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ASCON Public Administration Series

The President-in-Council

*Evolution of the Federal Council
Secretariat*

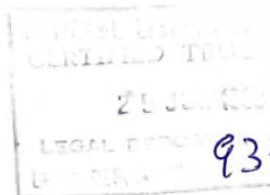


Sunday Babalola Ajulo



The President-in-Council

*Evolution of the Federal
Council Secretariat*



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Council Secretariat*

Sunday Babalola Ajulo

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*Dedicated to
my late father
JACOB AWOLOPE AJULO;
and to the past, present
and future officers of
Council/Cabinet Secretariat
of the Federal Government of Nigeria.*

Acknowledgements

The publication of this book has many "foster-fathers." Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed, the incumbent Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), is the chief of them all. Without his *prima facie* approval of its first draft the book would never have seen the light of day, at least in its present form. He approved the application written on my behalf by Alhaji Abdullahi Ma'aji, the current Director-General of the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC), seeking permission for the manuscript to be published. Alhaji Mohammed did not only approve the application, he also made valuable suggestions aimed at enhancing the quality of the book. And more importantly, he agreed to write the "Foreword" thereto.

The second "father" of the books is Alhaji Abdullahi Ma'aji, who enthusiastically welcomed the project into his Department, even though it was hesitatingly introduced to him. My initial hesitation stemmed largely from the fact that the initiative for the project was not only personal, but also a carry-over from my previous Department. I thought that for Alhaji Ma'aji to combine the onerous task of PAC with the extraneous project could be daunting and hardly possible. Contrary to expectation, however, Alhaji Ma'aji supported the project in words and in deed. His tactful intervention, in fact, brought the project to the limelight.

Professor A.D. Yahaya, Director-General of ASCON and member of PAC, through his good offices, accepted to edit the manuscript and also to write the Epilogue. He eventually admitted it into the list of ASCON publications. Thus, Professor Yahaya is the third "father". To all these "foster-fathers" I am profoundly grateful.

My thanks are also due to all my Permanent Secretaries and Directors-General from 1982 to 1990 who influenced my career in the Council Secretariat. The list includes: Mr J.E. Uduehi, Alhaji Saidu Barda, Mr Ason Bur, Dr G.A. Adeosun and Mr F.A. Adetula.

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Needless to say that some of my colleagues in the Cabinet Office encouraged me in the formative stages of the project by sharing their thoughts with me on the working of the Council Secretariat. Prominent among them are: Messrs Deji Omotade, Tony Amiewanu, Ayo Akinboboye, Ayo Fasan, Tayo Kuponiyi, and Ndubuisi Igwebike. Mr T.A. Ajayi, the Chief Archivist in the Presidency compiled the list of the Presidents-in-Council and the list of Council Secretariat officials, 1916-1990.

It would be impossible to mention the names of all the secretariat staff who typed the manuscript at different stages for they are a legion. Prominent among them, however, are Mrs Agnes Ada Ekenobi, Mrs Hope Adjekuko, Mrs. G.T. Gbolade, Messrs D.N. Onuoha and A. Egwumba. To them all I owe a huge debt of gratitude.

Any surviving errors of facts and interpretation are entirely to be ascribed to the author.

S.B. Ajulo
PAC Secretariat
State House
Ikoyi, Lagos.
12 May, 1991

ASCON Public Administration Series:

Editorial Note

The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) was established in 1973 by Decree No. 39. The Decree provides that the College shall, among other responsibilities, promote policies designed:

- to conduct research into problems of management and administration arising in different spheres of national life; and
- to undertake and provide for the publication of journals, research papers and books in furtherance of the aforesaid objectives.

In order to achieve these objectives, ASCON has established a publishing firm, the ASCON Press, whose objective is to provide facilities for researchers, scholars and managers with broad managerial, professional, and research interests, to identify and investigate contemporary issues and theories in the wide field of management.

Editorial objectives include:

- Seeking and reflecting a broad spectrum of thought and practices in management;
- informing managers objectively on the state-of-the-art; and
- disseminating current developments and attendant controversies in the domain of general and functional management.

Publication Criteria

Contributors to these series are required to ensure that their manuscripts meet criteria such as:

- Careful and thorough empirical investigation;
- originality, objectivity, and maintenance of balance between theory and practice; and
- clarity of language as well as well-organized presentation.

General Information

Manuscripts will be accepted so long as they meet the editorial criteria and have not been accepted for publication elsewhere. Contributors are advised to ensure that they do not infringe any copyright law as ASCON *will not accept liability* for such infringement.

Foreword

Written about four decades after the unpublished "Office of the Council of Ministers: Organization, Practice and Procedure" by Mr A.F.F.P. News, the Manual on Council Secretariat now becomes a worthy successor to the pioneering efforts of a colonial officer in the nascent Nigerian Civil Service. In historical perspective, the two books would seem to complement each other. While Mr News' book sourced its materials from Her Majesty's Civil Service in London and processed them for the incipient Cabinet Secretariat in Lagos, Mr Ajulo has sourced his own materials from the Nigerian Cabinet Office (The Presidency) and processed them for the Nigerian clientele. Thus, to gain a comprehensive knowledge of Council Secretariat affairs, the two books would, for some time to come, remain invaluable.

As can be gleaned from the introduction, the author of this Manual has turned his rather disappointing experience to good account. His initial sense of frustration when newly posted to the Secretariat in 1982, propelled him to write the book which can now serve as a guide for both the present and future generations of Council Secretariat officials. The age-long axiom that experience is the best teacher is best demonstrated by the output of the author. His eight years working experience in Council Secretariat has equipped him with enormous resources to write the book. I am persuaded that he has competently explained the intricacies of Council work, ranging from drafting of Council Memos to summarising Council Conclusions.

New comers to the Cabinet Secretariat can now be introduced to their career through the written word, rather than through trial and error. Old timers too can fall back on it as an *aide-memoire*. In the spirit of the 1988 Civil Service Reforms, the book will surely promote professionalism in Council work.

I heartily recommend it to all senior officers in the Civil Service whose duties embrace the writing of draft Council memoranda and to the students of public administration in ASCON; Nigerian Universities, and Polytechnics.

Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed
Secretary to the Government
of the Federation

Prologue

I am greatly delighted to write the Preface to this book on Council Secretariat for a number of reasons, two of which I want to mention here. I have been privileged to know Mr S.B. Ajulo, the author, intimately; second, I have had the honour of fostering the completion of the manuscript of the book which he began in 1989 when he was in the AFRC/NCS Secretariat.

I am aware that the book was inspired by the spirit of the Civil Service (Re-organization) Decree No. 41 of 1988, which has put great premium on the professionalization of the Civil Service. Section III(2) of the Schedule of the Decree states: "Each officer, whether a specialist or generalist, will now make his career entirely in the Ministry or Department of his choice, and thereby acquire the necessary expertise and experience through relevant specialised training. . ." Thus, the book is primarily addressed to the officers in the Council Secretariat. However, officers whose duty embraces the writing of draft Council Memoranda will find this book useful. To be sure, all Ministries and Departments have, at one time or the other, to prepare draft Council Memoranda as part of their routine but sacrosanct assignments.

It is common knowledge that most of the courses offered in our conventional universities and polytechnics on Public Administration hardly embrace the intricacies of the work entailed by the civil service appointments. Thus, most recruits into the civil service enter, more often than not, with a *tabula rasa* (clean slate) on which the ethics, practices and usages of the civil service are to be written. Indeed, experience has shown that most Council Affairs Officers arrive at the Council Secretariat with hardly any previous knowledge of Council work. Whatever the specialization of the new entrant in his/her previous duty post, on arrival at the Council Secretariat, he/she is faced with specialized assignments of writing, vetting Council Memoranda and writing Conclusions thereon. It is with a view to facilitating the difficult road to specialization in Council Secretariat work that Mr Ajulo has written this book on Council Secretariat, which to the best of my knowledge, is the first of its type in the Federal Civil Service.

Chapters II and III of the book are, in my estimation, a successful scholarly attempt to trace the evolution of Cabinet system in Nigeria, and to reconstruct the history of the Council Secretariat. The remaining chapters deal with specific aspects of the art of writing and vetting Council Memoranda, as well as how the Conclusions thereon are to be written. Valuable hints on how to take notes during Council deliberations are also given. To aid the new entrants, the author has provided some practical examples of how Memos and Conclusions are written.

Finally, I commend the book to all senior officers in the Presidency, to the students of ASCON, and to the students of Public Administration in the Nigerian Universities and Polytechnics. Indeed, all officers in the Nigerian Civil Service will certainly gain some insight into the working of a significant sector of the Nigerian bureaucracy. It is my hope that the author will fulfill his promise of producing future editions of the book which will take account of additional information and data on Council Secretariat of the Federal Civil Service.

Abdullahi Ma'aji, mni
*Director-General,
PAC Secretariat,
State House,
Ikoyi, Lagos.*

Introduction

Mr A.F.F.P. Newns bequeathed to the Cabinet Office a manuscript entitled "Office of the Council of Ministers: Organization, Practice and Procedure."¹ From all indications, the manuscript was probably not published. An extant bound copy thereof is preserved in the Archives of the Council Secretariat.

the manuscript was probably not printed. An extant bound copy thereof is preserved in the Archives of the Council Secretariat.

Presumably, the manuscript was intended to provide basic information for the officials of the nascent Cabinet Secretariat, created when Nigeria moved from *administrocracy* to *ministerial rule*.²

Be that as it may, it would appear that Mr Newns' unpublished manuscript is yet to have a successor three decades after Nigeria's independence. Thus, there is a yawning gap in our knowledge of the Council/Cabinet Secretariat. The present book is intended to fill that gap.

This book was motivated by three unrelated things. First, between 1984 and 1988, the author was invited regularly by ASCON to deliver lectures, *inter alia*, on "the writing of Council Memoranda." Second, Mr Ason Bur, then Permanent Secretary, Council Secretariat (1984-85), assigned him the singular task of writing a brief history of Council Secretariat. The ASCON lectures were designed to induct officers on G.L. 08-09 in the civil service, while the writing of a history of Council Secretariat was to be a contribution of the Council Secretariat Department to a book on the "Evolution of the entire Cabinet Office."³ The successful completion of both assignments sowed the germ of this book.

The third motive sprang from an excruciating sense of frustration experienced by the author during the first year of his career in the Department. That needs some explanation. In 1982, when he began his career in Council Secretariat, he had to learn by trial and error the intricacies of the job of the Department. No matter the industry displayed in taking notes in Council meetings, no matter the enthusiasm shown in writing Conclusions, his draft Conclusions always fell below the set standard. This was compounded by the fact that he did not receive any prior briefing and there was no manual to guide his first steps in

Council work. Personal supervision or attention by the superior officers was hardly forthcoming. But there was also no recrimination on account of assignments badly done. "The new comer must first acclimatize" was the remark regularly heard from the old-timers.

Chief O.A. Okafor and Mr C.C.C. Ugbodaga, both of whom had had a fairly longer tenure in the Secretariat, used to assure him that he should exercise patience in learning council work. They narrated how it took them about a year before their draft Conclusions could be acceptable. The brotherly support of Mr J.E. Uduehi boosted his morale when frustration appeared to be setting in.

In retrospect, if a book of Council Affairs had been available at the time he began his career in Council Secretariat, the way could have been better paved; the period of trial and error could have been considerably reduced; and no sense of frustration could have been felt at all. Having overcome the initial "culture shock" a sense of mission presented itself, namely: to write a manual which could serve as a pathfinder for the "cadets" of Council Secretariat.

The book is therefore primarily intended to facilitate the entry of the new Council Affairs Offices of the Presidency. However, officers performing similar functions in the State and Local Governments might find it useful.

Notes and References

1. I am indebted to Mr T.A. Ajayi, Chief Archivist in the Presidency, who drew the attention of the author to Mr Newns' manuscript preserved in the Archives of the Council Secretariat.
2. I.F. Nicolson, *The Administration of Nigeria: 1900 - 1960*, Oxford, 1969, pp. 217-300.
3. The Press Unit sent an invitation to all Departments in the Cabinet Office requesting contributions to a book on Cabinet Office. The letter was signed by the Press Secretary, Mr Dosu Oyelude.

Explanatory Notes

From the outset it is necessary to define certain terminologies and abbreviations which occur frequently in this book. These are: Cabinet, AFRC, NCS, NCM, CM, FEC, EXCO, Collective Responsibility, Memos, Prayers, Conclusions and Decrees.

Cabinet

Cabinet is a body of men/women appointed by the Head of Government for the purpose of assisting him/her to formulate and execute policies as approved by the ruling class (military or civilian). According to Sir Ivor Jennings, "the cabinet is the directing body of the national policy."⁽¹⁾

Council

A Council is constituted by the Chief Executive (federal or state) when he/she summons the cabinet members or other designated persons in various capacities for the purpose of taking collective decision on national/state matters. Nigeria has witnessed various forms of Council, namely: National Council of State (NCS); Federal Executive Council (FEC); National Council of Ministers (NCM); Supreme Military Council (SMC); Armed Forces Ruling council (AFRC).

- (i) **National Council of State (NCS):** When the President formally convenes a meeting of State Governors, he is said to hold the meeting of the National Council of State.
- (ii) **Federal Executive Council/National Council of Ministers (FEC/NCM):** When the Head of Federal Government holds Cabinet meetings with his Ministers, he is said to hold Federal Executive Council or the National Council of Ministers. The two terms are synonymous.
- (iii) **Supreme Military Council (SMC)/Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC):** When the Military President formally meets in Council the highest decision-making organ of

government, he is said to hold the meeting of the Supreme Military Council or the Armed Forces Ruling Council. The two terms are synonymous.

- (iv) **Exco:** When the State Governors hold Cabinet meetings with their Commissioners, they are said to hold Executive Council (EXCO) Meeting.
- (v) **The President-in-Council:** When the Head of Government presides over meetings in Council, he is referred to as the President-in-Council. By the same token, the Governor-in-Council should be applicable in the States.

Memos

Issues scheduled for deliberation in Council are presented in written prose called Council Memoranda or "Memos" — an abbreviation of the word 'memoranda.'

Prayers

The itemized requests at the end of each memorandum are called 'PRAYERS.'

Conclusion

Minutes of Council Meetings are called *Council Conclusions* which contain Decisions and Directives of Council and the arguments leading to them.

Decrees

Decrees are duly enacted laws of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria.

Acts

Acts are duly enacted laws by the Parliament of a civil administration.

Collective Responsibility

"All members of government are expected to be unanimous in support of its policies on all public occasions."⁽²⁾ Whereas Council members may disagree during the deliberations preceding a decision on any issue, no member of Council may publicly express contrary opinion thereto.

References/Notes

1. I. Jennings, *Cabinet Government*, Cambridge, 1961, p. 228
2. J.P. Mackintosh, *The British Cabinet*, Stevens & Sons Ltd., London, 1968, p. 521. See also Jennings *op. cit.*, p. 277.

1

Cabinet Systems in Comparative Perspective

Introduction

This book focuses on the activities of the Council/Cabinet Secretariat of the Federal Government of Nigeria; nevertheless, it is necessary to discuss briefly some cabinet systems which may have directly or indirectly influenced the evolution of the Nigerian model. In this regard, the British and the US cabinet systems are justifiably singled out for discussion. For the purposes of comparison, however, two continental systems, namely: the German and the French, are added. The British and the German Cabinets are by-products of parliamentary democracies while the French and the American are offshoots of presidential democracies. Although Nigeria has witnessed both parliamentary and presidential democracies, interspersed by longer periods of military dictatorship, the received cabinet system, as will be shown later, has endured.

The British Cabinet

"The Cabinet," Sir Ivor Jennings said, "is the core of the British constitutional system. . . It integrates what would otherwise be a heterogeneous collection of authorities executing a vast variety of functions."¹ That authoritative statement encapsulates the British parliamentary democracy. Unlike some European cabinet systems (discussed below) the British cabinet system is not a product of legislation. Rather, it is a relic of "constitutional conventions"² which grew out of democratic practices and precedents³ of the House of Commons. Indeed, the House

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of Commons and the Cabinet are potent instruments of the British parliamentary democracy.⁴

At the centre of the British Cabinet system is the Prime Minister who constitutes the chief *dramatis personae*. He/she selects from among his/her party colleagues who have successfully contested legislative elections and collectively emerged as the majority party in the House of Commons.⁵

The British monarch enjoys the prerogative of choosing the Prime Minister from the majority party. Since the Second World War, each party has consistently settled its own leadership by projecting a candidate who would be acceptable to the electorate as a potential Prime Minister. In the words of John Monley, the Prime Minister is "the keystone in the Cabinet arch" and "the leader of his party"⁶ in the House of Commons. In the 18th and 19th centuries, he/she was regarded as *primus inter pares*; today he/she is "*inter stellas luna minores*."⁷ S.A. de Smith even regards the Prime Minister as "The Sun around which planets revolve."⁸ In sum, "the British Cabinet is the directing body of the national policy," and "consists of the principal leaders of the party in power."⁹

John P. Mackintosh traced the evolution of the British Cabinet system from its early beginnings. In his view, it began with the "king's advisers" or "favourites,"¹⁰ who commanded his confidence. According to S.A. de Smith¹¹ the British Cabinet is traceable to the "small group of confidential advisers instead of the full Privy Council." The "inner Cabinet" ultimately emerged when King George I ceased to attend Cabinet meetings.¹² Thus Cabinet emerged as the dominant factor in the House of Commons.¹³

Party loyalty is sacred. Disraeli was quoted as saying "the first duty of an English Minister is to be faithful to his party."¹⁴ Richard Rose persuasively discussed the making of British Cabinet Ministers thus. In choosing his/her Cabinet Ministers the Prime Minister has to consider "representativeness in relation to political factions and tendencies, as well as social origins,"¹⁵ "loyalty" and "ministerial competence."¹⁶

Modern British Cabinet system is rooted in some sacrosanct constitutional conventions: *Inter alia*, Cabinet Ministers must be members of Parliament; and they should not disagree with one another publicly on matters already settled in the cabinet.¹⁷ The latter has given rise to the well-known doctrine of collective responsibility¹⁸ in British politics.

Unlike the continental democracies, a two-party system has

held sway in Britain and influenced the evolution of the British cabinet system, beginning from the days of the Whigs and Tories, through the Liberals and Conservatives, to the Labour Party and the Conservatives. More information on the continuity and turnover of the British Cabinet from 1868 to 1970 can be gleaned from James E. Alt.¹⁹

The verdict of the electorate fluctuates and periodically produces the "swing of the pendulum" which has become a familiar feature of British politics. Thus the electorate votes in or out a party, forcing one party into the opposition while returning the other into power. The majority party in the Common constitutes a homogeneous Cabinet. Occasionally, however, a coalition Cabinet²⁰ may become imperative for instance, 1852-55, 1915-21, 1931-7, 1937-9, 1940-5. Bruce Headey examines the job of Cabinet Ministers.²¹

The British cabinet system has been exported to most Commonwealth countries. Thus, the Cabinet practices in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, are basically the same. Against the background of the practices in the older Commonwealth, H.V. Wiseman²² compares the cabinet practices in British Africa, West Indies and South East Asia.

Continental Democracies

Cabinets in the European parliamentary democracies, unlike the British Cabinet system, are mostly heterogeneous, given the fact that their governments are always constituted through coalitions. Multiplicity of parties or multipartism makes it hardly possible for a single party to emerge with sufficient majority to constitute a cabinet by itself. In that regard, Valentine Herman's comparative study on ministerial stability in Britain and European countries is very illuminating.²³ For illustrative purpose some examples will suffice.

Federal Republic of Germany (Bundersrepublik)

With the promulgation of the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law) on 8 May, 1949, and general elections in September of the same year, the Federal Republic of Germany joined the club of Western liberal democracies.²⁴ However, multipartism remotely traceable to the Second Reich and Weimar Republic has characterized its political life.

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Given the spate of Cabinet instability of the Weimar Republic, constitutional and administrative means were devised between 1945 and 1949, to curb the mushrooming of parties in the *Bundestag*.²⁵

German parties, unlike their British counterparts, are constitutionally recognized by the Grundgesetz (G.G.). Article 21 (1) of G.G. States:

The political parties shall participate in the forming of the political will of the people. They may be freely established. Their internal organization must conform to democratic principles. They must publicly account for the sources of their funds.

Article 21 (2) further states:

"parties which, by reason of their aims or the behaviour of their adherents, seek to impair or abolish the free democratic basic order or to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic of Germany, shall be unconstitutional." Should the need arise, "the Federal Constitutional Court shall decide on the question of unconstitutionality."²⁶

The G.G. was drafted under the watchful eyes of the Western Allies, namely: U.S.A., Britain and France, which had agreed, as early as 1945 at Potsdam, that four political parties should be established. These were: the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SDP); the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Free Democratic Party (Liberals) (FDP), and the Communist Party of Germany (CPD). The Federal law on parties came into force²⁷ on 24 July, 1967. *Sperrklausel* (electoral hurdle or restrictive clause) was imposed on parties to prevent frivolous mushrooming of parties in the *Bundestag*. The *Sperrklausel* stipulates, *inter alia* that any party which fails to win five per cent of the votes of three direct seats is barred from the *Bundestag*. Vigorous application of Articles 21 (2) of G.G. has effectively kept away from the *Bundestag*, disruptive and unserious party formations.

