

# Playing God With Banned Politicians

The AFRICAN  
**Guardian**

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# IBB must hear this

■ Lapses in the  
Nation's New Capital

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**IBB MUST HEAR THIS!** We certainly are no moles for the presidency, so what can possibly be our business with a headline like that? It really has nothing to do with tale-bearing. Indeed in a sense, it carries an admonition, perhaps a warning about a number of lapses, whose dire consequences are no less worrisome by the sheer illusion that they belong to the far future. Abuja, Nigeria's smouldering new capital has not unexpectedly been subject of great controversy; from the economics of its phased-development through its constitutional status as a pretender-state, to how best to simulate the nation's diversities in its cultural landscaping.

Our indefatigable Paul Nwabuike has just returned from yet another of his several visits to the place and thought we should send a vital memorandum to our readers, through the President. This cover choice of his highlights more aspects of the problem than you probably ever realised. See how he puts it:

*There is a seeming lack of concern about the dangerous proximity that*

*exists between the Presidential complex, the parade ground where the national day celebrations take place on one hand and the Hilton and the new national mosque on the other. Architects spoken to (most of whom opted for anonymity because they are staff of the Federal Capital Develop-*

*ment Authority (FCDA) concede that a mistake had been made, a potentially dangerous mistake at that. The source of the problem, it seems, can be found in bureaucratic oversight. When the hotel space was given out, for example, no thought was given to the height if the hotel to be constructed.*

*The mosque, on the other hand, has a vintage view of Abuja and while it may not be immediately obvious, the implications of having religious fundamentalists with a grouse against government so close to the seat of power are anybody's guess. In fact the Indian experience — the Holy Temple at Amritsar — is a case in point.*

All that is right about security. But we also carry a story on "some other features of the new federal capital that seem to detract from the Abuja dream."



*Cindy Akporngbo*



## Nigeria

Religion is gradually gaining high visibility in Nigeria's new Federal Capital, Abuja. There are magnificent mosques and church buildings. But the construction of these religious houses has opened a floodgate of financial aids from foreign lands.

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## Economy

THE activities of some estate agents are fast becoming a source of agony and concern to both private individuals and corporate bodies. Recently, one such fake agent was discovered and...

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## Special Report

Decree No 25 of 1987 was very clear on the point: No politician of the old breed shall be reared in the new political dispensation of the Third Republic. But with the Third Republic drawing near and NEC hoarding the list of banned politicians there seems to be uncertainty among the populace of who is banned or not.

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**Where did we go wrong?**

"Where Did We Go Wrong?" (October 3) was an intensive and extensive insight into the political problems of Nigeria. It unfolds that we have not achieved anything in our 28 years of nationhood.

It must be emphasised that the ignorance of Nigeria's leadership in understanding the dynamics of political economy, coupled with their continual support for agents of colonialism, capitalism cum imperialism was where we went wrong. Hence, Nigeria has not and can not achieve socio-political and economic development with the present crude capitalist state structures operating within the exploitative international economy. It is only a well-defined and articulate socialist ideology that can bring genuine advancement. There is basically no ray of hope for Nigerians and Nigeria with the present quality of leadership existing within the international capitalist economy.

*Taoleeq Yami Gidado,  
Ado-Ekiti, Ondo State*

It is a shame that, Nigeria at 28, is still crawling like a baby. I regard the celebration of every 1st October as a waste of money and resources.

Nigeria should not imitate the developed countries because they have every reason to celebrate. They are economically and industrially advanced. What can we boast of? After almost three decades of independence, we can't boast of controlling our economy.

*Matthew Iyamu  
Oshodi, Lagos State*

While Cuba, in 1959, was ousting a dictator — Batista — Nigeria was also feverishly preparing to receive the seal of independence from a colonialist — Britain.

Cuba was like a brothel for the pleasure of businessmen from the U.S. while Britain saw Nigeria as a ready source of raw materials. Both countries were indeed ruinously exploited.

But today, while Cuba under one man (Castro) has been able to wipe out illiteracy (less than 5% are illiterate in Cuba), provide good medical facilities for its citizens and even export its military man-power to other parts of the world within 28 years; Nigeria under eight leaders is yet to give its citizens potable drinking water, tearless education, functioning medical care or even good roads.



The difference is that while Cuba studied the international system and chose a trustworthy ally, Nigeria groped into the hands of wolves who have today refused to let go their strangulating hold on our economy.

*Nigeria must rethink.  
Moden Ogiaman  
Onle-Iganmu, Lagos*

We went wrong because our governments are representatives of foreigners and not Nigerians whom these governments are supposed to serve. We went wrong because our press, the watchdog of society, watched nothing or where it watched, busied itself with issues of petty significance.

We went wrong because Nigerians are too self-centred and cannot, therefore, cooperate to check the excesses of their governments.

And, for as long as we all balk when the government barks, for so long shall we remain mired in planlessness and stagnation.

*Mike Fakeye  
Ibadan, Oyo State*

Nigeria went wrong when we decided to remain ideologically vacant. No nation survives without a nationally accepted guiding philosophy for development.

Until we embrace one ideology — outright capitalism or socialism at full blast — Nigeria shall continue to go wrong.

*Mark Omosate  
Ilesha, Oyo State*

Your magazine glossed over the critical issue of ideology while looking at Nigeria's 28 years of distortions in the

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name of development. Is it that you do not share in the need for a national ideology for overall mobilization of the people and resources of the nation?

Remember: whatever failures recorded by our governments is a reflection of the cowardly input of the press as the mouth-piece of the people. The nationalist press of the colonial times succeeded in kicking out the colonialists because of the sustained missionary zeal of the press in that era.

*Ola Akinwale,  
Kano, Kano State.*

## The Gender Question

I have been fascinated, although not impressed, by "The Gender Question" (March 7, 1988.)

The cause which you seem to espouse is one which has won my deep sympathy and which, therefore, received my practical support while I was in Nigeria.

However, the point, persistently missed is that, by-and-large, the Nigerian woman is really as yet to "assimilate" and, then, "accommodate" the mentality which alone can establish, and forever guarantee, her natural equality and parity of esteem with the Nigerian male.

*Iro Eweka,  
Bristol, UK*

## Correction



On page 18 of our last edition (October 24) Dele Giwa's photograph was inadvertently used in place of Rufus Giwa's (photo above). The error is regretted.

— Editor

Address Letters to the Editor, typewritten on double-space, with writer's name, address and, if available telephone number, to The African Guardian, Rutam House, P.M.B. 1217, Oshodi, Lagos Nigeria. Letters subject to editing.

## Undiplomatic omissions

**T**HE Ministry of External Affairs seems to have adopted a new approach to inter-government communication following the shooting of two Nigerians, Mr. Jolly Jackson and Chief Clem Nwamene in Detroit and New York respectively. The ministry in a press statement, condemned the increasing rate Nigerians in the United States were being shot to death. The statement called on the American authorities to ensure adequate protection of the life and property of Nigerians living in that country.

Beyond the press statement, no official communication of the government's stand seems to have gone to the American government. On Wednesday, the American Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Princeton Lyman told *The African Guardian* that the embassy was yet to receive an official statement from the External Affairs Ministry on the death of the two Nigerians.

The Americans only learnt of the Nigerian government's position on the matter through the press, which cannot be taken to be an official message to the American government, he said.

Under normal diplomatic procedures, the appropriate thing would have been to pass the message to the American embassy, which then makes it a government-to-government affair.

## Head-count blues

**T**HE National Population Commission is in a financial strait-jacket though officials of the commission would not readily admit it. The population commission which shall conduct a national census between January and September 1991, will need about N25 million to start a programme of area demarcation this year in all the 304 local governments in the country. According to the schedule, the area demarcations will group houses in units consisting of 400 to 600 persons for easier enumeration.

Now, though a request for the N25 million went out to the Federal government mid this year, only N5 million or 20 per cent of the account has been provided. With the delay in the approval of the total amount, the ground work expected to be laid this year is in danger of running behind schedule and could affect the transition to civil rule programme.

## Editors' guild to the rescue

**T**HE Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) began preparations last week for a save-our-souls mission to Benin-City on behalf of the beleaguered *Nigerian Observer*, the Bendel State government-owned newspaper, shut down on October 7. The Guild's mission is connected with plans by the Bendel State government to terminate the services of the paper's editors.

The State Commissioner for Information, Dr. Isaac Ikoyo-Eweto, proffering reasons for the government action, said government was saddened by the degeneration in the standard of the tabloid which, over the years, had become an embarrassment to the government and peoples of the state. For now, 547 employees of the newspaper had been asked to go home for the meantime though about 146 would have to look for jobs elsewhere.

It was learnt that Governor Tunde Ogbaha decided to close down the *Nigerian Observer* following a front page lead story on September 30 entitled: "Football Team Wants Ben Johnson." The governor was said to have wondered why a regional paper should be more concerned about a disgraced Canadian sprinter when events in most rural areas of the state had not been effectively reported.

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Andy Akporugo

## Fighting shy of fate

It seemed from the outset that there wasn't very much to be gained from the muscle-flexing. And as the debate progressed, it became clear that the greatest advocates of a new order were motivated by less than the appropriate revolutionary vision. The clamour was for a new moral significance; a new political direction. But the conceptualisation was all warped, cowardly and essentially self-serving.

A blanket ban on 'old politicians' and former public officers is really only a sanctimonious statement, pleasing perhaps to the mob, but hardly equipped on its own, to assure a radically improved system.

The logic of deterrence is sadly bastardised in any scheme that seeks to punish the guilty with the innocent on the most specious ground that "they all once served". There is inherently, also, the unwitting suggestion that it is as much an offence to be honest as to be corrupt in the future service of the land.

Decree 25 may be seen today as a piece of expedient legislation, whose political worth lay substantially in the expressed intention (threat) to make available a comprehensive list of its different categories of victims. Many Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) members justified the curious philosophical invention by asserting (on TV) that this "clean break" with the "rotten" past was to be suitably codified in the form of an easily accessible national roll of dishonour or temporary disfavour. The need for such evident reference was made even more urgent by aspects of the decree which required to be clarified. There were also several ambiguities between its so-called letter and its so-called spirit; a confusion often created by the excited pronouncements of sundry government officials.

The cut-off point for a particular class in the branding, as contained in the enabling decree, has, for example, remained different by three months from the impression conveyed in as many as three of the President's speeches, which, themselves, have been further misunderstood in a wel-

ter of subsidiary explanations.

Peradventure a clear list just might provide an opportunity to explain why on earth all the commissioners of the Muritala-Obasanjo era can be construed to be without blemish - on a *priori* basis - any more than executive council members of other corrective regimes, especially Gowon's.

I don't happen to know that we have ever had an age of innocence; and indeed, the years, 1975 to 1979, now arbitrarily exceptionated, did witness their abundant share of permissiveness. There were never so many successful farmers, industrialists and bankers derived from any other tiny 4-year military period! Might not another

***"The logic of deterrence is sadly bastardised in any scheme that seeks to punish the guilty with the innocent"***

useful fall-out of making the names public, be the excuse to ask why the ban on top military members of the present administration was not extended to their civilian ministers? Afterall, are some of these men in agbada not poised to convert the advantages of routine visibility and other official privileges into a personal headstart or pre-emptive leverage in what promises to be a determined jostling for the Third Republic?

Alas there is not to be a list! Not because there is no list, but because somebody did not comprehend well enough the enormous sociological impact of the compilation before it was orchestrated. A list, I understand, was ready as long ago as 1987. It didn't look conclusive; it couldn't possibly be. But more than that, it looked culturally lopsided, (if you know what I mean) not by any manipulation but in faithful reflection of a good slice of our shameful historical quota reality. Like fighting shy of fate, it was suddenly realised that a section of the country naturally most affected would be left almost without leaders. So somebody pressed his case or he forced the issue and the ponderous document had to be shelved.

However, this "Somebody" was to be spared the embarrassment of saying it himself. It had to be Professor Eme Awa's job to compound the scarcely flattering reputation of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with a most doubtful defence. He said something like, "there is no need to publish any list, because all those affected by the ban do very well know themselves."

It is a pity that Professor Awa has always managed to be quite so flimsy about the great expectations of his office. He was obviously ill-prepared for the last December Local Government Elections. Yet he resisted all entreaties.... and got almost drowned in his own feignings in the end. When there was an unnecessary rumpus recently over the status of local government chairmen vis-a-vis state authorities, the NEC chairman played the ostrich again in double-speak, and lost thereby a vital score in public confidence and courageous arbitration.

So that by the time Mr. President came around to reiterate the proper autonomy of the local governments by scrapping their esthablish supervising ministries, on air, Professor Awa was in no position to benefit from the spontaneous public acclaim that followed. Poor fellow; and now it seems the grinning professor must teach yet another lesson in duplicity by personally upturning NEC's earlier pledge to make available a list of the banned, at the appropriate time.

The national chairman of MAMSER, Dr. Jerry Gana, seizing the opportunity to upgrade his fledgling outfit has promptly criticised Awa's position. He believes that it is unfair to place a matter as crucial as electoral qualification outside a generally settled frame of reference or to make it a subject for absolute determination by an easily assailable body like NEC. Did he say unfair? I think it is extremely dangerous and might well undermine the entire transition process.

Mercifully, the AFRC can yet reverse itself on the damned list and save its yeoman, Professor Awa, the brunt of an unpopular and whimsical decision he is too frightened to disown.

# Pain in the NEC

## Electoral body fights to maintain credibility

We expect the master list in due course. I am not sure when we would get it, but events would make that clearer soon.

— Eme Awa

**N**OT quite two months after his appointment in August as Chairman of the National Electoral Commission (NEC), Eme Awa was the guest of editors of the *Sunday Times* in mid October, 1987. There, it seemed to the professor of political science that whether a master-list of banned politicians, public office holders, and sundry individuals would be available to his commission was a foregone conclusion. What Awa could not say for sure then was when. And even so, "events", in the estimation of the chairman "would make that clearer" sooner than later.

Almost a year later, events, rather than clear up the issue of a master list, have raised a hail of controversies, which observers fear, could take up all of the time and energy of the commission as it plods towards 1992.

Ironically, the first salvo of wranglings was fired by Awa himself. On October 10, the chairman announced through a News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) report that, contrary to expectations, NEC would not publish a master-list of the names of those banned from elective and other public offices under Decree 25 of 1987. NEC, Awa was reported as saying, would deal with cases as they arise because the criteria that could enable prospective candidates to know if they were qualified to contest or not had been made known. "There is no doubt", according to Awa, "that each prospective candidate knows where he belongs". To him, "those who pretend not to know and go ahead to contest will be called to order at the appropriate time".

The potential minefield in NEC's position are the words, "appropriate time". To critics, leaving the resolution of those qualified to contest the elections to NEC's "Appropriate time", is a call, not to free and fair elections, but to a disorderly pool. Nothing, perhaps, could have confounded the commission's position more than the scathing criticisms credited to Dr. Jerry Gana, the Director of MAMSER, a body that complements NEC's efforts, in the words of Awa, to wean Nigerians of their perception of "elections as being synonymous with violence, thuggery and corruption".

Gana, was quoted, ironically at the first in-house workshop on political education at Abeokuta, Ogun State, as saying that NEC's decision not to publish a master list was the laying of the foundation for election rigging. The MAMSER director, as reported by several newspapers, was of the view that a majority of the people would not be able to know who was banned or not. As such, if a popular contestant had his candidacy nullified only a few days to the election, the people might not know and this could be capable of disrupting the elections. In his opinion, those banned should be informed long before the election so that if they felt they had been wrongly banned, they would have time to take their case to the Transition to Civil Rule Tribunal so that the outcome of the judgement would not affect the results of the elections. Saying he would write a memo to the NEC Chairman, Gana, was purported to have requested the publication of the ban list, state by state.

Although the words credited to him by several newspapers were strikingly identical in detail, Gana, by last week, was said to have written to the government to deny that he ever made those statements, although the denial was yet to be published by the news media at the time *The African Guardian* went to press.

Whether he had denied or not, the purported statements of Jerry Gana provided the anchor for the *Nigerian Tribune* and *The Democrat* to editorialize on October 19. Believing that there were grey areas in the categorisation of those banned, the *Tribune* admonished that "those marginal cases were better sorted by publication of a comprehensive list of those affected by the ban than be left till election time when it would be too late for justice to be done". As for *The Democrat*, Dr. Gana's contention that the public, including those affected, ought to know, stands very valid and objective in the face of the "no strong" points advanced by NEC.

Even if reporters had concocted Gana's criticism from their fertile imagination, the statements nevertheless agreed with the thinking of other critics. Mr. Steve Giwa-Amu, a former solicitor-general of Bendel State wants NEC to release a preliminary list now "to allow for claims and objections", if confusion is to be avoided at the polls. Echoing this refrain, Mr. Bayo Ojo, an Ilorin-based lawyer, advises that the only way NEC will save itself from "a multiplicity of suits" at the last minute is to publish the list. To social critic, Air Iyare, NEC's problem has been vastly simplified by the President's categorisation of those banned. "It is just a question of telling the SSS (State Security Service) to compile the names, that is, if the names have not been compiled already.

