

Fuel Scarcity: Syndicates take control

JULY 8-15, 1991 VOL 2 NO 28

N10

Citizen

50 BILLION NAIRA STORY

The
deportation
of a foreign
correspondent

FINANCIAL TIMES

Concern over Nigeria's use of oil windfall

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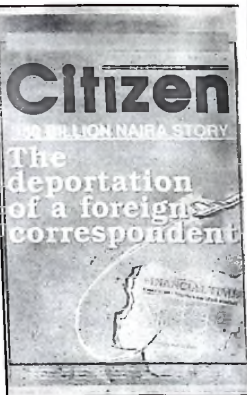
Citizen

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For several weeks now much of the northern states has suffered from severe fuel shortage that has threatened to bring both business and government activities to a stand-still. Smuggling seems to be at the heart of it all.

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PREFACE

It reminded you of the famous (or infamous, depending on which side you were on) story of the missing 2.8 billion Naira several years ago. Or of the more recent *Ebony* scandal. In both cases serious charges of financial malfeasance were made against senior government officials without attributing the stories to any source, credible or other wise.

This time too, no sources were mentioned even though 50 billion was allegedly involved. This time, however, the purveyor—the *Financial Times* of London—had a sound record of credibility. Government reacted by denouncing the story, filed by William Keeling, its Lagos correspondent and carried on June 27, as mischievous and false—but not before summarily deporting him. The paper responded by saying it stood by its man and as if to underscore its point, did an even longer story on the same subject on July 2.

Clearly it was government's word against *Financial Times*, and both are honourable institutions. Unfortunately for government, the choice posed little dilemma for the public, seeing they tended to believe the worst of government officials. In the course of doing this week's cover story Adamu Adamu and Mohammed Haruna came to the conclusion that government's case was bad as it seemed—that is if it was bad at all. The Gulf War windfall hardly met expectations. Besides, in wanting the world to believe its side of the story, *Financial Times* relied solely on its reputation and would not name a source that can be cross-checked.

However, government could obviously have done much better than the defense it put out last Monday which was long on rhetorics and short on specifics. It cannot hope to kill the story if it is not more forthright with facts and figures than it has been so far. Needless to say, the sooner, the better.

LETTERS

"Wooing the bride"

Sir,

We are satisfied with your wonderful cover story of May 20 1991. Your reporter said that "political observers, see SDP's Reverend Fr Adasu, a Tiv, as likely to clinch the coveted prize". With all modesty, we agree with this assessment. We however consider as incorrect, the assessment that it only depends on "a formidable ally in Paul Unongo".

According to your source, "Unongo had previously supported Igbetar but later shifted to Adasu when problems developed between Igbetar and himself".

First we are likely to clinch the prize but not on account of Unongo's patronage. Second, if "Unongo had previously supported Igbetar", then he has not shifted base, not being a vacillating man but an honourable one who will not shift position just like that even when "problems develop".

We prefer to believe that your reporter was actually ignorant — not mischievous — when he made the link between Adasu's electoral desire with Unongo's shifting support.

Your paper is an honourable one — and so should your reporter be — which should normally steer you from deliberate mischief-making — the other force that could have prompted the tell-tale Adasu-Unongo link. Happily the security agencies, the party hierarchy and the Benue electorate — SDP and NRC — know that Adasu's enormous electoral goodwill has nothing to do with 'Unongo's shifting' support. So Adasu will not be banned or disqualified because the Citizen reporter invented a (non-existent) link between Adasu and a banned politician, Mr. Paul Unongo.

Sebastian S.I. Agbinda
Makurdi

Save us from redeemers

Sir,

Yusuf's "save us from redeemers" made an interesting reading. It is high time someone told these media-hero curvers that not all those members of the reading public enjoy their amplified self-made media heroes, dished-out to us every morning. It stinks if they don't know. Why in the 100 million citizens of this country only Wole Soyinka and Tai Solarin make the "news"? Certainly the press in the recent past have sunk to its lowest ebb by reporting every bit of their nuisances as news.

As for their and others' sycophancy, the president must believe that he is either encouraging them (through appointments) or succumbing to their ways under of duress (from their boys in the media house).

Ibrahim Idris Bello
Agege, Lagos.

Drug business in Nigeria

Sir,

By law, the pharmacist is the only person who should import, mix, dispense and sell drugs and poisons.

However, we know that in practice, the drug business is now every body's business. This has come about through various ways in some cases with open or subtle support by the governments of this country.

The most far-reaching of such government action is the issuing of patent medicine vendors' licence to laymen to control drugs and poisons. In theory, they are supposed to sell the so-called patent medicine. But everyone, including the authorities know who licenses them that they also sell poisons or admini-

ster drugs and injections since their main aim is to make money.

The various government agencies also see the patent medicine vendors' licensing as a lucrative source for increasing their revenue; hence the present attempt by the minister of health to make local government councils patent medicine licensing authorities should be seen in that light.

The medical doctors in Nigeria are quick to accuse pharmacists of selling drugs without getting prescriptions for them. I do not want to go into the details of that law but it is necessary to point out that the same doctors in Nigeria are also dispensing doctors. They prescribe and dispense drugs from what they call "pharmacies" in their private clinics or hospitals. How do they expect the pharmacists to survive? So the truth in the Nigerian context is that both the medical doctors and the pharmacists encroach on each others professional area. The best way to check this I feel is by rigid separation of their different functions. The doctor should prescribe and the pharmacist should be the only person to dispense drugs.

I also suggest that only pharmacists be allowed to establish patent medicine stores in the rural areas, employ staff trained by them and visit such stores regularly for supervision.

In practice, it means that no new licences should be issued to laymen while the existing licence holders should be professionally trained. This will make the pharmacist answerable for any lapses that will occur in serving the community.

I maintain that we are compromising the health of our rural dwellers by allowing every man or woman to administer drugs to the through the patent medicine vendors' licence issue.

Mazi Emeka Okadigbo
Zar

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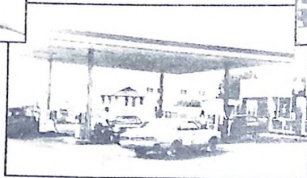
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Smash the petrol syndicates

It is most disturbing, to say the least, that for weeks now some parts of this country have suffered from acute shortages of petroleum products. The dislocation to the economy and the distress to the people that this shortage caused is probably beyond estimation. It is bad enough that for long, no one came out to clearly explain the cause of the shortage. It is only known that some kind of equipment failure occurred at the NNPC's Kaduna refinery, rendering it unable to pump sufficient quantities of fuel products into the depots. Just before that, shortages had also been caused by the refinery's annual closure for servicing.

It was disturbing, too, that after more than 13 years' practice, NNPC's bridging operations, by which fuel is moved from Lagos and Ibadan to augment supplies in the North during closures of the refinery, was still far from being smooth. The NNPC's refund of transport costs to petroleum dealers for bridging operations was painfully slow, thereby causing them to discontinue participation in the operation. We understand that as at last month, the NNPC had paid out only 20% of total claims from the petrol dealers. The amount owed was also rising as more requests for refund were brought forward.

While the NNPC's problems are well noted, it is also true that when all is said and done, the bane of fuel supply is and may continue to be the smuggling of the product out of the country. Even without refinery shutdown, Sokoto and Katsina states have experienced acute shortages in fuel supply. This has been attributed to an unpatriotic syndicate of smugglers and security officials who are hell-bent on reaping personal profit and ruining their compatriots and their national economy in the process.

Some may argue that the best solution to smuggling is to align domestic fuel prices with those in Niger, Benin, Chad and Cameroun. That means an eight-fold increase in the price many Nigerians already consider to be too high, since our country is well endowed with the commodity. We urge government to resist the urge to move in this direction, since smuggling is only one of our many problems and by no means the only one.

Government must somehow smash the fuel syndicates in line with its brave attempts to break those of hard drugs, foreign exchange, examination racket and armed robbery. It is worrisome, indeed fearsome, that almost all of the government's security agencies have their elements involved in this syndicate. Still, they must be broken. If government cannot do it, then perhaps civilian anti-smuggling vigilantes can do the trick.