These constitutional and administrative measures, only curbed but could not eradicate multipartism. The resultant political equation has thus made it almost impossible for any single party to obtain the absolute majority necessary to single-handedly constitute a homogeneous Cabinet. Consequently, Cabinets have consistently been constituted through coalitions.

Be that as it may, a swing of the pendulum from the right to the left and vice-versa with the centre party holding the balance, has characterized the political landscape of Germany. Scholars are agreed that the Federal Republic of Germany operates *Kanzlerprinzip*²⁸ (Chancellor principle). Mevil Johnson calls the system the "Chancellor democracy,"²⁹ or "prime ministerial."³⁰

The German *Kanzlerprinzip* is derived from Articles 62, 63 and 64 of the G.G. Article 62 states: "The Federal Government shall consist of the Federal Chancellor and the Federal Ministers (The Cabinet)." Article 63: "The Federal Chancellor shall be elected, without debate, by the *Bundestag* upon the proposal of the Federal President." And Article 64 (1): "The Federal Ministers shall be appointed and dismissed by the Federal President upon the proposal of the Federal Chancellor."³¹

Adenauer of the CDU ruled Federal Republic of Germany from 1949-69. Since then, coalition governments have characterized German political life. The SDP/FDP coalition under the successive chancellorship of Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt ruled from 1969-79. From 1979-1991, CDU/CPD/FDP have ruled³² Germany under the chancellorship of Helmut Kohl, who has thus achieved the historic feat of being the first Chancellor to rule a reunited Germany.^{31a}

The French Cabinet System

The Cabinet system of the Fifth French Republic, more german to the present discussion, would appear more presidential than prime ministerial. This is suggested by the provisions of Sections 8 and 9 of the Constitution of the Fifth French Republic.³³

Section 8 stipulates: "The President of the Republic shall appoint the Prime Minister. . ." And, ". . . on the proposal of the Prime Minister, he shall appoint and dismiss the other Members of the Government" (i.e. the Cabinet Members). Presumably, the Prime Minister would propose only those candidates who would be acceptable to the President. When the Cabinet is constituted, the President presides at the meetings. *Expressis verbis*, Article 9 states: "The President of the Republic presides over the Council of Ministers."³⁴ Thus, the members of the Cabinet are: the President, the Prime Minister and the Ministers.

By Article 49, the Prime Minister pledges the responsibility of the Government before the National Assembly in respect of government programme. By Article 50, the National Assembly may pass a vote of censure aimed at rejecting any unacceptable government programme. If the President has a majority in the National Assembly, government programmes are likely to pass faster. It should be noted that by virtue of Sections 6 and 7 the President is elected by direct universal suffrage and he is therefore responsible to all French men and women as a whole, including the citizens of the French overseas territories.

The role of the French political parties defies rationalization as far as Cabinet formation is concerned. Frears observes that the French political parties do not seem to compete for the power to govern.³⁵ This, according to him, is because they are fragmented and are "too small to aggregate the demands of a large part of the electorate into coherent policy programmes."³⁶ Borella characterizes the French political life as "regime des parties,"³⁷ (a regime of parties); Philip M. Williams pillories it as "the reign of parties;³⁸ and Dorothy Pickles thinks the nature of French politics depicts a "high degree of political incoherence . . . caused by unstable parliamentary majorities," resulting from "fundamental and permanent divisions."³⁹

Indeed, France has a plethora of political parties. Under the Fourth Republic they were well over 25.⁴⁰ In the Fifth Republic, they still remain a patchwork. In such a fragmented multi-party system, it took the "charismatic authority"⁴¹ of General de Gaulle to wield political power almost in the tradition of Louis XIV (the Sun King). In hindsight, it has been acknowledged that General de Gaulle succeeded in giving a new direction to the French political life by stimulating Gaullism, "the federator of almost all the electors. . . in the centre and on the right." The success of the Gaullist Movement ultimately galvanized⁴² the left into a more effective co-operation, whence emerged the "*Union de la Gauche*."⁴³

In Britain and Germany, Cabinet formation is strictly an affair of a single victorious party; or a coalition of two or three parties. In France, it is an affair of the *Majorité* which, according to Frears, means "more than a coalition but less than a party . . . , it embraces all parties and groups that give disciplined electoral and parliamentary support to the President of the Republic and to the Government appointed by him."⁴⁴ Each French President since General de Gaulle's era has always had his own *Majorite* in the National Assembly.⁴⁵

The US Cabinet

Expressedly, the US Constitution has no provision for the creation of a Cabinet. However, a thorough scrutiny of Article II, Sections 1 and 2 could shed some light on the view that Cabinet is, in fact, therein implied.

Article II, Section 1 stipulates: "The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America;"⁴⁶ while Article II, Section 2, provides that the President "may require

the opinion, in writing, of the principal officers in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective offices. . . ."⁴⁷ The "Principal Officers" mentioned in Section 2, eventually emerged as the Presidential Cabinet. The framers of the Constitution must have presumed that the President would need men of ideas to formulate and execute national and international policies to rule the country. The mere fact that the Constitution requires the President to seek the opinion of the principal officers would seem to suggest that the idea of Cabinet was implicit in the document.

The US Cabinet system is necessarily presidential, because the US Constitution and the American governmental system are presidential.⁴⁸ The US President's Cabinet was probably a child of circumstance. Snubbed when he tried to use the Senate in advisory capacity and rebuffed when he went to the Supreme Court for a similar mission, President George Washington, the initiator of the US Cabinet, eventually turned to his principal administrative officers, namely; Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasury, Secretary of War, and Attorney-General, for collective advice.⁴⁹ That would appear to be the informal beginning of the US Cabinet System. Subsequent Presidents have not only maintained that innovation, which has metamorphosed into an institution, the Senate has also evolved a convention of confirming the President's nominations to his Cabinet.⁵⁰ It was mentioned in the Federal law of 1907. John D. Lees asserts: "Appointments to Cabinet positions are rarely challenged, though some may be subject to searching questioning and investigation before being approved."⁵¹ He also contrasts the US Cabinet system with that of the British. While the latter is subject to and emanates from the legislature, the former is separate therefrom.⁵² And while the British Cabinet is regularly the formal co-ordinating body, it is only so in principle in the US. In practice, "it is rarely used as a collective body for making decision by the President, and some Presidents use the Cabinet more than others."⁵³

The President's Cabinet system is generally influenced by the US two-party system which engenders a swing of the pendulum between the two parties that dominate the American political life. These are the Republican and Democratic parties. The incumbent president nominates candidates for Cabinet positions from the rank and file of the party adherents. Irish and Prothro observe; "Since Cabinet positions are regarded as top prizes in national politics, party loyalty figures high in the appointment."⁵⁴

The executive Department to which the President has to make nominations are: Secretary of State (1789); Secretary of the Treasury (1789); Secretary of Defence (1949); Secretary of Agriculture (1889); Secretary of Commerce (1913); Secretary of Labour (1913); Secretary of Health and Human Services (1979); Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (1965); Secretary of Transportation (1966); Secretary of Energy (1977); Secretary of Education (1979).⁵⁵

The dates when the Departments were created would seem to suggest that they were created in response to expressed needs at different times. Thus, the growth of the President's Cabinet could be deemed evolutionary.

Cabinet System in Nigeria

Wiseman's study on Cabinets in the Commonwealth embracing post-war cabinet developments in Africa, the West Indies and South-East Asia⁵⁶ would seem to suggest that the British colonialists should be credited with the initial efforts to foster the Westminster model of cabinet system in colonial Nigeria, as elsewhere in their colonies. For our present purpose it will suffice to mention just a few of the efforts made in Nigeria.

As early as 1923 under the auspices of the colonial government, electoral system had been introduced in Lagos;⁵⁷ between 1946 and 1954, franchise had been extended nationwide; and in 1959 a federal election was conducted nationwide on the basis of universal suffrage.⁵⁸

The initial two-party system⁵⁹ allowed in Lagos was probably intended to pave the way for country-wide application. Owing to subsequent socio-political evolution of the country, however, a three-party system ineluctably emerged.⁶⁰ To be sure, there were many more minor parties,⁶¹ which had to seek alliance with any of the three major parties for the purpose of political survival. As events later showed, Nigeria, like France and Germany, was inevitably afflicted with a multiplicity of parties. Thus, the Nigerian body politic fell victim of what Diamond described as "cleave, conflict and anxiety," characterized by "progressive polarization of conflict between sectional parties."⁶²

During the initial period of parliamentary democracy, 1959-1966, cabinet formation was a by-product of legislative elections. However, during the subsequent presidential democracy, 1979-1983, it was a function of presidential and gubernatorial elections. The popularly elected President and

State Governors were empowered by Sections 135 and 173 of the 1979 Constitution to constitute their respective cabinets. Section 135(1) stipulated: "There shall be such offices of Ministers of the Government of the Federation as may be established by the President. And, according to Section 132(2), "Any appointment to the office of Minister shall, if. . . confirmed by the Senate, be made by the President." Section 173 conferred similar powers on the State Governors. But appointments of Commissioners by the Governors were to be confirmed by each State House of Assembly.

Scholars of Nigerian politics agreed on the fact that ethnicity, regionalism, sectionalism and religious differences perennially bedevilled the Nigerian party politics. Such differences prevented the emergence of truly national political parties. The politico-cultural configuration of the country could have been accountable for that state of affairs. In their respective classic works on the Nigerian 1959 federal elections, Richard L. Sklar and K.W.J. Post observed that the major parties evolved from 'tribal' and cultural associations, rooted in the erstwhile three regions of Nigeria. The *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* gave rise to Action Group (AG);⁶³ the *Ibo State Union* engendered the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC),⁶⁴ and the *Jam'uyyar Mutanen Arewa A Yau* produced the Northern People's Congress (NPC).⁶⁵ These three major parties recorded their highest electoral successes in their home bases. None of them had a country-wide popularity or appeal. Consequently, in the federal legislative elections held between 1959-64 no single party could garner the necessary absolute majority to facilitate the formation of a homogeneous cabinet. The victorious politicians had to resort to coalitions.⁶⁶

To stem the tide of political fragmentation and possibly stimulate country-wide political party formations, Decree No. 73 of 1977 complemented by the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO), formulated laws and regulations designed to prevent ethnically-inspired political parties.

Section 78 (1) (b) of Decree 73 of 1977 made it mandatory for membership of political parties to be open to every Nigerian citizen, irrespective of place of origin, religion, ethnic group or sex. Section 78 (1) (e) prohibited emblems or motto with ethnic or religious connotations. It also prescribed that the activities of any political party should not be confined to any particular geographical area of the country. Rather, the entire nation should be the constituency of each party. According to Section

79 (a), membership of the executive committee or the governing body should reflect the federal character of Nigeria. Above all, membership should be drawn from no less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of all the states of the Federation. Alhaji Amadu Kurfi's work⁶⁷ on FEDECO is particularly relevant to this issue, while L. Adele Jinadu's theoretical analysis on the same issue is very instructive.⁶⁸

Old habits die hard! The results of the 1979 legislative, gubernatorial and presidential elections reflected the voting patterns of the first republic.⁶⁹ In that regard, Professor Billy J. Dudley remarked: "For all the care taken in the new Nigerian Constitution . . . to play down the elements of ethnicity in Nigerian political life . . . the 1979 elections showed quite clearly that . . . electoral behaviour was still a far cry from the ideals of the framers of the Constitution . . . the voter voted out of sense of ethnic commitment."⁷⁰

Oye Oyediran⁷¹ and Williams D. Graf⁷² examined the five parties registered to contest the legislative, gubernatorial and presidential elections of 1979. These were the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigeria People's Party (NPP), Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), People's Redemption Party (PRP), and National Party of Nigeria (NPN). The dominant party, NPN, entered into a coalition agreement with the NPP in order to constitute a cabinet. In that regard, Alex E. Gboyega's analysis on how the NPN-NPP Cabinet was chosen is very informative.⁷³

The 1983 gubernatorial and presidential elections produced results⁷⁴ comparable to those of 1959, 1964 and 1979 electoral experience. In his assessment of 1959-64 epoch, Oluwale Idowu Odumosu concluded: "The slow growth of cabinet government at the centre can largely be attributed to lack of a country-wide party."⁷⁵ That conclusion would appear similarly applicable to 1979 and 1983 electoral results.

The upshot of the foregoing discussion is that the Nigerian federal governments between 1960-66 and 1979-83 were characterized by coalition cabinets, be it under the parliamentary or presidential system. Of course, Cabinets formed by the military regimes⁷⁶ did not represent any party; they were constituted in a manner to reflect a broad geographical spread of the nation.

Informed by the lessons of the past, the Third Republic may present a new set of scenarios, given the seriousness of the preparations that accompanied the Transition Programme⁷⁷ of the Babangida Administration. A two-party system, cutting

across ethnic, cultural and religious barriers has been forged. It has been captioned "grassroots democratic two-party system."⁷⁸ The parties established by government are: the *Social Democratic Party* (SDP) and the *National Republican Convention* (NRC).⁷⁹

Although the manner in which the parties were formed provoked some controversies,⁸⁰ nevertheless, it has been vindicated as a most prudent and astute measure, designed to end the vicious circle of ethnically-inspired and unbridled multi-party system with all its attendant vices. For the first time in the nation's history, Nigerians are constrained to join any of the two parties broadly represented in all parts of the country, on the platform of which local government, legislative, gubernatorial and presidential elections should be contested. Any of these two nation-wide parties which succeeds in obtaining an absolute majority in the presidential and gubernatorial elections would be expected to produce a homogeneous presidential or gubernatorial cabinet, as the case may be. The end in view is a presidential system à l'américaine.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that, in its 30 odd years of nationhood, Nigeria has more or less experienced all the various political systems, adumbrated above, namely: the Westminster prime-ministerial and the White House presidential. However, under both systems she was afflicted by the debilitating effects of a multi-party system, reminiscent of the French Fourth Republic and the German Weimar Republic. It was the multi-party factor that necessitated the federal coalition cabinets between 1960 and 1983.

At the apex of the executive organ of government is the Cabinet, constituted by the political class. Its bureaucratic agency is composed by a substratum of bureaucrats, mostly civil servants. They are found in what is generally known as Cabinet Secretariat, on which the rest of this book will focus.

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2

Cabinet Secretariat

It would appear that the Anglo-Saxon countries have a tradition of instituting cabinet secretariat as an adjunct of the cabinet system. It is observable both in the American Presidential Cabinet as well as in the British Parliamentary Cabinet. President Eisenhower is said to have initiated cabinet secretariat in the US. Among the functions assigned to it are: the circulation of agenda, briefs and authority to release major policy statements after cabinet meetings.¹ The British cabinet secretariat is historically more relevant to Nigeria. That is why it is necessary to discuss it briefly before analysing the Nigerian federal cabinet secretariat.

The British Cabinet Secretariat

Professor Jennings observed that the British cabinet secretariat was born in 1916 "under the stress of war."² Before then, no Cabinet Office *per se* existed: hence no cabinet secretariat. However, during the First World War, Mr Lloyd George innovated the idea of cabinet secretariat as an agency of his War Cabinet, aimed at executing his war plans more expeditiously.

The Secretariat of the Committee of Imperial Defence initially provided the take-off ground for the cabinet secretariat. In 1918, government approved the recommendation made by the "Machinery of Government Committee," namely, that the cabinet secretariat should be permanently maintained "for the purpose of collecting and preparing the cabinet agenda, of providing the information and the material necessary for its deliberation; and of drawing up the results for communication to the departments concerned."³ As Jennings further observed, the current duties of the British Cabinet Secretariat include:

- (a) circulation of memoranda and other documents required for the business of the Cabinet and its Committees;

- (b) compilation under the direction of the Prime Minister, the agenda of the Cabinet and, under the direction of the chairman, the agenda of a Cabinet Committees;
- (c) arranging the meetings of the Cabinet and its Committees; and
- (d) circulation of the conclusions of the Cabinet and its Committees, as well as the preparation of reports of Cabinet Committees.⁴

The Secretariat, which is located at No. 10 Downing Street, London, has free access to the ministries and departments for the purpose of obtaining information for the Cabinet as and when necessary. The staff consists of a press agent and his assistant; a principal private secretary and his assistant, a specialist in foreign affairs, an expert on the House of Commons, who watches over the Prime Minister's questions and speeches in the House. The officers are said to be more political than most civil servants.⁵ The Secretariat has a dual role: it features in the Parliament as well as in the cabinet at No. 10 Downing Street. In the word of Walker:

The Cabinet Secretariat in the 1950s and 1960s underpinned the whole structure of the Cabinet system. It kept the Cabinet and the Committee in mesh. It provided the cog wheel between decision and the execution of policy...⁶

The Nigerian Cabinet Secretariat

In Nigeria, the terms *Council Secretariat* and *Cabinet Secretariat* have been used interchangeably. When cabinet ministers attend formal meetings, they are officially said to be attending Council or Executive Council Meeting, whence the expression *EXCO Meeting*.

Genesis of the Secretariat

How did the Nigerian Council/Cabinet Secretariat originate? And how has it evolved? To answer these questions, it is necessary to briefly trace its history as a department of government.

The present stage of research has not revealed the exact date when the cabinet secretariat was created. However, for our purpose here, it is reasonable to rely on the archival records preserved in the Council Secretariat. In this regard, records⁷ of

proceedings of council meetings which dated back to 1919 provide some useful hints.

Since the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria in January 1914, Nigeria would appear to have been administered by one form of Council system or another. For instance, Sir Lugard established three Councils: Executive Council for Nigeria, Legislative Council for the Colony, and the Nigerian Council.⁸ Sir Clifford's reforms emphasized the Executive Council.⁹ Eventually, the Executive Council emerged as the sole machinery through which government policies were formulated.¹⁰ When the Chief Secretary became an ex-officio member of the Executive Council, another official, designated the Clerk of the Executive Council, took on his behalf, the minutes of the Council meeting.

By virtue of the *Nigerian Gazette Extraordinary*, No. 73, Vol. 7 of 27 November, 1920, Sir Hugh Clifford, established the *Nigerian Secretariat*, put directly under the control of the Chief Secretary to the Government. By that publication, the Chief Secretary was mandated to "collect and collate all questions" that had to be decided by the Governor. Thus, the main function of his office was to co-ordinate the work and activities of the Government. And, whenever the Governor held Executive Council meetings with the respective government agencies, attended by the Lt. Governors and the Commissioners from all the provinces, the Chief Secretary to the Government was the scribe who kept all the records thereof. That function most probably entailed the emergence of a sub-unit in the Chief Secretary's Office with the ultimate responsibility for the custody of the minutes and permanent records of the Executive Council. That sub-unit metamorphosed into the present-day Council/Cabinet Secretariat.

Nomenclatural clarification

Between 1951 and 1959, when the ministerial system of Government was introduced in Nigeria,¹¹ the sub-unit catered for the newly constituted Council of Ministers. Conclusions of the Executive Council preserved in the Archives indicate that it was called the "Office of the Council of Ministers." Upon the attainment of independence in October 1960, the unit was renamed *Cabinet Secretariat*. Under the first Military Government of 1966-1979, it was still known as *Cabinet Secretariat*. During the Second Republic (1979-1983), the name *Council Secretariat* was

adopted. The Babangida Administration, which came into power in August 1985, initially created two Council Secretariats: the *Secretariat for the National Council of Ministers*; and the *Joint Secretariat for the National Council of State and the Armed Forces Ruling Council*. In the course of 1990 the two Council Secretariats were fused and renamed *Cabinet Secretariat* with responsibility for Council of Ministers and the National Council of State, and the Armed Forces Ruling Council. The foregoing shows that the nomenclatures: *Council Secretariat* and *Cabinet Secretariat* are interchangeable. In essence the Secretariat has remained the same, only its personnel changes periodically.

Changing Patterns of the Nigerian Cabinet System

Just as the British cabinet system historically evolved from the *Magnum Concilium* (Great Council), the inherited Nigerian cabinet system similarly evolved from the colonial council system instituted by the colonial governors in Nigeria.

Before Nigeria attained responsible government status, the colonial governors, as noted above, had ruled by various councils. Following the constitutional development of 1951, the Executive Council distinctly emerged.

According to archival records, Sir J.S., Macpherson presided over Executive Council meetings in 1951; Sir H. Marshall in 1954 and Sir James Robertson from 1955 to 1960. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the first indigenous Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Nigeria, presided over the same Council meetings from 1960 to 1966; Major-General J.T.U. Aguiyi-Ironsi, from February to July 1966, General Yakubu Gowon from 1966 to 1975; General Murtala Mohammed from 1975 to 1976; General Olusegun Obasanjo from 1976 to 1979; Alhaji Shehu Shagari from 1979 to 1983; Major-General Muhammadu Buhari from January 1984 to August 1985; and General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida from 1985 to 1992. The colonial government was characterized by a mono-instanced decision-making machinery, namely the Executive Council. The early post-independence government adopted the same model, subject to parliamentary responsibility. By contrast, the successive military administrations instituted a three-tier machinery, consisting of three organs, namely, the *Supreme Military Council* (later known as the *Armed Forces Ruling Council*), the *National Council of States* and the *Federal Executive Council*, subsequently known as the *National Council of Ministers*. The Second Republic had

two instances: the *Federal Executive Council* and the *National Council of State*.¹²

Functions of the Councils

A full scale discussion of the structure, nature and functions of all the Councils is beyond the scope of the present study. However, for illustrative purposes, it will suffice to give an overview of their functions. Thus, the Councils of the administrations from 1979-1992 will be considered, under two sub-headings: *civil administration* and *military administration*.

