earns \$27,586 (about 275,860 Naira) more than his close



Lendl

est rival, Edberg who earns a total of \$469,323 (about 4,693,230 Naira) over the same period, according to the April edition of the ATP Tour News Release.

Jim Courier, ranked seventh on the ATP Tour came third on the top earners chat, displacing Becker to the fourth position. Couriers' total earnings is \$416,669 (about 4,166,690 Naira) as against \$315,864 (about 3,158,640 Naira) earned by Becker. On the ATP point ratings, however, Lendl is trailing Edberg and Becker by 1,159 and 816 respectively. Lendl has 2,624 points as against 3,440 by Edberg and Becker.

By Joe Olajuwon

ADAMU ADAMU S

DEFINITIONS
IN HUMOUR

Hurry cane

If it was the wind of change that swept over Africa in the 1950's, the wind had now come of age. It is hurricane. It is not sweeping over Africa it is sweeping over dictators. The latest in the series is Mengistu Haile Mariam. Apparently the science in Marxism is no longer the experimental variety — it failed, *warfully*. Who is there who can estimate the toll from the horrendous massacres carried out in the name of marxism? After sacrificing all these lives to anonymity, then you flee.

Wise guy. If you don't *hurry up*, a *cane* can help to lend velocity to your legs.

Mengistu — *Marxgistu Hell Marry'm*. He is indeed progressive. In two days he has progressed 3,000 kilometres from Addis Ababa (to Harare). If that's what marriage to hell does, we better betroth all our leaders to the fair, fiery lady. And then leave happily ever after we have got rid of the next and the next and the next. And.

Poetic Just-tease — They clashed in Ogaden. Both were servants in the court of the Soviets. Odd. Siad Barre switched to America, Mengistu remained fateful — plump, shiny face. Somalis and Ethiopians chased both out. They fled to Kenya. Odd. Mengistu

switched to Zimbabwe. Barre remained fateful.

Gandhi — *Gunned die*. The assassination of the last representative of this dynasty is truly, for India, tragedy in a nutshell. Already many have accompanied him and many, many innocent more — will follow in his wake. Indira, Sanjay and

their greater namesake — the Mahatma. Is fate locked up in the name?

Kerekou — His first *Kou* (coup) was against the government (he took it over), his second against the people (he lord it over) and now it is against Soglo (he slogged on). Now you see why they call him "carry coup", he's carried it out. Wise guy ruling behind the scene, is he?

President — The president I learn has written a book. Like his speeches, the book will be fairly well written, and will prove readable if you can get a copy. The only thing I don't like is the name. "For their tomorrow, we gave our Today". How about "From their Tomorrow, we got our Today". That's right.

So it is a plan

PPFN — Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria. A plan to put all parents in hoods throughout this federation of Nigeria. It is both a hood of ignorance, and a hood of separation. When parents are ignorant of your aim, you can easily separate them — in more ways than divorce.

Heredity — If your parents didn't have any children, you probably won't have any either.

Library

Chinese Food — by Foreman Chew
No Drug — by Dr M.T. Kay Mist
The Art of Tea Drinking — by Thirstea Buzu
Counting — by Sense says
Books — by Lie Bray Ryan.

Ambition

How do those great executives in business find their way into the board rooms? There are many ways. Here's two of them (from the Right Joke for the Right Occasion):

Executives — The managing director's son had just died and as the managing director was without any other heirs there was a mad scramble amongst the executives of the company to take the son's place — even though the son had not yet been laid to rest.

One of the executives was so ambitious that he called on the managing director to express his sympathy at the sad loss of such a great man. But he continued: 'No one could ever hope to achieve as much as your son has done — but I wondered, sir, if it would be possible for me to take his place.'

'Certainly,' replied the managing director. 'I'll see if the undertaker can arrange it.'

The television company decided to make a programme about successful business executives, so they called five of them into the studio to talk about their lives and how they managed to be so successful.

The first four executives all told of how they had fought to get to the top — all four of them marrying their respective boss's daughter. But the fifth executive had had a really hard fight to become successful. 'Life was never very easy for me,' he explained. 'I had to fight for everything and times were often extremely difficult — but I just gritted my teeth, rolled up my sleeves... and got down to asking Dad to lend me another £50,000.'



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