Disarm them

There are indications that all constables and non commissioned police officers will soon be disarmed in a bid to curb the killing of innocent citizens by the officers. This policy must be pursued with vigour. The peace loving people of this nation can not but hail such a move, having watched callous, trigger happy cops mow down their victims in cold

blood. The celebrated incident of the Dawodu brothers, the recent case of two Yabatech students and the killing of innocent people suspected to be armed robbers at check points all readily come to mind. In a rather bizarre defence, such incidents are often blamed on "accidental discharges". So pervasive is this scenario that the policemen have carved the negative image as "killer cops" and enemies of

LEADERS

the public, a complete departure from the protective and humane force they were envisaged to be. Equally disturbing are strong suspicions that policemen rent their guns to robbers. Anyone familiar with crime syndicates knows better than to dismiss such rumours.

It is therefore commendable that the force has not closed its ears to public outcry on its vile profile and has taken appropriate steps to clip the wings of those class of officers prone to harbour such lethal tendencies. In arriving at the class of officers to be disarmed, the force was guided by the theory that only lower ranking officers can engage in such perfidious behaviour. While this may be true most of the time, cases of

high ranking officers whose mentality do not tally with the responsibilities reposed on them can not be ruled out. But these should be seen as the exceptions. To recommend that they should also be disarmed is an unreasonable demand that would cripple the police force. What the police force ought to do is to re-train its officers in the handling of the arms that are so vital for efficient discharge of their duties.

This also raises the issue of how the disarmed officers can still remain relevant in curbing crimes when they must face an increasingly sophisticated syndicates of armed robbers. The police force must take this as the greatest challenge in its attempt to acquire a humane outlook but one that is credible deterrent to criminals.

Taylor and peace

If the hugs and back-slapping we saw on television are not mere fiddlesticks, the "peace plan" agreed upon at the ECOWAS Yamoussoukro mini summit, Liberia, nay Africa is about to achieve some measure of brotherhood and unanimity of purpose.

The summit was a success if for nothing else, at least for bringing under one roof the two sides, as it were, to the Liberian crisis. Until the summit, Charles Taylor, the violent and restive leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL, had not only turned deaf ears to all talks of peace but had rejected the ECOWAS-installed interim president of Liberia, Professor Amos Sawyer.

Taylor, backed by Libya, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, had continued to insist that the war in Liberia which he started in order to oust Samuel Doe, was not over until he was given total control of the country.

His strength had been the fact that he controlled 90 per cent of Liberia, a point which the executive secretary of ECOWAS Dr. Abass Bundu, easily dismissed. Dr. Bundu argues that even if that fact is incontrovertible, Taylor did not control the minds and hearts of the people in the areas he controlled.

For a man who instituted war against his

country on the pretext that democracy had been thrown to the dogs, his subsequent actions were at best bizzare. The fact is that for him to govern Liberia, there must be law and order. At the time ECOWAS installed Sawyer, there were at least three self-acclaimed governments in Liberia. To have allowed each a free run of the tiny enclaves they controlled would have amounted to gross irresponsibility on the part of ECOWAS.

In the circumstance, it acted rightly by appointing an interim government to, if we understand it correctly, oversee a transition to a normal, democratic government. It took Taylor months to see this need, but we are happy that he did. It is obvious that a military solution to the Liberian crisis is no longer feasible or desirable.

The task ahead is hard and difficult. We enjoil all parties to the crisis to truly work hard in restoring law and order, democracy and a spirit of give and take so that people of Liberia can once again know peace and stability. They have been brutalised enough and if those who fought in their name and on their behalf did so sincerely, then it is time to restore their dignity by working for them.

We commend ECOWAS and those of its members that worked patiently and had presence of mind to rise above pettiness and empire-building dreams to seek to bring peace to that troubled country.



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The 50 billion Naira controversy

At the risk of sounding like Mr. Know-it-all, we must say the recent deportation of William Keeling, a correspondent of the influential London *Financial Times*, over his story in the June 27 edition of the paper was rather unfortunate, to say the least. Unfortunate in the sense that it merely succeeded in shifting attention from the credibility of story itself and focussing it on governments motive. The impression Keeling's hasty deportation created was that government had no answer to his allegations.

Straight away we must point out that Keeling's story clearly failed the most elementary test of professionalism. This test demands that one listens to both sides of an issue. Keeling's story did not even make any pretence at doing so. By his own admission, he had written two similar stories before over which the minister of finance, Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji, had expressed unhappiness. Apparently Keeling remained undeterred. Not only did he not cross-check his story with the authorities, this time around, he somewhat arrogantly told the minister "well, I am only doing my job".

In the circumstance, it was very tempting to deport him. That temptation should have been resisted. His story rather than himself should have been the focus of government's action. The reporter had established a pattern of filing his stories to coincide with the start of difficult negotiations with our foreign creditors. This time his story appeared a day after a team of IMF officials arrived for a week long negotiations on rescheduling our debts. Given this pattern, we would have thought our intelligence organisations would have shown an interest in his background and the company he keeps. These may very well be above board, but it is worrying, to say the least, that the authorities had no clue as to

where he lived or worked until after the June 27 story.

Needless to say the best reply was to have provided credible counter figures to his own. Keeling claims we earned 5 billion Dollars or roughly 50 billion Naira as Gulf War windfall and spent 30 billion Naira of it on ECOMOG, the recent OAU summit in Abuja and the Aluminium plant. He gave no sources, official or otherwise, for his figures and may very well be lying with statistics. Unfortunately government hardly did any better in its reply. It said it earned only 20.2 billion Naira as windfall and spent only 5 billion Naira on payment of debts. Government would have done better if it gave the basis of its figures — say, the amount of oil we sold for how much over the period of the Gulf crisis. These are figures that can be easily cross-checked. We are inclined to believe government could have come out better than Keeling given the fact (1) that the windfall turned out to be less than expected because the war itself was short and sharp and (2) we do not participate actively in the Rotterdam spot market and therefore are not in a vantage position to maximise our benefits from upswings in oil prices.

However because government did not give these vital details and because having denied Keeling's version of how it spent the windfall, it did not give the source of its funding of ECOMOG *et al*, it was Keeling's word against government's. Unfortunately for government, the public, from experience, tends to believe the worst of its officials.

Still it is not too late for government to redeem its image of a squandermaniac that Keeling tried to paint. It can rectify matters by simply being more forthcoming with figures and specific details on its income and expenditure than it has been so far.

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what are clear excesses. Commissioner Daura is apparently satisfied with this performance but unhappy with journalists. "When armed robbery is very high journalists will be saying "the police is not doing anything", he said. "When we are determined they shout, 'the police is killing

The nation has had to learn to live with the phenomena of accidental discharge and suspects resisting arrest. When that wore thin, a play was made upon our fear — armed robbers; and more recently Frank Odia's trajectory theory. The last was the callous and unfortunate attempt by the police public relations officer to explain the physics behind a bullet trajectory when police shooters failed to hit a target as big as a 504 tyre at arms length in broad daylight! Instead they found the chest of a man standing outside the car.

The police is your fiend

A little over six weeks ago, police in Lagos shot a business executive to death.

He was said to be unarmed — his hands were up in the air — when the shot that killed him was fired. This case immediately brings to mind similar instances, when police opened fire without what looked like the necessary condition for resorting to the gun.

The Civil Liberties Organisation has determined that 19 people lost their lives as a result of police carelessness in the recent past. Accidents of course do occur. But when they become regular, one has every right to suspect carelessness — or ineptitude. And we can afford neither.

In March, seven people, suspected to be armed robbers, were gunned down at Oko-Oba, on the outskirts of Lagos. Last month, three more people suspected to be armed robbers were shot to death at a police checkpoint on the road to Abeokuta. Putting a spirited defence of his men, Sani Ahmed Daura, Lagos State police commissioner, spoke of guns recovered from the slain suspects. Good evidence. But we want someone independent to investigate and tell us that. Otherwise we shall be right in suspecting that the guns were put there.

The victims might indeed be what the police suspect them to be — criminals and armed robbers — but the commissioner must leave that decision to the courts. It won't do for officialdom to always seek to justify

everybody"

Of course when crime rises, the police must take the blame. Haven't we employed them to check it? And when they kill, people must shout.

According to Mr. Parry Osayande, DIG in-charge of operations, police are not instructed to kill suspects but to maim them. Where policemen feel they are in danger, he said, they can kill. If this right sounds reasonable, how they go about enjoying it does not. It is certainly not every act of killing by police that must be defended as an act in the face of danger. When it is murder it must be treated as such, because its danger can indeed be great.

The Nigerian Police must therefore do something about its image because this must be good if it wishes the people to regard its mistakes as made in good faith.