Civil Administration

Under the Second Republic, and in accordance with sections 136 and 140 of the 1979 Constitution, two Councils were established, namely *Council of Ministers* and *National Council of State*.

The functions of the Council of Ministers included the determination of the general direction of domestic and foreign policies of the government of the federation, co-ordination of the activities of the President, the Vice-President and ministers in the discharge of their executive responsibilities.

The Council of State under the 1979 Constitution hereafter referred to as "constitutional Council of State" differed significantly from the Council of State(s) of the military regime. The former was an advisory body, while the latter was partly advisory, partly executive and partly legislative.

The constitutional Council of State advised the President-in-Council specifically on national population census, prerogative of mercy, award of National Honours, the Federal Electoral Commission, the Federal Judicial Service Commission, maintenance of public order within the federation or in any part thereof. The President alone presented memos for the consideration of the Council. Its membership consisted of the President (Chairman), the Vice-President, (the Deputy Chairman), all former Presidents and all former Heads of Government of the Federation; all former Chief Justices of Nigeria, all State Governors, the Attorney-General of the Federation, and one person from each state appointed by the Council of Chiefs of the State

Military Administration

The principal organs of the military administration were: the

Supreme Military Council/Armed Forces Ruling Council, the National Council of State(s) and the Federal Executive Council/National Council of Ministers.

The Supreme Military Council/Armed Forces Ruling Council determined the national policy on major issues affecting the federation as a whole, made pronouncements on constitutional matters, decided all national security matters, including the authority to declare or proclaim a state of emergency or martial law. It had exclusive responsibility for the appointment of the Head of the Federal Military Government, the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters/Chief of General Staff, Chief of Army Staff, the General Officers Commanding, the Inspector-General of the Nigeria Police, the Director-General of the Nigerian Security Organization, Military Governors, members of the National Council of State and the Federal Executive Council/National Council of Ministers. It ratified the appointment of such senior officers as the Council from time to time specified, and generally supervised the work of the National Council of Ministers.

Subject to the control of the Supreme Military Council/Armed Forces Ruling Council, the military National Council of State formulated policy guidelines on financial and economic matters and social affairs, in so far as they affected the state governments; formulated policies on the implementation of National Development Plans, including State Programmes; pronounced on constitutional matters, especially in so far as they affected the state governments.

The Federal Executive Council/National Council of Ministers determined and executed the general policy of the Federal Military Government, subject to the control of the Supreme Military Council/Armed Forces Ruling Council.

Evolution of Council Secretariat

The evolution of the responsibilities of the Council Secretariat will be examined under two main headings: *colonial* and *post-independence*. It will be observed that the political evolution of the country has correspondingly brought about the expansion of the decision-making organs of the Federal and State Governments. Consequently, the responsibilities of the Secretariat at both governmental levels have progressively increased.

Colonial Executive Council

Between 1914 and 1954, Nigeria was under a unitary Government that made laws and regulations for the governance of the entire territory.¹³ Policy decision were taken at Executive Council meetings presided over by the Governor, with the Chief Secretary as the scribe to the Government. The functions of the the Secretary to the Executive Council ultimately attracted statutory significance. For instance, Section 3 of the 1945 Royal Instructions mandated the Chief Secretary to take and keep the minutes of the Executive Council meetings.

When the ministerial form of government was instituted in the early 1950s and Council decisions were arrived at through the consideration of memoranda, the Secretary to the Council strengthened the sub-unit responsible for the processing of Council memoranda and writing of Council Conclusion. Each Conclusion bore the name of the Secretary to the Council and his assistants who were all British. The assistants were simply referred to as *Secretaries*. At least, two Secretaries were always in attendance at each meeting.

Between 1954 to 1959, A.F.F.P. Newns was Secretary to the Executive Council. He was probably one of the most prominent of the Colonial Secretaries to the Council of Ministers. Before independence, the following names regularly featured as Secretaries: Mr Jenkins, Mallam A. Hawdy and Mr C.O. Lawson. The last two were Nigerians. With the emergence of Nigerians as Assistant Secretaries to the Council the incipient Nigerianization policy seemed to have gained ground.

Post-Independence Executive Council

The Final Report of the Parliamentary Committee on the Nigerianization of the Federal Public Service of 1959 stipulated, *inter alia*, that the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary to the Council of Ministers should be Nigerians. Thus, at independence, the posts were accordingly *nigerianized* with Mr S.O. Wey as the first Nigerian to be appointed Secretary to the Executive Council of Ministers.¹⁴ But the post of Deputy Secretary to Council was left out until it was revived in the mid-1970s.

The functions of the Cabinet Secretariat between October 1960 and February 1966 included facilitating parliamentary business, namely preparing bills and motions, statutory in-

struments, constitutional matters; servicing the Committee of Council, the National Committee on the Award of Honours, the allocations of quarters, and collection and presentation of petitions.

Reorganization

Between 1966 and 1979, the Cabinet Office was frequently reorganized in order to cope with the rapid expansion of government business. The first reorganization took effect from 15 November, 1966.¹⁵ The Cabinet Secretariat was then more or less synonymous with the Cabinet Office. Its functions included political and constitutional matters, legislative and administrative business of the Federal Government, meetings of the Federal Executive Council and the Supreme Military Council, Police Affairs, the Internal Administration of the entire Cabinet Office, preparation of Council Memoranda and recording and circulation of Conclusions (i.e. FEC, NCS, and SMC), follow-up action, pursuant to Council decision, and servicing of the Committees of Council.

The first Civilian Government that preceded the military regime of 1966 held Executive Council Meetings periodically. By contrast, the military held Federal Executive Council meetings every week. In effect, greater frequency of Council meetings resulted in increased activities and work-load of the Cabinet Secretariat. Thus, it became necessary, once again, to reorganize the Cabinet Office and to match the increased responsibilities. This was done in 1971.¹⁶ Under the new arrangements, the Cabinet Secretariat was laden with matters connected with Council meetings, agenda and attendance at the Council meetings, VIP Guest Houses, Federal Flight Unit, control of cars used by Government guests (this fleet of cars was named Conference Visitors Unit (CVU) cars).

In 1975, following the publication of Gazette No. 34, Vol. 62 of 16 July, 1975, in which statutory functions were assigned to Ministries and Departments, the Cabinet Office was further reorganized to accommodate additional assignments. The Cabinet Secretariat retained the core of its traditional functions, while those not directly relevant to the functions of Council work were distributed among the remaining Departments in the Cabinet Office or transferred to other Ministries. The authors of the periodic reorganizations of the Cabinet Office probably intended that the Cabinet Secretariat should specialize in Council

Affairs. The following specific duties were assigned to the Cabinet Secretariat:

- (a) organization of meetings of the SMC, FEC, NCS, and Cabinet Committees;
- (b) preparation of briefs for the SFMG on memos;
- (c) follow-up actions on Council decisions; and
- (d) press releases.

These and other duties have since remained the main responsibilities of the Council Secretariat. An Administrative post, Secretary for Council/Cabinet Affairs, was eventually created. Today, the incumbent is called Director of Council/Cabinet Affairs.

As far as the Secretariat was concerned, the 1979 reorganization was cosmetic. It merely changed the name of the Department from Cabinet Secretariat to Council Secretariat. Subsequent reorganizations between 1983 and 1985 left the functions of the Department intact. In 1990 the name Cabinet Secretariat was once more adopted.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that the Nigerian Cabinet Secretariat initially operated like its British counterpart. It kept the legislative and the executive organs of government in a mesh. The intervention of the military in the political evolution of the nation, however, brought about a historic turning point. The Secretariat combined both the legislative and executive functions as dictated by the operations of the military regime. Subsequent constitutional evolution of the nation restricted the Secretariat to the executive arm of government.

Endnotes

- 1. Irish et al, op. cit., p. 429
- 2. Jennings, op. cit., p. 243
- 3. Ibid., p. 245.
- 4. Ibid.
- 5. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 509
- 6. P.G. Walker, *The Cabinet* Jonathan Cape, London, 1970, p. 56. See also E.C.S. Wade and G. Phillips, *Constitutional Law*, Longman (8th edition), London, pp. 200; 209-10.

24 *The President-in-Council*

7. The Archives of the Council Secretariat preserves these records.
8. J. White, *Central Administration in Nigeria, 1914-1948*, Frank Cass and Company, London, pp. 41-58.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 58-82.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 280-291.
11. The terms "National Council of State" and "National Council of States" are found in the records. The Mohammed/Obasanjo Administration initiated the Council of States to create a forum for meeting the state governors. The resultant forum emerged as the third-tier of the military administration. On why and how it was created see O. Obasanjo, *Not My Will* UPL, Ibadan, 1989.
12. For a discussion on the subsequent evolution of the National Council of States, see S.B. Ajulo "National Council of States" (forthcoming).
13. T.F. Nicolson, *The Administration of Nigeria, 1900 to 1960*, Oxford, 1969, pp. 217-300.
14. Information gleaned from the file on "The Reorganization of Cabinet Office."
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*

3

Organizational Structure of the Council Secretariat (Federal)

Before the 1988 Civil Service Reform, Ministries and Departments used to have complex organizational structures, characterized by disparate directorates, divisions, and subdivisions, and corresponding complex personnel management.¹ To that general rule, the Council Secretariat would appear to be an exception.² From inception, the Council Secretariat Department has espoused a simple organizational structure dictated by the peculiar nature of its functions.³ Its team of senior officials, numbering less than twenty, is groomed specifically to produce Council papers, namely: memoranda, annexures and conclusion.

The officials usually have pluri-disciplinary backgrounds, mostly liberal arts and social sciences. By convention, all of them are administrative officers, assisted by highly skilled secretary-typists. By design, members of the executive cadre and copy typist, generally found in most Ministries and Departments, are never posted to the Department. Consequently, the Council Secretariat staff is somewhat elitist in nature.

As noted above, a Permanent Secretary now (Director-General) is the administrative head of the Department. He is assisted by one or two Deputy Directors, two or three Assistant Directors, two or three Chief Council Affairs Officers, two or three Assistant Chief Council Affairs Officers, and one or two Principal Council Affairs Officers.⁴ Usually, officers from the grades of Assistant Chief and above are entrusted with the processing of council papers, note-taking in Council meetings and the writing of draft Conclusions which are subsequently collated and scrupulously edited by the Director-General, assisted by the Director, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors and any other capable officers the Director-General may from time to time invite.

The Department has some functional sub-units, headed by relatively senior officers. These are: Internal Administration, Archives, End-Room and Distribution.

The Internal Administration is headed by a Chief Council Affairs Officer. There is no hard and fast rule about that. A middle level management officer is generally deemed competent enough to manage the simple personnel affairs and take charge of all vehicles, equipment and other forms of chattels in the Department. The higher grades of officers are mostly pre-occupied with the vetting of memoranda. The functions of the Internal Administration Unit do not include recruitment and salary matters which fall within the jurisdiction of the General Services Office of the Cabinet Office.⁵ The Archives is headed by the most senior Archivist, while the End-Room and Distribution sub-units are each headed by the most senior and competent Secretary-typists. All the sub-units are all responsible to the Director of Council Affairs who, in turn, reports far-reaching decision to the Director-General.

The Council Secretariat maintains an archives of Council paper, dating back to about 1916. By convention, two copies of every Memo and Conclusion produced by the Secretariat are marked "Archives Copy" and sent to the Archives the store-house of knowledge on government policy decisions. It is the only authentic centre where Council Memoranda and Conclusions are systematically preserved for posterity. In 1987, under the headship of Dr G.A. Adeosun, then Permanent Secretary of the Council Secretariat, work on the Archives assumed the much awaited professionalization when Mr T.A. Ajayi was posted to the Presidency by the Archives Department of the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture to pioneer the professionalization of the work in the sub-unit. He succeeded in revolutionizing the activities of the unit. Since then information retrieval regarding Council Decisions and Directives has been greatly facilitated. Meanwhile, the micro-filming of memoranda and conclusions has been carried out.

The End-Room is so called because all the efforts at producing all Council papers, be they memoranda, annexes thereto and conclusions thereon, terminate in that sub-unit. There the memos and conclusions assume final form and shape in readiness for circulation to members of the respective Councils. The End-Room is, for this reason, a beehive of activities. Staffed with specially selected grades of secretary-typists, the End-Room ensures the security of all the Council papers which are,

by their very nature, highly classified. The success of the Council Secretariat depends very largely on the quality of work finally produced by the End-Room.

Work begins at the End-Room when a draft memorandum emanating from any given Ministry⁶ or draft collated Conclusion emanating from the officers, has been vetted by the Director-General and given a code number by the staff of his Registry. The End-Room ensures that the right quality of paper is used for duplicating the memos and conclusions and that the right number of copies are produced for circulation.

An adjunct of the End-Room is the Distribution sub-unit, also staffed with secretary-typists of very high calibre. In that sub-unit completely processed memos and conclusions are received and parcelled for distribution to the members of the respective Councils. The certified lists of members of each Council (generally determined at the beginning of each Council by the Director-General, in consultation with the Secretary to Council, and, possibly, with the President of council) are kept in the Distribution sub-unit. To this sub-unit are attached carefully selected dispatch clerks who ensure prompt distribution of the Council papers to their various addressees at any time of the day or night.

For a brief period, 1987-90, when two Council Secretariats were created in the office of the Secretary to Government, two End-Rooms and two Distribution sub-units emerged. That measure had the merit of decongesting the old End-Room and Distribution sub-units, thus easing their work-load. However, with the fusion of the Secretariats in 1990, the sub-units have been merged once again.⁸

The pace of work in that Section is generally dictated by the urgency attached to every assignment sent to it. Occasions do arise when work in the Secretariat extends far into the night or even till dawn, particularly during the budget period.

Secrecy

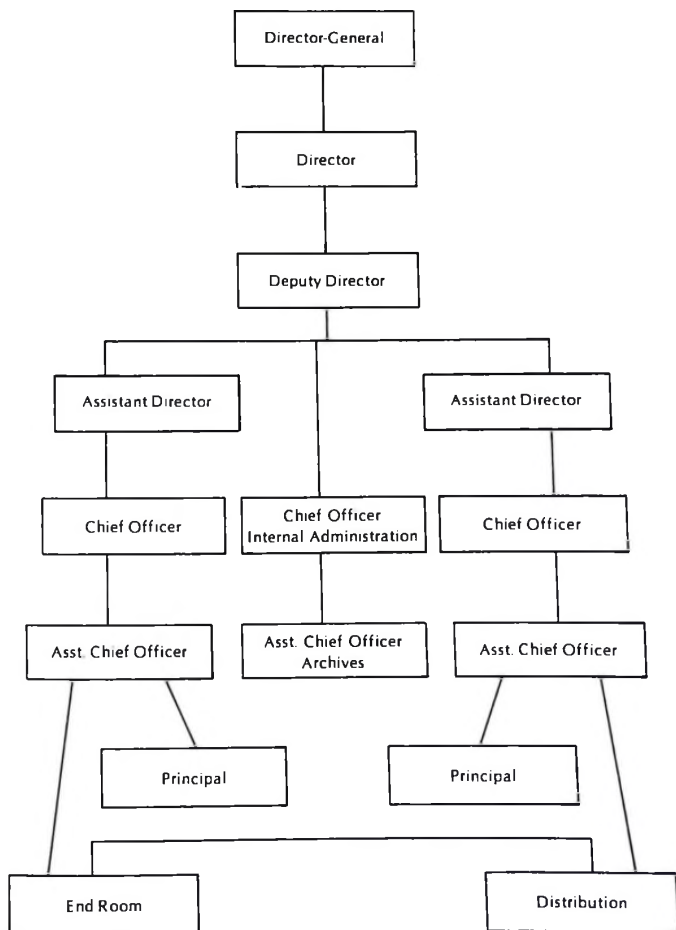
The world over, Cabinet functions are usually shrouded in secrecy. Those of the Council Secretariat are no exception to that general rule; consequently, all matters handled by the Secretariat are accorded a top secret status. Usually, unauthorized visitors are not allowed in the Department, nor do the officials themselves hob-nob with the staff of other Departments in the Cabinet Office. They are generally discrete in their

dealing with officials of other Departments. The self-imposed restriction of movement would appear necessary to curb the chances of leakages of government matters. That should, however, not create the impression that the Secretariat operates in a prison-like establishment or behind an iron curtain. As a matter of fact, leakages are rare.

References

1. Section III of "Implementation Guidelines on the Civil Service Reforms," paragraphs 8-16, streamlined the organizational structure of the civil service. Paragraph 9 makes it mandatory for all Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments to be restructured into not more than eight Departments, to be sub-divided into Divisions, Branches and Sections.
2. The Cabinet Office would, pass for an Extra-Ministerial Office, given the large number of Directors-General responsible to the Secretary to the Government of the Federation. Thus, the stipulations in paragraph 9 referred to above is not applicable, although the essence of the reform was imbibed.
3. See the organizational chart.
4. Prior to the 1988 Reforms, the nomenclatures were as follows; Permanent Secretary, Secretary for Council Affairs; Principal Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under-Secretary, Principal Assistant Secretary, Senior Assistant Secretary. With the Reform, Secretary is equivalent to Director; Principal Secretary, Assistant Director, Deputy Secretary, Chief Council Officer; Under Secretary; Assistant Chief Officer; Principal Assistant Secretary, Principal Officer.
5. The General Services Office is central and provides common services to all the Departments of the Cabinet Office.
6. When a draft memo is submitted by any Ministry, the Director-General sends it direct or via the Director to a schedule officer who vets and returns to the Director-General via the Director. Further vetting is done by the two topmost officers before processing begins at the End-Room. The supervisor shares the work out, proof-reads the typescripts and ensures production of the needed quantity for circulation.
8. In readiness for the ultimate disengagement of the military from government, the two Secretariats have been streamlined into one. Henceforth, one Secretariat should cover all Council meetings.

ORGANOGRAM



4

Council Memoranda

Sources of Memos

The function of the three different Councils which the Council Secretariat caters for have been discussed in Chapter Two. When each of the Councils formally meets, it considers Memoranda on various issues from which decisions emerged for execution or for reference to other Council. Sources of the Memoranda processed by Council Secretariat vary in accordance with the requirements of each Council.

Draft memoranda for the Council of Ministers emanate from all ministries, departments and parastatals. Extra-ministerial departments and parastatal organizations forward their draft memoranda through their supervisory ministries. By convention, only Ministers present memoranda in the Council of Ministers. Of course, the President or the Vice-President occasionally present memoranda in that Council when they emanate from the Presidency.

In the Council of State, by contrast, only the President and the Vice-President (or by whatever title known) present memoranda. Thus Council of State memos have limited sources. They could spring either from the President or the Vice-President. Memos could also be referred to either by the Council of Minister or by the Armed Forces Ruling Council for a second opinion on any particular issue. Referred memos are then converted by the Council Secretariat from their original form to that of the Council of State. The Presidency originates memos for the President or Vice-President. They are vetted and properly restructured by the Council Secretariat. Memos may seek to inform Council about a new development concerning the whole country, e.g. internal security matters; they may also seek to consult state governors on matters on concurrent legislative list, e.g. educa-

tion or taxation. As already mentioned above, the functions of the Council of State under the military are different from those assigned by the 1979 and 1989 Constitutions.

As regards the Armed Forces Ruling Council, the sources of memoranda are absolutely limited to the President. Like the Council of State, only the Presidency originates memos for the President. In that regard, any relevant Department in the Presidency may be requested to originate the memo, but the Council Secretariat vets it and puts it in proper form and shape. The conversion of the memos of other Councils to AFRC memos is the responsibility of the Council Secretariat. By leave of the President, the Vice-President, may also present memoranda in the AFRC.

Nature of Memoranda

Council memoranda deal mostly with policy matters. Memoranda may seek to initiate or implement policies; or even modify existing ones. Implementation memos may be based on Development Plans. In that connection it should be noted in passing that Nigeria has witnessed four Development Plans: 1962-68, 1970-74, 1975-80 and 1981-85. The Fifth Plan, called "Perspective Plan," with longer life span (15 years), is in progress.

All the capital projects which have physically and materially transformed Nigeria were envisaged in the Plans. The airports, the highways, the seaports, telecommunication networks, expansion of the university system, the polytechnics, colleges of education, the 6-3-3-4 are all products of implementation memoranda, by virtue of which approval was conveyed on the means of funding which must have been duly budgeted for in the relevant financial year.