Although critics see the commission's intention not to publish a master list as potentially disruptive of the transition programme, it appears from investigations by *The African Guardian* that NEC will not waver. According to reliable sources, the consensus among officials of the commission is that nothing more should be said now or ever on the question of a master list.

This position is informed by several considerations. First, the commission, it is said, believes that attempting to publish a comprehensive list of those banned is an exercise in futility. Since Decree 25 of 1987 envisages persons who will run foul of it up to the end of the transition period, a master list, in the reasoning of NEC, will never be exhaustive. More than this, if an all-embracing list were attempted, it will never be fool-proof. The consequent litigations that would follow could lead to a spate of clearances by the Transition to Civil Rule Tribunal, a situation that could erode the commission's credibility in the eyes of cynics that could term the bans as having been malicious in the first

• Eme Awa and Tony Iredia. NEC does not ban people.



place. It does appear in the reckoning of NEC that in the face of its likely unreliability, why take all the pains to compile the names of everyone included in the categories of those to be banned when only a few of them will eventually want to contest the elections? To show how wasteful such an effort could be, a source close to the commission likened attempts to compile a master list to the efforts that it would take to have a general census purely for elections when only persons of 18 years and above were needed for actual voting.

Even so, the issues for NEC appear to go beyond problems of compiling a ban list. Presumably informed by past skirmishes with other organs of government over who had authority for what, NEC, this time around, seems wary of venturing into areas that do not strictly belong to it as an administrative organ with delegated legislation. The commission's feeling is that it is the prerogative of the government to publish a ban list, since it initiated the moves, and knows best those who fit into its various categorisations. "NEC does not ban people", asserts an official. "It has powers only to screen candidates according to the electoral laws". This position accords with the somewhat mellowed position of Awa when he visited the *Daily Times* early this month where he declared that "there is no provision in the decree setting up NEC which empowers NEC to decide how elected councillors are to be removed". "Our job," he said, "is to arrange for them to be elected."

**HIS** new-found insistence on the limits of NEC's power could have been informed by what NEC experienced in the removal of Dr. Sam Orji as the Chairman of the Enugu Council by the Chief of General Staff, Vice-Admiral Augustus Aikhomu, shortly after warnings by the NEC chairman that governors had no powers to remove councillors from office.

Within its limited powers, the commission does not feel that it could be handicapped in dealing with those who have been banned. Under Decree 25 of 1987, NEC feels that any intending contestant who is in doubt regarding his status under the various categories is entitled to seek clarification from the Commission even now. Furthermore, the decree provides that any member of the public who knows that a person nominated to contest any election or appointed or elected to an office in a political party or government has been affected by the ban can file an objection to NEC to nullify such nomination, election or appointment. NEC is bound by the law to pronounce on the objection within 30 days of the receipt of a reply from the person whose nomination, election or appointment is being objected to. Those dissatisfied with NEC's ruling shall within 30 days apply to the Tribunal for a review of the declaration.

In addition to these safeguards, NEC seems confident that all those included in the ban will be fished out through the screening process before actual elections. Even though the commission is iron-cased in its belief that the course it has chosen is the correct one, it does not want to defend or even explain its position before the public. To do so, according to the seeming consensus among the officials, is to appear in the public mind to have joined issues with Dr. Gana, and, by extension, with MAMSER, a complementary organ that ought to help NEC achieve a smooth transition to the Third Republic. The Commission, *The African Guardian* has learnt, wants to avoid creating images of discordant tunes with organs, whose objectives in

the final analysis, are one with NEC.

In July for example, NEC had a running battle with the Transition to Civil Rule Tribunal. Despite the provisions of section 5, sub section 4 of Decree 36 of 1988 which made decisions of NEC on the eligibility of Constituent Assembly candidates "final and binding", the tribunal still went ahead to hear cases of some candidates disqualified by the commission. When NEC protested, the tribunal replied that it had powers to hear such petitions, arguing that it could not fold its hands where a case of unjust disqualification was alleged.

More than this, NEC is seemingly irked that the tribunal regularly summons its commissioners and other officials to appear before it physically in cases that are purely civil and for which they could be represented by their counsel. Only last month, the tribunal had summoned the Director of Public Affairs, Mr. Tonnie Iredia and a member of the commission, Ambassador Gabriel Ijewere, for divulging "official secrets" to a petitioner. Ijewere was reported to have threatened to resign because of what he considered to be the humiliating experience.

Still, NEC's avoidance of a public master list would appear to go beyond issues of credibility, enabling power and the convenience of dealing with individual cases. Authoritative sources have told *The African Guardian* that the commission is indeed in possession of a master list compiled long ago by the Federal Government.

The speculation for now is that the list, if implemented wholesale, could wipe out the entire political class of certain parts of the country, a situation capable of arousing allegations of unfairness. To skirt around this largely unforeseen problem, the Federal Government is believed to have given NEC, the task of playing God with banned politicians, with all the inscrutable whims it implies. In the event, the former presidential candidate of the Nigerian Advance Party, Mr. Tunji Braithwaite, may have been unwittingly prophetic when he declared, after the announcement of the political slate-cleaning in September 1987 that only God could ban him.

To Lagos lawyer, Fola Akinrinsola, the Federal Government, even before now, had given scant regard to the spirit of the ban. Just after elections into the Constituent Assembly in June, Akinrinsola observed that the law on the ban had been compromised by its "internal and operational contradictions", and that "it would collapse under the weight of these contradictions". He remarked that erstwhile councillors (who were unaffected by the ban except for those found guilty of corruption or other offences) had "fallen foul of its provisions and sections". Not only that. In his opinion, many of the 117 persons appointed by the government into the Constituent Assembly were "picked in utter violation and of total disregard to the provisions". While noting that the government had not complied with the law it promulgated, he nevertheless conceded that it had "the right to take the posture". The danger, as he admonished, however, was that "its example will be followed by the citizens and other arms of government". To Akinrinsola, "when a legislation is subject to the vagaries, whims and caprices of the law makers, it becomes an oppressive law".

Will the National Electoral Commission play God? Will its ways be inscrutable as the Almighty's? Will this cup pass by NEC? The road to 1992 will tell.

By Godwin Agbroko with reports from Abdul Orah and Tunde Oyekola.



Night Club & Restaurant  
Adeniran Ogunsanya, Surulere, Lagos

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- A RAFFLE DRAW VIDEO SETS, REFRIGERATOR, COLOUR TELEVISION AND OTHER CONSOLATION PRIZES ARE TO BE WON

**DATE:** Saturday, October 29, 1988

**VENUE:** The Peak Night Club  
Adeniran Ogunsanya, Surulere, Lagos

**ADMISSION:** N150.00 Flat

**TIME:** 9 p.m.

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# Flight into the doldrums

*Nigeria airways' plane crashlands, management seeks solution from all.*

**T**HE Nigeria Airways is still flying, no doubt. But for how long and at what cost? These were the questions Nigerians, still sympathetic enough to listen to the litany of woes dogging the debt-ridden national carrier, were asking last week. And what a week for Major-General Olu Bajowa, now conferred with full powers as Sole Administrator, to come up with a hat-trick on how to stop the airline's flight into the doldrums. The President, General Ibrahim Babangida, who sacked the airline's feuding board last week and put Bajowa solely in charge, will wait until December for the retired general to come up with a rescue plan.

But the public, it would seem, cannot wait that long as they demonstrated Wednesday, October 12. It all began like a normal and quite familiar flight delay. After three hours of waiting at the domestic wing of the Murtala Muhammed Airport in Lagos, the 22 passengers to Jos, Plateau State, felt relieved when their flight was announced at 7.30 p.m. Olabisi Daramola (11), bracing up for an interview slated for the next day into the Command Secondary School in Jos, filed in along with the other passengers.

The plane, Boeing 737, christened *Oguta Lake*, took off smoothly; but it did not go far, for it soon returned to Lagos. Different opinions have been offered for what happened on the way. Airline spokesman, Femi Ogunleye says the flight was airborne for 40 minutes when the Captain was informed by the Jos Control Tower and a private aircraft of a looming bad weather. The captain promptly informed the passengers of the development and his intention to return to Lagos.

The passengers, unconvinced, began to murmur and one of them (still unidentified), who claimed to be a pilot, stormed the cock-pit to berate the captain and the cabin crew. The captain reportedly told the angry passengers to peep through the windows and see the weather for themselves but they were not assuaged. As the plane touched down, some of the passengers rejected all entreaties to deboard. Mr. Ogunleye claims only five of them agreed to come out; but *The African Guardian* learnt that most of them came

out only to move in again at 6.30 a.m. ostensively to beat the early morning jostling for space.

According to the airline's version, when the passengers refused to come down, airways engineers were called to switch on the Auxiliary Power Unit to operate the air-conditioners and other internal lighting system. Some of the passengers slept at the waiting lounge while the rest slept inside the aircraft. It took Baiowa and Airforce Director of

Public Relations, Group Captain Brai Ayonote 30 minutes to persuade the passengers to alight the next morning. The passengers were given breakfast after which they were taken to the police station where they made statements. A police source told *The African Guardian* that the passengers would likely face charges after the investigation but it was clear last week that although the airline officials were visibly shaken by the alleged sabotage, they

were not interested in pressing charges. This is because there was no major damage to the aircraft except the batteries that went flat.

Just as the airline was telling sympathetic ears how the nation was embarrassed by the incident, one of its Boeing 737 out of the seven still in its fleet, crashlanded in Port Harcourt and lost two engines. One of the passengers, including Air Vice Marshal Larry Koinyan, a member of the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC), was hurt. After a hurried flight to Port Harcourt in a chartered plane to inspect the damage, Ogunleye confirmed that the plane was a write-off, adding that the ball is now in the court of NICON, the insurers.

In September last year, the airline

lost two of its four Airbuses at the Port Harcourt Airport. The aircraft were subsequently taken to France for repair where they were impounded by the manufacturers. Two other Nigeria Airways aircraft are grounded due to lack of spare parts to put them in the air. *The African Guardian* learnt that a loan of \$206 million (N865.2 million) has been procured by the Federal Government to salvage the airline but this is a far cry from the N2.9 billion debt owed to 50



• Ogunleye: It's been a crowded period of crash and crisis.

companies worldwide.

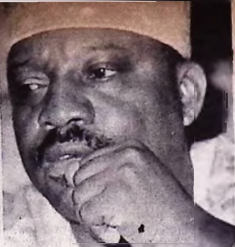
However, Bajowa seemed confident as he moved swiftly last week to meet the president's three months deadline. He recalled all managers, controllers and directors on leave; suspended all staff leave; recalled all district managers both at home and abroad for a crucial meeting scheduled for Thursday October, 20.

Ogunleye is equally convinced that the President's deadline would be met: "We are already working out plans as the President directed," he said, and pleaded with the public to "send suggestions because our problems are known to all."

By Abdul Orob



• Okogie: Is begging for foreign aid the best option?



• Onabule: This administration cannot be blamed for CAN's initial refusal to accept Shagari's offer

## Wages of wavering

Christians look beyond Nigeria to fund Abuja Centre

WHEN in 1983, deposed President Shehu Shagari offered the two major religious bodies in the country (moslems and christians), N10 million each to build befitting centres of worship in Abuja, Nigeria's future capital in the making, the moslems quickly grabbed the offer, but the christians dithered. They first wanted to know the rationale behind the gift.

According to Mr. Charles Williams, secretary, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the christians suspected the monetary offer was a political bait, hence the initial rejection. But shortly after, former Vice President Alex Ekwueme, who was asked by Shagari to explain issues to the christians, convinced them that the offer was not a Greek gift. But then, the military struck; ending the life of the fragile Second Republic and dashing the christians, hope of collecting the money.

However, on September 20, 1988, five years after the initial offer was made, Air Vice-Marshal Hamza Abdullahi, Minister for the Federal Capital Territory signed a First Bank cheque of N10 million to redeem Shagari's pledge to the christians. But the money is like a drop of water in the ocean. Williams argues that because of the depreciation in the value of the naira, it will now cost about N100 million to erect the proposed Christian Ecumenical Centre in Abuja.

Even before the amount was released to CAN, the association had, at a meeting with the Chief of General Staff, Vice Admiral Augustus Aikhomu, asked for an upward review of the government's grant in line with the disparity in the present value of the naira and its value in 1983, when the pledge was made. But

it's unlikely that the government would accede to CAN's request because last week, Chief Duro Onabule, chief press secretary to the President, told *The African Guardian* that the present government should not be "held responsible" for both the depreciation in the value of the naira, and CAN's refusal to accept the offer in 1983. Onabule's position, somehow leaves CAN in the lurch.

However, there are indications that CAN may embark on a financial drive to raise funds from church bodies in Europe and America to build the religious edifice in Abuja. Apparently, CAN may be following the moslems example though the sources of fund will be different. *The African Guardian* gathered that Saudi Arabia made a generous donation to the moslem community in Nigeria to enable it complete work on its magnificent mosque in Abuja. Williams does not see anything wrong with asking its members overseas to assist in building a befitting house where christians can commune with God. He describes the proposed revenue drive abroad as "ecumenical

• Hamza: Redeemed Shagari's N10m pledge to the christians



sharing of resources."

There are strong fears, however, that foreign interests may use the opportunity to either establish or fortify their strongholds in Nigeria's economic and political spheres. Without being specific, His Holiness, Prophet G.O.K. Onyioha, the spiritual head of Godian Religion, said that foreign aid, for whatever purpose, "is not charity ... there are strings attached."

Mr. Akin Oyebo, a lecturer in the Faculty of Law, University of Lagos, was more forthcoming with the implications of accepting foreign aid. Said he: "You cannot accept foreign aid without mortgaging your political, economic and cultural independence." Oyebo says that there is a struggle among the super-powers to gain a stronghold in Nigeria, to the extent that multinational corporations in the country are being used to cause disaffection among the religious bodies in the country.

Abba Dabo, a journalist and Constituent Assembly member for Dambana, Kano State, had earlier accused South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Israel and American churches of pumping money into the country for selfish reasons. "There have been direct attempts by foreign interests at using religion as a tool to spread their sphere of influence ..." he said.

Nevertheless, the national executive of CAN seems divided over the issue of looking beyond the country to finance the building of the house of God. For Dr. Godfrey Otubu, *Baba Aladura* of the Eternal Order of Cherubim and Seraphim, christians should look inward for additional money to build the Abuja Christian Ecumenical Centre. Otubu, who is also a member of the dormant Advisory Council on Religious Affairs (ACRA), says that churches like his, which have no parent bodies abroad can only rely on their Nigerian members to raise funds for the Abuja project.

The Christian Ecumenical Centre in Abuja, will be located on 6.24 hectares in central Abuja. Williams says the centre, will consist of a main chapel, which will accommodate 5,000 worshippers, and two other chapels which will take in 1,000 people each. Also, there will be a guest house, administrative block, staff quarters, committee rooms and a conference hall attached to the five-floor centre. CAN will only occupy one floor while the other floors will be let out for commercial purposes.

By Mike Ubeni

# A monarch's shopping list

*King Moshoeshoe seeks aid and closer economic co-operation between Nigeria and Lesotho*

**T**HROUGHOUT his four day visit to the country last week, the constitutional monarch of Lesotho, King Bereng Seesiu Moshosho was a testimony in commitment against apartheid, albeit on a verbal level.

At the welcome ceremony on Sunday (October 16) in the State House, Marina, the 50-year-old bespectacled monarch told his host, President Ibrahim Babangida that his kingdom remained "committed to all obligations that bind all free countries of Africa to work towards liberation of all our brothers and sisters who still suffer the indignity of oppression, domination and racial segregation ...". He was to give variations of this statement at the opening of bilateral talks and at the special banquet organised in his honour a day before he left on Wednesday.

The monarch, at the banquet for instance, had said that "the Kingdom of Lesotho supports all efforts aimed at securing political stability within the South African region and the attainment of the political aspirations of the oppressed and marginalised African majorities of South Africa so that they may be free and equal." But problems agitating the monarch's mind seemed to dwell more on the need for increased economic and technical assistance from Lagos to Maseru. In fact, the King's speeches focused more on request for increased aid to Lesotho. This made his views on apartheid appear more rhetorical, putting it in second place to the calls for "broader and deeper co-operation" between Nigeria and Lesotho.

The monarch perhaps explained why this was so when at the opening of bilateral talks he said that for Lesotho to live up to the commitment of African liberation, it "needs — as a prerequisite — to consolidate her political independence, to safeguard her territorial integrity, national sovereignty and dignity, to accelerate economic self-sufficiency and eliminate all forms of avoidable dependence on South Africa."

There is good reason for Lesotho, a tiny land-locked country with a population of 1.5 million, completely surrounded by South Africa, to want avoidable dependence from the apartheid enclave. Since its independence in

1966, Lesotho had relied heavily on Pretoria for economic sustenance. For instance, over 50 per cent of Lesotho's Gross National Product (GNP) is provided by its citizens working in South Africa. There exists industrial agreements between both countries. The \$1.6 billion water project which involves the building of six dams in Lesotho, but funded by Pretoria, is an example.