Even if we succeed in getting party politics, peaceful succession to civil rule, economic growth and diversified economy in place, everything will fall to pieces if the people are not guaranteed their basic freedoms. And the last way not to guarantee these is to let some disgruntled, drunken, gun-totting check-point keeper know that his commissioner and the government will clear him even when he misuses his gun. That may be good for morale in the force, but it will be a disastrous betrayal of the nation and too costly for every one in the long-run.

And nor are their other records better. The police has a great speciality in failing to track down famous fugitives — Clement Yildar and Dauda Usman, if only so that they can get a pardon. Then there are the Orkar horde. Then there are Dele Giwa's killers, if only so that they can save the government embarrassment by Gani Fawehinmi.

There is the ever-rising crime wave. Then there is the question of *wetin-you-carry*. According to Osayande, "corruption is everywhere in our system in Nigeria". But we didn't employ police in order that they copy the corruption that went on in the system; we employed them to stop it. And their failure ought never to be their defence.

But the police is now not without initiative. The inspector-general is said to have introduced a special squad now going round the country for the detection and arrest of any policemen found taking bribe. This is a great innovation.

Though we don't know the strength of the squad, many are already suggesting that it should be exactly half of the force. Each policeman arrests another; and the nation will probably be better off thereafter. There will be anarchy, you will say. But just think a little. What is it that we now have? And so is the police not your fiend?

50 billion Naira story

The deportation of a foreign correspondent

The federal government deports a foreign correspondent over a story it alleges is false and mischievous — and thus starts a controversy over its financial management whose end is hard to predict

William Keeling, Lagos correspondent of the *Financial Times*, was enjoying his weekend on the evening of Saturday, July 27. To be sure, it was an uneventful week ending with a rather dull weekend. For a British journalist, such an evening in Lagos is probably best spent in company of friends — pen-pushers out on a rural posting — or spent more quietly watching "Britain-in-a-box" as the BBC video news and programmes service is popularly known. Getting free time to enjoy a weekend doesn't happen every week, one therefore had better grab whatever creature comfort comes one's way. For Keeling this weekend was not to hold much

comfort, at least not long enough to see him through.

At a few minutes to six o'clock a soft knock came on his door. Keeling answered it — and came face-to-face with unsmiling security men. Exactly six hours later the correspondent was dispatched to London in much the same manner he used to dispatch his reports.

Though Keeling was probably not expecting a deportation order, he was aware that Nigerian authorities were not terribly pleased with his latest news report. According to his own account, he had written more than a hundred stories on Nigeria, and on two previous occasions he had been summoned by a minister to hear his displeasure with two of Keeling's articles. But since nothing further

followed these reprimands, a third one by the same minister was unlikely to prepare him to expect the worst.

When the article that drew the ire of the federal government appeared in the *Financial Times* on Thursday June 27, it was Finance Minister Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji who summoned Keeling. According to Keeling that was the third time he would be summoned by the minister.

"There were two occasions on which I saw finance minister Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji," Keeling said. "He explained that he didn't like two articles — one was (about) the refusal of the World Bank to give the 500 million Dollars on the basis of government expenditure and the other article was concerning Nigeria

and the Gulf war and its position towards Iraq."

The meeting on Friday was about the piece captioned "Concern over Nigeria's use of oil windfall." The minister and the finance ministry director-general Alhaji Ahmadu Abubakar and the journalist were reported to

have gone over the story "line by line and word for word." By the time they were through, the fury was mutual. They parted without agreeing. As he rose to go, Keeling was heard muttering — not without contempt — "I am only doing my job." The two officials also rose to do theirs.

The following day security forces made an attempt to invite Keeling for a chat. And temporarily, the concern became no longer with the content of his *Financial Times* story but with the earth-shaking methodology of tracing his office or home. The *Financial Times* shared offices with the British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC but it was only after a deeply embarrassing running helter-skelter that the security forces were able to lay their hands on Keeling. According to Keeling he remained with them for about an hour after which he was driven back to his flat. "I was given ten minutes to pack my bags," he said.

As he packed, he was probably looking forward to a lively interview after the trip he believed they were going to make to see the

director of State Security Service. Instead, he was driven to Murtala Mohammed International Airport and put on the next flight to London. Keeling said he was not allowed to phone, call or see any member of British diplomatic staff or lawyer before he was questioned and bundled out.

In his article, Keeling had

the short fall, Keeling said, were Nigeria's dispatch of troops to Liberia (250 million — 500 million Dollars), the holding of the Organisation of African Unity, OAU, summit in Abuja (150 million Dollars) and the commencement of the construction of an aluminium smelter by Ferrostahl of Germany (1.33 billion Dollars).

These were serious charges that ought to have agitated the government. They did, and the government promptly came out with a response — after deporting the writer. Yet if the lapse in the deportation was indefensible, the story of how the content of the Keeling article came into the country was simply unbelievable.

A highly placed source informed *Citizen* that no one at the Federal Ministry of Information knew anything about the damaging article because no one was monitoring the *Financial Times*. But with the plethora of the nations scouts

abroad (information officers they call them) and a horde of sit-tight scanners at the ministry, it is unclear how information handling and dissemination becomes so severely handicapped. According to the source, "since the *Financial Times* sells for up to 20 Naira the ministry struck it off its subscription list". It required a good Samaritan in London to see, read and fax the offending article to some officials in Lagos. Then followed the scramble at international newsstands in



The offending story as filed by Keeling

alleged that Nigeria might have already spent more than half of the windfall it received in increased oil revenues as a result of the Gulf crisis. He estimated the windfall at 5 billion Dollars and charged that the government embarked on reckless extra-budgetary expenditures that consumed 3 billion Dollars, which he said donor agencies did not find accounted for in Central Bank figures.

The costly extra-budgetary projects that were responsible for

Concern over Nigeria's use of oil windfall

Below is the text of the story in the London *Financial Times* of June 27

Nigeria may have already spent more than half the windfall it received from higher oil export earnings during the Gulf crisis.

The receipts, which donor agencies estimate at about 5 billion Dollars, resulted in a 76 per cent rise in official oil export earnings from 7.5 billion Dollars in 1989 to 13.2 billion Dollars last year.

Economists working for donor agencies say that at least 3 billion Dollars is not accounted for in central bank figures for the period between July 1990 and last month.

The shortfall has led to concern that the government has embarked on a programme of extra-budgetary expenditure. One western diplomat

said: Higher oil earnings gave an illusion of wealth at the worst possible time, just as the time-table for the withdrawal of the military from government was beginning'.

The country's military administration is due to hand over power to a civilian government in October next year.

Costly projects undertaken since last July have been the sending of troops to Liberia as part of the West African intervention force, the holding the Organisation of African Unity summit earlier this month, and the start on construction by Ferrostahl of Germany of a controversial MD 2.4 billion (1.33 billion Dollars) aluminium smelter.

Donor agencies estimate the cost of government of the intervention in Liberia to be 250 million - 500 million Dollars.

Although the cost of the actual operation was far less, the intervention has acted as a catalyst to increase military expenditure, including a contract for 150 tanks from Vickers of the UK.

The OAU summit is believed to have cost more than 150 million Dollars, inflated by the short time in which the facilities were built following the decision to hold the summit away from the OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa.

According to diplomats, the cost of the Mercedes stretch limousines bought to

transport the heads of state exceeded the level of contributions made to the OAU by member countries last year.

Diplomats say that the capital cost of the aluminium plant is 60-100 per cent higher than similar plants elsewhere in the world. International creditors have called for the project to be scrapped.

Disagreement over expenditure on the smelter may block any attempt by Nigeria to obtain debt reduction from the Paris Club of creditor nations, to which it owes 17.5 billion Dollars. Nigeria has applied to the club for debt reduction and has informally requested terms similar to those recently granted to Poland.

hotels in the country for the edition in which the article appeared.

Government concern is understandable, indeed expected, but its reaction will have been better handled if it has not been rather tight-fisted with information about what was happening to the windfall Dollars.

To underscore its concern with the story it came out with a very detailed — if not completely effective — rebuttal. Many believe it is more of an over-reaction ala *Ebony*, and will have died by itself. After all, they ask, how many people read the *Financial Times* in Nigeria? As it is, the deportation and elaborate explanation following it combined to create a widespread readership for an article that would have been read by only a handful.