Memoranda might also be presented on events, natural phenomena, a public scandal, natural disasters, sudden economic, social or political developments, unrests or agitations. Examples include the Public Service Review Commissions (1974); National Policy on Education (1977); the Report on the Presidential Commission on Salary and Conditions of Service of University Staff (1982); Report on the Presidential Commission on Parastatals (1982); Emene Air Disaster (1983); the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) (1986); the Political Bureau (1987); the Civil Service (Re-organization) Reforms (1988); and National Policy on Housing (1991). Memoranda on the above were based on extensive studies culminating in reports and drafts White Papers thereon.

Quite often, Presidential speeches do contain policy statements which should be translated into implementable programmes by the relevant ministries or agencies. The change of school year in 1986 and the Reform of the Civil Service of 1988 are but two examples out of several.

Classification of Memoranda

Memoranda may be classified into four broad categories as follows; policy-making, legislative and judicial, financial, and informative.

(i) Policy-making memos

These are memoranda that seek the approval of Council on policy matters and governmental activities initiated by government agencies for a given financial year or even on a longer term basis. Virtually all government agencies submit such memoranda.

(ii) Legislative and Judicial Memos

Under the military administration, the three Councils named earlier perform quasi-legislative functions. Ministries intending to submit new legislations or proposed amendments to existing ones, first forward memoranda on the issues involved to the National Council of Ministers in order to obtain approval for the necessary drafting instructions to the Ministry of Justice for the preparation of the appropriate draft legislation (Decree).

During the debate on such memoranda, the sponsoring Ministries have to convince Council on the need and relevance of the proposed legislation to the overall objectives of Government. The resultant draft Decrees are then submitted, where necessary, first to the National Council of States and then to the SMG/AFRC for ratification before promulgation by the President.

Not all Decrees pass through the National Council of States. Only those that have relevance to the State governments and local Council affairs are considered by that body. As a rule, however, most draft Decrees pass through the Armed Forces Ruling Council.

The SMG/AFRC occasionally performs quasi-judicial functions, particularly in matters relating to the confirmation of

sentences passed by the Military Tribunal and the appointment and removal of judges. When the SMC/AFRC sits in its quasi-judicial capacity to confirm the verdicts of the Military Tribunals, the proceedings and Reports of such Tribunals are presented to Council in the form of memoranda based on the reports. This is not entirely new. Councils of the colonial era, particularly in the 1920s, used to consider memoranda on serious criminal cases like murder and manslaughter. Memos on the confirmation of sentences and appointment or removal of judges are originated by the Council Secretariat on the basis of materials, reports, etc., received from each Tribunal and the Advisory Judicial Commission. As regards the appointment of judges, the Advisory Judicial Commission (A.J.C.) makes well-reasoned recommendations to the AFRC for approval; such recommendations are reduced to memos for the consideration of the AFRC.

(iii) Memos dealing with financial matters

Generally speaking, there cannot be any public expenditure on capital projects unless prior approval of Council has been obtained for that purpose. Such projects, in normal circumstance, must have been reflected in the Development Plan for the period and budgeted for in the relevant financial year. Fiscal and monetary measures announced by the President in his Annual Budget Speech are always preceded by memoranda submitted to the National Council of Ministers by the Ministers of Finance and Budget and Planning. Such memoranda are subsequently considered by the National Council of States and the Armed Forces Ruling Council before the Budget Speech of the President, followed by a Press statement by the Minister of Budget and Planning.

(iv) Information memos

The import of some memoranda is informative. Such memoranda may describe the roles played by Nigeria in international organizations such as UN, OAU, ECOWAS, GATT, Lome Convention, of which she is a member-state. Memoranda might also inform Council on treaties to which Nigeria is signatory. Council is generally briefed by way of Memos or Notes on the international meetings attended by Nigerian official delegations.

Form and Lay-out of draft memoranda

An inspection of numerous Council memoranda dating back to the 1950s reveals that the authors of the documents maintained a remarkably high degree of consistency of format, which must have been handed down by the colonial officers and must have been faithfully followed by their successors.

The headings are written in capital letters, reflecting the names of the respective Councils. They look like this: THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL or NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS or THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE or THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL or THE ARMED FORCES RULING COUNCIL. This is followed by some other formal inscriptions which include: the code number, date of production, copy number, title, and the author of the memorandum; e.g. "Memorandum by the minister of Finance," or "by the Chief of General Staff" or "by the Vice-President," or "by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces." Each memorandum bears the word: "SECRET," inserted on top of the code number.

To demonstrate the format more graphically, it is necessary to visualize some simulated specimens, albeit inspired by reality. the specimens reflect types of memoranda processed by the Council Secretariat.

The specimen memos depict different subject matters and situations. Memo 'A' depicts a situation where a Report was imagined to have been submitted to Council for consideration. As a rule, Memos on Reports should bring out clearly the source and terms of reference of the Report, the salient points thereof and recommendations for the Council to approve. Memo 'B' is a Fictitious reorganization of a Ministry. Indeed from time to time, a Minister or Commissioner might deem it necessary to reorganize his/her Ministry or extra-Ministerial Department. If such an exercise should impinge on a fundamental change of policy on material and manpower resources of the Ministry, the approval of Council should be sought. Memo 'C' throws light on an issue characteristic of the federal/state relationship. Memo 'D' depicts what a new government might do upon assuming office, namely the restructuring of the Civil Service, in order to accomplish the goals spelt out in the programme or manifesto of the ruling class. In the present specimen memo, the new government decides to merge some Ministries in a bid to save cost on administrative overheads.

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

SECRET

EC(Code Number) 17

April, 19....

COPY NO. . . .

**FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
REORGANIZATION OF MINISTRY XX**

Memorandum by the Minister of X X

Previous reference: (if any).

The aim of this memorandum is to submit to Council proposals for the re-organization of my Ministry.

2. The prevailing over-centralization of the present organizational structure is no longer conducive to effective management (vide Annex 1). Modern organizational structures are simple, straight forward, and often related to the available manpower resources and infrastructure. The organizational structure recommended in this memorandum is, therefore, inspired by modernity and it is geared towards achieving maximum results with the available manpower resources. Details of the proposals are shown in Annex II to the memorandum. This memo has been cleared with the Establishments Department. The opinion thereon issued is contained in Annex III.

3. The Council is invited to:

- (i) note that the current organizational structure of the Ministry shown in Annex I is outdated, and consequently it is no longer conducive to modern management;
- (ii) note the need to reorganize the Ministry in order to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency in management;
- (iii) note the recommended organizational structure as set out in Annex II to this memorandum; and
- (iv) approve the new organizational structure.

(Initialled)
Ministry of X
LAGOS.

April, 19....

**THIS DOCUMENT IS THE
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

SECRET

CM()18

20 October, 19...

COPY NO.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
SUBMISSION OF A REPORT ON 'Z'**

Memorandum by the Minister of X

Previous references: (if any)

This memorandum presents to Council the Report of the Committee set up to investigate the activities of 'Z', which is a parastatal under the supervision of my Ministry. The terms of reference of the Committee were:

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

2. The Report of the Committee is attached to this memorandum as Annex I; and the draft Government views thereon as Annex II. Chapter I of the Report deals with the historical evolution of 'Z'. Chapter II sets out the findings of the Committee; and Chapter III contains recommendations to Council.

3. The Council is, accordingly, invited to:

- (i) note the Report on 'Z' attached as Annex 1 to this memorandum;
- (ii) note the draft White Paper in Annex II;
- (iii) approve the draft White Paper in (ii) above, subject to any amendment in Council; and
- (iv) direct the Secretary to Government to convey appreciation of Government to the Chairman and Members of the investigation Committee.

Initialled F.J.S.
Ministry of X
Lagos.

20 October, 19...

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PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE**

SECRET

CS(2)2

December, 19. . . .

COPY NO. . . .

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE
STATE GOVERNMENTS' INTERNAL LOANS**

*Memorandum by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the
Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*

Previous References: (if any).

In a previous meeting, Council decided that States should devise alternative ways other than Development Loan Stocks to finance viable projects. This memorandum recommends some alternatives for the consideration of Council.

2. A perennial problem which State Governments have had to confront is their inability to absorb all their debt-service obligations, given their recurrent and capital expenditures on social services which are basically non-revenue yielding.
3. To break the vicious circle of ceaseless indebtedness, it is proposed to reschedule the outstanding debts without casting too heavy a burden on the States in the future. It is also recommended that States be granted X-year moratorium on the principal sum. Thereafter, repayment will be over a Y-year period.
4. The Council is, accordingly, invited to:
 - (i) note the increasing debt burden of State Governments;
 - (ii) note the options considered in this memo; and
 - (iii) approve the rescheduling of the internal debts of State Governments, as proposed in this memorandum.

(Initialled)
State House
Lagos.

December, 19. . .

**THIS DOCUMENT IS THE
PROPERTY OF THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL**

SECRET

SMC()2

January, 19...

COPY NO.

**SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL
THE STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRIES OF
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA**

*Memorandum by the Head of the Federal Military Government
and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces*

This memorandum presents for the consideration and approval of Council the list of the Ministries with which the present Administration hopes to carry out its executive functions.

2. Members will observe that certain ministries have been merged: for instance, A & B; C & D; Y & Z. Through the merger some savings are expected to be made in respect of administrative overheads.
3. The Council is invited to:
 - (i) note the proliferation of ministries during recent past;
 - (ii) note the staggering cost of overheads to maintain these ministries;
 - (iii) note the current economic downturn;
 - (iv) agree that some allied ministries be merged; and
 - (v) approve the new structure of ministries as shown in the Annex to the memorandum.

(Initialled)
State House,
LAGOS.

January, 19...

Hints on writing memoranda

The writing of Council memoranda requires some specific skills which can be acquired by dint of frequent practice. In addition to that, it is necessary to carefully study as many previous memos as possible. It is necessary to consciously build up, *pari*

passu, the ability to quickly absorb and digest new facts and figures, an inquisitive and analytical mind, high sense of value judgement, sensitivity to political, social, cultural, domestic and international problems, sound communication skill, specially a good command of English.

The style of composing the body of the memorandum depends largely on the skill and ingenuity of the individual author(s). Be that as it may, it is necessary to indicate in the first paragraph of the memorandum, the aim(s), purpose(s), or objective(s) of the author(s). The succeeding paragraphs should develop cogent arguments, supported by facts and figures, to convince Council about the seriousness and genuineness of the memorandum. Verbosity should be avoided. A memorandum should not be a verbatim reproduction of what is contained in the annexes. It should be a succinct analysis of the subject matter, providing various possible decision options open to Council. Where detailed facts are contained elsewhere, coded reference should be made to such sources in the body of the memorandum, and a copy of the source attached as an annex to the memorandum.

Paragraphing is very important. Each paragraph should convey a full argument or a set of related arguments. In other words, paragraphs should be thematic and numbered in Arabic figures like this: 1, 2, 3, etc. The body of the memorandum should be a succinct and rational exposition of facts and figures, circumstances and events.

The last paragraph is usually the most important. It contains the specific requests of the originating Ministry or agency, called *Prayers*. It begins with a formal sentence: "The Council is accordingly invited to." This is followed in the succeeding lines by the *Prayers*. These are to be couched in short, cogent but full sentences, beginning with functional verbs such as: "note," "agree," "approve," "direct," "ratify," "confirm," etc., depending on the nature, type and sense of the request. A semi-colon is inserted at the end of each prayer.

To the foregoing general hints should be added the following specific points. Memoranda with financial and economic implications should be cleared with the Ministries/Departments of Finance and Budget. Views expressed thereon must be attached to the memorandum as annexes. That is necessary in order to ascertain if the sponsoring Ministry has made budgetary provision for the subject matter of its memorandum and that sources of funds are identifiable.

All memoranda dealing with economic matters or with projects envisaged in National Development Plan should be cleared with the Departments of Planning and Budget. That measure curbs arbitrary introduction of capricious projects which might divert attention unnecessarily from a carefully conceived National Development Plan.

All memoranda dealing with establishment matters, such as the reorganization of a Ministry, the creation of new posts or the enlargement of the existing ones, have to be cleared with the Establishments Department. That measure is intended to ensure the homogeneity of the structure and organization of the civil service establishments.

Memorandum proposing new legislation or amendment to any existing bilateral agreements with a foreign country, accession to treaties, etc., should be cleared with the Ministries of Justice and External Affairs. Views expressed thereon should be attached as annexes to the memoranda. The reason for obtaining clearance is self-evident. International relations attract both rights and obligations, rooted in international law. Both Ministries are potent agents through which international relations can be validly conducted.

When necessary, joint memoranda may be produced on related issues by the relevant Ministries. Such joint memoranda should be initialled by the Ministers concerned. For instance, the Ministries of Education, Science and Technology; Transport and Communications; External Affairs and Justice might present joint memos on issues of common interest.

If the subject of a memorandum had previously been considered by the Council, the references of all previous decisions on it should be given on top of the memorandum. This is intended to facilitate cross-reference and thereby aid the decision-making process, and consequently obviate inconsistency. If a memorandum had been considered previously by other Councils, the views of those Councils should be attached as annexure to the new memo, so that the Council considering the memo could have the benefit of the views of the former. Although opinions of each Council are issued independently, and may be at variance with those of other Councils, the decision of a higher Council regularly takes precedence over those of the lower ones.

Secrecy is one of the ethnics of the Cabinet/Council system. Thus, all Council memoranda are marked *Secret* and treated as such at all levels.

Duly initialled draft memoranda should be placed at the back-cover of the Ministry's file in which the subjects of the memoranda have been treated. The files are then minuted to the Director-General, Council Secretariat. He is the Deputy Secretary to the Council.

The size of a Council determines the number of Council papers to be prepared for circulation on any given subject. In the case of the three Councils at the Federal level, the prescribed number of copies of annexes, which might range between 100 and 125, must accompany any draft memorandum to Council Secretariat. Draft memoranda with insufficient quantity of annexes might be rejected by the Secretariat.

Given the nature and importance of Council memoranda, it is absolutely necessary that draft memoranda should be vetted by the topmost officials of the Ministry or agency before presentation to the Minister for initialling. Memoranda represent the quintessence of ministerial bureaucracy. If lapses are discovered or pointed out during deliberation in Council, the Minister may be embarrassed. Such a memorandum may be rejected or be asked to be represented. A well written memorandum often attracts commendation from Council members. The Minister takes absolute responsibility for the quality of the memorandum in Council.

Thus, the data presented in each memorandum must be set out logically and convincingly. The language must be simple, direct and flawless. Flowery language, cliches, slangs and trite idioms can mar memoranda by lengthening them, making them unintelligible and boring.

When a memorandum is submitted to the Secretary to Council, it ceases to belong to the originating Ministry. Henceforth, it becomes the property of the Council. Reproduction is absolutely prohibited. A memorandum can be reproduced only by the Office of the Secretary to the Council upon formal request.

Hints on vetting draft memoranda

The guidelines provided here for vetting draft Council memoranda are by no means exhaustive. They are designed primarily to assist newcomers into the Council Secretariat to pick up the key aspects as quickly as possible. The guidelines can also serve as an *aide-memoire* for old-timers. Thus, it is expected that a great deal more than is contained here will naturally be encountered on the job.

First and foremost, an officer requested to vet a given memorandum should first raise a number of questions, some of which can be answered only by perusing the whole file in which the memorandum has been submitted. That explains why draft memoranda from all Ministries/Extra-ministerial Departments are submitted in the files in which the subject matters of the memoranda are treated. Specifically, the following thirteen questions are among those to be posed and answered:

- (i) Is the subject matter of the draft memorandum treated in the appropriate file containing the background to the memo?
- (ii) Is there any apparent inconsistency, ambiguity or information gap in the body of the memo? If so, can they be rectified without returning the file to the originating Ministry for appropriate action before resubmission?
- (iii) If irredeemable, should the memo be returned unflinchingly to avoid any distortion of facts and/or figures?
- (iv) Are there any obvious mistakes, typographical or arithmetic errors or even miscalculation of figures?
- (v) Has the draft memo been cleared with other government agencies whose functions are related to the subject matter of the memo and who should, therefore, be contacted?
- (vi) Is the general lay-out of the draft memorandum logical, and is it in conformity with the standard Council format?
- (vii) Does the file containing the draft memorandum show any evidence of unresolved divergence of views? If yes, does the draft memorandum resolve or bring out the divergencies, explaining why the one or the other point of view is preferred?
- (viii) Is the style of writing lucid, straight to the point and readily understood?
- (ix) Is the draft rather too long? Can portions of it be summarized or treated as annexures?
- (x) Are the annexures properly presented, numbered and sequentially arranged?
- (xi) Are previous references, if any, correctly cited on top of the memo?
- (xii) Does the thrust of the draft memorandum run counter to the current government policy? If it does, is the deviation acknowledged in the memorandum and reasons given why an exception should be made or the existing decision reversed?

- (xiii) If the draft memorandum involves spending of money, is there any financial provision for it in the Budget Estimates? If not, does the draft indicate or suggest the source of funding?

Conversion of memoranda

Conversion takes place when the memoranda in question have been considered by a Council and referred to another Council by the President-in-Council. Thus, it is a regular feature of Council work to convert some memoranda of the National Council of Ministers to the memoranda of the higher Councils, namely, the National Council of State or the Armed Forces Ruling Council. The purpose of such an administrative practice is to allow the higher Councils consider the same issues on which the ultimate decision should be taken at the highest level of government. Budget, legislative and policy memos, among others, are frequently so converted.

Memoranda originating from various Ministries are presented to the other Councils by the President or sometimes by the Chief of General Staff/Vice-President. This is why all AFRC and NCS memoranda are initialled by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces or by the Chief of General Staff/Vice-President.

One of the main things to watch out for when converting memoranda is to ensure that incongruities are eliminated. To that end, the following nine hints may be considered pertinent and useful.

- i. The whole memoranda should be read over and over again to eliminate phrases like: "my Ministry," originally applied by the originating Ministry. It would be odd for Mr President to say "My Ministry." Thus, the sense of the original sentence must be extracted and reformulated in such a way that the reader would not be in doubt that the President, or the Chief of General Staff/the Vice-President is the originator of the memo.
- ii. Facts and figures of the memoranda are sacrosanct. They should not be altered, except in consultation with the Deputy Secretary to Council/Secretary to the Council and possibly, the originating Ministry.
- iii. Where the decisions of the lower Council are to be incorporated into the memo, care should be taken to avoid distortion, misrepresentation or falsification of facts and

figures. In that case, the Conclusion of the original memo should be carefully studied and the main arguments therein reflected in the new memorandum. For the avoidance of doubt, the Conclusion should be attached as additional Annex to the memo.

- iv. The whole memoranda should be carefully re-edited to remove inelegant styles, grammatical mistakes, slangs, and slipshod expressions.
- v. A new paragraph is needed to explain that the memorandum had been considered previously by whatever body. The paragraph is normally second to the last.
- vi. The format of the memorandum should be edited accordingly by adding; "This document is the property of the Armed Forces Ruling Council. . ." or "the National Council of State," as the case may be. Thus, the code "CM" changes to "RC" or "CS" as the case may be. The memorandum is then deemed presented to the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces or the Chief of General Staff/Vice-President.
- vii. The new draft memo is ultimately channelled to the Secretary to Council who presents it to the President or the Vice-President for initialling.
- viii. The day of initialling becomes the new date of the memorandum.
- ix. After initialling, the Director-General or his Deputy authorizes the *End-Room* to process as usual. This includes inserting a new code number which is normally done in the Registry of the Director-General.

Characteristics of a Good Council Memorandum

In sum, what then are the characteristics of a good memorandum? In form and content, a memorandum should aim at satisfying the Council by complying with all the hints given above. Thus, the classic format must be preserved. Individual authors are not allowed to vary it, as attempts at doing so in the past proved abortive.

The subject matter of the memo must be precise. The introduction must define the nature and scope of the topic. The rest of the content must be clearly and logically argued in order to obtain the approval of the Council. A memo is like an advocate's brief before a judge. The plea either succeeds or fails. *Simplicity of style, elegance of language, precision or argument*

and *brevity* are some of the attributes of a good memo. Above all, the prayers must be carefully and meaningfully formulated in order to attain the objectives of the author(s).

Circulation of Memorandum

As soon as memoranda are completely processed, the Director of Council Affairs authorizes circulation to the members of the respective Councils. Each memo is carefully parcelled and hermetically sealed with wax to avoid leakage. Dispatch clerks ensure distribution by Council vehicles. The receiving Secretary in the office of a Council member signs for in-coming memos and takes custody of them on behalf of the member. He or she draws the attention of the member to them for perusal in preparation for a scheduled debate in Council.

5

Council Conclusions

Characteristics

Council Conclusions are essentially the decisions taken and directives issued by Council at the end of its deliberations over a set of memoranda. They are generally not as long as memoranda. Unlike the Hansard, Conclusions are not verbatim records of proceedings; rather they are digests of arguments that lead to the decisions and directives.