For a country whose chief export, apart from diamond, is its cheap labour of 200,000 workers in South Africa's gold mines, the dependence on Pretoria is extreme, and at times with dire consequences. In 1986, when its former Prime Minister, Jonathan Lebusa refused to sign a treaty of non-aggression with Pretoria and allowed Black African Nationalist Council, ANC, refugees sanctuary, South Africa imposed economic blockade on the country causing the fall of Dr. Lebusa in a military coup d'etat. Soon after the blockade was lifted, the new leaders agreed to expel the refugees. Though, the non-aggression pact sought by South Africa which would have made Pretoria determine who should be granted residency status in Lesotho among other conditions, has not been formally endorsed, the country is no longer an escape route for ANC members.

Last week in Lagos, King Moshoeshoe, against this background, called for joint ventures with Nigeria in the Lesotho highland water project, a project intended to develop the untapped natural resource for hydro-electric power and irrigation. The Nigeria trust fund with the African Development Bank, the Nigerian money market and direct government financial involvement, King Moshoeshoe suggested, are viable sources of funding the project.

Still on the technical level, the monarch wanted an expansion in the Technical Aid Corps Scheme (TACS) because, as he says, "alas, our needs are both extensive and urgent." Right now, under the TACS, three Nigerian medical doctors, one dental surgeon, three surveyors, one engineer and five teachers are serving in Lesotho. The king also called on the Nigerian private sector to find appropriate Lesotho organisations to co-operate with.

Before he left Lagos, the King, who was awarded an honorary doctorate de-



● Babangida: Unwavering support for needy African states



● Moshoeshoe: Economic freedom from South Africa is fundamental

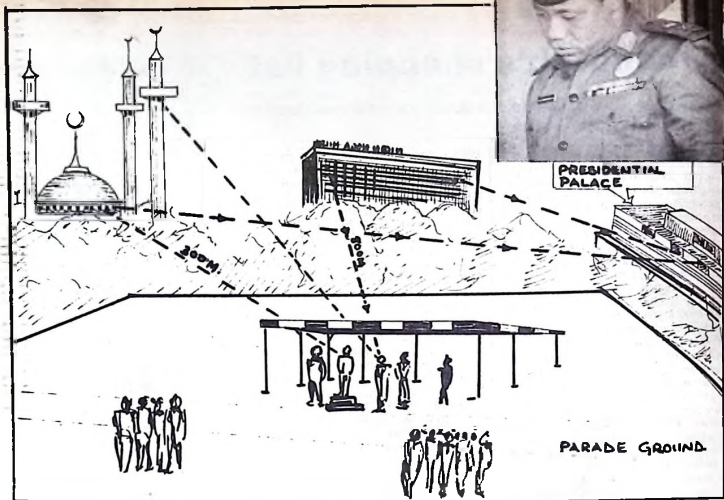
grec of the University of Benin and later the Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON), signed both technical and bilateral agreements with Nigeria. Under the technical assistance contract, both Lesotho and Nigeria are to explore areas of mutually beneficial economic ventures at a meeting of the Joint Commission between the two countries scheduled for next year.

With the promise of increased aid from Nigeria, King Moshoeshoe left for home after what diplomatic sources called a successful trip. But then, they doubted whether increased aid from Nigeria would guarantee Lesotho's economic independence from Pretoria and, in effect, political will to take a more vocal stance against apartheid.

*By Wale Akin Aina and Emenike Okorle*



PRESIDENTIAL PALACE



• A danger so obvious: An artist's impression of the high-rise buildings the presidential complex (far right) as seen from the parade ground. Babangida is in-set.

## Too close for comfort

*Abuja structures provide easy access to a president's life*

**T**UESDAY, October 11, 1988. It is late morning, on the wrong side of 10 O'clock. The place is Abuja, the new federal capital; the road from the town that leads to the Nicon-Noga Hotel, to be precise. It's a long, straight road, with sudden intersections that seem to spring out of nowhere. All around, a brooding presence, living and breathing are the Abuja hills. They seem to shimmer in the morning sun, hazy and mysterious and strangely alive.

The two visitors to Abuja are on the way to the Hilton to witness the opening ceremony of the conference of attorneys-general, billed to be performed by President Ibrahim Babangida. The road is almost bereft of traffic, obviously a consequence of security measures taken with the President and his important entourage in mind.

Suddenly, one of the men noticed a

movement out of the corner of his eye. It was as if something moved at the precise point where two of the summits met. It happened so fast that he thought at first that his imagination was playing him a trick. He enquired from his companion who shrugged and said, "They are part of the president's security."

President Babangida is perhaps Nigeria's most protected leader in recent times. Whenever he leaves the fortress-like confines of Dodan Barracks for a trip outside the country or to receive a foreign leader in Abuja, security, massive security, seems to dog his every step. Security is obvious in the ferret looks of the well-built young men who seem to be nowhere and everywhere at the same time wherever he goes. Security can be seen in the abrupt manner of the scowling soldiers and policemen who push back the crowds.

Security is personified by the trim men in suits who jog beside his official car, with their ear plugs and dark glasses.

On October 1, this year, for instance, before the president arrived at 9.05 a.m., the very air was taut. Before him, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of General Staff and other top military and administration officials had arrived. The security that accompanied these personages was impressive enough. Blaring sirens announced their presence, as the official cars made their noisy way into the parade ground. The guards were out before the vehicles with their tinted wind-screens came to a complete stop, achieving three purposes in one swift motion: a brisk salute, opening the door, and shielding the military big wig.

But when the President arrived, the security people out-did themselves as

they led the cars in the convoys into the parade ground. When he stepped out, spectators would only catch occasional glimpses of the President, as he was almost completely surrounded by military big shots, officials and of course, security men.

However, there is a chink in the armour of tight presidential security. Actually, some may consider it a gaping hole. It is a danger so obvious that not a few citizens have commented on it. Privately, that is.

The Nicon-Noga Hilton is about 800 metres from the new Presidential complex. In real terms, this means that anyone in any of the upper luxurious suites of the hotel can see the complex very clearly. Quite a few people took note of this, but the situation does not seem very troubling to the authorities.

However, Diekola Adekola, an architect with the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), offers a viewpoint that might inform official circles. "It is not dangerous because the facilities there are necessarily reserved. Remember you just don't go there. There are other considerations apart from the location," said Adekola who cites as example Dodan Barracks which is situated in a densely populated area.

But it is also a fact that security within Dodan Barracks has been tightened in recent times. According to sources, access into the residence of the nation's number one citizen has been seriously curtailed and visitors are vetted for accreditation more than ever before.

Another explanation for the dangerous proximity that exists between the presidential complex and high-rise buildings is given by a senior architect with FCDA. According to him, the proposals for hotel space were made "way back in 1982". Hotel space was allocated then for the Hilton, Agura and other hotels. But, by then, nobody had any idea what organisations or outfits would be allocated the hotel spaces, or in fact how high the buildings would be. This choice example of bureaucratic oversight, said the architect, happened because in 1982 "the department of planning and architecture were together."

Anyhow, by the time the hotel began its ascent, getting higher and higher, it became apparent that both location and height could have adverse security implications. Explaining further, another architect said: "It is true the height of the Hilton should have been checked. Initially it was just hotel space. So it was left for physical control to take care of any problems. The sitting *per se* is not the problem, because everybody knew from the beginning where the presidential complex is."

What can be done about the situa-

***A binocular can effortlessly cover the distances between the four strategically located places ... A good rifle with sights can achieve the same purpose.***

tion? At this stage, what measures can be taken to ameliorate a situation whereby a guest, or just anyone with innocent or evil intentions who finds himself in any of the upper floors in the Hilton can see the complex very distinctly. Adekola proffers an explanation: "Internal security is no problem. But external security could pose some difficulties. One can get a good view of the complex from the Hilton. Apart from that, the complex is being handled by a foreign firm. The people must know quite a lot about the set up."

Like others interviewed, Adekola is at pains to explain that actions have been taken or are being taken to take care of any oversight: "Those who did all that were not numb-skulls". Then he added enigmatically: "The place could

be so close, yet so far."

Adekola's reference could be to some devices which are state-of-the-art in security systems. In fact, it is likely that such equipment of physical security as two-way radios, scrambler phones, closed circuit television, alarms as well as the planning and limitation of the number and location of entrances will be standard fare in the new complex. It is also likely that careful attention will be paid to exits, and traffic patterns.

An architect concedes that "there may have been an error. Maybe the execution may have brought problems to light. Error is human". The architect goes on to make an observation that impinges on the very nature of the presidency: "The President is a human being. Why are we walling him away?"

The answer to the problem may lie in the control of traffic flow, another architect notes. He adds that "the conceptualization is beautiful. Maybe there were not enough inputs from the professionals concerned."

The most visible structure in Abuja today is the new Abuja mosque. It can be seen from virtually all parts of the federal capital. It is also about 508 metres from the parade ground (the third one in three years) where the national day celebrations took place this year. In fact the only thing that separates the mosque and the parade ground is a broad stretch of land. The location of the mosque so close to the parade ground in the general direction of the complex is, to some, also a cause for worry. "It should not be so close to such important places," says an Abuja resident, who cites the example of the Golden Temple of Amritsar, the Sikh shrine in Punjab, the scene of many battles between Sikh extremists and government forces in India. "Anything can

• Babangida's motorcade at Abuja parade ground. Security is personified by the trim men who jog beside his car



happen." However, a government official at Abuja guesses that bureaucratic bungling may also be responsible for the situation.

Beyond the Abuja situation, Nigeria is not the most security-conscious or secure nation in the world. The story is told of a senior Nigerian army officer who went for a military course in the United States some years back. At one of the US military installations, he was shown a screen, obviously an airport scene. "That's Lagos airport," said one of his hosts. He thought it was a still picture until he noticed that the figures and vehicles were moving. He realized that the scene was being relayed live, beamed from across seas thousands of miles away.

Whatever maybe the explanation for the security situation at Abuja, the truth is that a binocular can effortlessly cover the distances between the four strategically located places: the mosque, the presidential complex, the Hilton and the parade ground. A good rifle with sights can achieve the same purpose.

History provides evidence. On November 22, 1963, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, America's youngest ever president, was in a limousine, part of a motorcade that was riding slowly through down-town Dallas. Kennedy was in Texas to patch up things between his vice president, Lyndon Baines Johnson and another Democratic Party top-shot whose feuding had the potential of reducing his support in the state. With his eyes set on a second four-year stay in the White House, Kennedy was in no mood to take chances. But the President did not make the nomination or a second term. Or for that matter, the next day. At 12.30 pm. Lee Harvey Oswald opened fire from a roof-top. Two bullets from Oswald's rifle struck the President — one at the lower portion of his neck and the other in the head. He was dead on arrival at the hospital.

More than anything else, two factors facilitated Kennedy's assassination: the open limousine in which he was riding and the roof top conveniently located, almost custom made for a sniper. Among other factors, events such as the murder of Kennedy inform the fear and trepidation that many nurse over the location of important national monuments in Abuja and other places.

But the indications are that government is taking security very seriously. When the president comes to Abuja, for instance, the sheer extent of security is overwhelming. Policemen and soldiers seem to sprout suddenly. Security agents

(you can always identify them from their stealthy manner and suspicious glances) are everywhere at once. Routes through which the Presidential convoy is likely to pass are searched with a tooth comb. It may be a coincidence but most reporters who have Abuja as their beat believe that telephone lines, especially the Abuja-Lagos ones, are also cut as part of security measures. Anybody who says that he cannot get through to Lagos on telephone is invariably asked the question: "Do you know if the President is in town?"

At a recent seminar of the Nigerian Institute of Architects, with the theme: **Development Control in the new Federal**

**'Those who  
did all that were  
not numb-  
skulls...The place  
could be so close,  
yet so far'**



■ Defence and Internal Affairs Ministers Baki and Shagaya: How protected are future presidents from hostile elements ensconced in adjacent structures.



**Capital Territory**, participants, among others, were told that it is of utmost importance that the development of Abuja follows the masterplan. Most architects say that the masterplan is an almost perfect example of judicious and imaginative use of land space. "The conceptualization is beautiful", enthused an Abuja-based architect.

Perhaps. But the masterplan, designed by Kenzo Tange, a Japanese firm of architects, may be a thing of beauty, not necessarily of perfection. The proximity of sensitive landmarks may be a blot on an otherwise excellent plan. The structures are, to quote a cliché, too close for comfort.

By Paul Nwabukwu in Abuja

# Dreams die first

Abuja's gradual transformation lures some, repels others

**"THE way for forging the unity of the nation is by building a capitalist city which will belong to every Nigerian; where every Nigerian will be rest assured that he or she has an opportunity to live in parity with every other Nigerian, and where no Nigerian will be regarded, whether in law or in fact, as a Native Foreigner."**

**T**Hese fine sentiments were expressed by the Justice Akinola Aguda Panel which recommended the area known today as Abuja as the new Federal Capital. The words not only capture the essence of Murtala Mohammed's "Abuja is Unity" vision; they also reflect the wishes and dreams of most Nigerians about this predominantly virgin land located in the very heart of the nation. Abuja was meant to be, in practical terms and in the less-realistic level of dreams, everything Lagos was not and is not.

Today, 12 years after Murtala died, the dream seems to have died or at least lost its polish. In fact the status of Abuja, considered, sacrosanct in Murtala's time, is under question. Committee 17 of the Constituent assembly deliberated on the status of Abuja and other issues concerning the Capital Territory. As deliberations have been marked by bitter wrangling over what the status of Abuja should be, two members of the committee, one from Anambra State, the other from one of the far northern states, actually came to blows during the committee's deliberations. The issue in contention is deceptively simple. What should be the status of Abuja? Should it be a state or should it maintain its Special Territory status?

Achana Gaciyo Yaro, a member of the Assembly from Bauchi State and others believe fervently that Abuja should retain its status as a specially administered territory. "Abuja is the only insurance for unity; utmost good faith should guide everything including the very execution of projects."



• Murtala Mohammed: who is questioning his "Abuja in unity" vision?

But others disagree. Among them is the Chairman of Committee 17, Bashir Dalhatu. They contend that for administrative and other reasons, the expression, "as if it was one of the states of the federation" which was in section 279 of the reviewed constitution should be retained. The pro-state group generally supports the existence of local governments in the federal capital which some have said will be abolished after 1992.

Apart from these broad divisions, the issue of whether or not there will be a mayoralty, and the extent of its jurisdiction has produced wide cleavages among the members of the committee. Yaro and others not only want a mayor; they want his authority to extend through the length and breadth of the federal capital. Explaining their stand, a member of the committee said: "The term Federal Capital City does not exist. Section 278 of the reviewed constitution says that "Abuja is the federal capital territory". Abuja has no suburb. The words "Abuja", "federal capital territory" and "FCT" refer to the same

area."

However, others who wish for a mayoralty restricted to the "capital city" make their case just as strongly. In their view, the rest of the territory as distinct from the municipality should be administered as local governments so that "development will go to the grassroots."

During its sitting, Committee 17 received evidence and memoranda from individuals and organisations. The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Air Vice Marshal Hamza Abdullahi who received the committee in audi-

ence, gave his support to those calling for a local government structure. Abdullahi hinged his case on the enhancement of revenue allocation and collection.

When the issue of status was put to the vote, 17 out of 32 members were in favour of making the territory a state; 15 were opposed to the idea. The Constitution Review Committee (CRC) in its draft constitution provided for a mayor for Abuja by an act of the National Assembly to run the territory as well as its administrative and political machinery.

The Political Bureau, on the other hand, made a recommendation which amounts to delicate balancing: "a machinery should be set in motion to fashion out an administrative management for the FCT, which will ensure that the territory is truly national, meaning that all Nigerians will have equal rights in the area while allowing the inhabitants to participate fully in the administration of their own affairs."

As in most other issues which are on

the front burner at the Constituent Assembly, the causes of the cleavages in view show a disturbing trend. For one thing, most of those in the pro-state lobby are moslems from the far northern states; those who oppose them hail from the south of the Niger. The southerners are afraid that Abuja would naturally become the 12th state in the north with all the implications of this for the unity of the country and allocation of resources. A Committee 17 member adds ominously: "We know what they are after. They want to dominate us."

The controversy also has religious undertones. As part of the complaints of many Christians in the country, which the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has been in the fore front of protesters, is the notion that Abuja is fast becoming "Islamised". Olunubi Okogie, the Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, for example, is a consistent critic of the Islamic landmarks in Abuja, especially the architectural slant; domes and minarets are said to predominate in public buildings.

Many Christian members of the assembly privately express the fear that making Abuja a state would be the last nail in the coffin of religious co-existence in the Federal Capital and ultimately, Nigeria. In their view, the advocacy for a state may be a ploy to make the federal capital, to all intents and purposes, an emirate: "When you create local governments, you're endorsing (an) emirate," said an assembly member. A female resident of Abuja who works in one of the government agencies there shares the same view.

According to her, "Everything here is Islam." She vowed never to "stand under their bus stops (the bus-stops are dome-shaped and have been subject of controversy).