But the government clearly had more important considerations to

worry about. Allowing Keeling's allegations to go unchallenged would have put the government and creditor nations and agencies on a collision course. Economists are agreed that Nigeria will have great difficulty with the banks and agencies if it sends signals of reverting to the profligacy of the 1970's.

In January the International Monetary Fund, IMF, approved a stand-by credit facility of SDR 319 million. The Paris Club agreed to reschedule 17.5 billion Dollars and the London Club rescheduled 5.8 billion Pounds of which a portion was for debt-equity swap. In April Germany agreed to schedule its 4.9 billion Naira owned as trade credits. The World Bank, the International Finance Corporation and a member of the international banks and the government jointly contributed 16

billion Dollars for the Oso Condensate Project, and the government will loathe to see any damaging revelations that will make them withdraw. And sending creditors away, according to government, looks to be precisely the one goal Keeling has been after.

Look at the timing he chooses, one official said. Whether by choice or by coincidence Keeling's story was published a day after the arrival of an IMF team to Lagos. The team arrived June 26 and his story appeared the following day. Government officials were much relieved when negotiations went ahead without any hitches. Apparently the team paid no attention to his "wild" allegations, an official in the ministry of finance said. It was clear the man was being used. The official did not say who by.

The government therefore denied everything including Keeling's impartiality as a professional. The government statement ended with a wagging finger at Keeling and those likely to write as he did. "From the facts available to government and the slant of the article in the *Financial Times*, government is convinced that the intention is to deliberately mislead the public, including our development partners," the statement said. "His activities in Nigeria confirmed the suspicion that he is here for a purpose."

That purpose is now a matter of interpretation.

Nduka Irabor, chief press

secretary at the British High Commission, "William Keeling is a professional a serious-minded journalist with a reputable British newspaper. We have no reason to doubt his credibility.

While Reuters correspondent had "no comments" to make (Reuters also once had its correspondent deported), Sharpse Nicholas, correspondent of TASS news agency said, "I can assure you that he (Keeling) struck me as a thorough professional."

Unconfirmed reports say some foreign news organisations have protested to the government over the treatment meted out to him. He stuck to his guns. On July 2, he came

"the legacy of the current government is in danger of being that of an economy weakened by a heavy and unjustified spending programme."

He warned that "as recent events bear witness, economic development is not so dependent on higher export earnings, but on transparent and accountable government." But if the government said it was surprised by such a conclusion it was probably because there was no one monitoring *Financial Times*.

Hints of almost all the allegations Keeling made in his article dotted the *Financial Times* survey on Nigeria in its March 12



Ahmed and Alhaji: unhappy with Keeling

secretary to the vice president attempted to explain how Keeling erred. "Perhaps he read the accounts upside down," he said. "certainly his facts were wrong. I can assure you that I confirmed that."

According to Tim Rawlison,

out with a more detailed story covering much the same area as the story of June 27. He himself ended the second story on a defiant and more pessimistic note. He clearly meant it as an indictment of the present regime. "As the return to civilian rule approaches," he wrote,

edition. Though government sponsored, the survey painted a rather depressing, almost pessimistic though not entirely inaccurate, picture of Nigeria's economy and some of its important and more costly projects. Even here the projects chosen for special

FG reacts to "Oil Windfall" publication

The attention of the Federal Government has been drawn to a publication in the London *Financial Times* of June 27, 1991 captioned "Concern at Use of Lagos Oil Windfall". In the said publication, the author, William Keeling, alleged that "Nigeria may have already spent more than half the windfall it received from higher oil export earnings during the Gulf crisis". Keeling claimed that donor agencies estimated the windfall at US 5 billion Dollars and that economists working for these agencies say that at least US 3 billion Dollars of this amount was not accounted for in Central Bank figures for the period July 1990 through May 1991. Keeling went further to allege that the amounts had been spent on the peace-keeping operations in Liberia, the cost of which he put at between US 250 and US 500 million Dollars; the hosting of the OAU summit estimated by his sources at a cost of US 150 million Dollars and the financing of the Aluminium Smelter Plant said to have been contracted to Forestal of Germany at a cost of DM 2.4 billion (810 million Dollars).

The Federal Government wishes to state categorically that the estimates of "oil windfall" contained in Keeling's story are without any

foundation and that the additional proceeds realised from the sale of oil during the Gulf crisis have largely been saved, and were not utilised to finance any of the projects referred to in the publication.

In fact given the painful experience that the country suffered in the past, when periods of relatively buoyant foreign exchange earnings were quickly followed by acute shortages, resulting in severe set-backs to the country's development efforts, Government deliberately decided the last time around not to let the temporary windfall affect normal expenditure patterns, and raise hopes and aspirations that cannot be sustained.

Consequently, Government decided to create a Foreign Currency Stabilization fund in September, 1990 for the purpose of conserving the temporary excess receipts from oil over the budgeted level. The first transfer of US 234.5 million Dollars to the fund was made in October 1990. This grew steadily in subsequent months, reaching a peak level of US 2.1 billion Dollars at the end of March 1991. The Fund was drawn upon for the first time only in April 1991 to meet debt service payments amounting to US 500 million Dollars. As at June 27, 1991 and balance of the fund stood at US 1.7 billion Dollars. In effect,

apart from payments made to service our foreign debts, the fund has remained intact.

It is evident from these facts that the balance in the Foreign Currency Stabilization Fund never, at any time, reached US 3 billion Dollars, let alone the 5 billion Dollars claimed by Keeling in his article. His claim that certain projects were financed from the fund are also fallacious and at best a figment of his imagination. In fact, one of the projects — pre-dates the Gulf crisis and the creation of the fund.

As regards the other contents of the article, we state as follows:

Cost of Hosting the OAU Summit

There is no truth whatsoever in the suggestion that unduly large amount was spent in hosting the OAU summit. "The fact is that a substantial part of the expenditure incurred in hosting the summit was on vital capital projects that government of necessity has to put in place to make the new capital functional. These include the International Airport apron, the construction of the VIP lounge and the dualisation of the road from the airport to the city centre as well as the construction of residential houses for the next batch of officers that will move to Abuja this year. OAU summit or no OAU summit, these

essential structures would have been provided on time for the summit, is in fact cost saving especially in the reality of ever rising prices. In the implementation of the projects and, indeed the other essential procurements for the summit, every effort was made to ensure that value was obtained for money. It should be emphasised that apart from a few special guests and the members of the Secretariat of the OAU who, under international practice are regarded as guests of government, all other participants paid their way.

ECOMOG

As should be common knowledge by now, ECOMOG was the creation of ECOWAS, and Nigeria is only one out of several countries that have contributed to troops now working hard to maintain peace in Liberia. The cost of maintaining the ECOMOG force is borne by all the member states of ECOWAS. As a peace-keeping force, the combat operations of the troops and their involvement in day-to-day activities in Liberia are minimal, hence the cost of maintaining them is moderate. For obvious military and strategic reasons, it is inopportune, even under blackmail, to disclose the breakdown of the expenditures

COVER STORY

associated with the ECOMOG operation. Suffice it to say that to day, the cost to Nigeria of participating in the peace operation is not more than 10 per cent of the floor of Keeling's estimate.

Aluminium Project:

With regard to the Aluminium project the cost of implementing it was negotiated at a fixed price of DM 2.4 billion (fixed over the construction period of 54 months). This price includes all infrastructural services such as the 549 MW Power Plant, Housing Estate, 6 km conveyor belt, harbour, and link roads. The World Bank assisted government during the process of negotiation in reviewing the project. The conclusion of the World Bank then was that the negotiated price of DM 2.4 billion was excessive by 6 per cent and advised government to press for a cost reduction of this magnitude. This could not be accommodated by the contractors because of their perceived risk of the

sub-structure of the site chosen for the project.

During the course of project implementation, fears of rapidly depreciating exchange rate of the Dollar relative to the Deutsche Mark prompted further criticism by the World Bank of the cost of the project vis-a-vis other similar projects. As at February 1991, when the value of the Dollar was at its lowest, i.e. 1.0 Dollars = DM 1.45 as against 1.0 Dollars = DM 1.8 at the time the contract was awarded, the apparent project cost in Dollar terms was projected to increase by up to 20%, if the trend continued. This apparently gave rise to the fears expressed by the World Bank that with that trend, the final payment for the project could exceed the price of similar plants by up to 20%. The Dollar has since strengthened to the pre-contract position, and these fears are no longer founded. From cost comparisons made with aluminium plants in other countries such as Dubai,



Okongwu and Aminu: no truth in the story ?