A conclusion is generally in three main parts: introduction, body of arguments, decisions and directives. These three parts are set out in separate paragraphs. However, if the presenter of the memorandum makes additional explanatory explanations containing substantive points, a sub-paragraph should be added to the classic introduction. Thus there would be two introductory paragraphs. The body of arguments may also be subdivided into sub-paragraphs, depending on the nature of the arguments on a particular subject matter. Indeed a discursive conclusion would require multiple paragraphs.

The style of writing is simple; and the language is normally in reported speech. Names of speakers are generally not mentioned; by convention, they are anonymous in the records.

Like memorandum, each edition of Council Conclusions constitutes a distinct booklet with distinctive classic characteristics. Some of the salient features will be mentioned.

At the topmost part of the first page of each edition of Conclusions is written in capital letters: **THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS or FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, or THE CABINET SECRETARIAT, or NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE, or SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL, or ARMED FORCES RULING COUNCIL.** Below these bold captions are arranged one after the

other, the Code Number of the edition of the Conclusion, the list of attendance which is usually long and may occupy about two pages. Next to that is the content page or pages; then the respective Conclusions, one after the other, as indicated on the contents page(s). The time each Council adjourns is inserted at the end of each edition of Conclusions. How an edition of Council Conclusions looks is best visualized through specimens. (see below).

**THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL
OF MINISTERS**

SECRET

CM (86) 5th Meeting

COPY NO

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

*CONCLUSIONS of the Meeting of the National Council of
Ministers held at Council Chambers, Lagos, On THURSDAY,
20 NOVEMBER, 1986 at 9.00 a.m.*

Present

.....
*President, Commander-in-Chief of the
Armed Forces (President)*

.....
Vice-President

.....
*Attorney-General of the
Federation and Minister of Justice.*

.....
Minister of External Affairs.

.....
Minister of Petroleum Resources

.....
Minister of Health

.....
Minister of Budget and Planning

.....
*Minister of Information and
Culture.*

.....
Minister of Industries

.....
*Minister of Employment
Labour and Productivity*

.....
Minister of Internal Affairs

.....
e.t.c.

Secretariat

Secretary to the Council	Mr	X
Deputy Secretary to the Council	Mr	Y
Assistants	Mr	A
	Mr	B
	Mr	C
	Mr	D
	Mr	E
	Mr	F
	Mr	G
	Mr	H

In Attendance

Head of the Civil Service of the Federation.	Permanent Secretary, Lagos Ministry of Mines, Power and Steel.
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Aviation.	Secretary for Steel; Ministry of Mines, Power and Steel.
Director, (Home Finance), Ministry of Finance.	Director (Finance), Ministry of External Affairs.
Principal Secretary, (Administration), Ministry of Information and Culture.	Managing director, Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria.

25th

SECRET

C O N T E N T S

Item	Subject	Page
1.	IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNCIL DECISIONS BY MINISTRIES/DEPARTMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 AUGUST TO 31 OCTOBER, 1986	3
2.	THE NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER, 1983 AND THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER, 1984	7
3.	AUDITED ACCOUNTS OF THE NATIONAL DOCK LABOUR BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER, 1984	8

4. ASSISTANCE TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES: TECHNICAL AID CORPS SCHEME 10

Specimen Conclusion in Outline

1. **Implementation of Council Decisions by Ministries/Departments for the Period 1 August to 31 October, 1986**

Introduction —
Body of arguments —
Summary of the President —
Decisions and Directives —

2. **The National Provident Fund Audited Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December, 1983, and the Year Ended 31 December 1984**

Introduction —
Body of arguments —
Decisions and Directives —

4. **Assistance of African Countries: Technical Aid Corps Scheme**

Introduction —
Body of arguments —
Decisions and Directives —

The Council adjourned at 8.05 p.m.

Council Secretariat,
Cabinet Office,
Lagos.

November, 19

Writing Council Conclusions

A Conclusion begins with a standard introductory statement; "The Council considered memorandum CM/EC; CS/NCS; SMC/AFRC (88) 22" by Minister X," "by the President, Commander-in-Chief," or "by the Chief of General Staff"/"Vice-President," depending on what Council and in what context.

The introductory statement may be followed by another formal introduction by the presenter of the memo to the Council. Thus, in a preambular manner, the explanatory introduction highlights the salient points in the memorandum and the annexes thereto. Sometimes, the introduction may contain new

facts or explanations of situations not contained in the memorandum or its annexes already circulated. Special note should be taken of such fresh facts and explanations. They are not only additional information but could also lead to significant decisions and directives. Be that as it may, it would be superfluous to repeat facts already contained in the memorandum and annexes.

The third paragraph begins with the phrase "During discussion. . ." In that paragraph, the main arguments leading to the Council Decisions and Directives on any matter are logically set out. If it becomes lengthy, a further paragraph may be added. The new paragraph then begins with "During further discussion. . ." That portion might contain the reaction or replies of the presenter of the memo to various questions asked thereon by members. The body of the conclusion may also be written in shorter paragraphs to reflect the major arguments of the deliberation. Precedents abound on that. Whatever format is adopted, consistency should be maintained in any given volume or edition of Conclusions.

The final paragraph which begins with the word "summarizing" contains the President's or Chairman's summary of the deliberation. The summary recapitulates the thrusts of the arguments in council, pointing out their merits and demerits. It resolves divergencies on the strength of the arguments. The summary is followed by Prayers, i.e., the requests of the author or presenter of a memorandum. Prayers are itemized decisions and directives on the request made in the memorandum. Special care should be exercised when writing the prayers. In form and content they differ from the original as contained in the memo. They are carefully worded to reflect the decision of Council not necessarily as conceived by the presenter. Some of the original prayers might disappear as a result of Council decision. The surviving prayers are written out as full sentences.

Style of Writing

Conclusions are written in reported speech. The use of present tense is thus virtually excluded. As a rule, the language should be simple, direct, unencumbered and lucid. Rules of punctuation must be observed in order to facilitate understanding.

Names are generally not mentioned in Conclusions. Thus it suffices to say "a member" or "group of members" or "Council"

said XYZ. However, when the President or the Vice-President makes any substantive contribution to the debate, he is to be identified as such in the appropriate place in the Conclusion. Identification is by official title and not by personal name. "The President or the Vice-President observed that . . ."

To attempt to put on paper how every member expressed his or her view on any given topic would produce an absurd Conclusion. That may easily lead to a boring repetition and verbosity. Indeed, Conclusion writing is an exercise in precis writing. Two arguments may be premised on various shades of opinion. These should be reflected clearly. Journalistic expressions are not appropriate in Council Conclusions.

For the purpose of illustration, specimen Conclusions to the simulated memoranda above are hereunder given.

**A. SUBMISSION OF A REPORT OF ENQUIRY ON THE
ACTIVITIES OF Z**

The Council considered memorandum CM (19) 18 by the Minister of X . . .

Introducing the memorandum, the MINISTER of X informed Council about the anxiety of the public over the possible outcome of the enquiry into the activities of Z. He said that anonymous letters of threat had inundated the Ministry, expressing deep concern for the fate of the officials who had been suspended indefinitely. An investigation into the source of the letter of threat revealed that a few of the officials of X being recommended for disciplinary action had resorted to blackmail. However, a ministerial committee set up to review the letter recommended that the assistance of the security agents should be sought to execute the orders and directives which Council might ultimately issue. By leave of Council, he suggested an additional prayer to the memorandum as follows: "direct the Inspector-General of Police to ensure that the officers retired from Z should be denied access to its premises for 3 years from the date of Council decision "

During discussion, members were dismayed at the extent of the malpractices perpetrated by the officials of Z. They commended the thoroughness of the investigation conducted by the Committee of Enquiry and endorsed all the recommendations in the Report, including the additional prayer suggested on the floor of Council. Some members, however, pleaded that Council should retire the erring officials, instead of dismissing them.

Summarizing, the President commended the thoroughness of the Report and endorsed the recommendations in the draft

White Paper, including the additional prayer suggested on the floor of Council. He suggested, and Council agreed, that the erring officials of Z should be retired compulsorily.

The Council:

- (1) Noted the Report of Enquiry on Z attached as Annex to memorandum CM (91) 18.
- (2) Noted the draft White Paper.
- (3) Approved the White Paper as amended by Council.
- (4) Agreed that the erring officials should be retired compulsorily.
- (5) Directed the Inspector-General of Police to ensure that the retired officials should not gain access to the premises of Z for 3 years.
- (6) Directed the Secretary to Government to convey the appreciation of Council to the Chairman and members of the Investigation Committee.

B. RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE MINISTRY OF X

The Council considered memorandum EC (81) 3 by the Minister of X.

In his introduction, the MINISTER OF X stated that the general reforms initiated by Government in recent times had prompted the re-organization of most ministries; thus, his Ministry merely followed suit. He urged that ministries which rendered paid services to the public should, as much as possible, be allowed to dispense with bureaucratic bottlenecks, characteristic of establishment ministries.

During discussion, a majority of members supported the proposals in the memorandum, subject to some reservations. It was argued that no Ministry should be allowed to unilaterally disrupt the Civil Service structure by introducing unconventional nomenclatures and work ethics. It was, therefore, suggested that the approved civil service nomenclatures should be applicable to all ministries. Council unanimously endorsed that suggestion.

Summarizing, the President appreciated the reforming zeal exhibited by the memorandum. He also acknowledged the reservations expressed by some members. He endorsed the re-organization of X, subject to the valid reservations expressed thereon.

The Council:

- (1) Noted that the current organizational structure of the Ministry was already outdated.
- (2) Agreed that it was necessary to re-organize the Ministry of X in order to achieve greater effectiveness of management and efficiency of services rendered to the public.

- (3) Noted the recommended organizational structure as set out in Annex II to memorandum EC (81) 3.
- (4) Approved the new organizational structure as amended by Council.
- (5) Directed that the current civil service nomenclatures should continue to apply in the Ministry of X.

C. REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' LOANS

The Council considered memorandum CS (79) 2 by the Head of the Federal Military Government, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

In his preliminary remarks, the Head of the Federal Military Government reviewed the concept of Nigerian federalism *vis-a-vis* the American and German models. He differentiated the *modus operandi* of the three models. He pointed out that in all cases, the state or regional governments are constitutionally mandated to discharge fundamental obligations, requiring capital expenditure. That has perennially made the state governments dependent on the Federal Government. He was, however, optimistic that prospects for industrialization in the country were bright.

During discussion, members unanimously shared the optimism of the Head of State and supported the proposals in the memorandum.

The Council:

- (1) Noted the increasing debt burden of regional governments.
- (2) Noted the options considered in memorandum, CS (79) 2.
- (3) Approved the rescheduling of internal debt of regional governments, as proposed in memorandum CS (79) 2.

D. THE STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

The Council considered memorandum SMC (84) 2 by the Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

In his preliminary remarks, the Head of the Federal Military Government reviewed the parlous state of the national economy and underscored the need to salvage it through carefully crafted measures. He said that Government should first look inwards to find ways of curbing the recurrent expenditures. Thus, it was imperative to reduce the cost of running

government. He adverted the attention of council to paragraph 2 of the memorandum where the merger of some ministries was proposed.

During discussion, members generally shared the views of the Head of the Federal Military Government and endorsed the merger of ministries A & D, C & B, Y & Z.

The Council:

- (1) Noted the proliferation of ministries in the recent past.
- (2) Noted the staggering cost of running government.
- (3) Noted the economic down-turn.
- (4) Approved the merger of ministries A & D, C & B, and Y & Z.

The Council adjourned at 8.50 p.m.

Council of Secretariat,
Presidency,
Lagos.

8 March, 1984.

Distribution of Council Conclusion

By convention, Council Conclusions should be ready for distribution 48 hours after the adjournment of the meeting. Occasionally, however, it might be necessary to produce them for circulation within 12 hours. The necessity for speedier production emerges from time to time. For instance, Council might decide to meet the following day to review a memo considered the previous day. Such an eventuality would imply that the Conclusions of the previous meeting should be ready so that members would have the benefit of reviewing their stand.

Distribution can take two forms. Should another meeting follow in quick succession, distribution may be effected by Council officials the first thing before the commencement of or during the next meeting. However, during normal times, distribution is effected exactly the same way as memoranda are distributed. They are waxed in special envelopes and dispatched by the clerks to their various addressees.

Where Council Decisions affect the functions of other Ministries, organizations or Extra-Ministerial Departments, they are conveyed to the respective bodies by the Council Secretariat in the form of "extracts" of the Decisions of the President-in-

Council. Where there is an urgent need for action to be taken before the extracts of the Conclusions are ready, the Cabinet Secretariat conveys the relevant Directives to the appropriate body as the Directive of the President needing urgent implementation. It is the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretariat to see to it that the Directive is carried out and, where necessary, a feedback is made available to the President-in-Council, in a formal Memorandum or Notes called Implementation of Council Decisions/Directives. This practice began in 1985.

Where a memorandum submitted by a Minister has been discussed in Council and further Directive is given for additional work to be done on the subject before a re-submission to Council; or, where a Council Committee is set up to undertake an in-depth study of a given matter as condition precedent for the submission or re-submission of a memorandum on an issue, the follow-up action by the Cabinet/Council Secretariat may take the form of a formal letter, drawing the sponsoring Ministry's attention to the fact that action is still pending on the Decision of Council. A record of such letters is usually kept in the Cabinet Council Secretariat.

6

Management of Council Meetings

Definition

In principle, the management of Council meetings is vested in the Secretary to Council. In practice, however, the Deputy Secretary to Council, assisted by a team of Council Officials, assumes full responsibility for it. They do the preparatory work in the relevant files to fix the dates, venues and to draft the agenda of the meetings. The files are then submitted to the secretary to Council who, in turn, presents them to the President of Council. Thus, the fixing of dates and venues of meetings, the drafting of the agenda thereof, the conduct of the meetings and the arrangements connected therewith constitute the management of Council meetings.

Types of Council Meetings

As already noted above, the Council Secretariat has catered for three types of Council meetings, depending, however, on whether it is a civilian or a military government. The civilian administration between 1957 and 1966 had one Council called the *Council of Ministers*; the civilian administration between 1979 and 1983 had two: the *Federal Executive Council* and the *National Council of State*. By contrast, the military administration initially had two types: the *Federal Executive Council* and the *Supreme Military Council* (1966-75); the military administration between 1975 and 1979 and 1984-1992, had three Councils: the *Federal Executive Council/National Council of Ministers*, the *National Council of State* and the *Supreme Military Council/Armed Forces Ruling Council*.

Agenda of Meetings

A list of circulated memoranda awaiting consideration is normally kept in the Office of the Deputy Secretary to Council (i.e. the Director-General, Cabinet/Council Secretariat). To determine the Agenda of a given Council meeting, the Deputy Secretary to Council, by way of minutes in the appropriate file, presents periodically a list of circulated memoranda to the Secretary to the Government, who, in turn, presents the same to the President of Council making appropriate recommendations on possible dates and venues of meetings and the items to be placed on the Agenda. Among the criteria for selecting items to be placed on the Agenda are:

- (1) the number and volume of outstanding memoranda
- (ii) the urgency of the issues raised in a memo; and
- (iii) the time-frame for the implementation of such issues.

On the basis of the directives received from the President, an authorized Agenda is produced by the Council Secretariat and circulated in advance of the meeting to the members of the relevant Councils.

Day and Frequency of Meetings

The President of Council determines the days of Council meetings in consultation with the Secretary to the Government. Records kept in Council Secretariat show that meetings could be held on any day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays. However, meetings are held fairly frequently on week days, that is, from Monday to Friday; favourite days are Wednesdays and Thursdays.

A Council meeting normally lasts a whole day. However, a meeting may occasionally spill over to the second or third day, if the memoranda listed for consideration cannot be exhausted within the stipulated time. Meetings generally begin between 9.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. and can last as long as possible.

The frequency of Council meetings depends on the Government of the day. Gowon, Mohammed, Obasanjo, Shagari and Buhari held Federal Executive Council meetings every week. They held the Council of State, Supreme Military Council/Armed Forces Ruling Council only as and when necessary. Under the Babangida administration, the National Council of Ministers in-

initially met weekly and, later, fortnightly. However, the National Council of States and the AFRC have continued to meet periodically as and when necessary.

Venue of Meetings

It is the prerogative of the President of Council to determine the venue of any Council meeting. That prerogative is, however, exercised in consultation with the Secretary to the Government whose duty it is to inform members about the venue of the next meeting.

In the colonial period, as gleaned from archival records, Council meetings took place mostly in the Government House; and occasionally, in the Chief Secretary's Office. When Ministerial rule began, Council meetings took place in the Council Chamber of the Council of Ministers. During the First Republic, according to an informant,¹ Cabinet meetings were held at the residence of the Prime Minister.

When the Military intervened in 1966, Council meetings were first held at the State House, Marina,² and later at Dodan Barracks, Ikoyi, Lagos.³ However, on 5 October, 1982, formal Council meeting was held for the first time at Akinola Aguda House, Abuja, the new Federal Capital Territory. Throughout 1983, Council meetings were held once a month in the temporary Council Chamber at Abuja.

Staff of the Secretariat

Punctuality of the Council Secretariat at all Council meetings is imperative. It is necessary for the staff to arrive early at the venue of the meeting, thirty minutes before commencement. Early arrival has the advantage of ensuring that all the seats are in their proper position; that the public address systems are functioning and that relevant reference works (Decrees, Laws, Dictionaries, Circulars, etc.) are in place.

The staff of the Secretariat have no official uniform. By convention, they are expected to be properly dressed, usually in a complete native attire or European suit.

The Secretariat officials are silent participants at Council meetings. No Secretariat official may speak, unless specifically invited to do so by the President. They are to merely take minutes of the deliberations. They must also be alert to the goings-on in the Council Chamber. Their vigilance should extend

to the gesticulations of Council members. For instance, a member might want to pass some messages to the President or to any other member(s) of Council through the Secretariat. Usually, he beckons or makes a summoning sign in the direction of the Secretariat to call Secretariat staff for the errand.

Sitting Arrangement in Council Chambers

The sitting arrangement in Council Chambers is generally determined by the Council Secretariat in consultation with the State Protocol Department of the State House. In that regard, the Council Secretariat staff should bear in mind that the President, who presides over all Council meetings, except when unavoidably absent, occupies the central position. Should a Council meeting hold in his absence, the Vice-President presides. The President and the Vice-President always occupy central positions in the Council.

The sitting arrangement is usually oval, given the oval shape of the conference table. By convention, the seat of the President is located in the centre of one of the two long sides of the oval table. From that vantage position, he commands a global view of the whole Council. Thus, he is able to see all members at a glance. As a rule, his deputy, known under whatever title (Chief of Staff, Chief of General Staff, or Vice President) sits to his right, being indeed, his right-hand man. Next to him further right is the Secretary to the Council, that is, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, assisted by his team of officials who sit next to him in order of seniority to record the proceedings of the meetings. To the immediate left of the President is usually the Attorney-General, who, as the Chief Law Officer of government, usually attends all Council meetings either as *bonafide* or *ex-officio* member of the Council. The Attorney-General who is normally a government Minister, is a *de jure* member of the Council of Ministers. His membership of the other Councils has not always been automatic. For instance, under the Buhari administration, he was a member of both the SMC and NCS. Under the Babangida administration, by contrast, he is not a *de jure* member of these Councils, although he is always in attendance as the Chief Law Officer of the Federal Government.

The sitting arrangement of the other members of Council depends on the discretion of individual members, particularly with regard to the Council of Ministers and the Armed Forces

Ruling Council. By convention, however, the Service Chiefs who are *de jure* members of the National Council of States and SMC/AFRC, tend to sit one after the other, to the left side of the President, but after the Attorney-General. By contrast the sitting arrangement of the State Governments is determined alphabetically, following the names of the States. Tags are usually provided for the President, the Vice-President and the State Governors, but not for the other members of Council.

By convention too, the Secretariat indicates the sitting arrangement at the early sessions of any Council. In the course of time members get used to their seats.

Note-taking in Council Meetings

Note-taking is universally one of the essential characteristics of meetings. This could be done mentally or in written form. However, in the interest of accuracy, written notes are certainly more reliable and more acceptable, particularly at meetings of a serious nature. This is partly because, as the Romans say, *scripta manet* (The written word has permanent value).

Modus Operandi

The mode of note-taking in written form could be by long or shorthand, or by tape recording. When done through tape recording, verbatim transcription must subsequently follow. Assuredly, notes taken by longhand cannot be as accurate as those taken by shorthand or through tape recording. But, it is also a fact of life that not all that is said in a meeting is of vital importance to the decisions ultimately arrived at. In such a case, note taken by long-hand has the virtue of being more selective. It is the product of discriminatory oral perception. The note-taker discriminates between what is essential and less essential; what is relevant and not relevant to the decision arrived at. That, of course, depends largely on the objectivity, vigilance, experience and seriousness of purpose of the note-taker.

Unlike the legislative fora (e.g. the National Assembly debates), the tradition of note-taking in Council is not verbatim. As a rule, tape recording is forbidden. Verbatim reporting may not, in effect, be very useful to the eventual writing of the Conclusion (Minutes). Thus, the note-taker in the Council meetings is obliged to follow attentively the trend of Council deliberation

on every topic. Note-takers are therefore expected to concentrate on the major arguments leading to concrete decisions and directives of Council.