Auwalu Yadudu, a lecturer at Bayero University, Kano who is also a member of the assembly, thinks such views are unreasonable. In his words: "I'm baffled at the suggestion that Abuja is losing its status and outlook as a federal capital and being turned into a northern 'city' or 'village'. This is merely on the charge that bus-stops are being constructed with dome-like structures. The fact that no northern city, much less a village, has any of the offensive structures is never appreciated."

Mohammed Haruna, managing director of the Kaduna-based *New Nigerian* considers the charge of "northernisation of Abuja" even more untenable. Critics have charged that both the profile of workers at the new federal capital territory and the granting

of contracts, reveal an obvious northern bias. Armed with statistics, Mohammed counteracts the criticism: "Out of 7,110 employees of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) and Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory, 370 are from Bendel, 419 from Imo, 354 from Anambra, 232 from Cross Rivers, 146 from Ondo, 156 from Oyo and 62 from Ogun. Borno has 52, Gongola 74, Sokoto 82, Bauchi 41 and Kano 130."

Statistics or not, a contractor from Anambra State who refused to disclose his name because "they will hire me out of here" says there's discernible unjust trend in the allocation of contracts. According to him, able and willing contractors from the south "have little hope of getting contract jobs if they have no connections." "What most of us do is to buy the contracts from these people who get contracts even though they do not have the skills", he says.

This may be true but another popular criticism: that mosques and praying grounds can be found in ministries does not seem to have much substance. During break or prayer time, Christians and Moslems who wish to say their prayers have to leave the secretariat because there are no houses of worship in the ministries. Corroborating this, an Abuja housewife who is a fervent critic of the *Islamisation* of the FCT concedes that there are no mosques or churches within the premises of any ministry.

But an avowed opponent of the local government structure gives an opposite view: "If you create local governments in Abuja, the council chairman can give customary titles. This is against the spirit of the place. Apart from this, what kind of land tenure system will operate in the FCT when you create local governments?"

A lesser-known source of controversy, though just as contentious in legal circles, is the status of the judicial system of the federal capital territory.

• Mohammed Haruna: "Northernisation of Abuja charge is untenable"



• Aguda: What his panel put together let no Nigerian tear assunder

The Chief Judge of Abuja was the only one out of those who submitted memos to be invited to make a verbal case for the establishment of a judicial service commission. He was of the view that the commission, if established, would greatly facilitate the day-to-day dispensation of justice in the territory.

But it is the opinion of some other of them that even the relatively recent post of Chief Judge of Abuja is an anomaly. "The Chief Justice of Nigeria should be the chief judicial officer of Abuja and Nigeria. Period," says one of them.

Far removed from these submissions in favour or against issues, but no less concerned about goings-on in the FCT are the Abuja aborigines. These are the original owners of the land, some of whom were displaced and resettled at Karshi and Keffi local government areas in Plateau State.

Other aborigines at Abaji, 100 Km from Abuja carried placards when Committee 17 members went to the town to look into the living conditions of the people. The placards had inscriptions including "Treat us fairly and justly," "We want autonomous LGs" and "Recognise our traditional rulers." They also demanded that NTA, Abuja and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria broadcast in some of their indigenous languages. In the sound and fury of politics and controversy, however, their voices seem to have been drowned out.

By Paul Nwabuliku

• Anigolu: Status of Abuja a thorny issue for the Constituent Assembly he chairs



## Thumbs up for the Democrats

**T**HE outcome of any American presidential election necessarily has implications that will be felt in other nations. This is part of the realities that have become intrinsic to the structure and logic of global politics in the post-Second World War era. It is a fact that many nations do not enjoy preponderance in the global distribution of military power. Yet, this is an advantage the US takes for granted. Not many nations can enforce economic or material sanctions on others. America wields this power routinely.

It follows as such that a man or woman elected to the office of the President of the United States is, by implication, a global actor with the means or facilities to act decisively on, or to influence fundamentally, events in different parts of the world. Modern American presidents are, indeed, actors that invariably shape the agenda of world politics, just as they have always remained significant in any determination of the theatres of the struggle for global power.

These reasons, more than others, explain why the rest of the world follows every American presidential election with keen interest. Or put differently, it is these reasons that show why different nations and groups, having stakes in both regional and world affairs, cannot but be concerned about who, among the two candidates in any race for the White House, ultimately gets the mandate.

The candidates in this year's election are accomplished and outstanding figures. Vice President George Bush (former ambassador, legislator and business leader) and candidate Michael Dukakis (a two-term governor with a reputation for effective economic management) carry with them a background that is as rich as it is honourable. However, the election is also about vision and the implications of orientations and commitments. And even if it can be said that basic American interests at home and abroad are stable over time, it still matters a lot whether they are to be pursued by a Bush or a Dukakis administration, by a Republican or a Democratic president.

Few will doubt that Democratic administrations are more likely to advance equal opportunities, to protect the interests of minorities and the down-trodden in the American society, and to use the law to commit government to basic social responsibilities. The civil rights laws, the emergence of Black elective officials and the opportunity of a man like the Reverend Jesse Jackson to credibly seek the office of the President of the United States, through one of the two major parties — all amount to vivid manifestations of the

great achievements of the Democratic party.

We cannot, of course, claim to know America history more than the Americans themselves. But we know that the effect of Republicans' longstanding conservatism (given the way and manner in which this conservatism has been pursued) has been to fore-close the practical realisation of similar possibilities of the American liberal democracy.

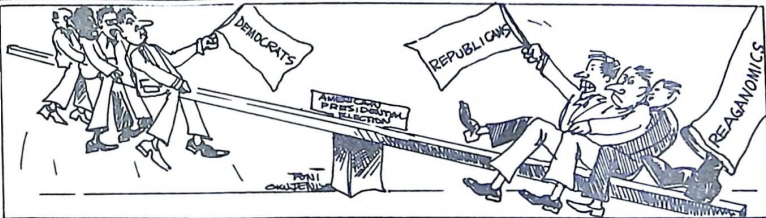
The systematic cut-back on welfare programmes and the inverse augmentation of the fortunes of the propertied class under Reagan, is a classic example of what we are saying. Nor is it to be forgotten that traditionally this conservatism has often translated externally into hostility to progressive regimes, jingoism and naked imperialism. Examples: the *contra* affair, bombing of Libya in 1986, support for the rebel UNITA movement in Angola, thwarting of sanctions efforts against South Africa and assisting her military destabilisation of the Frontline region, using the IMF to put the squeeze on ailing Third World economies, and Kissinger's policy of benign neglect against Africa, aimed at consolidating Portuguese colonialism.

Nothing convinces us that a Bush administration will chart a different course. His posturings about acting tough toward the Russians are, frankly speaking, a continuation of the old bellicosity. They are bound to be eminently disruptive, particularly at a time of a general relaxation of tensions in global politics. The Republican's apparent emphasis on a foreign policy framework based virtually exclusively on power politics between the US and the Soviet Union is narrow and unrealistic.

In contrast, Governor Dukakis comes across like the kind of leader who, as President, will work for a lessening of tensions so that peace and security can be strengthened through prosperity. He promises to cut down on the big, wasteful defence systems, so that resources will be available to reconstruct the economy and handle domestic problems. This makes sense to us.

Besides, we think that Africa will gain from a Dukakis presidency. The Democratic party has already branded the racist enclave a terrorist state. And mere anticipation that Democrats will capture the White House has forced South Africa to seek peace in the region.

Governor Dukakis campaign is constructive, honourable and issue-oriented. We endorse his race for the White House.



# The logic of security



*"After Sankara, few leaders anywhere, but especially in Africa, can afford to trust their security to something as nebulous, as insubstantial as the collective determination of a people".*

BY OKEY NDIBE

It is one of the more hard-to-swallow requirements of modern politics that those who lead have to be isolated, physically, from their followers. The main argument for this paradox is that the leader needs to be secured from the capricious hazards of everyday life.

The argument has some obvious merit. In a society where the good faith of all citizens is not given, where all kinds of grudges and wickedness lodge in men's breast, the man who embodies a collective vision — that is, in other words a leader — cannot be abandoned to the arbitrary logic of the street. And so, we arrange for our leaders to live in rarefied isolation; we permit them irritable sired passages; we throw about them a protective ring of fierce-looking, gun-wielding soldiers, and, sometimes, red-eyed, fang-baring dogs.

Nobody can truly say that this elaborate ritual is unnecessary, for there is abundant illustration in history of the price which some leaders and their nations have had to pay for dispensing with this requirement or even for carrying it out half-heartedly. There is the example of Patrice Lumumba. And then John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Anwar Sadat, Murtala Muhammed, Indira Gandhi, Thomas Sankara, and so on.

Tremendous energy and wisdom are necessary in this business of ensuring the security of a leader. It is even possible to suggest that a nation's success at the task is, in a sense, a measure of its greatness. Against this criterion, the United States of America, with a high quota of assassinated presidents, must be called a nation on the debt side of greatness. But wait a minute. Is it not possible that the experience of the United States offers us a different kind of instruction?

Look at it this way. The president of the United States is guarded by one of the most alert security apparatuses ever put together. Long before he arrives in a place, security agents comb the place for the slightest sign of trouble. Laxity cannot be said to be an American habit; and yet, see how many US presidents have been felled by assassins, and how many were lucky, like Reagan, to snatch away their lives from the muzzle of the gun, as it

were.

The American example proves, for me, that there is always a chink in our safeguards, a chink wide enough to admit the bullet of an assassin or the evil lurch of his knife; a chink that often makes the difference between the life and death of a president. The big lesson of the American example is that we labour in vain — ultimately — against a determined assailant, against an unforfeiting fate.

This wisdom had led some leaders to put their trust elsewhere, to embrace a radically different ethic of self-preservation. Thomas Sankara was perhaps the best advertiser of the new attitude. He trusted — naively, in retrospect — that a leader's security lay in the determination of his followers to protect him. He thus sought to live among his people, to hold hearty palaver with them, to share their food with them, drink their water, to connect his life to theirs, his dreams likewise, and to live constantly, unflinchingly, faithfully, in their every breath. This way, reasoned Sankara, how could an enemy get at him, seeing that the people would share in the pain of the stab, in the scalding, shattering hurt of the assassin's bullet?

It turned out that Sankara's vision was too brave, much too naive, was, indeed, informed by a fatal innocence about the strange, sophisticated ways of the world. When he was eventually felled, not by an enemy in the conventional sense of the word, but by a friend who thereby re-enacted the betrayal of Caesar on the African theatre, a flush of indignation, a furious feel of hurt, coursed through the soul of Burkino Faso. But by then, Sankara was cold dead, and neither indignation for his slayers nor love for him could restore him at his post in Ouagadougou.

**A**FTER Sankara, few leaders anywhere, but especially in Africa, can afford to trust their security to something as nebulous, as insubstantial as the collective determination of a people. The collective determination of a people can lift a leader into the glorious pages of their history; but, sorry, it cannot stay the hands of an assassin, much less stop the deadly flight of a bullet.

If America proves that technical precautions are not inviolable and are therefore inadequate, Sankara's sad end must instruct us that there are risks a leader must not take. Perhaps the safest thing is for every leader and every nation to embrace the reflexes of those who insist on choosing the best of two things; never one or the other. No leader should turn his back on the minimum requirement of measures to safeguard himself. The logic of self-preservation dictates that he takes a hand in his safety. But this can also be over done, can be stretched to vulgar limits, as happens often in Nigeria where the passage of the military and civilian leaders leads to several hours of truncated traffic, tremendous loss of man hours, and the inconvenience of embarrassed citizens who can't see the whole point of it. Nigerian leaders, like Sankara, must try also to forge a dynamic union with the rest of us.

SOUTH AFRICA

# A knock on apartheid

## White rugby chief's trip to Zimbabwe jolts racists

**D**ANIE Craven, president of the all-white South African Rugby Board (SARB) thinks he can draw a strict demarcation between international sports and politics. Till now, he is saying that he was in Harare, Zimbabwe last weekend only to "talk sports" (not politics) with fellow sports enthusiasts; that it was a mere coincidence (which he could do nothing about) that these "fellow enthusiasts" turned out to be members of the banned African National Congress (ANC).

Many, especially the extreme-right conservatives and hard-core racists in Pretoria don't believe him. They have denounced the Harare meeting as a "degrading spectacle". And leaders of Ultra-Right Conservative Party (CP), and the super-racist African Resistance Movement have specifically vowed to resist all attempts to give the Blacks (through the ANC) a say in the control and administration of sports in the country. Their fear, observers say, is that given the chance, Blacks could outshine the whites in the game of rugby, a national obsession with many of the South Africa's three million Afrikaners (Whites).

Such opportunity does not seem far away anymore, given the outcome of the Harare talks. There was an agreement, in principle, for a merger between the two opposing rugby bodies presently operating in South Africa: the predominantly-white SARB (with Dr. Craven as president), and the fiercely anti-apartheid South African Rugby Union (SARU) run by Blacks. By proposing an integration of the two organisations, and the formation of "a genuinely non-racial national rugby federation", the aim is apparently to break the years of isolation forced on the South African rugby team, the Springbok, by the anti-apartheid world community. (Springbok's last tour was to New Zealand in 1981). Details of the merger plan are expected to be worked out during the next round of talks (next month). But analysts are saying that such a single controlling body may not emerge until sometime next year.

As it is, much depends on the ability of Craven, a former Springbok captain, the major brain behind the unity talks, to resist the mounting extremist pressures. And his chances of preventing what analysts see as an inevitable split in

the ranks of the SARB, an organisation he has headed since 1956. Besides, the Pretoria authorities, worried by the rightists' outcry, and its possible effect on the forthcoming elections, have now waded into the controversy. Reports by last Wednesday were that the rugby officials had been summoned to Pretoria by the authorities.

Whatever happens, experts on South African political affairs believe that the Harare meeting, as it is, represents the introduction of sports as a new weapon against apartheid. Besides, the willingness of the white rugby officials to talk with the exiled ANC, without fear of

being accused of treachery, highlights the increasing lack of internal cohesion within the apartheid enclave. It seems to prove conclusively that most white South Africans are becoming fed up with Pretoria's continuing defence of its indefensible racist policies. This, some prominent Afrikaner businessmen and others have already sought to demonstrate over the years with their establishment of strong ties with the ANC and other anti-apartheid movements (in defiance of their government's ban on the ANC).

Bukar Bukarambe of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), sees the new willingness of individual, moderate Afrikaners in the SARB and elsewhere to negotiate with the ANC as a "token, a simple expression" of their commitment to non-racism which could, with time, mature into "something bigger". He predicts that more and more moderate white South Africans would continue to reach out hands of friendship to the Blacks, until perhaps such a time that there would be an open clash between the liberals and the super-racists.

The prediction, it seems, is already coming true. The SARB boss, Craven, described as South Africa's most endur-

ing and charismatic sports personality, has since the Harare meeting, been engaged in a no-holds-barred verbal shoot-out with officials of the white-supremacist CP and the African Resistance Movement (ARM). Andries Tjournicht, leader of the CP has publicly accused Craven of being a communist (a serious political sin in South Africa), because of his dealings with the ANC (which they regard as communist-controlled organisation). And the hate-mongers in the ARM are clamouring for the prosecution of Craven and his colleagues for subversion — just as Nelson Mandela and others were. There are also talks of other possible reprisals against Craven, from the right extremists.

But so far, the 78-year-old rugby veteran appears unintimidated. "I'm not deterred by anyone", he told jour-



• Craven: Determined to fight apartheid through sports

nalists last Monday, vowing to continue his drive to lead South Africa back into world rugby. Perhaps, to prove his point, Craven quickly left South Africa (Tuesday), to campaign for support for his bid to set up a new international (South American and African) rugby organisation to be headed by South Africa. With this union, he hopes to bring together not just most Latin American countries (Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and so on), but some Black African countries. Craven also has another ambition: to use sports to fight for the abolition of segregation in schools, which he sees as one of the major obstacles in integrating sports in the country.

By Emenike Okorle

## WEST AFRICA

**In search of friends***Desperate racist leader visits Cote d'Ivoire*

**T**HE game-plan has literally turned Pieter Botha into a restless traveller. Barely a month after his well-publicised visits to Malawi, Mozambique and Zaire—designed to end his country's diplomatic isolation. Botha wandered off to West Africa to huddle with an ageing friend.

He and his Foreign Minister, Pik Botha, stopped over (from a trip to Lisbon, Portugal) at Yamassukro, Cote d'Ivoire's new capital city to see Felix Houphouet Boigny. No official communique was issued at the end of the October 15 meeting. Press sources, however, disclosed that the five-hour talk bordered on consolidating diplomatic ties between the West African nation and the racist enclave, even though sources quoted the racist chief as saying that "matters concerning Africa, especially South Africa, were discussed."

Cote d'Ivoire flirting with South Africa has a long history. Houphouet

Boigny was the first African leader to give landing and refuelling rights to South African aircraft flying between Johannesburg and Europe. John Voster, the former assassinated South African Prime Minister reportedly visited Cote d'Ivoire in the 1960s.