"I stand by my story" — Keeling

It was not difficult getting through to Mr. Keeling. A copy of the controversial *Financial Times* I obtained did not list the paper's office telephone number. A call to the Kaduna office of the British High Commission took care of my enquiries. I dialled the number a couple of times before a cheerful female voice answered. She was only too glad to respond to my questions on the whereabouts of Mr. Keeling. In another minute I was talking to the latest casualty in journalism's hazardous territory.

William Keeling, erstwhile Lagos correspondent of London based *Financial Times* had no pretension that something unusual was about to happen to him. He had filed in a story captioned "Concern at use of Lagos oil windfall" which was published in the edition of the newspaper of June. For him, it was another routine story that analysed the country's expenditure in relation to crude oil earnings. Keeling was in a familiar territory having filed over one hundred reports on Nigeria's monetary and fiscal policies, economic indicators and economic projections. It was

therefore a surprised Keeling who received stern faced, unexpected visitors in his flat on Saturday, June 29. The intruders identified themselves as state security officials with directives to interrogate him on the report carried in the *Financial Times*. After interrogations, a shocked Keeling was bundled to the airport and deported to Britain. He arrived London on board a British Airways plane on Sunday morning. *Citizen* called the London office of the *Financial Times* on Tuesday where Keeling granted an interview on the events that unfolded just before his deportation.

Citizen: Good Evening Mr. Keeling.

Keeling: Good Evening, 'am told you're a reporter from Nigeria. Which media do you represent?

Citizen: *Citizen* magazine and I want to interview you on your recent deportation. Was that the first time it happened to you?

Keeling: Absolutely. That was the first time.

Citizen: What reason was given and was your resident permit

withdrawn before you were deported?

Keeling: No, the issue of resident permit did not even come up. Plain clothes security officials picked me up at my flat on Saturday evening. They told me I was to be taken to meet the Director of State Security Services in Ikeja. But I was not taken to any office instead I was driven around Lagos, hemmed between the security officials for about an hour during which they asked me several questions. They wanted to know who my sources were.

Citizen: Did you tell them?

Keeling: I refused. I can't divulge my sources, but I want you to know that they are very reliable. I have no cause to doubt what they told me, so I still stand by my story.

Citizen: But the government has denied the story describing it as "figments" of your imagination. Its important to let us know your sources.

Keeling: As a journalist, I have a right not to disclose who my sources are but I assure you they are credible. So I stand by

every bit of my story. I did not disclose my sources to the security officials and I have no intention of doing so now. They even asked me why I thought the government was upset and I told them to go and ask the government.

Citizen: I suppose you had no opportunity to talk to any government official after that?

Keeling: Well, the security men just told me right there that I was being deported. I was taken to my flat where I was given about ten to fifteen minutes to pack my things. They didn't allow me to make even a phone call and insisted that I use my return ticket for the trip. I was taken to the airport and that was it!

Citizen: How do you feel about this incident?

Keeling: It was a strange but not unusual experience for a journalist. I hope to be back in Nigeria one day and when I do, I shall call at *Citizen* to say hello. I've always thought you are a good magazine. I liked your cover story on the kid robbers.

Citizen: Thank you Mr. Keeling and good bye.

By Blikisu Yusuf

mention included the 1.5 billion Dollars aluminium smelter, the 1 billion Dollars Oso condensate project, the 4 billion Dollars

Ajaokuta steel, the 5 billion Dollars Gas project proposed by Chevron and the 3.7 billion Dollars Liquefied natural gas project.

When the survey considered Nigeria's budgetary procedure, it found "an incomplete picture," as regards "the Ecomog operations in

Liberia, rumours of substantial, presumably off-budget, military spending in the region of 15 billion Naira and the certainty of higher inflation."

On the Oso condensate project, Keeling doubted the ability of Nigeria to attract the requisite financing. "Although a viable project," Keeling wrote, "securing finance has not been easy and its future is still not wholly certain. Nigeria's poor record for loan repayment has resulted in investors approaching the project with some trepidation."

If creditors exhibited trepidation over Oso, it was probably because they hadn't heard

defending the case for the smelter criticised any comparison with structures in other parts of the world. "In advanced societies," he said, "you only erected the structures. Here you have to think of providing the water, electricity, housing needed by the workers and in some cases even a staff school for workers' children. In other places these were taken for granted." He, however, didn't say who should have provided the infrastructure needed here. If these added up to the 6% discrepancy complained about by the World Bank, he said, why should anyone complain?

The steel industry on the other hand, according to Keeling, is

sector hangs in the balance.

The overall summary of the gloomy picture was left to Tony Hawkins, who with Michael Holman, *Financial Times* Africa Editor and Keeling, anchored the survey. He gave it in an analysis of the 1991 budget. "The assumptions underlying the budget," he wrote, "are a confusing mix of the obviously conservative and overly optimistic. But the most difficult of all, if hardly surprising, is the incompleteness of the picture—the knowledge that a great deal of off-budget activity, revenue as well as expenditure, is being by-passed."

All these views were expressed four months ago. So actually what has Keeling left unsaid? Nothing, except the insinuation that all the extra-budgetary expenses were out of the windfall from increased oil sales as a result of the Gulf crisis.

The government statement released by the office of the vice president accused Keeling with dabbling in distortions, half-truths and damn lies. According to the statement, government had been taught by experience not to indulge in reckless spending just because excess cash became available. To say that it had resorted to misusing the oil windfall revenue was a gross distortion of the facts. The windfall is in tact and has not been "utilised to finance any of the projects referred to in" Keeling's report. The truth, the report said, was that government had created a foreign currency stabilisation fund in September 1990 for the purpose of conserving the temporary excess. And that is what it said it did. "By March 1991," the report added, the fund had reached "a peak level of US 2.1 billion Dollars." The first drawing of US 500 million Dollars was in April 1991 to meet debt service payment in CBN figures.

In his recent story Keeling had said that the windfall revenues had been estimated by donor agencies to be about US 5 billion Dollars and of

Allowing Keeling's allegations to go unchallenged would have put the government and creditor nations and agencies on a collision course. Economists are agreed that Nigeria will have great difficulty with the banks and agencies if it sends signals of reverting to the profligacy of the 1970's.

about the smelter. Its scale, Keeling said, is impressive, though he quickly asked, "But is it a wise use of Nigeria's financial and natural resources?" He alleged that its cost had been inflated almost 100%.

He added, "The management of Aluscon (the company that will own and manage the smelter) have conceded that they have been unable to attract any loans either from the World Bank, commercial banks or export credit agencies." Most of its inputs will have to be imported, he said, and wondered why there are no plans to begin exploiting the bauxite reserves from which alumina can be produced to feed the smelter.

A government official

marked by deficient planning. "After twelve years and more than 4 billion Dollars," he said, "Ajaokuta has yet to pour metal." In this and other sectors Keeling always admitted the existence of abundant resources.

On Nigeria's gas reserves, he said, there was more than fifteen times the annual consumption of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK combined. In addition, experts, he said, had estimated the existence of undiscovered reserves more than one thousand times more than what is known. But because of government pricing policy and the potential of export limited by fierce international competition, the gas

FG reacts to "Oil Windfall" publication

The attention of the Federal Government has been drawn to a publication in the London *Financial Times* of June 27, 1991 captioned "Concern at Use of Lagos Oil Windfall". In the said publication, the author, William Keeling, alleged that "Nigeria may have already spent more than half the windfall it received from higher oil export earnings during the Gulf crisis". Keeling claimed that donor agencies estimated the windfall at US 5 billion Dollars and that economists working to these agencies say that at least US 3 billion Dollars of this amount was not accounted for in Central Bank figures for the period July 1990 through May 1991. Keeling went further to allege that the amounts had been spent on the peace-keeping operations in Liberia, the cost of which he put at between US 250 and US 500 million Dollars; the hosting of the OAU summit estimated by his sources at a cost of US 150 million Dollars and the financing of the Aluminium Smelter Plant said to have been contracted to Forestal of Germany at a cost of DM 2.4 billion (810 million Dollars).

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foundation and that the additional proceeds realised from the sale of oil during the Gulf crisis have largely been saved, and were not utilised to finance any of the projects referred to in the publication.