What to Look For

The individual officers taking note have various academic backgrounds. Their training might have included shorthand writing. That would be an asset. However, an officer who is unable to write shorthand should not feel disadvantaged either. Any officer who has successfully completed any prescribed post-secondary study would be sufficiently equipped intellectually to take useful notes in Council.

Deliberation in Council focuses mostly on memoranda previously circulated to members and officials who would attend the meeting. The study of such Council Papers on the eve of any scheduled meeting is highly recommended in order to be able to follow the trend of the discussion thereon and thereby facilitate note-taking.

A memorandum is usually introduced by the Minister of the originating Ministry or by any other member of Council duly authorized to do so on his behalf when absent. If the introductory remarks of the Minister do not contain anything new to what is already set out in the memorandum, note-taking may not be necessary. If, however, the Minister makes additional contribution, or proposes some amendment thereto, which may either be written or oral, it may be imperative to take proper notes of such additional data.

When members begin in turn to express their views on the memo, full notes should be taken on what they say individually in favour of or against the memo. The points so made may be itemized for ease of reference. Unless other members express divergent or contrary views on the same issue, note-taking may be superfluous. Thus, only additional points should be noted. Views expressed are generally not attributed to the individual members of Council. As the debate progresses, different strands of opinion will normally emerge. It is necessary to note them carefully and clearly.

When the President/Chairman summarizes the debate, it is essential to take full notes because, from his summary, the decisions of Council usually emerge. The President/Chairman often acknowledges all the various shades of opinion expressed on the issues under consideration. He resolves any controversial points

either by way of a definitive statement thereon or by setting up a sub-committee of Council to consider the matter in order to make further recommendations thereon.

Schematically, therefore, note-taking during Council deliberation on any issue should fall into three parts:

- (a) the introduction of the memo by the presenter;
- (b) the contributions of members on the issue(s) raised; and
- (c) the summary of the President/Chairman.

Special attention should be paid to the prayers which may have been amended in the course of the deliberation. What led to the amendment should be carefully noted and clearly brought out in the Council Conclusion. That aspect of note-taking is most crucial and vital to the fate of any memo discussed in Council.

Writing Council Conclusion

The writing of Council Conclusions depends on good note-taking. It is an indispensable *aide-memoire*. Without notes, essential portions of the deliberation might be missed out. While every Council Secretariat official present at the meeting takes full minutes of the proceedings, the drafting of Conclusions is usually a team work.

Each Director-General at the inception of his tenure of office determines administratively how Conclusions should be written. This includes the format and the procedure of writing. He reviews the existing practice. He either maintains or modifies it. He might formally seek the approval of the Secretary to amend the inherited practice. Occasionally, Council might direct that the format should take a particular shape. For convenience, the format and procedure witnessed by the present writer will be described below.

The Director of Council Affairs or the most senior official who accompanied the Director-General to a given Council meeting shares out the memoranda deliberated upon in Council and the other topics discussed under *other matters* not included on the agenda. Thus, each note-taker receives just a few of the items depending on his experience and the complexity of the item. Each officer composes the items received on the strength of his notes. He might also consult others whose notes might be more comprehensive.

The Director collates the first type written drafts and edits them as a volume before submitting it to the Director-General who re-edits the entire volume on the basis of his own notes. While editing, he exercises his discretion to add or subtract from the text. The outcome is subsequently subjected to discussion by a small team of senior officials of the Secretariat. That is necessary to ensure the accuracy of the content of the Conclusion. The product of that discussion is presented to the Secretary to the Council who also edits it as he may deem fit. Thereafter, the Conclusion can go into circulation.

Memorandum and Conclusions: Identification Devices

Memoranda have some identification marks. Some are comparable; others are peculiar to each set of memo and Conclusions. The comparability of Council memoranda and Conclusions is very limited; they differ essentially in content, format and colour. The similarities will be considered first.

Memoranda and Conclusions bear comparable headings. As can be observed from the specimens given above, each memo is said to be the property of the particular Council indicated on top of its first page. Thus, the title reads: *THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF COUNCIL X*. That is the first quasi-common identity. The second common characteristic is the word: *SECRET*, which is inserted below the title of each memo and each edition of Conclusion. Third, the phrase: *COPY NUMBER*, which is inserted on the extreme right below the title of the memo or Conclusion. In other respects the documents differ particularly as regards their code numbers, out-lay of the contents, language, style and colour of paper used. These will now be considered briefly.

The *Code Number* of a memorandum indicates the year of its production and its serial number for that year. For instance, *CM (90) 215* would indicate that the memo is the property of the Council of Ministers; that it was produced in 1990 with serial number 215. The date of its production is also indicated. By contrast, the *Code Number* of a Conclusion indicates the year in which the meeting was held and the number of its occurrence in that year, that is, whether the meeting was the first, second or third, etc., in that year. For instance, *CM (91) 2nd Meeting* would indicate that the Conclusion is the property of the Council of Ministers; that the meeting was held in 1991; and that it was the second meeting in 1991.

The body of the memo contains a logical presentation of facts and figures in support of the requests made for the consideration of Council. This is followed by the itemized Prayers. The entire presentation is made in paragraphs numbered in Roman figures. The style may be descriptive or analytical, using appropriate tenses, past, present and future, depending on the situation being described. As regards Conclusions, the reader is confronted with a continuous prose set out in unnumbered paragraphs, usually shorter than the parent memorandum. While the itemized Prayers of memos are in Roman figures, those of the Conclusions are in Arabic figures; and each Prayer is rendered as a complete sentence. The language is exclusively in the reported speech.

A memo can also be distinguished from Conclusion through colours. On the one hand, the colours of the memos differ from those of the Conclusions; on the other hand, the colours of the memos and Conclusions as separate entities are also different. For instance, while the colour of the memo of the Council of Ministers is emerald, that of the council of States is light grey and that of SMC/AFRC is light blue. By contrast, while the colour of the Conclusions of the Council of Ministers is light-yellow, that of the National Council of State is deep-yellow; and that of the SMC/AFRC is pink. If, owing to scarcity of papers, other colours are to be used, care should be taken to ensure that the documents have separate colours. Discretion in such matters is exercised by the Secretarial Unit, in consultation with the Director or Director-General.

The essence of the subject matter treated in each document is an important identification mark. For instance, a memo treats only one subject matter while an edition of Conclusions contains arguments, decisions on a wide range of matters, treated by as many memos as were listed on the agenda. Matters not listed on the agenda, but mentioned and discussed as substantive issues in their own right, are also included in the Conclusions.

Endnotes

1. Chief M.E.P. Udebiuwa, one of the earliest heads of the Council Secretariat, provided this information.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*

HEADS OF GOVERNMENT 1960 — PRESENT



← Gen. I.B. Babangida
President 1985–92



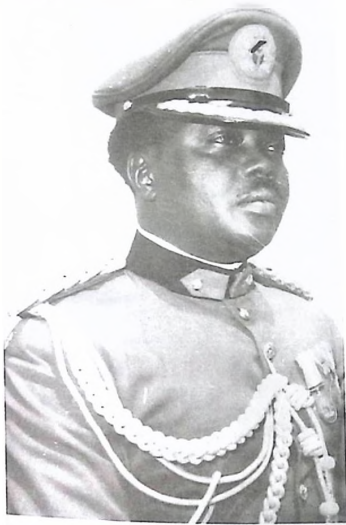
Major-General M. Buhari
Head of the Federal Military Govt. →
1983–85



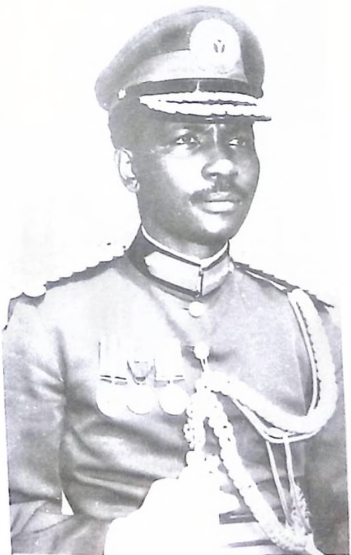
← Alhaji Shehu Shagari
President 1979-83



Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo
Head of the Federal Military Govt. →
1976-79



Gen. Murtala Mohammed
 ← Head of the Federal Military Govt.
 1975-76



Gen. Yakubu Gowon
 Head of the Federal Military Govt. →
 1966-75



Major-Gen. J. T. Agui Ironsi
 ← Head of the Federal Military Govt.
 1966 Jan — July



Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa →
 Prime Minister 1960—66

COUNCIL IN SESSION



President I.B. Babangida in council, Dodan Barracks, Ikoyi, Lagos



President I.B. Babangida admiring work of art in the ante-room of the council chamber at Abuja



Official commissioning of Asakoro Council Chambers at Abuja (Presidential Complex)



President I. B. Babangida about to take his seat in the new Council Chamber at Abuja



President I.B. Babangida, swearing in the V.P. A. Aikhomu in the Council Chambers, Dodan Barracks, Lagos.



Gen. I.B. Babangida in council



President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida with SGF and Cabinet Secretariat Staff, Abuja, 1991.



Council of Ministers January 1952



Council of Ministers January 1955

SECRETARIES TO THE GOVERNMENT



Aliyu Mohammed 1990—92



Chief Olu Falae 1986—89



G.A.E. Longe 1984—86



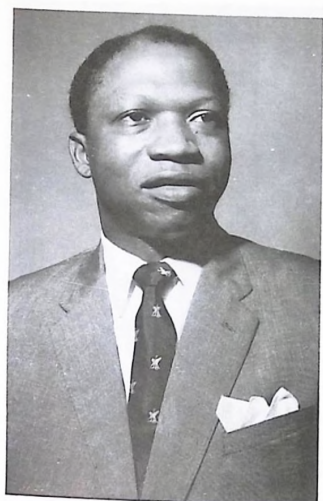
Alhaji Shehu Musa 1979—83



A.L. Ciroma 1977—79



A.A. Ayida 1975—77



C.O. Lawson 1972-75



A.A. Attah 1970-72



M.A. Ejueyitchic 1966-70



S.O. Wey 1961-1966

GOVERNORS-GENERAL



Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe
Governor-Gen /President 1960—66



Sir James Robertson 1955—60



Sir John Macpherson 1948—55



Sir Arthur Richards 1943—48



Sir Hugh Clifford



Sir Lord Lugard



Exco Systems in the States of the Federation

Modern Nigeria is a federation¹ consisting of a federal and several state governments. The discussion thus far focuses on the federal cabinet system. However, in order to have a comprehensive view of the functions of the cabinet system in the entire country, it is necessary to say a few words on the practices in the constituent states of the federation.

Toyin Falola observed that "federalism in Nigeria is a product of history, one that involved the interactions between us and the colonizers on the one hand, and among our different nationalists on the other."² The efforts during the colonial era culminated in the constitutional talks of 1953 when the erstwhile unitary government of Nigeria was regionalized. In the process, three regional governments were created as follows: Northern Region, Eastern Region and Western Region. In 1963, the Mid-West Region was added. The latter creation marked the beginning of indigenous efforts at modifying the received federalism. In 1967, the Nigerian military that was in control of the political fate of the country abandoned the concept of regions in favour of state system. Thus, the new federation was divided into twelve states. In 1976, seven more states were created; in 1987, two more were added; and in 1991 nine additional states were created bringing the total number of states today to thirty. Future state creation is conceivable; for by virtue of Section 9 of the 1989 Constitution, more states can be created. The agitation for more states has continued unabated.³

A significant tradition characteristic of all regional or state governments, either in the old or new federation of Nigeria, is the received cabinet system. Thus, irrespective of whether the Nigerian government has been civilian or military in nature, the cabinet tradition has flourished, differing only in minor details

one from the other. Thus, each Region or State has had an Executive Council holding Executive Council meetings at regular intervals. Its Chief Executive was initially a premier⁴ but subsequently a governor, who appointed his ministers or commissioners. By convention, each Executive Council takes policy decisions by considering memoranda submitted by the ministers or commissioners. The process of preparing EXCO papers, (i.e. executive Council memos) is similar to that of the federal Cabinet Office. Indeed, each state government has a Cabinet Office.

For the purpose of comparison, it is necessary to look at some samples of state EXCO memos and Conclusions. The South Eastern State Executive Council Handbook,⁵ 1972 edition, provides a suitable example; excerpt thereof will be adapted. This can be compared with Augustus Adebayo's models, representing what was practised in the old Western State.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

SESEXCO Memo Number 72/XYZ

Problem.

Construction of a new Road to link 'A' Industry.

Background.

- 1 Members will recall that a few months ago Government considered a feasibility report submitted by a team of experts who had visited the State to examine the possibility of establishing 'A' industry. According to their findings, *Fortunate Village* was chosen as the most suitable site for the project. The site was chosen for three chief reasons, namely,
- 2 The co-operation of the *Vocal Village* is necessary for the success of 'A' industry, because the engineer and a good number of the technicians who can operate the 'A' industry come from there.
- 3 The new road is shorter by twenty miles than the old one. It lies through a good and easy terrain. It is estimated that its construction will involve an expenditure of (three hundred thousand pounds). . . Unfortunately, this expenditure was not anticipated (because it was not expected that the

- report of the experts would come out so soon) and so no provision was made for it in the current Year's Capital Estimates ...
- 4 The Ministry of Finance has been consulted and is fully sympathetic to the scheme. The Commissioner for Finance, however feels that the only way of meeting the expenditure is by suspending one of the projects already approved in the Capital Estimates ...
 - 5 Both the Ministers of Works and of Town Planning are in support of my proposal.
 - 6 His Excellency is requested:
 - (a) to approved that work on the new road be started without delay;
 - (b) to direct that funds set aside for the construction of ... be transferred to the new Road Project;
 - (c) to direct that Mr. Rover be approached by the Secretary to the Military Government and/or the Commissioner for Justice to talk to the people of *Vocal Village* with a view to disabusing their minds about wrong conceptions.

Source: South-Eastern State Executive Council Handbook 1972; pp. 10-11.

EXCO MINUTES

THE BUILDING OF A NEW ROAD TO JOIN 'A' INDUSTRY

SESEXCO Memo. No 72/XXX. Submitted by the Hon. Commissioner For Works

Introducing the memorandum, the Hon. Commissioner for Works reminded Council of its decision to establish 'A' industry in the State ...

2. Members discussed the matter extensively and during the discussion the following points were made:

- (a) the old road should be improved, because it would be cheaper than opening a new road. This view was, however, countered by the production of expert estimates showing that the improvement of the old road would be far more expensive.
- (b) The new road would destroy valuable agricultural land, upon which a large area of our population had hitherto depended for the supply of staple food, such as yam and cassava.

- (c) Politically speaking, the people of Vocal Village would misunderstand the proposal and attempt to cause confusion.
3. Summing up the points made, the Chairman made particular reference to a member's statement implying that the siting of economic projects could be influenced by political consideration. It was this type of attitude which had in the past led the country to grief. As far as the Military Regime was concerned, undue political considerations or respect for vested interests could not be the criteria for deciding matters of vital public interest. He had listened to all the arguments put forward by members for whose candidness he was grateful. He had also given the most careful study to the points raised in the memorandum submitted by the Hon. Commissioner for Works, and now had no doubts in his mind as to what should be done.

Conclusion

4. His Excellency directed (or decided) that
- (a) The new road linking 'A' Industry should be opened as requested in the Memorandum, and work should be started without delay,
 - (b) Agreed that new funds should be found for the project since no provision had been made in the Capital Estimates.
 - (c) That money earmarked for the construction of . . . be diverted for the purpose.
 - (d) No approach should be made to Mr Rover to speak to the people of Vocal Village as that might be taken to mean that Government was afraid of those people. If it becomes necessary the Divisional Officer or the Commissioner himself should meet the people.

Source: South-Eastern State Executive Council Handbook. 1972, pp. 12-13.

SECRET

**THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF THE EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL OF . . . GOVERNMENT**

M.G. (68) (Serial No. of Memorandum in the Executive Council
Register) COPY NO

Date:

PROVISION OF GRANT OF ₦5000 TO THE ALL-NIGERIA
UNITED NATIONS STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Memorandum by the Minister of Education

In response to a special appeal made to this Ministry by the All-Nigeria United Nations Students Association (ANUNSA) for funds to help finance an educational conference of the United Nations Students Association in West Africa being held in Abidjan currently, I propose that this government should give the Association a grant of N5000.

3. The Ministry of Finance supports this Memorandum.
4. Council is invited to:
 - (i) approve that a grant of ₦5000 be given to the All-Nigeria United Nations Students Association;
 - (ii) direct that the Ministry of Finance should make the necessary provision available.

(Initialled)

Ministry of Education.

File Reference:

Source: A. Adebayo, *Principles and Practice of Public Administration in Nigeria*, Wiley & Sons, 1981, p. 122.

Appraisal

A comparison of the federal Council Memorandum and Conclusions will show that both the federal and state governments adopt a comparable method of taking executive decisions, (namely, *via* memoranda); but the formats of the resultant documents are not stereotyped. The samples considered in this book exhibit individual differences, showing the ingenuity and discretion of the Secretary to the respective Councils. Of vital importance for administrative science is the fact that the history of executive decisions in Nigeria can be constructed by examining council memoranda and conclusion.

References

1. See T.N. Tamuno, *The Evolution of the Nigerian State between 1898 and 1914*; Longman, 1978; M. Crowder *The Story of Nigeria* . . . E. Isichie, *A History of Nigeria*. Longman, 1983, O. Ikime (ed), *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Heinemann, 1980; pp. 390-409; *Readings on Federation*, A.B. Akinyemi; et al. (eds) NIIA. 1979, pp. 91-102 where Jide Osuntokun traced the historical background of the Nigerian federalism.

2. Toyin Falola "The Evolution and Changes in Nigeria. Federalism" in *Federalism in a Changing World*, R.A. Olaniyan, Obafemi Awolowo Press, 1988, p. 52.
3. In *Daily Times*, Lagos, 17 April, 1991, p.17, A group of Nigerians addressed a Memorandum to the President and the Armed Forces Ruling Council demanding the creation of Enugu/Wawa, Abia, and Anioma State. On 27 August 1991, President Babangida created 9 more states.
4. In the First Republic, the Chief Executive of each region was known as Premier. Under the Second Republic he/she was called a Governor, that tradition will continue in the Third Republic.

8

Council Secretariat Staff

The Council Secretariat staff consists of a Director-General, many administrative officers, many secretary-typists or confidential secretaries and a handful of clerks. Professionals like accountants, accounts clerks, technicians, usually found in other ministries or departments are conspicuously absent in the secretariat. Such services are provided by the General Services Office of the Presidency. These include recruitment, purchasing of equipment and payment of salaries and allowances of staff.

Headship of the Secretariat

Politically, the headship of the Council Secretariat devolves on the incumbent Secretary to the Government of the Federation.¹ Indeed, all the Departments in the Cabinet Office (there are about 10 of them) are directly answerable to him. Thus, all Departments taken together constitute the office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation.² Their administrative powers are derived from him. This is evidenced by the administrative practice whereby all official correspondences and circulars emanating from the Cabinet Office to other corporate bodies are sent out in the name of the Secretary to the Government.

Be that as it may, the Deputy Secretary to the Council exercises the administrative headship of the Council Secretariat Department. Before the radical re-organization of 1975, the Deputy Secretary of Council was referred to within the framework of the civil service as Permanent Under-Secretary, a post interpreted to be equivalent to Deputy Permanent Secretary. Mr. M.E.P. Udebiuwa pioneered it in 1966.

In October 1975, the Federal Executive Council approved the Council Memo which proposed the upgrading of the post of

Deputy Secretary to Council to the rank of a Permanent Secretary. Ostensibly, the approval hinged on the expediency of investing the incumbent with sufficient powers to cope with the executive duties linking the Council Secretariat with all Ministries/ Departments and State Governments.

The incumbents since that dispensation included: F.I. Adesanoye (1975), A.S.N. Egbo (1975), E.O. Olowu (1976), J.E. Uduehi (1977-1983), Alhaji S. Barda (1983), Ason Bur (1983-1985), Dr. G.A. Adeosun (1985 - 1989), F.A. Adetula (1987 -1990) for AFRC/NCS, and Dr. A.S. Abam (1991-1992).⁴

Secretaries

The Administrative Secretaries who assist the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary to the Council are administrative officers carefully selected and redeployed from various Ministries. Their academic backgrounds vary. They are mostly graduates of liberal arts and social sciences.

Confidential Secretaries

The confidential secretaries are secretary-typists of the highest calibre available in the civil service. Like the administrative officers they are posted to the Council Secretariat from various ministries. They are usually very proficient in shorthand-writing and typewriting. Each administrative secretary has a confidential secretary who produces draft memos and conclusions. The remaining secretary-typists are located in the typing pool, partly in the End Room and partly in the Distribution Unit.

Clerical Staff

The clerical staff consists of holders of West African School Certificate. They assist the Secretaries in the production of memos and conclusions and dispatching them, when duly completed and authorized.