Botha's visit is seen in diplomatic circles as an achievement of sorts for Pretoria. On the other hand, observers believe South Africa's sudden realisation of its long diplomatic isolation is not without good reasons. In the first place, it has gradually dawned on the racist government that its acceptance in Europe and international committees will be contingent upon Pretoria's acceptance in the continent. Already, selective economic sanctions against the racist enclave have begun to bite and it is apparent the apartheid regime cannot continue without making otherwise costly diplomatic concessions.

The recent diplomatic flurry is particularly a Pretoria design to cut down on



• Houphouet-Boigny: Playing host to a rejected one

regional hostilities, the assumption being that with some degree of regional acceptance, criticisms of South African white minority rule will lessen.

Ordinarily, most of the frontline states lack economic and political muscle to sustain a face-off with South Africa single-handed. They have been quite helpless in the face of incessant military harassment by the racist enclave, pursued through support for anti-government guerrilla forces in particular. Consequently, Botha's search for "friendship" with war-torn southern African states is unlikely to meet with much enthusiasm.

But quite a number of the frontline states (Angola, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia and others) have been unwilling to play ball. A fortnight ago, Zambian leader, Kenneth Kaunda reassured African leaders of his government's hard-line posture on apartheid. He gave South African implementation of United Nations resolution 435 on Namibia's independence as a precondition for holding diplomatic talks with President Pieter Botha. Kaunda expressed misgivings about Botha's current diplomatic overtures, drawing attention to the Nkomati non-aggression pact jointly signed by South Africa and Mozambique in 1978 which was dishonoured by South Africa.

Analysts contend that Botha's efforts are far from earning the racist enclave much credit, since the real issues—the unconditional release of jailed ANC leader, Nelson Mandela and the return of South Africa to majority rule—are yet to be included in the new initiative. There has been more of something like shadow fighting than anything else.

OAU Secretary General Ide Omu-marou, says that South Africa can only join the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) if its leaders denounce apartheid, release political detainees and recognise liberation movements. Last Monday, Nigeria's Minister of State in the External Affairs Ministry, Mamman Anka, warned that the time is not ripe for a dialogue with Pretoria. Nigeria had earlier criticised Botha's October 1 meeting with Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko.

By Abraham Ogbodo

**Week of disasters***Thirty die in air crash in Rome, 160 in India*

**A**CROSS two continents last week, jetliners ran into fresh harrowing disasters. From Uganda, (in Africa) through India (in Asia), it was one long tale of mangled bodies, charred flesh and metals.

It began last Sunday at the Fiumicino airport near Rome, Italy. Thirty persons, mostly Ugandans, were killed, and several others injured, following the crash of a Ugandan airliner, Boeing 707, on a flight from London to Entebbe via Rome.

A bewildered onlooker explained after the crash that the aircraft was at an incredibly low altitude, grazing roof tops of several houses with its outstretched landing gadgets and wings before crashing on the ground, off the runway at about 2335 GMT.

The wrecked aircraft which had 52 persons on board—45 passengers and seven crew members had 22 survivors including a former Ugandan ambassador to the Vatican, Mr. John Harigye and three British nationals.

But the over 100 passengers, and 60

crew members in the separate crashes, said to be India's worst air disaster last Wednesday, were not so lucky. They all died in the mishap involving a Boeing 737 on a domestic flight from Bombay and a Fokker Friendship plane operated by a private Indian airline. Preliminary reports blame pilot error and poor visibility for the Fokker plane and Boeing 737 accidents, respectively.

Air disaster, a hitherto rare occurrence, had over the years risen to an alarming proportion. Only 48 hours before the Rome disaster Nigerian Airways Boeing 737 with 125 passengers on board and seven crew members, had crashed in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, as a result of bad weather. Fortunately, everyone on board escaped with minor injuries.

Also in this month, a Chinese airliner crashed into a hotel in the northern Shaanxi province, killing all 42 persons on board. The Rome and India crashes tentatively bring to five incidents of plane crashes the world over in the month of October alone.

# Uncertainty is the word

As the race nears end, both candidates hope for last minute surprises

If there is any hope left for Michael Dukakis to turn things around in this final lap of the US presidential race, it does not appear at the moment to be any more concrete than his own improbable forecast that he, not front-runner George Bush, will be the first to sprint to the tape, come November 8. In which case, experts that immediately dismissed it (the forecast) as some "outward enthusiasm" needed to boost a campaign hopelessly sagging in morale, are hardly to be said to be misguided.

It is a fact that nation-wide percep-



• Bush (left) Dukakis. Each holding unto his

irony was that polls were showing that the race was getting close on account of his (Dukakis's) strong performance in the first debate. In fact, up till the eve of the October 13 debate, he was trailing Bush, 41 to 44 per cent in the Los Angeles Times poll, 43 to 49 per cent in the Gallup poll, 48 to 51 in the Harris poll, 45 to 48 in US Today/CNN, 42 to 47 in the New York Times/CBS and 45 to 51 in the Washington Post/ABC. His victory in the second debate would certainly have narrowed the gap further.

The fear now is that the various un-



Trump card

tions of the Democratic flag bearer lately went from bad to worse. Last week, all the polls were suggesting that he is out of it, that Bush has finally pulled away and that the tide is unlikely to change. For instance, Bush was found to be ahead by as wide as 17 percentage points in the popular vote rating. He was also found to be gaining on his rival in the more decisive electoral college vote. Current tabulations give him the lead in 28 states (total: 270 electoral votes). He is said to have locked up the whole of the South and the West. Dukakis, the same polls showed, was ahead in only seven states (51 electoral votes).

The Democrat's latest trouble followed what was widely described as his dismal performance in the second and last nationally televised presidential debate held in Los Angeles, October 13. Six hundred and thirty-nine respondents interviewed after the debate said Bush won for appearing warmer, surer of himself and more presidential. The

favourable polls can only have the effect of setting off a momentum, by default, in favour of Bush. There is worry that voters will look at them (the polls) and get the impression that more support for Dukakis will not make a difference. Paul Kirk, national chairman of the Democratic party, worried that there is "a psychological flow from the (polls) if the press puts too much emphasis on them."

George Washington University political science professor Williams Adams does not agree. Voters, he suggested, "are more annoyed than swayed by polls." His idea is that they are put off by anything that seems to present them a fait accompli.

Quite understandably, both Bush and Dukakis were asking their supporters to ignore the new polls. Bush said he is too much of a politician to interpret polls literally. Dukakis said the race is still a very tight one. Then, threatening to fire any aide that shows any sign of "letting

up", he vowed that he was "not going to walk away from (the) fight."

Among observers, there is an attitude that Dukakis needlessly got himself into this tight corner. Former President Richard Nixon said last week that he (Dukakis) has run a "pathetically amateurish campaign". In just sitting there and watching Bush batter him without pity, Dukakis may have inadvertently conveyed the image of weakness. Again in conceding, without a fight, the ideological battle to Bush — in fact, in denying all too often that he is not a liberal (as if being a liberal is inherently bad), he may have succeeded in alienating his primary constituency.

Still, few are ready, as of now, to stick out their necks and proclaim that the race is all over. There are things called private polls (done by the two campaigners which are said to be more accurate at times than public opinion polls). Observers say that these might have been the polls both Bush and Dukakis had in mind in suggesting that the race is far from being locked up. Specifically, the Dukakis people are saying the support bases of the two candidates are so soft or volatile as to be of the sort that can change drastically.

Bush himself appears to be winding down his mudslinging assaults, for fear they might backfire. What this has done has been to open the way for Dukakis to mount a subtle image-hurting campaign of his own. He is telling audiences across the country that Bush is a man "without convictions, no ideas and plans." In the swing states of the Midwest — the last battleground — the strategy is now one of raising fears about the economic future of Americans. He has brought the competence issue back to the fore, tempting voters with the promise of turning the 140 billion dollar US trade deficits into a surplus by the end of his first term in office. And he has begun to star in his own television advertisements — an attempt to deepen his personal touch.

Tuesday, October 18, some good news reached him. A Dallas, Alabama tobacco shop that held a cigar popularity poll (based on the idea that a purchase of a one dollar cigar bearing either the picture of Bush or Dukakis, means a corresponding vote for that candidate) showed Dukakis beating Bush, 59 to 41 per cent. In 1984, a similar poll was conducted in New York's Grand Central Station and Ronald Reagan beat Democrat Walter Mondale 54 to 46 per cent — exactly the margin of victory in that year's presidential election.

By Chukwuemeka Gahia

## EUROPE

## No love lost

Queen Elizabeth visits Spain but political tension between the two kingdoms remains.

HERE and there in Madrid, the Spanish capital, last week, tell-tale signs of the decades of tension in Anglo-Spanish relations could still be seen. The atmosphere was reportedly tension-soaked as the British royal couple, Queen Elizabeth II, and her husband, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, arrived for their three-day official visit (the first ever by a British Monarch). Perhaps, in anticipation of trouble or just out of deep official apprehension, security was unusually tight. Wherever the royal visitors went, in and around Madrid, two police helicopters hovered just above their motorcade.

Later, at the Spanish Cortes (parliament), Speaker Felix Pons made a veiled reference to the still-unresolved dispute over the British-ruled Gibraltar (claimed by Spain) but in British possession since 1704.

In all, Queen Elizabeth's visit is widely accepted as a clear indication that there have in recent times been far-reaching improvements in the relations between the two former imperial rivals (Britain and Spain still pride themselves as builders of the "two world's greatest empires"). Signs of a thaw in relations first appeared in 1984 when Madrid and London agreed, for the first time, to hold talks over Gibraltar (residents in the colony had voted in 1967 to remain under Britain). Then two years ago, Spain's King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia made their first official trip to Britain. And just last month, Prime Minister Thatcher herself visited Madrid.

Still, the issue of Gibraltar remains at the centre of the Spanish-British diplomatic storm. So far, London is not willing to forfeit the colony in defiance of the UN General Assembly resolution



• Queen Elizabeth: Fiance not yet mended

(October 1, 1969) demanding an end to their demand over the centuries for "substantial sovereignty" over the colony. The 40 year-long dictatorship of Gen. Francisco Franco in Madrid (which ended with his death in 1975) had also contributed to the tension in the British-Spanish relations. It was Gen. Franco, for instance, who ordered partial blockade against Gibraltar in 1966.

Between London and Madrid, however, it has not all been wranglings and disputes. In fact, the Anglo-Spanish association has been a series of political undulations. Apart from both countries being members of the European Economic Community (EEC), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the British and Spanish royal houses are related by marriage. Spain's Alfonso VIII (in 1170) married Richard I the Lion-Heart, King of England's sister, Eleanor.

By Emenike Okorie

## POSTCARD

Saudi Arabia  
Iran reconcile

Only a few months back — in the days before the United Nations' mediated truce in the Gulf took hold — Saudi Arabia eminently coordinated Arab diplomatic fencing against Iran opponent of Iraq in the disastrous, eight year old hand-to-hand Gulf combat. Last week Saudi authorities abruptly put cheers back into the strained relations. They probably felt Iran is immeasurably mollified as it is and his hardly in any shape to cope with fresh muggings. King Fahd even ordered a halt to attacks on Iran in the official media "as a gesture of good will."

Saudi Arabia severed relations with Iran in April last year following disturbances in Mecca, Islam's holiest city.

• *Moi: Another leather*

Four hundred and two people, including 275 Iranians, were killed by Saudi forces while trying to quell the uprising.

Kenya: Now  
also a Moi day

If Kenyans had a swell time at last Thursday's commemoration of the annual Kenyatta Day, next year's celebrations surely promise to be more fun. Apart from the usual mass rallies held on the October 20 date in honour of former President Jomo Kenyatta, they will now have October 10, beginning from next year, as a public holiday. It will be called (curiously enough) the Moi day. This was the day in 1978, when Vice-President Daniel arap Moi was nominated as Kenya's second president following Jomo Kenyatta's death on August 22.

The Kenyatta Day is observed by Kenyans in remembrance of the arrest of the former President by the

British colonial administration, 36 years ago, for leading the "Man Mau" movement which spear-headed the bloody independence struggle.

Caribbean: Yet  
another hurricane

The first time around, it came as Gilbert — and it was predominantly a Jamaican misfortune. Now, as hurricane Joan, the storm has moved West, down the Caribbean coast. Last week in northern Colombia, an estimated 20 people fell and thousands were rendered homeless under the fury of the cyclone, said to have been moving at an eight to 16 kilometre per hour speed. Winds it sustained were close to 190 kilometres.

Experts predict that residents in the coastal parts of Nicaragua and Costa Rica are not safe from it. They say Panama would experience a heavy downpour were the

hurricane to maintain its present surge.

United States:  
To the whales'  
rescue

Environmentalists will love this. Help finally reached three whales trapped for about two weeks now in thick ice, off the coast of Alaska. A military helicopter took an ice-breaking gadget and a team of scientists to the area last week.

Two transport helicopters went along, to alternately tow the ice-breaking gadget (a hovercraft barge) for an arduous 25 to 40-hour journey over the ice covered Arctic Ocean. The barge is owned by VECO incorporated, a company that supplies offshore oil rigs. Assisting the aircraft are marine biologists and the Eskimos who used chain saws to break openings on ice sheets so as to allow air to reach the trapped whales.

# Quashing the quacks

*Influx of unregistered estate agents leads to litigation*

**T**HE activities of some informal estate agents are fast becoming a source of agony to most Nigerians. Even corporate bodies are not left out.

In June last year, NOM Export Limited, exporters of cocoa had wanted to know the true net book value of its assets in its Ondo State office at Akure to ensure proper accounting practice. NOM contacted Akingba and Associates, a firm of "estate surveyors and valuers" also in Akure to value the company's properties. The firm with registration number 588, purportedly issued by the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV), commenced work after the contract was sealed and came out with a valuation estimate of ₦250,000 for the company's assets. And by the official one per cent as service fee, the firm was entitled to collect ₦2,500.

But the valuation seems not to have satisfied NOM Export which doubted the firm's competence and authenticity. In June this year, the issue came to the notice of the Estate Surveyors Registration Board (ESRB) and was promptly reported to NIESV. Mr. Joe Idudu, a chartered surveyor with Knight Frank and Rutley (KFRN) Lagos who is also the second national Vice President of NIESV and chairman Professional Practice Committee of the institution says, NIESV quickly mandated ESRB to investigate the issue. It was found that Akingba and Associates never existed in the institution's register. The certificate together with the number and seal were all said to have been forged.

Ordinarily, the case would have been left for NOM Export and the firm to slug out. But Idudu, recalling his loss of 1972, felt that NIESV must take up the issue legally to serve as a deterrent. In this regard, the legal unit of NIESV has been detailed to institute legal action against Akingba Associates as soon as thorough investigations are concluded.

NOM Export is not alone in its dilemma. When it comes to sales or letting of properties, the unholy activities of some of these agents become more notorious. A military captain who thought he could use them as a short cut for solving his housing problem had to approach Jide Taiwo & Co., a registered agent at Apapa Lagos, for the same issue after falling victim, says an official of the



• Idudu Successful dealings with informal agents border on luck

firm. The practice is for these agents to collect money from prospective tenants and show them houses they have no rights to let.

Mr Biodun Akin, administrative officer with Nigerian Ports Authority, Apapa says it is an everyday affair. In February this year, he paid ₦1,965.00, including ₦15 registration fee and ₦150 commission, to an informal agent at Olodi Apapa in Lagos State, to assist in getting a two-bedroom apartment. But he soon discovered that the agent had no right to let the property in question. Biodun lost the commission and registration fee. Even so, he was only able to recover the rent in several instalments.

Informed by these developments, Idudu says the present governing council of NIESV visited the Works and Housing Minister, Alhaji Mamman Kontagora early this year where he was adequately briefed and he did promise to study the situation. There is no in-

dication that the ministry has any form of control over unregistered estate agents. Also, critics of NIESV say that dishonest practitioners exist even in NIESV. Some claim that NIESV is warring against unregistered agents so as to run a monopoly in the industry. But NIESV, by a 1975 decree establishing the institution, may have monopoly in estate surveying and valuation, though that does not include letting out property.

However, if the shady activities of quacks are known to the likes of Mr. Akin, why do they continue to patronise them? Mr. Dayo Lekan of Guinness Nigeria Limited, Ikeja

says, shortage of accommodation, nearness of these agents which makes for convenience, and the fact that the registered agents are expensive, are among the reasons why they are patronised. For example, in January this year, he had attempted to use the services of registered agents to get a three-bedroom apartment in Ogba or Ikeja for an annual rent not exceeding ₦3,000. But all the houses made available by these agents were far above his means. He then registered with one Okunsağa & Co., an informal agent in Oregon, Lagos State who in the second week of

April this year got him one at Ifako Agege for ₦3,270 including ₦20 registration fee and ₦250 commission.

In a success story such as this the informal agents are known to reap undeserved profits. Landlords are made to pay the same service fee as the tenants. And where they are made to collect rents, the service fee ranges from 10 to 20 per cent of rent collected. Some dubious ones may never remit the rent to landlords and where they do, remittances to landlords are made piecemeal says an official of REXACO, an unregistered agent along Ojo road, Apapa, Lagos.