In fact given the painful experience that the country suffered in the past, when periods of relatively buoyant foreign exchange earnings were quickly followed by acute shortages, resulting in severe set-backs to the country's development efforts, Government deliberately decided the last time around not to let the temporary windfall affect normal expenditure patterns, and raise hopes and aspirations that cannot be sustained.

Consequently, Government decided to create a Foreign Currency Stabilization fund in September, 1990 for the purpose of conserving the temporary excess receipts from oil over the budgeted level. The first transfer of US 234.5 million Dollars to the fund was made in October 1990. This grew steadily in subsequent months, reaching a peak level of US 2.1 billion Dollars at the end of March 1991. The Fund was drawn upon for the first time only in April 1991 to meet debt service payments amounting to US 500 million Dollars. As at June 27, 1991 and balance of the fund stood at US 1.7 billion Dollars. In effect,

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As regards the other contents of the article, we state as follows:

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There is no truth whatsoever in the suggestion that unduly large amount was spent in hosting the OAU summit. "The fact is that a substantial part of the expenditure incurred in hosting the summit was on vital capital projects that government of necessity has to put in place to make the new capital functional. These include the International Airport apron, the construction of the VIP lounge and the dualisation of the road from the airport to the city centre as well as the construction of residential houses for the next batch of officers that will move to Abuja this year. OAU summit or no OAU summit, these

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Indonesia, Canada and Bahrain, the conclusion reached is that the capital cost of the Nigerian project is on average, not in excess of current costs of similar plants in the world. The allegation that the cost of the Nigerian plant is 60-100 per cent higher than similar plants elsewhere in the world is, therefore, preposterous and totally unfounded.

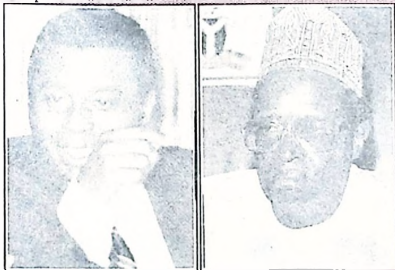
The Federal Government is fully aware of the conspiracy, within certain circles with vested interest, aimed at preventing the Nigeria Aluminium Project from taking off while similar projects in other countries go on unnoticed. The popular reason advanced against the project has been so-called "inflated cost". The Federal Government would not allow itself to be diverted by this "blackmail". It is indeed part of the economic strategy of the present administration to lay the foundation for the achievement of greater self-reliance for the economy. The aluminium smelter project, the LNG and the petrochemical project are not only resources based, they have the strong potential to expand and diversify the export base of the country and provide wide opportunities for employment and down

stream investment. **S u c c e s s f u l** implementation of these key basic industries can only launch the Nigerian economy more decisively into the 21st century. It is for these reasons that despite the threats and blackmail of the international "do gooders" the Federal Government will push ahead with the implementation of its vital projects.

Conclusion

From the facts available to government and the slant of the article in the *London Times*, government is convinced that the intention is to deliberately mislead the public, including our development partners. Government could have ignored the publication but we have chosen to respond in order to put the issues right. As for the writer, William Keeling, the government has for sometime been aware that he is a freelance journalist working for a number of newspapers, but mainly the *Financial Times* of London. His activities in Nigeria and the slant of the articles he has been writing on the country has confirmed the suspicion that he is here for a purpose.

The Federal Government remains undaunted and unshaken in her determination to run an open government but appeals for the maintenance of a high sense of responsibility and respect for obligations which freedom imposes.



Okongwu and Aminu: no truth in the story?

this "at least 3 billion Dollars is not accounted for" between July 1990 and May 1991.

But as at June 27, 1991 on the day Keeling's story appeared, the fund, according to the government, stood at US 1.7 billion Dollars. Taking into account the 500 million Dollars paid for debt service, the grand total of all lodgements into the windfall fund stood at US 2.2 billion Dollars. "It is evident from these facts that the balance in the foreign currency stabilisation fund never at any time reached US 3 billion Dollars, let alone the US 5 billion Dollars claimed by Mr. Keeling in his article," the government report

to have predated the Gulf crisis and even the creation of the fund. Government argued therefore that

than 150 million Dollars." He also said the cost of the Mercedes limousines bought to transport

In his article, Keeling had alleged that Nigeria might have already spent more than half of the windfall it received in increased oil revenues as a result of the Gulf crisis.

the tanks couldn't have been bought out of a fund that did not exist at the time of the purchase. The

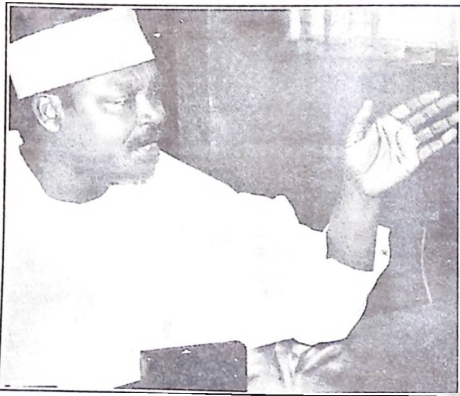
heads of state exceeded the level of contributions by all OAU countries in 1990.

Government said there was no truth whatsoever in Keeling's suggestions that an unduly large amount was spent in hosting the summit. The government, however, did not say how much was spent though it explained that a substantial part of the expenditure incurred in hosting the summit was on vital capital projects that must be erected whether or not there was an OAU summit.

The decision by member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to intervene in Liberia's crisis by sending in a monitoring group (ECOMOG) and especially Nigeria's leading role received the attention of donor countries, according to Keeling. He said they had estimated the cost to Nigeria's government to be 250 million — 500 million Dollars.

Government called this suggestion blackmail but promised not to bow before it, and, for security reasons, declined to disclose the cost of its involvement in ECOMOG. Later it said the cost was not more than 25 million Dollars.

Observers said this change of heart was a wise decision in view of the full and public disclosure by the United States of America of the cost of its own intervention in the Gulf crisis.



Information minister Akinyele: a big PR headache

asserted.

Keeling's claims that certain projects were financed from the project were, according to the government, also fallacious and at best a figment of his imagination. The purchase of Vicker's tank, which Keeling gave as an example an extra-budgetary military expenditure were said by the report

government, however, had not given the actual date for the purchase.

The government dismissed Keeling's estimates of the other items of expenditure and disputed his insinuation that they were all settled out the windfall fund.

"The OAU summit," Keeling said, "is believed to have cost more

Keeling also claimed that the cost of the contract awarded to Ferrostahl of Germany to construct the aluminium smelter was almost doubled. He said international creditors had called for its scrapping. "Preposterous!" said government. "The allegation is totally unfounded." Once again it promised not to bow to the blackmail of international "dogooders."

Clearly Keeling, perhaps basking in the confidence engendered by trustworthy sources he believes to be and unimpeachable, has not written a balanced account. Most news sources in Lagos are only too willing to open up to foreign correspondents. And some, in an effort to save or salvage the nation's face, go to gratuitous lengths. According to Alhaji Ahmed Abubakar the director-general of finance ministry, after the two encounters during which Keeling was invited by the finance minister he was assured of prompt response to all his requests for information. "I gave him my telephone number, that of the honourable minister and the governor of the Central Bank," he said, indicating that Keeling ought to have tried to verify. He was obliged to hear our side, he said. He never called, Alhaji Ahmed said.

Official sources close to the presidency and some in the finance ministry were quick to dismiss Keeling's diplomatic sources. "If we had 5 billion Dollars in our till," one of them said, "we would have told the creditors to go hang."

While creditors hang, information seekers were mostly left to hang high and dry. Many observers said 2.2 billion Dollars looked too much on the low side. (Algeria whose crude oil production was 800,000 barrels per day against Nigeria's 1.9 million barrels per day during the first quarter of 1991, earned 2 billion Dollars). Proportionately therefore,

Nigeria ought to have earned at least 4.75 billion Dollars.

Government officials who volunteered explanation on condition of anonymity said there are more complex factors in determining OPEC revenues than taking mathematical proportion.

"You have to consider Nigeria's own domestic needs," one of them said. "We don't sell everything we produce." Even when we do sell, he said, you'll need to net up after paying off the oil companies and other charges.

An official at Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, warned against multiplying production figures and the prices on the spot market. "While countries

But while he might not have cared about giving time or care to "the other side," his report, much as government might be irked, came just in time.

While the stabilisation fund had been known for sometime, without a categorical statement and verifiable information that something had been put into it and had not been touched, there was nothing to make readers doubt Keeling's conclusions.