Qualities of the Secretaries

The qualities which the Secretaries of the Council Secretariat should possess are over and above the ordinary; at least, much higher than those expected in the other Departments and Ministries. Salient among them are: high intellectual capability necessary to grasp the complexity of the Council work; high

moral standard to keep government secrets (because all documents from different sources inundating the Council Secretariat are classified); selflessness, without which Council work cannot be accomplished; and good health to sustain the tempo of work. As a matter of fact, each officer is routinely subjected to security screening and are constantly watched by security agents to forestall leakages of government documents.

Personal Attributes

Given the peculiar nature of the work of the Council Secretariat, it has become customary to forge a special type of *esprit de corps*; indeed, a sort of camaraderie that is hardly found elsewhere in the public service. Council work involves all and sundry in the Department. There is no room for partial success; thus, the overall success is at stake. For instance, if all papers have been carefully prepared and the clerks fail to deliver them, the Director-General will be answerable for the non-performance should Council ask relevant questions thereon. To avoid failure or embarrassment, the Director-General is normally interested in the production and dispatch of processed Council papers. He is, therefore, assisted by all the officers, irrespective of rank, grade and seniority. The inter-relationship or inter-dependence necessary for the production system makes camaraderie an indispensable personal attribute of all Council officials.

Personnel Growth

Personnel growth in Council Secretariat has been a function of the growth and expansion of government work. In the 1950s and early 1960s when Council Secretariat catered for just one Council, the personnel requirements were modest. Under the military when many more Councils were created and Council meetings became more frequent, the staff strength had to be re-inforced accordingly. In 1990 they were not less than a hundred.⁵

The list of staff from 1916 to 1990 hereunder given depicts the progressive growth of the Council Secretariat personnel.

It is necessary to point out that, by convention, only the names of the officials who attend Council meetings and actually take the minutes thereof are entered on the attendance sheets. The names are arranged in a format showing separate columns for different categories of attendants, namely, the President, the Vice-President, all members of Council present at a given

meeting and, the Council Secretariat officials, as well as duly certified representatives of Ministries or Departments or their agencies in attendance.

The names of Council Secretariat officials are arranged in order of seniority below those of the Council members. The list begins with the name of the Secretary to the Council followed by that of the Deputy Secretary to Council, then other names. Government officials representing their Ministries or Departments are acknowledged only by their official designations. Their column comes immediately after that of the Council Secretariat. The arrangement can be visualized pictorially as shown below.

There is no pictorial record of the Council Secretariat officials. The Council members often take group pictures with the President at the inception of each constituted Council.⁶

SPECIMEN OF ATTENDANCE SHEET

President, Commander-in-Chief

Name and Title.....

.....

Vice-President

Name and Title.....

.....

Council Members

Names and titles

.....

Council Secretariat

Name only.....

.....

.....

In Attendance

Titles only.....

.....

.....

COUNCIL SECRETARIAT STAFF LIST FROM 1916-1990

1916

1. Mr. C.T. Lawrence
2. Mr. Hde B. Bewley
3. Mr. L.H. Boileau
4. Mr. L.S. Bathel

1917

1. Mr. C.T. Lawrence
2. Mr. L.S. Bathel
3. Mr. G.S. Browne

1918

1. Mr. G.S. Browne
2. Mr. A.C. Burns
3. Mr. Hde B. Bewley

1919

1. Mr. Hde B. Bewley
2. Mr. G.O. Nugent

1920

1. Mr. G.O. Nugent
2. Mr. W. Scott Evans
3. Mr. Henry Beauchamp Butler
4. Mr. Theodore St. Clair Harrison
5. Mr. G.O. Nugent.

***From August 1924**

1. Sir Donald Cameron
2. Hon. H.M.M. Moore
3. Hon. T.S.W. Thomas
4. Mr. G.O. Nugent
5. Mr. A.B. Russy

1925

1. Hon. T.S.W. Thomas
2. Hon. F.M. Baddeley
3. Mr. A.B. Russy
4. Mr. K.L. Hall
5. Mr. H.L. Wardprice
6. Major Chadwick D.S.O.

1926

1. Hon. T.S.W. Thomas
2. Hon. F.M. Baddeley
3. Mr. A.B. Russy
4. Mr. W.R.R. Ffreneh
5. Mr. J.W.C. Rutherford

1927

1. Hon. T.S.W. Thomas
2. Hon. F.M. Baddeley
3. Hon. H.M.M. Moore
4. Mr. A.B. Russy
5. Mr. J.I. Outrain
6. Mr. W.O.P. Rosedale

1928

1. Sir F.M. Baddeley
2. Hon. H.M.M. Moore
3. Hon. Donald Kingdon
4. Mr. H.E. Priestman
5. Mr. A.B. Mathews
6. Mr. G.D. Pitcairn

1929

1. Sir F.M. Baddeley
2. Mr. H.E. Priestman
3. Mr. A.B. Mathews

1930

1. Sir F.M. Baddeley
2. Mr. H.E. Priestman
3. Mr. R. Macauley
4. Mr. A.C.M. Burns
5. Mr. A.R.A. Dickens

1931

1. Mr. A.C.M. Burns
2. Mr. G.S. Browne
3. Mr. R. Macauley
4. Mr. A.R.A. Dickens
5. Mr. G.C. Whiteley

**No records in the Archives from February 1921 - July 1924*

6. Mr. G. Harmmaut
7. Mr. J.H. Blair

1932

1. Mr. A.C.M. Burns
2. Mr. J.D. Hartford

1933

1. Mr. A.C.M. Burns
2. Mr. G. Hermmaut
3. Mr. J.D. Hartford
4. Mr. G.C. Whiteley
5. Mr. E.R. Ward

1934

1. Mr. A.C.M. Burns
2. Mr. G. Hermmaut
3. Mr. J.D. Hartford
4. Mr. K.A. Sinker

1935

1. Mr. G.C. Whiteley
2. Mr. K.A. Sinker
3. Mr. J.A. Maybin
4. Mr. C.R. Niven

1936

1. Mr. G.C. Whiteley
2. Mr. K.A. Sinker
3. Mr. J.A. Maybin

1937

1. Mr. G.C. Whiteley
2. Mr. K.A. Sinker
3. Mr. J.A. Maybin
4. Mr. T.F. Smith

1938

1. Mr. G.C. Whiteley
2. Mr. J.A. Maybin
3. Mr. F.T. Smith
4. Mr. R.E. Alford
5. Mr. C.C. Woolley
6. Mr. F.F. Wilkinson

1939

1. Mr. T. Hoskyns-Abrahall
2. Mr. C.C. Woolley
3. Mr. T.F. Smith

1940

1. Mr. T. Hoskyns-Abrahall
2. Mr. C.C. Woolley
3. Mr. A.G. Dalgleish
4. Mr. W.R.T. Milne

1941

1. Mr. T. Hoskyns-Abrahall
2. Mr. C.C. Woolley
3. Mr. A.G. Dalgleish
4. Mr. P.P. Campbell

1942

1. Mr. T. Hoskyns-Abrahall
2. Mr. P.P. Campbell

1943

1. Mr. A.W.G.W. Grantham
2. Mr. P.P. Campbell
3. Mr. K.P. Maddocks

1944

1. Mr. A.W.G.H. Grantham
2. Mr. K.P. Maddocks
3. Mr. F.D. Jakeway

1945

1. Sir Gerald Whiteley
2. Mr. T. Hoskyns-Abrahall
3. Mr. G.F.T. Colby
4. Mr. F.D. Jakeway
5. Mr. G.B. Stooke
6. Mr. L. Bain

1946

1. Mr. F.D. Jakeway
2. Mr. G.B. Stooke
3. Mr. L. Bain
4. Mr. G.F.T. Colby
5. Mr. W.S. Carter

1946

1. Mr. G.B. Stooke
2. Mr. S. Phillipson
3. Mr. G.F.T. Colby
4. Mr. W.S. Carter

1948

1. Mr. S. Phillipson
2. Mr. W.S. Carter
3. Mr. H.M. Foot
4. Mr. A.W.C. Savage
5. Mr. J.G. Davies

1949

1. Mr. H.M. Foot
2. Mr. J.G. Davies
3. Mr. P.H. Balmer
4. Mr. H.F. Marshall

1950

1. Mr. H.M. Foot
2. Mr. P.H. Balmer
3. Mr. H.F. Marshall
4. Mr. H.R. Stephens
5. Mr. C.J. Pleass

1951

1. Mr. Hugh-Mackintosh Foot
2. Mr. H.F. Marshall
3. Mr. H.R. Stephens
4. Mr. A.E.T. Benson
5. Mr. K.J. Hilton

1952

1. Mr. A.A.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. H.P. Elliott
3. Mr. R.E. Brown
4. Mr. B.A. Abbott
5. Mr. J.M. Blair-Fish
6. Mr. V.L. Cornish

1953

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. H.P. Elliott
3. Mr. D.H. Lloyd Morgan

4. Mr. V.L. Cornish
5. Mr. R.E. Brown
6. Mr. R.G. Hodgson

1954

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. R.G. Hodgson
3. Mr. J.H. Mackie
4. Mr. P.J.D. Nesbitt-Hawes
5. Mr. G.M.L. Blackburne-Kane
6. Mr. C.M.H. Harrison
7. Mr. F.F.A. Grey
8. Mr. A.M. Muir
9. Mr. J.O. Field

1955

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. A.M. Muir
3. Mr. G.M.L. Blackburne-Kane
4. Mr. C.P. Thompson
5. Mr. L. Roberts

1956

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. C.E.H. Tuck
3. Mr. L. Roberts
4. Mr. C.P. Thompson
5. Mr. P.H.G. Stallard
6. Mr. M.L. Parker

1957

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. M.B. Hall
3. Mr. M. Jenkins
4. Mr. C.E.H. Tuck
5. Mr. G.M.L. Blackburne-Kane

1958

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. M. Jenkins
3. Mr. C.O. Lawson
4. Mr. A.G.H. Gardner-Brown
5. Mallam Isa Koto
6. Mr. A. Sprilyan
7. Mr. V.H.K. Littlewood

1959

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. M. Jenkins
3. Mallam Isa Koto
4. Mr. M.B. Hall
5. Mr. A.G.H. Gardner-Brown
6. Mallam Abdulrahman Howeidy

1960

1. Mr. A.F.F.P. Newns
2. Mr. M. Jenkins
3. Mallam Abdulrahman Howeidy
4. Mr. C.O. Lawson
5. Mr. F.R.I. Opara
6. Mallam Isa Koto
7. Mr. M.O. Akande

1961

1. Mr. C.O. Lawson
2. Mallam Isa Koto
3. Mr. M.O. Akande
4. Mr. R.C. Onyejepe

1962

1. Mr. S.O. Wey
2. Mr. M.O. Akande
3. Mr. R.C. Onyejepu
4. Mallam Isa Koto

1963

1. Mr. S.O. Wey
2. Mallam Isa Koto
3. Mr. R.C. Onyejepu
4. Mr. M.I. Alege

1964

1. Mr. S.O. Wey
2. Mr. R.C. Onyejepu
3. Mr. M.I. Alege
4. Mr. I.A. Wemambu

1965

1. Mr. S.O. Wey
2. Mr. R.C. Onyejepu
3. Mr. M.E.P. Udebiuwa
4. Mr. M.I. Alege

1966

1. Mr. S.O. Wey
2. Mr. M.E.P. Udebiuwa
3. Mr. S.I.A. Akenzua
4. Mr. C. Nnabeze
5. Mr. M.I. Alege
6. Mr. F.I. Adesanoye

1967

1. Mr. S.I.A. Akenzua
2. Mr. M.I. Alege
3. Mr. F.I. Adesanoye

1968

1. Mr. S.I.A. Akenzua
2. Mr. G.A. Ige
3. Mr. M.I. Alege
4. Mr. F.I. Adesanoye

1969

1. Mr. G.A. Ige
2. Mr. H.R.B. Harper
3. Mr. M.I. Alege
4. Mr. F.I. Adesanoye
5. Mr. J.B. Ojo

1970

1. Mr. G.A. Ige
2. Mr. M.I. Alege
3. Mr. D.R. Omokore
4. Mr. A.O. Oluwunmi
5. Mr. J.B. Ojo

1971

1. Mr. G.A. Ige
2. Mr. H.R.B. Harper
3. Mr. D.R. Omokore
4. Mr. F.I. Adesanoye
5. Mr. U.S. Ndayako
6. Mr. A.O. Oluwunmi
7. Mr. B. Kolawole

1972

1. Mr. C.O. Lawson
2. Mr. F.I. Adesanoye
3. Mr. U.S. Udayako

4. Mr. A.O. Oluwunmi
5. Mr. B. Kolawole
6. Mr. B.I. Olinmah

1973

1. Mr. C.O. Lawson
2. Mr. F.I. Adesanoje
3. Mr. B. Kolawole
4. Mr. A.O. Oluwunmi
5. Mr. B.I. Olinmah

1974

1. Mr. C.O. Lawson
2. Mr. F.I. Adesanoje
3. Mr. A.O. Oluwunmi
4. Mr. B.I. Olinmah
5. Mr. M.P.U. Obaro
6. Dr. A. Ogunleye

1975

1. Mr. C.O. Lawson
2. Mr. A.A. Ayida
3. Mr. A.S.N. Egbo
4. Mr. E.O. Olowu
5. Mr. F.I. Adesanoje
6. Mr. A.O. Oluwunmi
7. Mr. M.P.U. Obaro
8. Dr. A. Ogunleye
9. Dr. R.O. Mowoe

1976

1. Mr. A.A. Ayida
2. Mr. E.O. Olowu
3. Dr. O. Ogunleye
4. Mr. J.E.K. Oyegun
5. Mr. M.P.U. Obaro
6. Mr. E.A. Oleghe
7. Mr. C.O. Lebi
8. Mr. A. Ojo
9. Dr. R.O. Mowoe
10. Mr. O.A. Adesoye
11. Mr. I. Egedo
12. Mr. L. Abimbola
13. Mr. M. Shitu
14. Mr. A. Adetola

1977

1. Mr. A.A. Ayida
2. Mr. A.L. Ciroma
3. Mr. J.E. Uduehi
4. Mr. E.O. Olowu
5. Mr. E.A. Oleghe
6. Mr. M. Shitu
7. Mr. A.A. Banusa
8. Mr. I. Egedo
9. Mr. A. Adetola
10. Mr. C.C.E. Ugboaga
11. Mr. A.O. Okafor
12. Dr. A.A. Coker

1978

1. Mr. A.L. Ciroma
2. Mr. Bukar Shaib
3. Mr. J.E. Uduehi
4. Mr. M. Shitu
5. Mr. L.E. Essien
6. Mr. A.O. Okafor
7. Mr. C.C.E. Ugboaga
8. Dr. A.A. Coker
9. Mr. A. Adetola
10. Mr. O.O.O. Ogunkua
11. Mr. I.E. Onwubueke

1979

1. Mr. A.L. Ciroma
2. Mr. G.A.E. Longe
3. Mr. J.E. Uduehi
4. Mr. L.E. Essien
5. Mr. A.O. Okafor
6. Mr. C.C.E. Ugboaga
7. Mr. I.E. Onwubueke
8. Mr. O.O.O. Ogunkua
9. Mr. A.I. Obeya
10. Mr. I. Egedo
11. Mr. A. Adetola

1980

1. Alhaji S.A. Musa
2. Mallam Y.A. Dikko
3. Mr. J.E. Uduehi
4. Mr. L.E. Essien
5. Mr. A.O. Okafor

6. Mr. C.C.E. Ugbodaga
7. Mr. I.E. Onwubueke
8. Mr. O.O.O. Ogunkua
9. Mr. L.C. Ibe
10. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
11. Dr. Bukar Shaib
12. Mr. I. Egedo
13. Mr. A. Adetola

1981

1. Alhaji S.A. Musa
2. Alhaji Y.A. Dikko
3. Mr. J.E. Uduehi
4. Mr. L.E. Essien
5. Mr. A.O. Okafor
6. Mr. C.C.E. Ugbodaga
7. Mr. I.E. Onwubueke
8. Mr. L.C. Ibe
9. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
10. Dr A. Ogunlewe

1982

1. Alhaji S.A. Musa
2. Alhaji Y.A. Dikko
3. Mr. J.E. Uduehi
4. Mr. A.O. Okafor
5. Mr. C.C.E. Ugbodaga
6. Mr. I.E. Onwubueke
7. Mr. L.C. Ibe
8. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
9. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
10. Mr. K.C. Obikwelu
11. Dr. A Ogunlewe

1983

1. Alhaji S.A. Musa
2. Alhaji Y.A. Dikko
3. Mr. J.E. Uduehi
4. Alhaji Saidu Barda
5. Mr. A.O. Okafor
6. Mr. C.C.E. Ugbodaga
7. Mr. I.E. Onwubueke
8. Mr. L.C. Ibe
9. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
10. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
11. Dr. A Ogunlewe

1984

1. Mr. G.A.E. Longe
2. Mr. Ason Bur
3. Mr. A.O. Okafor
4. Mr. L.C. Ibe
5. Mr. S.A. Seweje
6. Mr. E.A. Aimienwanu
7. Mr. P.E. Odili
8. Mr. E.O. Kuponiyi
9. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
10. Mr. I. Odoe
11. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
12. Mr. E.N.C. Okechukwu
13. Mr. J.F. Olofin
14. Mr. K.C. Obikwelu
15. Mr. A. Fatoki
16. Mr. S.O. Ayanbadejo

1985

1. Mr. G.A.E. Longe
2. Alhaji A.M. Waziri Fika
3. Mr. Ason Bur
4. Mr. A.O. Okafor
5. Mr. A.E. Aimienwanu
6. Mr. W.A. Wachuku
7. Mr. E.O. Kuponiyi
8. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
9. Mr. I. Odoe
10. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
11. Mr. J.F. Olofin
12. Mr. E.N.C. Okechukwu
13. Mr. A. Fatoki
14. Mr. S.O. Ayanbadejo
15. Mr. K.C. Obikwelu
16. Mr. J.O. Mukoro
17. Mr. A.F. Salami

1986

1. Mr. G.A.E. Longe
2. Mr. S.O. Falae
3. Dr. G.A. Adeosun
4. Mr. A.O. Okafor
5. Mr. S.N. Mbamaran
6. Mr. A.E. Aimienwanu
7. Mr. W.A. Wachuku
8. Mr. E.C. Kuponiyi

9. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
10. Mr. A. Fasan
11. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
12. Mr. J.F. Olofin
13. Mr. E.N.C. Okechukwu
14. Mr. A. Fatoki
15. Mr. O.S. Ogedengbe
16. Mr. S.A. Aina
17. Mr. J.O. Mukoro
18. Mr. S.O. Ayanbadejo
19. Mr. A.F. Salami

1987

1. Chief S. Olu Falae
2. Dr. G.A. Adeosun
3. Mr. F.A. Adetula
4. Mr. J.A. Koguna
5. Mr. A.E. Aimienwanu
6. Mr. W.A. Wachuku
7. Mr. E.O. Kuponiya
8. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
9. Mr. A. Fasan
10. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
11. Mr. E.N.C. Okechukwu
12. Mr. S.A. Aina
13. Mr. O.S. Ogedengbe
14. Mr. J.O. Mukoro
15. Mr. I.B.C. Akujuobi-Amadi

1988

1. Chief S.O. Falae
2. Dr. G.A. Adeosun
3. Mr. F.A. Adetula
4. Mr. J.A. Koguna
5. Mrs. B.A.M. Okusanya
6. Mr. A.E. Aimienwanu
7. Mr. W.A. Wachuku
8. Mr. E.O. Kuponiya
9. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
10. Mr. A. Fasan
11. Mr. A.O. Akinboboye
12. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
13. Mr. A.N. Osaka
14. Mr. O.S. Ogedengbe
15. Mr. E.N.C. Okechukwu
16. Mr. S.A. Aina

17. Mr. J.O. Mukoro
18. Mr. I.B.C. Akujuobi-Amadi
19. Mr. H.N. Said

1989

1. Chief S. Olu Falae
2. Dr. G.A. Adeosun
3. Mr. F.A. Adetula
4. Mr. J.A. Koguna
5. Mr. A.E. Aimienwanu
6. Mr. W.A. Wachuku
7. Mr. E.O. Kuponiya
8. Mr. S.B. Ajulo
9. Mr. A. Fasan
10. Mr. A.O. Akinboboye
11. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
12. Mr. A.N. Osaka
13. Mr. O.S. Ogedengbe
14. Mr. E.N.C. Okechukwu
15. Mr. S.A. Aina
16. Mr. J.O. Mukoro
17. Mr. I.B.C. Akujuobi-Amadi
18. Mr. N.H. Said
19. Mr. M.U. Nnaji

1990

1. Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed
2. Mr F.A. Adetula
3. Alhaji Dahiru Mohammed
4. Alhaji J.A. Koguna
5. Mr. W.A. Wachuku
6. Mr. U. Eloagu
7. Mr. E.O. Kuponiya
8. Mr. A. Fasan
9. Mr. A.O. Akinboboye
10. Mr. N.U. Igwebike
11. Mr. A.N. Osaka
12. Mr. O.S. Ogedengbe
13. Mr. E.N.C. Okechukwu
14. Mr. S.A. Aina
15. Mr. T. Mise
16. Dr. Owomero
17. Mr. J.O. Mukoro
18. Mr. Agina
19. Mr. I.B.C. Akujuobi-Amadi
20. Mr T.A. Ajayi
21. Mr. M.U. Nnaji

Head Girls of the End-Room and Some Long Serving Secretaries of the Secretariat

1. Mrs. E.O. Bayagbona
2. Miss Inko-Taria
3. Mrs. E.A. Ladejobi
4. Mrs. P.A. Aderibigbe
5. Mrs I.K. Durodola
6. Miss S.O. Gbinigie (MON)
7. Mrs. E.A. Ikpade (MON)
8. Mrs. F. Adegborioye
9. Mrs. L.O. Savage (MON)
10. Mrs. A.O. Lawson
11. Mrs L.K. Adebajo
12. Mrs. F.A. Araba
13. Mrs. Shade Adegbenro
14. Mrs. A.E. Ekenobi
15. Mrs. F.A. Akadiri
16. Mrs. K.O. Ashorobi

Endnotes

1. The Secretary to Government is the Secretary to Council. In the performance of his assignment, he is assisted by the Council Secretariat, one of the Departments in the Presidency. For the functions of the Secretary to Government, see S.B. Ajulo "The Constitutional and Administration Evolution of the Office of Secretary to Government in Nigeria 1991 - 1992" (Forthcoming).
2. The organogram of the Presidency prepared in 1990 shows that more than ten Departments each headed by a Director-General reported to the Secretary to Government. See below
3. Personal interview with Chief Udebiuwa in March 1991.
4. See Decree No 28, 1990. Section 7 lists Cabinet Secretariat as one of the Departments of the reconstituted office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation.
5. 1990 Recurrent Estimates of Authorized Establishments of the Federal Civil Service; FGP 1990 pp. 9-10.
6. Preserved in the Council Secretariat Archives are two group photographs of members of Council of Ministers dated 1952 and 1955, respectively. That pictorial evidence would seem to suggest that each constituted Council normally takes, at least, one formal group photograph with the President of Council. It is, however, not known for certain if that practice has been sustained. What is obvious is that the precedent set in the early 1950s of preserving copies of group pictures of Council members in the Archives was discontinued even before the attainment of Independence in 1960.