But Idudu emphasizes that successful dealings with these agents border mostly on luck. Even then, that of registered agents, in his words is virtually free since property owners are by law made to pay the service fee of five per cent of the annual rent.

By Lucky Flakpa

# In aid of the farmers

Government plans insurance scheme to check agricultural risks

**N**AURAL disasters may no longer leave their full impact on Nigerian farmers, if the Federal Government's new insurance scheme comes through. The programme, the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS), is expected to upset farm losses resulting from natural mishaps, as well as help facilitate increased credit to farmers. To manage the scheme, the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Agency (NAIA) was established in December, 1987. The Agency, managed by Nigerian Insurance Corporation of Nigeria, (NICON) will have the Federal Government provide 70 per cent of the capital base while the central bank picks up five per cent. Other participating institutions — state governments, banks, insurance and oil firms are contributing the remaining 25 per cent.

Out of the capital base of ₦200m, the Federal Government has already pledged to keep its share of ₦140 million in the reserve fund of the fifth national development plan. Though the other participants have been adequately briefed, says a NAIA source, their pledges have not been redeemed. While inaugurating NAIA's board of directors in Abuja on October 12, the Agriculture, Water Resources and Rural Development Minister, Major General Gado Nasko implored members to use their influence to make other participating institutions concretize their pledges. In the interim, a ₦50m fund has been earmarked for the Agency's initial take-off. Of this amount, the Federal Gov-

ernment has already disbursed ₦41.5m to NAIA.

The Agency is to operate nationwide, and will offer protection to commercially viable crops and livestock. But the risks covered are only elemental and physical disasters pertaining to production. So that losses resulting from flood or drought would be paid for. However, claims cannot be made for losses due to price fluctuations and production shortfalls. Accordingly, only two grains, rice and maize, will be protected from germination to physiological maturity.

But the average minimum insurable acreage has not been specified. There is fear among some critics and observers that the insurance company may require that insurers hold large farm which may be to the detriment of small farmers. However, the premium rates are between 5 per cent and 8 per cent of the insured amount.

Livestock insurance takes into cognisance also the risk associated with breeding. The cover duration for cattle is one year, renewable on an annual basis. For poultry, day-old chicks are covered up to 72 weeks for layers and hatchery birds and limited to 10 weeks for broilers. The premium for sums insured is between 3.5 per cent and 7.5 per cent.

All chargeable premiums were originally planned to be subsidized by government to the tune of 50 per cent. But government has tended to back away because of the prohibitive cost of such



• Maize: Protected by the scheme

subsidy. It now appears that only peasants will enjoy this gesture, while commercial farmers may have to pay full premium for any coverage.

For farmers seeking credit facilities from financial institutions, NAIA's policy is mandatory. NAIA hopes that such a mechanism will guarantee better farm supervision and increase flow of funds to farmers. The Agency is convinced that this strategy will attract more patronage, especially from small farmers. Already, media campaigns are on to attract attention to the scheme. According to a source at NAIA, although farmers have started knocking at the door but most of the enquiries are from commercial operators.

Even with such responses however, not many farming organizations are optimistic. They contend that only commercial farmers stand a good chance. Their stance is that NAIA's deliberate evasion of coverage of high-risk areas, excluded peasants from the benefits. They also fear that NAIA may peg the size of farms it would cover, an issue many think could make the scheme a "big farmer's" affair. But NAIA is convinced that all categories of farmers are catered for. Some farmers' associations agree that the government's plan is laudable. However, their grudge is that in planning the scheme, peasants were not consulted. According to Chief Jones A. Alajo, secretary-general of the Nigerian Farmers' Organisation, the exclusion of farmers or their representatives in planning the scheme could hamper its success. His prophesy would be ominous: "We are waiting to see how the scheme will work out without farmers' co-operation."



• Nasko: A plea for the concretisation of pledges

By Felix Obanya

# The wheel of the economy

Since the early 80s when the down turn in the Nigerian economy started as a result of gross mismanagement, successive administrations have initiated a number of socio-economic policies to restructure the economy. But in formulating these policies, inadequate attention was paid to the Finance and Investment sector until 1986 when the present military government came up with bold but painful policies such as SFEM (later FEM), and SAP, with emphasis on finance and investment, to turn the economy round.

The economy recorded a significant expansion in output in the first half of the current year relative to the same period in 1987. The output of the manufacturing sub-sector has continued to rise while those of agriculture and crude oil has shown appreciable recovery after the declines recorded in 1987.

The impressive performance in these sectors was, however, accompanied by increased strain on government finances and the balance of payments. Furthermore, the money supply accelerated considerably, mainly as a result of the increase in the banking system credit; while the price level continued to soar due partly to food shortages arising from the lean harvests of 1987, and partly from rising cost of production.

The Nigerian finance and investment sector expanded during the first half of 1988, as four new banks (two commercial and two merchant) and nine stock brokerage firms commenced operation. The two commercial banks are state-owned. They are Eko International Bank and Inlak Bank, while the two merchant banks are the Fidelity Union Merchant Bank and Alpha Merchant Bank. The new nine stock brokerage companies brought the total number to 42 as at the end of June 1988. The new entrants are the Mainland Trust Limited, Unit Trust Securities Limited, Unique Securities and Finance Company Limited, Trust Security Limited and Transglobe Investment and Finance Company Limited. Others are Finance Company Limited, Continental and Allied Company Limited and Equity Securities Limited.

## Commercial and Merchant Banks

The banking sector of the Nigerian economy has been championing the finance and investment side of the economy. There is no doubt that just like the Nigerian publishing sector, the growth of both commercial and merchant banks in Nigeria has been unprecedented. Since the beginning of this year, there has been a noticeable growth in the number of banks in the country. As at the last count, 10 more banks have joined their counterparts in this business in 1988 alone. Thus, bringing the total number of banks in Nigeria to 33 commercial banks with a network of 1,483 branches spread all over the federation.

However, this number is inadequate for the country. The existence of 33 banks means that one bank serves 2.4

million customers, or a branch for 53,944 persons. It is in recognition of the important role played by banks as the bedrock of economic growth that the government is encouraging the establishment of more banks, especially in the rural areas where over 70 per cent of Nigerians reside.

The banking institution is the key pillar of the Nigerian economic growth and development, since it provides business organisations with credit facilities for financing investments, thereby providing the mechanism for growth of the organisations.

However, care must be taken in the approval granted by the Federal Military Government in setting up more banks without exercising control on the existing ones.

## Other financial institutions

Available information on the other financial institutions, apart from the commercial and merchant banks, in the first half of 1988 suggest a mixed result: while some achieved growth, others recorded declines. The Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) during the period under review showed that out of the ₦81.4 million approved loans, textile industry received the highest share of ₦37.4 million or 45.9 per cent of the total package. Similar picture can be seen in the Nigeria Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB). Out of a total of ₦366.1 million made available as at the end of March 1988, loans and advances accounted for ₦365.1 million or 99.7 per cent while the remaining ₦1.0 million or 0.3 per cent were on investments.

For the first three months of 1988, total loans of ₦5.2 million were disbursed by the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) out of which ₦5.5 million or 6.8 per cent went to co-operatives.

The insurance companies also made substantial input into finance and investment. Out of the 87 registered insurance companies in Nigeria, 57 presented their annual reports. Loans and advances granted by the 52 companies by the end of March 1988 shows a total of ₦127.8 million. A breakdown shows that construction and mortgage loans accounted for ₦76.3 million or 59.7 per cent, manufacturing and agro-allied industries received ₦4.1 million or 3.2 per cent, while the shares of agriculture and services together accounted for only 0.5 per cent of the total. The balance of ₦39.7 million of 31.1 per cent went to other categories of borrowers. Total investments stood at ₦492.2 million at end of March 1988. Of this amount, ₦240.6 million or 48.8 per cent was invested in government securities, while private sector securities absorbed ₦251.6 million, representing 51.2 per cent of total investments. Insurance funds of the reporting companies amounted to 603.3 million naira. There are other private entrepreneurs who are engaged in finance and investment business. They include Centre Point Investments, Global Finance Li-



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## Debt management & reshuffling

New issues of Federal Government securities during the first half of the year indicated considerable expansion in treasury bills but a sharp decline in treasury certificates. There were no new issues of development stocks in the period. New issues of treasury bills amounted to ₦50.4 billion, representing an increase of 21.7 per cent over the level in the corresponding period of 1987, while those of treasury certificates amounted to ₦200.0 million, showing a decline of 29.8 per cent below its level in the corresponding period of 1987.

Repayment of maturing treasury bills in the period amounted to ₦50.4 billion, exactly the value of the new issues, while discounts stood at ₦4.0 billion. Transactions in development stock in the period featured sales of ₦289.3 million and redemptions of maturing stocks valued at ₦150.0 million.

Generally, a balanced foreign exchange budget was adopted in order to strengthen the external sector and improve the balance of payments position. Consequently, out of the projected aggregate foreign exchange earnings of US \$7.404 billion in 1988, \$1.2 billion which was expected

to be derived from non-oil exports was allocated to the private sector. A total of \$3.935 billion was earmarked for the funding of the Foreign Exchange Market (FEM), while \$1.711 billion was designated for external debt servicing. Finally, \$300 million was to be transferred to the external reserve, while \$258 million was provided for contingencies.

Equally, a debt conversion programme was established in the concerted effort to lessen pressure on the external sector. The aims of the programme include: reduction in the stock of Nigeria's external debt; attraction of foreign investors who otherwise will not consider Nigeria a viable and attractive place to invest; promotion of new investments with export bias; conversion to cash for the purpose of making gift/grant to Nigerian entities amongst others.

Negotiations for a multi-year rescheduling, with a grace period of two years was commenced between Nigeria and its uninsured creditors in order to further ease the debt service burden in 1988.

## Balance of payments

The pressure on the balance of payments arising mainly from the huge debt burden continued through the first half of 1988. Available data shows that the overall deficit stood at ₦6599.9 million during the review period compared with ₦2842.8 million in the corresponding period in 1987. As in previous years, the overall deficit was financed through the deferment of debt service payments (to the tune of ₦6444.1 million in the review period), as well as a draw-down from the external reserves to the tune of ₦1107.0 million.

However, the surplus in the current account rose by ₦774.1 million or 31.6 per cent during the review period, an indication that the existing external sector policy measures aimed at export promotion, expenditure switching and reduction, appeared to be yielding the desired results. Available data show that total exports during the period stood at ₦15,161.1 million, representing an increase of 15.4 per cent over the level in the corresponding period of 1987, while total imports amounted to ₦8,635.3 million, or 90.8 per cent, while the share of non-oil exports was approximately 9.0 per cent, or ₦1397.4 million. A disaggregation of total imports into major categories revealed that raw materials and capital goods account for approximately 70 per cent; while the share of finished goods was about 30 per cent. These developments were indications of the relative allocation efficiency of the Foreign Exchange Market (FEM) over administrative controls.

## Foreign Exchange Market (FEM) and SAP

The FEM featured thirteen bidding sessions during the first half of the year during which US \$1,530 million was offered for sale. Demands by authorised dealers at the sessions based on the prescribed ceiling for each dealer amounted to \$1,837.0 million. There was thus an unsatisfied demand totalling US \$307.1 million, which contributed to the considerable downward pressure on the naira value.

While the naira rallied at five of the thirteen sessions, it closed the period down by 4.0 per cent on the basis of the central rate at the end of December 1987. On the average, the naira declined from ₦4.1413 = US \$1.0 at the end of December 1987 to ₦4.3131 = US \$1.0 at the end of June.



• Falae: Nigeria has an open door policy for investors

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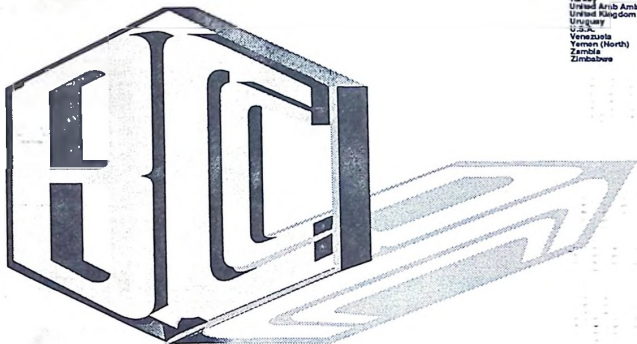
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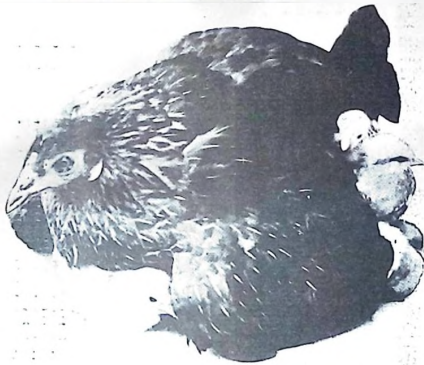
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The rate of depreciation was even more marked in the autonomous market, where the inter-bank rate declined from ₦4.5291 = US \$1.10 in December 1987 to ₦6.6038 = US \$1.0 in June, 1988. Thus, in percentage terms, the arbitrage gap between FEM and the autonomous market widened from 6.6 to 57.6 per cent during the first half of 1988.

In order to alleviate the situation, the Central Bank employed various measures including moral suasion, strict monitoring of authorised dealers and occasional purchases of autonomous funds, to support the naira value. A total of US \$25.4 million was purchased from the inter-bank to fund FEM during the first half of the year.

There is perhaps some truth in the feeling in some informed quarters that the recent upbeat trend in the tough posture of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) towards authorised dealer banks in the Foreign Exchange Market is a clear index of the bank's growing frustration in dealing with a situation that is out of control.

That banking has, despite the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and its consequent negative effects on the growth of most sectors of the economy, remained very attractive to investors is no longer news. Except for a few of them, all the commercial banks are making huge profits regardless of the services they render.

The contentious issue is not just large profits itself, but how they are made. It is a matter that can be said to be at the court of public opinion, with strong views held by both the critics and the banks. It is widely believed that most of the foreign exchange transactions are conducted without due regard for the law and at the expense of the value of the naira.

## Foreign Exchange flow

According to the Central Bank of Nigeria's First Half Report of 1988, the total foreign exchange inflow in the country was ₦14,675.0 million (US \$3,479.4 million) as against ₦13,211.1 million (US \$3,132.3 million) in the same period of 1987. Of this amount, revenue from oil was ₦11,244.4 million (US \$2,666.0 million) while revenue from non-oil exports amounted to ₦2,189.0 million (US \$2,996.1 million). This represented an increase of ₦1,691.0 million in the corresponding period of 1987, while the foreign exchange transactions during the first half of 1988 resulted in a net outflow of ₦1,015.9 million.

## Foreign Investments

At an average of US \$493.2 million per month during the first half of 1988, foreign investment increased by 67.9 per cent over its level in the same period of 1987. There was also a rise of 33.3 per cent in investment income from an average of US \$3.3 million in the first six months of 1987 to US \$4.4 million during the review period. The external debt service payments during the period totalled US \$1079.0 million, showing an increase of 189.7 per cent over the US \$372.4 million recorded during the corresponding period of 1987.

The government continues its reconciliation of Export Credit Agency (ECA) claims during the period while bilateral agreements were signed with 14 ECA bodies. Promissory notes valued at US \$648.0 million were issued during the review period while US \$1.0 million was capitalised on promissory notes. Despite the present military administration's effort at encouraging foreign investors into the coun-



• Ahmed: The banks are Nigeria's pillars of economic growth

try through the formulation of new economic policies such as FEM, trade liberalisation and discriminative tariff structure for imports, Nigeria's external volume of trade is yet to witness any significant change.

This worrisome situation has led the government to quickly dispatch its chief spokesman, Chief Olu Falae, to London and Washington to educate the investors on the open door policy, currency devaluation and trade liberalisation that have recently been introduced in the economy as well as to seek the support of the international financial institution for many government policies and projects that are yet to take off.

From all indications, one can rightly say that the trip has been a successful one. To add to this success story is the new recognition recently accorded Nigeria as a new member of International Development Association (IDA). Nigeria is now qualified to enjoy all the privileges of the Association which include granting of loan facility at a very low interest rate payable in between 20-50 years period. There is also the promise by the World Bank affiliate, International Finance Corporation (IFC) to join Mobil Nigeria in financing the, Akwa-Ibom Gas project Eket, put at \$900 million.

In addition to this is Mr. William Pyrie, the IFC Vice President's statement during his recent visit to Nigeria of financing some small/medium scale enterprises to the tune of between US \$100 and 750 thousand dollars. However, with the new wind of change in the finance and investment industry in Nigeria, coupled with the willingness of the International Financial System to aid the socio-economic growth process in Nigeria, Africa's most-populous country is on the right route to development as long as the general will of the nation is put above selfish and individual interest.

By Taiwo Toyin Rotimi, with Tunde Akinola

# FCMB

"We are humbled by the upsurge of our performance which seems to be well known. In keeping with our culture of excellence, however, we shall not rest on our oars. Our activities appear to have

traversed many sectors of the Nigerian economy. Even then, we are still exploring other products and we are happy to have played a leading role in most of our activities."