Many now say a nasty situation arose for the government because it had been less than liberal with information about its activities. Some people even now feel the government statement is inadequate. Before Keeling's story,

Clearly Keeling, perhaps basking in the confidence engendered by trustworthy sources he believes to be and unimpeachable, has not written a balanced account.

like Saudi Arabia and some big producers always reserve a portion of their production for Rotterdam's spot market, Nigeria plays only the game of contracts," he said. As a result we hardly ever earn the big bucks, he added.

Therefore to arrive at the correct figure of the windfall revenue Nigeria received, one has to know a whole lot of variables, figures, numbers, royalties, charges and a stroke of luck. And luck was exactly what was lacking. "I will be surprised if there is anyone in the country — whether in NNPC, Central Bank or ministry of finance — who can tell you all those things," one oil industry watcher said. "Perhaps no one can ever know for sure."

If government had been slovenly in stating its case, Keeling was clearly guilty of a professional slip. Even so, his story was not without benefit to the government.

that report much would have been sufficient but now it looked as if full disclosure would be the only right answer.

While the government has juggled with figures and percentages in its report, the reality gritty is yet to be done. Government has denied making 5 billion Dollars as a result of windfall revenues as alleged by Keeling. It quoted 2.2 billion Dollars and stopped there. How was that figure arrived at? How much oil, and how much more than pre-Gulf crisis production, was sold and at what prices? Only this could provide a water-tight case.

Meanwhile, Keeling is waiting in the wings for his chance to come back.

By Adamu Adamu and
Mohammed Haruna
with additional reports by
Okonta and Olayinka Telu

Fuel crisis

Syndicates take control

A vicious syndicate snatches up fuel supply, to the chagrin of consumers

The crisis set in without warning. One after the other, petrol and gas stations in several northern Nigerian cities and towns locked up their pumps and waved away customers who drove in for a refill. Within days, a crisis atmosphere began to set in as motorists and motorcyclists anxiously roamed petrol stations in search of fuel. They were joined by other fuel

sions; a petrol station manager in Sokoto, surveying the dozens of cars queuing up at his station, told *Citizen*, "They heard rumours that we will soon have fuel. Personally, I know nothing about it, but I am afraid of telling them to disperse".

The crisis worsened when the black petrol markets, officially known as surface tanks, also went dry.



Petrol everywhere, but not a drop to buy

users, including farmers who need it to power agricultural machinery and irrigation pumps. Rumours soon spread that an acute shortage was imminent, and with *Sallah* fast approaching, people rushed to stockpile it. Long queues of cars, motorcycles, gallons and jerry cans, sometimes five abreast, soon formed at any station that opened its pumps.

In due course, the atmosphere of crisis developed into a full-scale siege. Queues formed not only where there was fuel, but wherever rumours had it that it will soon arrive. The affair soon attained ridiculous dimen-

Traditionally, the black markets supplied fuel more regularly than the petrol stations, but at a higher price. A gallon of petrol sells for four Naira at Kwalkwalawa, a popular black market five kilometres north of Sokoto, thirty percent more than the official price. As the scarcity developed, however, the Sokoto State government banned the sale of fuel in surface tanks. The state's commissioner for commerce and Industry, Alhaji Walsu Yaro, told *Citizen* that the measure was adopted because "some dealers used surface tanks as an excuse to divert petrol and smuggle it out of the country". The govern-

ment was however forced to lift the ban in 14 out of the state's 37 local government areas because they had no standard petrol stations.

What the black markets lost at the surface tanks, they soon made up for at the petrol stations. A low-level syndicate of hawkers teamed up with petrol attendants and obtained fuel in gallons and jerry cans, an illegal act in Sokoto State. This fuel was then sold within the vicinity of the petrol stations to anxious motorists and motorcyclists who could not stand the long queues. At one stage, a gallon sold for 25 Naira and a tin sold for 100 Naira in this black markets. The effect soon snowballed into the rest of the city's economy. A taxi drop doubled overnight to two Naira and *Kabu-Kabu* motorcycle drop went up to three Naira or more.

Worst affected by the fuel crisis in the past month were the far northern towns of Katsina, Daura, Kano, Gusau, Sokoto, Funtua, Zaria and Bauchi. In all these cities, petrol stations were either dry or they had long queues of vehicles lined up in them. The queues finally arrived in Kaduna, the locale of the NNPC's huge re-



NNPC Group MD, John

finery, towards the end of June, although these were not nearly as long as those in the far north.

Just what had gone wrong in a country that exports more than one million barrels of oil every day? Although there was some confusion as to the actual cause of the fuel crisis, *Citizen* gathered that at least three factors were contributory. Officials of the Kaduna Refining and Petrochemicals Company, which pumps refined fuel to the main depots in Jos, Kano and Gusau, say that they had a partial breakdown of their machinery and could not pump the regular amount of fuel to the depots. This apparently happened within a week after the huge refinery re-opened after closing down for its regular maintenance work.

Top officials of the refinery were not available last week to explain to *Citizen* the nature of the breakdown. Nor, for that matter, did they offer any explanations to the numerous petrol dealers who flocked to their installations. At Gusau early last week, our reporter saw more than fifty oil tankers parked at petrol stations and other places several kilometres away from the oil depot. None of the drivers appeared to know why there was a shortage; some openly accused the NNPC of deliberate sabotage. "They have fuel in this depot, quite all right", an angry tanker driver told *Citizen*. "They are simply hiding it".

In Sokoto, the city worst affected by the fuel shortage, several petrol station managers told *Citizen* that depot officials offered them no explanations for the drastically reduced supplies. Emmanuel Dada, manager of the large Bafarawa petrol station on the outskirts of Sokoto, told *Citizen*, "We only know that there is no sufficient fuel at the Gusau depot, but they did not tell us why. Some say they had a breakdown; others say they are washing their tanks. For the past three months, the scarcity is getting worse and nobody told us why. We normally load up to four tankers a day at Gusau depot, but now we are lucky if we get one tanker in five days". This suggests a 95% reduction of fuel supply to the Gusau depot.

Dada's contention was supported by Umaru Sabi Kamba, general manager of Kamba Engineering Services, owners of Sokoto's newest and largest petrol station. "Our company orders ten tankers of petrol, kerosine and gas everyday for our four stations", Kamba told *Citizen*. "These days, they arrive sparingly, maybe one in four days. This is not enough to service even our Sokoto station, which has ten pumps. Our money is also locked up at the depot since we have paid for all ten tankers. We have not been told what is responsible for this".

It appeared that even officials of the Sokoto state government were not sure of the cause of the shortage. The state's commissioner for commerce and industry, Waisu Yaro, told *Citizen* last Monday that he was surprised to see fuel queues in the city that morning, for



Aminu: no explanations forthcoming

he had been assured by the managing director of the NNPC's petroleum products marketing subsidiary that fuel supplies to the depots was normalised the previous week. The commissioner could not immediately ascertain what was wrong since "the Gusau depot has no telephone"; he therefore dispatched a car to Gusau, 200 kilometres away, to find out what went wrong.

The NNPC had however advised petrol dealers, several weeks ago, to begin "bridging" operations in anticipation of a shortfall. Under this arrangement, dealers in the North send their tanker trucks to Ibadan and Lagos to collect fuel, for which the NNPC pays transport costs of 10,623 Naira per tanker. The refunds used to be made at Lagos and were very cumbersome. Recently, the NNPC began the refunds in Kaduna in order to ease the dealers' hardships. As *Citizen* gathered last week, however, the system re-

mained just as cumbersome. Abba Shehu Na-Ige, proprietor of Abba Petrol in Sokoto, told *Citizen*, "As of last month, dealers were demanding the refund of 15 million Naira from the NNPC for bridging operations. When we got to Kaduna, they told us that they will disburse three million Naira, then make a return to Lagos and collect another three million Naira. At that rate they will never cope, for more applications for refund are pouring in by the day. Our company alone applied for refunds of 400,000 Naira but we were paid 184,000 Naira. We cannot send any more tankers to the South unless we are paid because we haven't the money to service them."