Pictorial record-keeping is an age-old and world-wide practice. It should be part and parcel of the routine assignments of the Council Secretariat to ensure that the President-in-Council takes a group photograph with the members of the respective Councils. In exercising that function the Council Secretariat should preserve, in its Archives for posterity, copies of the resultant group photographs.

9

Conditions of Service for Council Secretariat

It would appear that working in Council Secretariat had nothing unusual or spectacular about it before the advent of the military administration in Nigeria. However, with greater frequency of Council meetings, and the expansion of the decision-making organs of government, the work-load in the Council Secretariat increased tremendously. Working longer hours than normal, sometimes till the early hours of the next day, became a regular feature. The Annual Budget sessions constitute the peak period in the Secretariat. To appreciate the rigour of work it is necessary to briefly describe the latter points.

All Budget Memoranda are considered by the Federal Executive/Council of Ministers, National Council of State(s) and Supreme Military Council/Armed Forces Ruling Council. The lower Councils consider them in turn before they are referred to the highest Council. Copies of the views expressed in one Council are attached as Annexes to the memos referred for the consideration of the next superior Council.

Usually, the memoranda considered by the Council of Ministers are converted to those of the National Council of State while those of the latter are converted to memoranda of the Armed Forces Ruling Council. Sometimes there might be just one day interval, or none at all. Under such circumstances, the staff of the Council Secretariat have to work round the clock to get the Council papers ready. It is remarkable that the procedure for producing Council papers in readiness for meetings is always hitch-free. Various devices adopted individually or collectively must have helped the Council Secretariat staff to cope with the tight work schedule. Secretaries occasionally adopt the shift system. A few unfortunate incidents were experienced. One

or two fatal casualties of staff were recorded in the 1970s. Such eventualities must have sensitized the authorities to the plight of the staff of Council Secretariat; more so because officers used to dread posting to Council Secretariat Department, generally regarded as *hardship post*, or *Sahara Desert*.

Measures taken to alleviate the hardships of Council Secretariat work included free and regular transportation of staff from home to the office and vice-versa; lunch on days when Conclusions of meetings are written; grant of token Council allowance and annual free medical check-up/treatment locally or abroad. The latter measure constituted the subject matter of a Council memorandum which was approved in 1980. Pursuant thereto, an Establishment Circular No. X 102201/T.50 of 5 August, 1980, was issued, which stipulated as follows:

The President-in-Council has approved that the staff of the Council Secretariat should be entitled to free medical examination and treatment by specialists locally or abroad at least once a year.

The allowance payable to Council Secretariat was stated in Circular No. B. 63304/T/37 of 27 October, 1980. The same Circular made it compulsory for all Administrative officers and Confidential/Personal Secretaries to spend at least two years of their career in Council Secretariat. These measures gave Council Secretariat Department a new lease of life.

In 1984, Mr Ason Bur set up a Welfare Committee of Council Secretariat Department under the Chairmanship of Mr S.B. Ajulo. The committee reappraised the *modus operandi* of work in the Department. It discovered that while some officers were over-worked, others had less to do. Measures recommended included closing at 4.30p.m. if there was no general work such as Conclusion writing which would involve all the staff. That measure had the merit of minimizing boredom generally suffered by officers having less to do. The Committee was reconstituted in 1986. It restored the feeding facilities which were temporarily suspended. It also rationalized the use of official vehicles during office hours.

Although the condition of work in the Council Secretariat has improved, a great deal still needs to be done to attract and retain staff in the spirit of the new Civil Service Reforms, which among other things, emphasize professionalism. It is pertinent to note that some of the provisions in the welfare package granted by the President-in-Council in 1980 are already in abeyance. For example, the stipulation that all Administrative officers and Confidential and Personal Secretaries must spend a

minimum of two years in the Council Secretariat in their career was faithfully implemented. This might now seem overtaken by the 1988 Civil Service Reform which makes it mandatory for officers to make a career in their respective Departments. The medical check-up/treatment at home and abroad on annual basis was operated only for a brief period. Other incentives could be given by providing courses of study at home and abroad to widen the horizon of the Council Secretariat officials. Between 1988 — 1990, study tour were arranged to Britain, Canada, Australia, Paris and Washington. Future programmes could include research-oriented courses which might lead to the overall improvement of the public service.

Endnotes

- 1 . Ajulo, S.B. "The Constitutional and Administrative evolution of the Post of Secretary to Government of the Federation, 1919—1992" forthcoming.
- 2 . See the Organogram of the Presidency in the Appendix.
- 3 . Fact gleaned from archival records.
- 4 . See *supra* the *Evolution of Council Secretariat*.

10

Conclusion

The primary objective of this book is to complement Newn's "Office of Council of Ministers: Organization, Practice and Procedure" written at the tail end of the colonial era. Against the background of the Cabinet Secretariat at No. 10 Downing Street, London, the author, a colonial officer, foreshadowed what was to happen in the Nigerian Cabinet Secretariat. By contrast, this book has attempted to describe the activities of the Cabinet Office, Lagos, between 1954 and 1990. In historical perspective, therefore, the two might be useful in the quest for chronological knowledge on the Council Secretariat. A short autocritique of this book is necessary in order to take the wind out of the sails of its would-be critics.

Given the title of this book, the constituents of the Cabinet Office have not been analysed. The author is not only aware that a substantive book on the entire office is a *desideratum*, but that one is, in fact, in the offing.¹ Secondly, the book has not described the functions of the Secretary to Government of the Federation because efforts thereon have already been undertaken elsewhere.² Thirdly, a systematic analysis of the content of Council Memos and Conclusions has not been attempted in order not to run foul of the sacrosanct administrative ethics of Council which forbid the disclosure of the contents of Council papers, unless officially authorized.³ The book therefore admits these shortcomings, among others, which may be detected by critical readers.

That notwithstanding, the book has attempted to show the remote and immediate origins of the Nigerian Cabinet system by alluding to the British, French, United States and German models. The conclusion that emerges from the comparison of the five models is that while the Nigerian Cabinet system was inspired by the No. 10 Downing Street/White Hall model, its evolu-

tion has exhibited streaks of presidentialism a *l'américaine*, and some sort of heterogeneity characteristic of the French and German Cabinet traditions. To that extent, the Nigerian Cabinet system would appear to be eclectic.

Indeed, the Nigerian Cabinet system flourished first at the centre before it spread through administrative dispersal into the regions or states as pointed out by Augustus Adebayo in his *Principles and Practice of Public Administration in Nigeria*.⁴

Like a living organism the Federal Council Secretariat has witnessed a dynamic growth. From a tiny little cell which it was at inception, the Council Secretariat has grown into a full fledged 'animal' described above. Thus, what began as a small sub-unit in the Office of the Secretary to Government has emerged as a substantive Department where a number of civil servants are now expected to make full career, given the 1988 Civil Service Reforms. The Department has evolved over the years conventions and traditions which have metamorphosed into norms to be obeyed by the career officers of the Department; or to be disregarded at their own peril. That is why it has been deemed necessary to reduce some of them into writing in order to guide the new entrants to Council Secretariat and to serve as *aide-memoire* to the old-timers.

A survey of the list of Council Secretariat officials shown in Chapter 8 cannot but attract attention. It will be observed that some of them eventually emerged either as Secretary to Government, Deputy Governor or Permanent Secretary/Director-General or even respectable paramount traditional ruler.⁵ Names like S.O. Wey, C.O. Lawson, A.A. Ayida, M.O. Akande, S. I. Akenzua (The present Oba of Benin), F.I. Adesanoye, Ason Bur, to mention just few, ring a bell. One cannot resist the temptation of inferring that the Council Secretariat offered a good training ground for leadership in the Nigerian public service. Indeed, the Department has "notoriously" produced "high fliers." Attributes ingrained in the Secretariat officials are, *inter alia*, hardwork, long suffering, absolute loyalty, high degree of discretion and circumspection.

Of course, the book does not pretend to have said all there is to be said on the Council Secretariat. After all, it is just a modest attempt to introduce the public to the corpus of knowledge on Council Secretariat. Conceptually, the attempt is designed to stimulate future greater efforts. Thus, if this publication can succeed in that quest, the author will have achieved one of his basic objectives. Be that as it may, readers are assured that future edi-

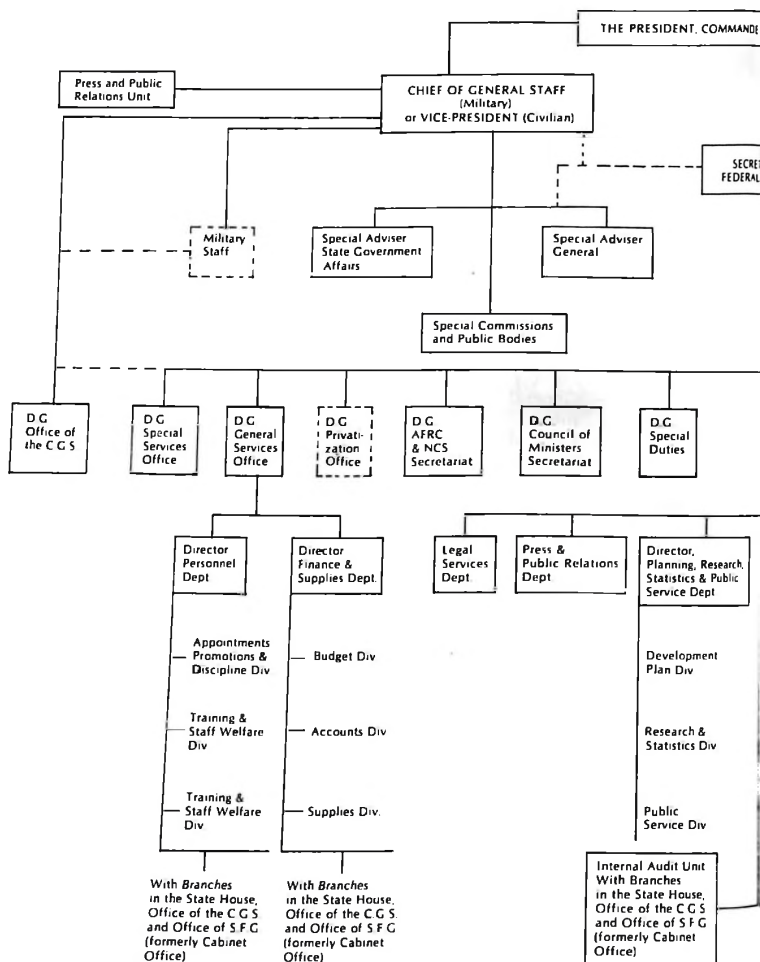
tions of the present book will be richer in content and higher in standard.

Appendix I

The Presidents-in-Council: 1914—1990

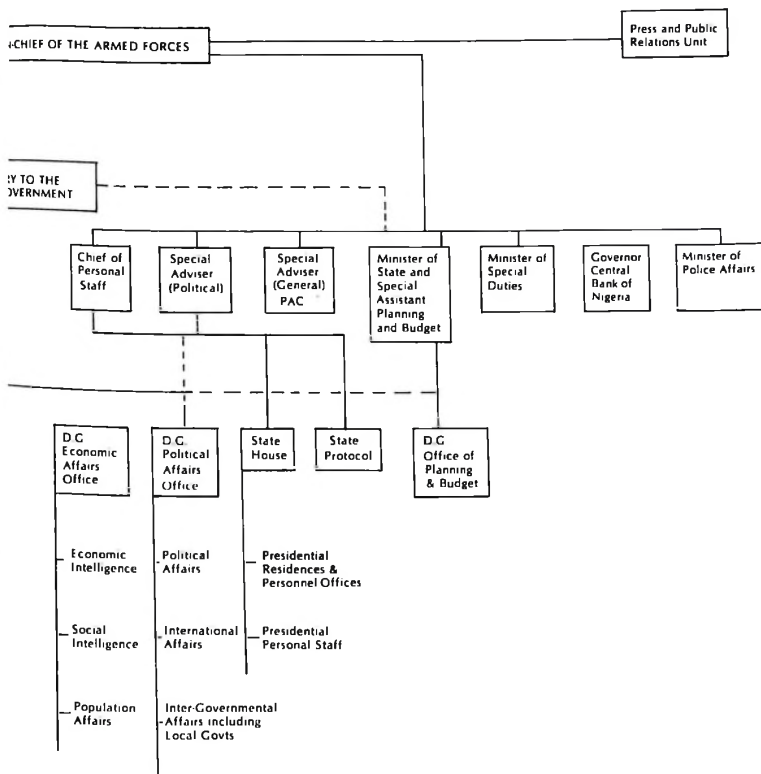
- 1914-19 — Sir F.J.D.D. Lugard, Governor-General
- 1919-25 — Sir H.C. Clifford, Governor
- 1925-31 — Sir G. Thompson, Governor
- 1931-35 — Sir D.C. Cameron, Governor
- 1935-43 — Sir B.H. Bourdillon, Governor
- 1943-48 — Sir A.F. Richards, Governor
- 1948-55 — Sir J.S. Macpherson, Governor-General
(in accordance with the Constitution of 1954)
- 1955-60 — Sir J. Robertson, Governor-General
- 1960-66 — Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister
- Jan. 1966 —
- July 1966 — Major-General J.T. Aguiyi Ironsi,
Head of Federal Military Government
- 1966-75 — General Yakubu Gowon, Head of the Federal Military Govern-
ment
- 1975-76 — General M. Mohammed, Head of the Federal Military Govern-
ment
- 1976-79 — General Olusegun Obasanjo, Head of the Federal Military
Government
- 1979-83 — Alhaji S. Shagari, President
- 1984-85 — Major General M. Buhari, Head of the Federal Military Govern-
ment
- 1985-1992 — General I.B. Babangida, President

ORGANOGRAM



Index II

THE PRESIDENCY



Epilogue

In the layman's parlance, an *Epilogue* is usually the end of a book or the last part of a significant event which rounds off the main event. However, in a field of study, such as public administration in Nigeria, where relevant research and documentation are either inadequate or virtually lacking on various crucial developmental topics, issues, and questions, it seems rather questionable if, in fact, an epilogue is yet due on any author's work. It is too premature to assume a closure or draw the curtain when myriads of topics that accord legitimacy, focus and validity to the democratic system in the Country remain unprobed, with findings documented. Therefore, instead of assuming closure, we should assume that the Cabinet Government, the Council System, the President-in-Council system and in fact, the whole Presidential System of Government in Nigeria are complex structures comprising many sets of interdependent variables contributing something and also receiving something from the whole. They need to be thoroughly researched into.

In this context of system and its sub-systems or of the whole and its parts, much more research is needed into the origins, development, nature and full management values and political roles of many sub-system, such as committees and sub-committees, caucus, the electoral ward, electoral College, ward congresses, pressure group, lobby, log-rolling, meetings and even Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC). Without these sub-systems, decision-making and governing would remain a mystery in the politically sensitive Nigerian Environment.

The findings of comparative studies in other political cultures are that forms like these and other sub-systems have been researched into and are being regularly studied in Presidential America, Parliamentary England and Polit Bureau Russia. Presidential Nigeria is also a "government of forms" that has to be studied and known with its peculiar characteristics recorded to facilitate the conduct of research.

Another area of research is 'structure'. If we are to strengthen

and maintain 'Forms', there is the need for uniformity in our concept and principles of the Council System as well as the practices relating thereto, especially at the secretariat level. When distinguishing between Council Memoranda, Council Conclusions and Council Notes in the Federal Council Secretariat and Executive Councils Secretariats in the States, we now exhaust all colours of the rainbow. Could there not be a harmonisation of identification colours for these documents? With additional research effort, Council practices, procedures, organization and methods in the Federal Council Secretariat and the States' Executive Council Secretariats, could be streamlined and unified. This is a further subject-matter awaiting research.

Greater significance can be attached to the line of argument pursued above that research into specific subject matters in public administration geared towards creating new structures and strengthening existing ones must be seen as an unceasing spiral of efforts and learning.

ASCON supports such research efforts, not only in the areas of pure research but also, in the wide fields of evaluation research, applied research, action research and administrative research. As a complement to these, the College provides institutional arrangements for the publication of the outcomes of research. In this regard, the College's research and publications policy is ambitious. Its network is vast. In addition to public administration, the research areas covered include:

- Management Studies
- Financial Management Studies
- Public Enterprises Management Studies
- Local Government Studies
- Legislative Studies
- Public Policy Studies
- Development Studies
- Consultancy Services
- International Relations
- Women's Affairs
- Environmental Studies

The outcomes of research in these subject-matters are usually published in the form of books, monographs, occasional papers and Journal of Management. Books published by ASCON are in series such as:

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The doors of the College's research and publications activities remain open for all scholars inside and outside the governmental circles to participate. As a confirmation of the open-door policy, this book has been published as the first in the "ASCON's Public Administration Series."

Mr Ajulo wrote this book probably to explain things to himself. But, one of the unintended consequences of his initiative is to open the pandora box containing unresearched phenomena of diverse interests to different researchers in the management of the machinery of government in the Council Secretariat. In other words, Mr Ajulo has brazed-the-trail. He has blown the clarion-call challenging aspirants, scholars and other researchers alike to engage themselves more meaningfully in research on the inner working of the machinery of government where, as at now, the proverbial "harvest" is great but the labourers are few.

Happily, the author's labour in this weedy terraine of relevant research has been largely endorsed by Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, who wrote the "Foreword" and by Alhaji Alhaji Abdullahi Ma'aji, Director-General, Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC), in The Presidency, who provided the "Prologue". If only for the purpose of complementing these prefatorial endorsements, an *Epilogue* is desirable, no matter how brief. However, this *Epilogue* should be regarded as a preface to more elucidating research aimed at reducing the level of ignorance on other related matters that deal with the management of a growing political and administrative system.

Professor Ali D. Yahaya,
Director-General,
Administrative Staff College of Nigeria
October, 1991

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* Ajulo's eight years working experience in the Council Secretariat has equipped him with enormous resources to explain the intricacies of Council work, ranging from drafting of council Memos to summarising Council conclusions.

Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed
Secretary to the Government of the Federation

* It is with a view to facilitating the difficult road to specialization in Council Secretariat work that Ajulo has written this book which is the first of its type in the Federal Civil Service.

I recommend the book to all senior officers in the Presidency, to the students of ASCON, and to the Students of Public Administration in the Nigerian Universities and Polytechnics

Abdullahi Ma'aji, mni
Director-General, PAC Secretariat,

Sunday Babalola Ajulo is the Deputy Secretary to the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC), a Department in the Presidency. He has served in various capacities in the Federal Civil Service: a successful teacher and a seasoned administrator.

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His research interests include International Law and International Relations with emphasis on ACP—EEC—Lome Conventions, ECOWAS and African Economic Community as well as the Nigerian Public Service. He has published stimulating papers in several scholarly journals, both at home and abroad.

He is married with children.



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