## Our Record

*"A measure of our Culture of Excellence!"*



NATIONAL FERTILIZER COMPANY OF NIGERIA  
N70,000,000 MEDIUM TERM SYNDICATED LOAN  
ARRANGED AND LEAD MANAGED BY FIRST CITY MERCHANT BANK LIMITED

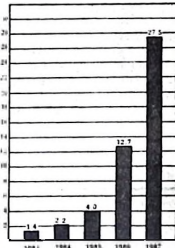


LUXURY APARTMENT BUILDINGS AT IKOJI FOM  
FIRST ZENITH INVESTMENT HOLDINGS



FINANCING NON OIL EXPORT  
DARIG LIMITED APAPA

CAPITAL FUNDS (N million)



FIRST CITY MERCHANT BANK LIMITED

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3RD FLOOR 11 AIRPORT ROAD  
P. O. BOX 12555  
KANO  
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## Tortuous march

Inventions cry for commercialization

**OSITA** Nwazojie, proprietor of "Discover Technology Company" based in Enugu, Anambra state, captures the average mood at the first National Science and Technology Week held from October 10 to 15, at the Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos. Though pleased with the exhibition, he says little or no product-commercialization is coming from the government or private investors.

The ratio of participants reveals an imbalance between the 21 government-owned research institutes in the country, Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology, versus private exhibitors who were only five. Mr. Sunday Oluwalé, the Managing Director of a hovercraft manufacturing company using 70 per cent local raw materials, won the Minister of Science and Technology award for adoptive technology.

The National Horticultural Research Institute (NIHORT), Ibadan, displayed their orange juice and soyamusa (plantain/soya) baby-food commissioned by the Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure, DFRRI. From the Federal Institute of Industrial Research, PIRO, Oshodi, came table vinegar, soap production machine, smoking kiln, soft drinks from Nigerian ginger, gums, glues and adhesives from cassava, ogi enriched with protein, palmwine preservation processes and cassava processing plant for garri, hahu, latun and starch.

The Project Development Agency, PRODA based at Enugu, had on display their improved cassava

peeling machines, fluidized-bed grain drying machine, pottery and ceramic

wares, angle, flat and alloy steels. Also on display was the newly developed ethanol distilling plant which produces 95 per cent ethanol in volume and purity.

GACOL Nigeria Limited



• Garri processing machine from PRODA

won the engineering award for the design and manufacture of a condenser for room and car air-conditioners. Emmanuel Ikheloa from Bendel state exhibited an ingenious mathematical instrument and Mr. Emmanuel Franklin Ajoku from Imo state had his Made-in-Nigeria printing machine.

It was never in doubt that Nigeria had the talents to open up fresh vistas of technology. But the government and private investors must be concentrating their attention in another direction.

By Humphrey Bekaren

## Memorials for Giwa

Journalists mark the anniversary of his death

**WEDNESDAY**, October 19, was a sombre day for journalists, marked with memorials for one of profession's best, Dele Giwa, whose life was terminated by a parcel bomb exactly two years to the day. In Lagos, Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka reinforced the permanent sense of loss with his presence at two commemorative occasions. Soyinka's own Nobel prize celebrations that October had been marred by the shock of the murder. Said he at a forum organised by the Lagos Council of the NUJ: "It will be a blot on the records of this regime, if it leaves Giwa's murder unresolved and a succeeding government will definitely take it up."

Turning to the press, Soyinka said that a press council was a "screaming necessity" but he was not yet done: "The press, let us face it, sometimes acts as a bully and an instrument of fascism. It urgently needs

to be on the side of truth, objectivity and the struggle against unacceptable aspects of our national being."

The forum, chaired by Dr. Yemi Ogunbiyi of *The Guardian* also featured fellow discussants, Alao Aka-Bashorun, Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) President, and Mr. Onyema Ugochukwu, President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors.

In another event that evening centred on the anniversary, Soyinka offered a rise of \$10,000 (£47,000) on the £20,000 he promised to pay last year to anyone who could find Dele's killers. He was giving the first Dele Giwa

memorial lecture at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.

Here again, apparently in reference to press allegations touching on his headship of the Road Safety Corps, Soyinka called for a higher sense of reportorial restraint.

"You can scoop in the sewer, to scoop up whatever happens to be going. If you scoop today, should I look for a deeper sewer tomorrow?"

The launching of *Dream maker*, a novel by Quality magazine editor, May-Ellen Ezekiel was part of the event organised by Newswatch Communications.

By Tayo Afalabi

• From far left: Ray Ekpu, Alada Oduwaju, Wole Soyinka, Yemi Ogunbiyi and Fumi Dele Giwa at the lecture



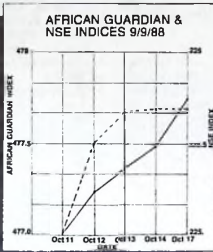
## THE AFRICAN GUARDIAN ECONOMIC INDICES

LEADING CONTRIBUTORS  
GUARDIAN INDEX  
17/10/88

Summary  
of Supply &  
Demand Stocks



Other Stocks	5.04
First Bank	9.72
USA	7.64
Total	5.17
Food Distribution	5.11
First Bottling	6.20
AP	6.21
Others	43.29

Highest Price/Earnings  
Ratio

Shares	Price	Dividend	PE Ratio
17/10/88	(K)	(K)	
Delta Glass	0	0.0	28.2
Bentworth Finance	68	0.0	21.1
Incar (Nig) Ltd	1400	57	18.8
Juk Pharmacy Ltd	0	44	18.1
Lennards	2762	28	13.3
Cappa & D'Alberto	0	51	12.2
Vitalcom	0	95	11.8
John Hop	2360	218	10.7
Wiggins Teape	0	130	8.8
Beecham	0	160	8.8
Guinness (Nig) Ltd	657	144	8.3
Prizer	0	118	7.8
Nig. Bottling	1412	218	7.7
Bata	0	112	7.5
Blackwood Hodge	0	50	7.3
Nig Breweries Ltd	205	37	7.2
Laveria Motors	4524	50	7.1
Cadbury	1793	142	7.1
CFAD	0	85	7.0
SCOA	220	0	7.0

R.T Briscoe Cuts  
Losses

R.T Briscoe (Nig) Limited recorded a turnover of N23.28 million during the financial year ended March 31, 1988, as against N11.34 million recorded in the previous year. This represents an increase of N11.94 million or 105 percent. Operating profit for the year also went up from N1.34 million in 1978 to N8.43 million representing a 529 percent increase.

Notwithstanding the impressive showing, the company, according to its chairman, Alhaji Shehu Musa, could not declare dividend as a result of accumulated losses of N8.38 million which had to be deducted from the N8.43 million profit for the year thus leaving about N50,000 as loss carried forward for the year. Dividends were last paid in the 1981/82 financial year but the chairman



• Musa: Briscoe to declare dividends next year.

was optimistic that the company would be in a position to pay dividends in the next financial year.

Some win some  
loose (SON)

Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) on October 14 in Lagos awarded 13 firms the Nigerian Industrial Standard (NIS) certificate in recognition of the quality of their products. This annual ritual has the certificate for the first time classified as gold, silver and ordinary.

Consistent winner of the NIS certificate for upward of ten years by a firm qualifies it for gold, five to nine years, silver, while the ordinary certificate would go to those winning for the first time and for consecutive four years. For this year, four companies got the gold, 28 silver and seven ordinary.

Seven companies that could not maintain the prescribed standards after winning the NIS award last year had their certificate withdrawn.

"Who is Who" in  
Insurance

Alfa Communications Limited is following up its publication *Nigeria Banking Annual* with the launching of a new book *Nigeria Insurance Annual* on Thursday, October 27.

The 180-page Annual contains "who is who" in the insurance industry, as well as, information, and data on the insurance industry. In addition, it will offer a critical appraisal of the business.

Martime body  
drowned

Maritime Reporters Association of Nigeria (MARAN) last week organised a workshop on "National Shipping Policy: One Year After". The workshop attracted papers from representatives of shipping companies, including the Nigerian Shipping Line (the national carrier). Their verdict was the same: National Maritime Authority's (NMA) performance is zero.

However, all the speakers agreed that the NMA needs the co-operation of all especially the shipping lines and the shippers council (owners of cargoes), for a successful implementation of the shipping policy.

## Job Guardian

• **Financial Accountant:** Qualification: ACA, ACMA, ACCA aged between 30 and 36 years. Experience in the use of IBM system 34 will be advantageous. Contact: Executive Selection Division, Coopers & Lybrand Associates Limited, P.O. Box 42, Lagos.

• **General Manager:** Must be a professional Insurance Executive with ten years experience in Insurance Brokerage. Contact: Chairman (Insurance) P.O. Box 2717, Marina, Lagos.

• **General Manager:** Qualification, BSC or HND in Mechanical or Metallurgical Engineering with seven years experience and not below 35 years. MBA degree will be an advantage. Contact: The Advertiser, Shipbreaking Executive, P.O. Box 2646, Lagos.

# Journey to the origins

*Life inhabitants rededicate themselves at the Olojo festival*

**A**n age-long festival, dating from the very beginnings of time, according to local respondents, was re-enacted between October 14 and 17 at Ife. At the centre of the festival was Ogun, the Yoruba god of iron. The festival of rededication to his name was itself a mental, spiritual and cultural journey back to the origins, for Ogun was the original pathfinder. Read on.

It is 3 o'clock on Saturday, October 18. The palace (Afin) of the Oni of Ife is already aswirl with the sounds of talking drums and trumpets and the surge of the expectant crowd. More and more Ife households in their particular style and fan fare as well as visitors from near and as far as wherever Ife holds mythic sway continue to arrive in a steady stream. The Enuwa square (palace square) has been pitched with improvised stands for dance bands and other groups of merry-makers.

The anticipated moment draws near, when the Oni breaks one long week of solitary communion with the gods and emerges for the only time in the year with the conical crown made up of elaborate and colourful beadwork, the Aare, on his head. Suddenly, a few minutes later, dark clouds roll across the sky. True to the foreshadowed intent, the rains come pouring down. Everyone rushes for the next available shelter. But the visitor is consoled by the indigenes with the words: "Don't worry. It will soon stop. It normally rains like this during the Olojo festival".

They are proved right. After... a few sporadic efforts, the rains withdraw to the bosom of the clouds for the duration of the ceremony. The falling of the rain that day is actually

part of the whole thing, people say. The beaded crown, the Aare, is itself a spirit whose coming out on that day causes the rain to fall. Some chiefs are assigned the duty to "catch" the rain and this ranks as one of the highlights of the festival. Placed conveniently sometime towards the end of October, the behaviour of the rains during Olojo may, however, be typical of that period.

Back to their positions, the excitement of the crowd heightens when the word sweeps around that the Oni is on the way having finished dressing up before an inner shrine. The Oba's *Haris* or messengers, some of whom, the *Lokolokos*, are painted with chalk on one side, said to represent the different complexions of Oranmiyan, a historical ruler, crash into the open palace compound, flogging out a clear pathway for the Oni with sticks. A little before 5 p.m., Oba Okunade Sijude Olubuse II, 58, emerges, the crown glittering on his head. Shouts of *Kabiyesi-o-o* rend the air. The Oni acknowledges with a raised sceptre. His face is hardly visible behind the lower strands of the crown.

The Oni, flanked by chiefs, walks towards the Oke-mogun, the jubilating crowd moving along in a wave or lining the route. In the past, this was one of the few occasions that the

Oni appeared in public. In the past too, this was the period a lot of marriages took place in Ife because of its reputation for fertility. The three times' movement to the Oke-mogun shrine, (the Oni personally undertook the journey twice, the second time the following Monday when chiefs re-pledged

of about 201 festivals in Ife. Ife in honour of gods and goddesses which crowd the major part of the Yoruba mythological sphere. The Olojo ranks as the most important, followed probably by the *Edi* festival, in honour of Moremi, the Ife heroine. To many Ife sons and daughters, outside the town or at home, it is a period of homecoming or reunion which may outstrip the excitement generated by other conventional festivals like Christmas. Rams are killed in many



• The Oni of Ife performing rites at the festival

their loyalty) is a re-enactment of Ogun's angry departure from the palace for the spot when he was reproved for breaking the *Igba Iwa*, the calabash of destiny, used for taking sacrifice to *Olodumare*, the Supreme Being, according to traditions. Now the sacrifice is taken to Ogun at the shrine.

The Oni, dancing to special state drums called *Osirigi*, goes to Ogun's shrine, where a disembowelled sacrifice of a dog and a chicken lies hanging, there to mark his sword.

Said Dr. Omotoso Eluyemi, the Apena of Ife: "The Oni's personal sword, his sword of authority, is rededicated to Ogun that day. That is the crux of the whole ceremony at Oke mogun."

The Olojo festival is one

homen in celebration of the event. A representative of the Governor of Ohio in the United States attended Saturday's ceremony.

Not far away within the same town, the drum-beats convey no magic or meaning to the people of *Modakeke*, migrants from Oyo with whom Ife has been involved in bloody feuds. The people do not celebrate the four day long Olojo festival. The boundary between both communities is hardly obvious to outsiders. On one side of the brook, said to represent the boundary, is the charred remains of a building from previous conflicts. On the other side, two medium-sized trees hold out on the tips of their branches small purple flowers towards the communities.

By Isi Omoito



• Kingstey and Gladys: In the forefront of the science drive

## Science whizz-kids

A GROUP of students, all in form five, attracted some attention at the recently concluded Science and Technology Fair in Lagos. They were invited to the exhibition after winning the 1987 edition of the National "Young Scientist" competition held in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Master **Elingsley Peter** and Miss **Gladys Frank**, from Government Secondary School, Eket, Akwa Ibom State came first with their Abbe Toothpaste entry named after their State Governor, Colonel Godwin Abbe.

Second at the "Young Scientist" competition was Jacob D. Lezor, from Biribir Memorial Grammar School, Bari, Rivers State. He demonstrated the possibility of the maximum use of sugar cane as the local raw material in the manufacture of alcoholic drinks, printer's ink, edible jam, oral rehydration therapy solution, and gum.

Chummy Miss **Adaobi Nwosu** and Miss **Chinyere Adim** from Federal Government Girls' College, Owerri, stood in for the 16 girls who won the third position at the competition. Their work was in the production of electrolytes from local raw materials.

The last but by no means the least on the honours roll were Messrs **Adeyemi Saburi** and **Sogunle Olajide** from Premier Grammar School, Abeokuta with their Thermo Conventional Dryer. Their drive was to help find a solution to the

problem of removing moisture from grains and other farm produce, especially during the rainy season by farmers.

The young scientists may be tomorrow's technological wonder-workers; who knows?

## Young, committed and Black

WHEN the urgently sought for new-bread Nigerians are eventually found, **Olisa Agbakoba**, 34, and **Clement Nwankwo**, 26, are certain to make the number. Both law graduates of the University of Nigeria, they have pitched beyond the usual professional concern for lucrative practice to enter the sensitive field of human rights violation.

On Saturday October 15, Civil Liberties Organisation, CLO, the body registered to further their human rights vision, was one year old. Agbakoba is

• Agbakoba: For the furtherance of human rights



President and Nwankwo, Secretary of the organisation.

Within that year, CLO has picked up some credits which include securing the release of the following: Joseph Odogu, last March, after eight years in detention as an armed robbery suspect; Kanwa Kyauta, in July after 10 years in detention, and 22 out of 70 persons they claim are illegally held at Kiriuku. CLO spearheaded the move that led to the closure of a penal colony on Ita-Oko Island in the Atlantic Ocean on September 30.

Membership has grown to 200 with three trustees, a board of governors, and an advisory council (patrons). The fledgling organisation still operates from Agbakoba's office "for management convenience". "It will require about N200,000 to get an office accommodation, and to effectively run the headquarters", says Nwankwo.

## The beauty within

FOUR years ago was a turning point in the life of **Miatta Fahnbulleh**. She simply refused to follow the daily toilette of combing her hair. Today, bespectacled Miatta wears dreadlocks, that hang loosely down her back. "It means one isn't focusing attention on physical aspects, but concentrating on the beauty inside," she says. The

"beauty inside," is her music.

For Miatta, this started at revival meetings back in Monrovia. And because in those years "no-one from a decent home will contemplate making a career from singing," she opted for broadcast journalism. Succumbing to the strong urge to become an artiste, she transcended the spiritual singing and clapping, as well as the school-girl con-



• Fahnbulleh: Very much interested in the environment

certs to become one of Liberia's foremost musicians. Miatta, 40, is currently in Lagos to put finishing touches to her new album entitled "Just 4 U."

Though her music is mostly romantic, she insists "I'm very much interested in my environment. How can you be somewhere and not care?" Her detention in Monrovia two years ago, for taking part in a public demonstration against the Doe regime, shows just how vocal the lady can be.

By Omotayo Afolabi and Humphrey Bakere

## Overheard

- ▶ I shall be leaving very soon for a very personal reason. — Captain Jurgen Scharnberg, present West German occupant of late Dele Giwa's house in Ikeja.
- ▶ The law has been made, nobody can do anything about it, no bagga can change it. — Yusuf Mamma, Press Secretary to the CGS, before his unauthorised closure of the Press Centre in the Presidential lounge of the Murtala Muhammed Airport was reversed.
- ▶ If the press is free, we do not need a constitution. — Olu Onagorowa, a constitutional lawyer.

# Stemming the tin tide

*Tin producer-nations seek better market for the industry*

**T**HE number of days allocated to the meeting itself was sufficient proof that all was far from well. For eight days, beginning Monday, October 17, members of the Association of Tin Producing Countries (ATPC) will be huddled in Abuja to seek fresh ideas on how to turn the fledgling tin market around.

Beset by intractable gluts in the market, the ATPC is attempting, once again, to reduce the quota allocated to member producers in its effort to shore up the global price of the metal. Just last year, the association allocated only 96,000 tonnes for export to its members which included Australia, Bolivia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Thailand and Zaire. The allocation paid off somewhat. The price of tin improved marginally by 0.8 per cent or \$4,213.24 per tonne compared to \$4,181 in 1986. But the measure succeeded largely because non-ATPC coun-

tries like Brazil and China were persuaded to limit their exports to 21,000 and 7000 tonnes respectively. Also the

on their exports. Already the association has scaled down its quota from last year's 96,000 tonnes to about 83,350



• Musa: Nigeria not hurt by the new quota

association had appealed to the United States not to sell from its strategic stock-pile of 150,000 tonnes.

Before the Abuja meeting ends Tuesday, October 25, the tin producers may ask China and Brazil to join ATPC or otherwise put a lid

on their exports. Already the association has scaled down its quota from last year's 96,000 tonnes to about 83,350 tonnes, for this year, beginning last March, with Nigeria having only 1000 tonnes compared to 1,461 tonnes last year. But this will not hurt Nigeria as it produced only about 211 tonnes last year and may not do much better by year end.

# A rise, a burst

*As oil price firms up, EEC threatens OPEC*

**B**UOYED by the agreement reached by the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) members to abide by the quota allocated by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the crude oil market seemed to be on the way to firming up in anticipation of the meeting of OPEC price and strategy committees on Thursday, in Madrid, Spain. North Sea Brent opened at about 14 dollars a barrel, up 50 cents from two Fridays ago, while New York futures for West-Texas Intermediate edged up 30 cents to \$15.20. But this upbeat may be short-lived unless Iraq joins hands

with OPEC in its efforts to prop up prices. Already indications that Iraq's cooperation with OPEC may not be forthcoming had brought down Brent to close at \$13.6 per barrel, on Tuesday.

The GCC countries comprising United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar issued a joint statement after talks in Riyadh that "GCC members are willing to abide by output levels agreed upon by OPEC within a production ceiling of 17.42 million barrels per day (mbpd) for all 13 members of OPEC". That suggests a good entry point for the committees' meetings

as they prepare for the full ministerial meeting on November 21.

Even as OPEC tries to resolve its quota busting problems in next month's meeting, it appears that the organisation may consider other external threats in Madrid. Last week, Alhaji Rilwanu Lukman, OPEC President expressed fears that policy initiatives of the European Economic Community (EEC) are aimed at destabilising OPEC. In a paper presented at the Pio Manzu International Conference in Rimini, Italy, Lukman said that the EEC requires member states to limit oil imports from Third World countries and OPEC by substituting oil with other energy forms and stepping up exploration and production in the community during the next six years. Fi-

While this may signal the resolve of the association to non-members to follow suit, it is not clear how the association intends to tackle the smuggling of tin—a development that has helped to depress prices. Even so, ATPC faces the competition imposed by the use of alternative metals and plastics in areas where tin had been dominant such as the canning industry. In appreciation of this threat, the executive committee chaired by Nigeria, is expected to come with answers. Alhaji Inua Gombe, the Federal Director of Mines says that ATPC will deliberate further on the rationalisation scheme to keep surplus stock within acceptable levels. Additionally, the association will come up with proposals on how to articulate research and development strategies so as to open up new avenues for the consumption of tin. Also, when the meeting ends this week, ATPC may succeed in reviving the International Tin Council in a renewed attempt to instil measure of control in the tin market.

*By Herbert Ojeh*

gures given by the OPEC president show that between 1985 and 1987 the EEC used between 45.8 and 46 per cent of oil in its energy mix. This is supposed to be scaled down to 40 per cent by 1995.

However Lukman warned that if the world oil market collapses, the international economic and banking system would be severely affected.

• Lukman: Not satisfied with EEC policy initiatives



## Cheerless road to Riyadh

Nigeria yet to perfect strategy to lift Fifa/Coca Cola Cup.

**G**OING by the sports blues that accompanied Nigeria's dismal performance in Seoul, it will probably require another international sports victory to stop the country from licking its wounds of defeat. That opportunity is being dangled by the approaching Fifa/Coca-Cola under-21 world championship, slated for February in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

To qualify for Riyadh, Nigeria's Flying Eagles scored a 2-0 victory over the Elephants of Cote d'Ivoire, two weeks ago, at the Adamasingba Stadium, Ibadan. Nigeria had earlier despatched Zaire and Lesotho. But it was a victory that failed to convince many Nigerians that they had a world class team capable of making a lasting impression on

world soccer.

The Flying Eagles that fans saw at Ibadan could easily be shot down in Saudi Arabia. Football analysts awarded Elephants higher marks for skills, technical display, and swift positional play. Of Nigeria's past outings in the U-21 world cup competition, the Flying Eagles can only boast a bronze from the Moscow '85 edition, when host country, Russia, lost in the third place match.

Last year, in Chile, the Flying Eagles got a 4-0, 2-0 drubbing from Brazil and Spain respectively, and a cheerless 2-2 draw with Canada. Nigerians would hate to relive that kind of experience when the kick-off is taken at the \$2 billion King Fahd Stadium.

Their fears are not unfounded. Flying Eagles



Flying Eagles players in action during the match

skipper Nduka Ugbade has threatened to quit if drastic changes are not made in the team. After the match at the Adamasingba Stadium, Ivorian chief coach, Yeo Martial and his assistant Allan Toussaint offered the brotherly advice that the Eagles' handlers should overhaul the entire team if they are to make Africa proud in Riyadh next February. In their estimation, a more technically groomed team with fast attackers would find the defence easy to tear apart. On Friday, October 14, Flying Eagles coach Tunde Disu, met with the Nigerian Football Association (NFA) committee to brief the members on the team's state of preparedness. The NFA has

intensified the search for a foreign technical adviser who might take over from Disu, according to reports. The credentials of a Brazilian and a Dutch are being looked at, reliable sources say.

It is debatable if a foreign adviser is the solution. Certainly, not many people would have the appetite for another Manfred Hoener, the adviser of the senior team. Disu or any other Nigerian coach ought to receive the incentive package up to be grabbed by another foreign technical adviser. Nigerians can then expect him to soar with the U-21 team in Riyadh.

By John Nwaobi with report from Dave Enechukwu

## Sting of the graphic warrior

Cartoonists criticize society through their art

**"L**ET Us Prey" was a cartoon that assisted the fall of a government in 1871 in the United States of America. The cartoonist, Thomas Nast, depicted to strip bare the corrupt regime of William Marcy Tweed, the de facto ruler of New York politics.

This vintage cartoon was one of the works belonging to 17 American and one Nigerian cartoonist on a month-long exhibition which began on September 13 at the United States Information Service, USIS, in Lagos.

In *Let Us Prey*, Tweed, with his henchmen are

shown as overfed vultures waiting to despoil the carcasses of the casualties of their self-serving policies. At their feet are the inscriptions: New York's Law, Rent Paper, Treasury, Justice, Suffrage, Liberty etc.

Together, the exhibition featured six works of Ossie Ogwo of the *Guardian* Newspapers and one each of Thomas Nast, Gene Bassett, Tony Auth, Jim Berry, Berke Breathed, Gary Bookins, Paul Conrad, Jules Fietter and Garry Truderer. Also, one work apiece were the contributions of Draper Hill, Mike Lane, Drew Litten, Dick

Loucher, Jeff MacNelly, Bill Mauldin, Don Wright and Paul Zep.

The six works of Ossie Ogwo were pre-occupied with international issues, a target for his usually irreverent barbs which shoot at anything in sight.

"The War Against Terrorism" is a mock-war between America's Reagan and South Africa's Botha. The cartoon "Stonewall" which won the 1975 Pulitzer Prize for Garry Truderer was one of those on exhibition. It is a graphic presentation of the 1972-75

Watergate crisis which eventually threw Nixon out of office.

Michael Gbadamosi, an architect, could not help remarking in the visitor's book: "Cartoons can be more efficient in judgement than the supreme court." An equally telling remark was by Emenake Okorie, a journalist: "I'm a firm believer in political cartoons. If I have my way, newspapers will be filled (from front to back) with them — just cartoons."

By Humphrey Bekans



## Chase for Giwa's killers

*Fawehinmi enlists the power of the written word*

**Book:** *Murder of Dele Giwa: The Right of the Private Prosecutor.*

**Author:** Gani Fawehinmi

**Price:** Not Stated

**Interviewer:** Humphrey Bekarek

UNDEFATIGABLE lawyer, Gani Fawehinmi celebrates in his book on the murder of star journalist Dele Giwa the coming of the private prosecutor to the Nigerian judicial system.

Virtually dripping with blood, the 193-page book is a neatly packaged hard cover finished in a predominant blood-red colour.

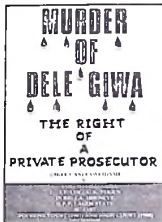
The kernel of the book deals with the legal upshots of Dele Giwa's death by letter bomb on October 19, 1986. The Lagos High Court under the State Chief Justice, Justice Candide Ademola Johnson dismissed Fawehinmi's application asking that the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) Mr James A.

Oduneye be compelled to either prosecute Colonel Hahilu Akilu, Director of Military Intelligence (DMI) and Lt. Col. A.K. Togun, Deputy Director of State Security Service (SSS) for the murder of Dele Giwa or grant him leave to do so as a private prosecutor acting on the strength of personal information.

Fawehinmi also mentions the failure of his suit at the Court of Appeal which did not only dismiss him as not having the *modus operandi* but also branded him a "busy body" on February 23, 1987. The Supreme Court on December 18, 1987 set aside the judgements of the High Court and the Court of Appeal and bequeathed to the judicial system the

right of a private prosecutor.

The success at the Supreme Court perhaps, accounts for the devotion of 22 pages to the colour pictures of the judges of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court's history. Following



in succession are the full-blown bust colour photographs accompanied by the judicial bio-data of the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Hon-Justice Mohammed Bello, and Hon. Justice Andrews Otutu Obaseki.

J.S.C., Kayode Eso, J.S.C., Augustine Nnamani, J.S.C., Ebenezer Babasanya Craig, J.S.C. The author includes his own personal picture as the lawyer/applicant/and appellant.

He describes Dele Giwa, to whom he was personal counsel as well as friend, as a "very brilliant and highly courageous journalist". The colour pictures of Dele Giwa in real life and the mutilated remains take the first two pages.

Before making its public debut, the book garnered controversy right from the time 496 copies were seized by security officials on June 10, 1988 to October 14, when a Lagos High Court presided over by Justice M. A. Ope-Agbe declared that the action was illegal and unconstitutional. It may now grace the book-shelves courtesy of the order of perpetual injunction restraining the police from its further seizure or interruption of its distribution.

## Again the Nobel

*Mahfouz wins prestigious literature prize*

THE Nobel Prize for literature has made its second visit to Africa since the institution of the prize 83 years ago. On October 11, the Swedish Academy announced Naguib Mahfouz, 76, as its choice for this year's prize. The prize money is 400,000 dollars (\$1,980,000).

Mahfouz's triumph came even as a surprise to him.

A prodigious writer, his corpus includes 40 novels and short stories and more than 30 film scripts, nine of them adaptations of his own novels. Critics recognise his preeminence in Arabic language letters.

Prior to his Nobel

award, Mahfouz's novels, says his US distributors, sold between 150 and 200 yearly. This is a poor figure by most accounts. But it hardly bespoke the talent and imaginative range of a writer whose product meant, according to the Swedish Academy, a powerful upswing for the novel as a genre and for

• Mahfouz



the development of the literary language in Arabic speaking cultural circles.

Mahfouz is certainly on the line for the sales boom that accompanies Nobel awards. Already officials of the Columbia University Press speak of a surge in demand for his novels, and re-print orders have been made. In Africa where readership is low, his novels are also likely to receive some boost.

*Children of Gebelawi*, the award winner's most ambitious novel, is available in Heinemann's African Writers Series as number 225. In the novel and other works, Mahfouz's evocation of the old Egypt and his attraction to spiritual themes have led critics to liken him to Dickens, Zola, Shaw, Orwell and Kazantzakis.

The award to Mahfouz

continues a recent trend in which the Swedish Academy has been looking beyond the 'metropolitan centres' of literary activity for winners. The Third World has been showing well in the list. These include the Colombian writer, Gabriel Garcia Marquez (1982), Nigeria's Wole Soyinka (1986) and now Egypt's Mahfouz (1988).

This trend is a tribute to the vigorous and vibrant literature coming from the Third World. Literary observers admit that while writers in the United States, Britain and Europe are becoming plastic, their counterparts from Africa, Latin America, and Asia are turning out lively, robust literature. The Nobel prize is expected to travel to these parts more often in future.

By Okey Ndibe.

## Patriotic trouble

**Y**OU'VE probably heard or read about the committee of Patriots. If not, let's refresh your memory. The Committee — no one in the Presidency would admit knowing who the members are — gives its office address simply as Dodan Barracks Ribadu Road, Lagos. Its main aim, we guess, is to inculcate the spirit of patriotism in every Nigerian, including occupants of the nation's citadel of power. Any how, Dodan Barracks residents say the Committee's Office does not exist within the walls of the State House. A case of impersonation? An inadvertent address? or is it simply that some people in Dodan Barracks are not patriotic enough to recognise fellow patriots?

Well, the committee surfaced last week in a drama that is causing Dodan Barracks' residents anxious moments. Starting in the drama are some officials of the Committee of patriots and the Federal Government Guest House in Victoria Island, Lagos. A few weeks ago, some members of the committee, we were told, checked into the guest house. After a while, officials of the Guest House (perhaps they were not that patriotic) got in touch with Dodan Barracks to settle bills accumulated by the great patriots. Dodan Barracks, we hear, rejected outright, any responsibility to the Committee. By Thursday, October 13, the Guest House was up in arms, equally patriotically. It threw out the patriots unceremoniously. End of drama? Wrong. We hear that officials of the Guest House who gave the patriots access into the rooms are to be disciplined. A case of too much of everything, including patriotism, being bad?

## Publish and be damned?

**W**E have always paid tribute to that irreverent tabloid that exists within the "Lagos-Ibadan axis," for we believe it has always remained fearless, bold and articulate, especially where its interests are not threatened. Of course, we recall the days of the Second Republic when the newspaper gave political opponents of its founder sleepless nights by generally being a constant irritant.

However, the paper, it seems has discovered the adage that the knowledge of fear is the beginning of wisdom. How? Well, it happened that some time ago, the fire-spitting newspaper got a statement from the northern zone of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) on a most contentious and topical issue — the Shoria. There is nothing wrong with that, you say? Well, the editors of the paper thought so too, till they discovered a paragraph in the CAN statement that made them shudder. The paragraph in question, we learnt, was so explosive they felt it would jeopardise the government's transition programme. And considering section 8 (1) of the Transition to Civil Rule (Political Programme) decree, a.k.a. a decree 19, their discomfort is understandable.

We are not saying that the editors seem to have developed cold feet. After all, we hear that they have sought the legal, business and political implications of the CAN statement and its contentious paragraph. They may just go ahead and publish. But up till week-end, a decision whether to publish or not had still not been taken.



## The Myth of SAP

**W**E recall those days of the oil boom when it was said that with enough cash in one's pocket, one could pick up an aircraft on a Lagos roadside with relative ease. This obviously was an exaggeration, but it showed the ostentation of the times when the country's problems was not how to make money but how to spend it. An incident brings to mind wistfully that by some means.

We are told that a motor company operating in the Commercial district of Obafemi Awolowo way in Lagos, Lagos, put a Rolls Royce car for sale some months ago at an asking price of N1.2 million. Soon, the car and the Motor Company became a centre of attraction; and even a group



column in one of the national dailies took notice of it. The posh car, many thought, would probably not away or be shipped back whence it came. Surely, not in these SAP-weary times would such conspicuous consumption be possible. Well, it would appear that those who thought along these lines were merely suffering from SAP-induced hallucinations. The car, we understand, now graces the garage of an heir to a fabulous fortune in Kano.

The heir, who we hear, paid just N1.1 million for the car has several posh cars. The talakawas of the ancient city on the inundated by groundnut pyramids must be wondering what the heir is out to prove this time. They are yet to recover from the recent flamboyant wedding of the heir which they believe would have made the Guinness Book of Records, if their faith had not forbidden them from having anything to do with alcohol.

Come to think of it, does SAP really exist?

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