With pumping of petrol stalled at the depots and with bridging operations in shambles, the state of siege reigned unabated in several cities. State governments responded to the crisis in their various ways. In Katsina, the energetic governor Yahaya Madaki went on radio and television to thank citizens for their patience. The governor then led an operation and captured some petrol tankers allegedly headed for Niger Republic through the porous Jibia border. The tankers were taken to the police station and thereafter forced to sell the oil locally, after which fuel supply in Katsina briefly normalised. Last week, the situation was back in crisis, and Colonel Yahaya Madaki was said to be embarking upon a night patrol in order to apprehend petrol smugglers.

In Sokoto, the state government reacted by setting up a task force to combat the smuggling of petroleum products and grains. Alhaji Waisu Yaro told *Citizen*, "We realised that certain unpatriotic citizens were smuggling the product out of the country, so a task force was set up with a responsibility for curbing these. At first there was success and normalcy returned, but the queues formed up again when maintenance work

Worst affected by the fuel crisis in the past month were the far northern towns of Katsina, Daura, Kano, Gusau, Sokoto, Funtua, Zaria and Bauchi. In all these cities, petrol stations were either dry or they had long queues of vehicles lined up in them.



Syndicate's victims: waiting for fuel in Sokoto

SPECIAL REPORT

started at the Kaduna refinery. We sent a team to Lagos to ensure that fuel was being lifted from there in sufficient quantities. Maintenance work at the refinery has now ended, but supply is still inadequate".

The government obviously thinks that smugglers are to blame. The task force, led by an army major, set up a military roadblock at Shuni, 12 kilometres outside Sokoto. All tankers arriving from the Gusau depot are escorted into the nearby Giginya Barracks, headquarters of the One Mechanised Brigade. There, a soldier, policeman or SSS officer is assigned to follow the tanker until it discharges its cargo into a pump. The officer also stays at the station until the fuel is sold.

Despite these stringent regulations, petrol is still smuggled out of the country through the borders at Illela and Kamba, respectively to Niger and Benin republics. Rumours make much of illegal smuggling routes in the form of bush paths, donkeys and human porters. In fact, a source in Sokoto told Citizen that most smuggling is done through the official border posts, which are manned by the army, police, customs, immigration and the SSS. "Nobody drives a fully-loaded oil tanker through a sandy bush-path at Illela", he said. "Rather, they are driven on the trunk A road from Sokoto to Konni".

The staging area for smuggling operations in Sokoto State is the town of Gwadabawa, 40 kilometres north of Sokoto. Tankers are driven up here early in the evening. There are at least five customs and police checkpoints from Gwadabawa to Illela, 40 kilometres further north. According to our sources, smugglers drive up to checkpoints ahead of the tankers and conclude an "arrangement". Presently, the going rate is 10,000 Naira per tanker, paid in advance. The tankers then drive out of Gwadabawa, usually after midnight, and drive on right through the border. A pretty similar operation takes place at Jibia, after the smuggling kingpins, based in Katsina, "arrange" with security officials. The deal is extremely profitable for the smugglers, since a tanker of oil goes for 128,000

Naira in Konni, 6 kilometres beyond the Nigerian border, or eight times its cost in Nigeria. The proceeds are then used to smuggle tobacco, wheat flour and "tourist" cars into Nigeria.

A top official in Sokoto admitted to Citizen the failure of the government's task force measure. "A syndicate has taken control of fuel supply", he said grimly. "It is made up of smugglers and security officials and is almost invincible". The syndicate, our sources said, is so well rooted that it knows in advance when customs inspectors are coming from Abuja and temporarily suspends operations. They were also able to operate even in the worst of emergencies, when the security dragnet is cast at its widest. Citizen learnt that when the Sokoto State security committee met last Friday to review the elaborate security machinery set up to contain smuggling, the acting governor, Alhaji Isa Wasagu, said he had heard from private sources that ten oil tankers crossed the Illela border at midnight.

Within the security forces, our sources said the syndicate is so wide-ranging as to include almost all officers, including those at the very top. Much solidarity exists within the customs, in particular, in sharing the bribes from smugglers. Officers who are away are well catered for, and regular "returns" are made to seniors and colleagues on desk jobs. Similar arrangements are said to exist in the police, SSS and Immigration. As for the army, a source in Sokoto said the force was corrupted during the 1984-85 closure of borders by the Buhari-Idiagbon regime, when smuggling was very

risky but highly profitable. Our source said at the time, any soldier posted to the border automatically forfeited his salary at the barracks.

Petrol dealers in Sokoto and Katsina gloat when asked about smuggling. "Smuggling? How do we smuggle?" one of them asked. "Afterall, we are closely watched by five security agencies".

An enraged motorist in Katsina told Citizen, "Let's face it, the government cannot control smuggling. Its agencies are neck-deep in it. The only solution is to allow citizens to form anti-smuggling vigilantes. Any tanker caught will be promptly set ablaze."

By Mahmud Jega in Katsina and Sokoto



Mazoch: state government helpless

Eleven Governors

Just like before

The Governors met but still left some issues hanging fire

The 22nd consultative meeting of the 11 northern states was held, quite alright. However, after about two full days of waiting, expecting to file in some captivating stories, reporters had to go home with nothing new. The case was that, the governors either repeated what they might have discussed long ago or they failed to make decisive resolutions on some certain issues. For instance, it was expected that they will make a black and white pronouncement on the case of the managing director of the New Nigeria Development Company, Daniel Ugbabe, and of course, say something —anything on the Arewa House.

It didn't really matter that the chairman of the meeting Governor Idris Garba of Kano State informed reporters, minutes before the meeting began that, they will discuss the usual things. Review of the performance of the three main institutions owned by the states, the NNDC, Bank of the North and Kaduna Polytechnic. The governor promised that they would "critically examine the problems of the institutions with a view to finding lasting solutions to them". That was on the morning of June 27. By the 28th when the communique was issued, no one seemed certain that the governors decided on things that were different from their March meeting.

The communique was full of praise for the managers of the various institutions — including, surprisingly, the NNDC, whose chief executive had been suspended early in the year for alleged insubordination. The communique, concerning the embattled managing director —

was so unclear that a reporter had to insist on getting an unequivocal statement from the chairman. Even the issue of the moribund Kaduna Textiles Limited, (KTL), was stated in a hush-hush and secretive manner as if the public had no right to know more.

First, the Kaduna Polytechnic was, perhaps, for the first time adjudged to be "prevailing under a peaceful atmosphere". The government went further to adduce reasons for the "stable atmosphere" in the institution thus: "a result of the good and exemplary leadership of the board of governors". For a job well done, the governors resolved to pay the annual subvention promptly. They also accepted and promised to support the institution's "initiative to raise more funds" by launching an endowment fund later in the year.

On the New Nigeria Development Company, apart from the governors' call to the company to "identify itself more with the development aspirations of the owner states" they expressed satisfaction with its performance saying that its "increasing role in privatisation of unviable public firms and its untiring effort to broaden its search for more investible funds" are commendable. The governors also noted that the board of the NNDC has complied with the directive given by the governors at their 21st meeting meaning that the managing director is staying put.

The governors were also impressed with the performance of the Bank of the North; but just for the first quarter of the year, which ended March 31st. The Bank garnered a net profit of 21.16 million

Naira.

The governors also deliberated on the report of the situation at Kaduna Textiles Limited. As recommended by a technical committee, the governors have appointed Churchgate Industries (Nig) Limited of India to manage the company —ahead of United Nigeria Textiles Limited, (UNTU



Ugbabe: reinstated

and Texlon who were involved in the bid. In addition, they approved the restructuring of the shareholding so as to give the company's workers a chance to participate in the affairs of the company.

Arewa House also got a mention. Despite the fact that the target amount of 120 million Naira for the renovation of the House was surpassed during the launching of the appeal fund by five million Naira, the governors said that they were appealing "for more contribution from individuals and corporate bodies." The issue of the removal of the director of Arewa House, Dr. Bashir Ikara, was brushed aside.

By Rabiu Baze

Abana Community

Citizens of two "countries"

The hearts of the people of Abana are with Nigeria, but their destiny seems to be with Cameroun

In a world where many are not satisfied with what they have, boundary disputes are a common occurrence. Communities tussle with communities and countries jostle with countries. As the game of greed goes on, those within the firing range wince from physical and emotional pain.

The people of Abana, Akwa Ibom State (?) are writhing in pain because they have the misfortune of being embroiled in an unending boundary dispute with Cameroun. What makes their case a most

pathetic one is that they have sold their souls to a "woman" who does not value their love and affection. That "woman" is Nigeria.

Abana is located at the south-eastern end of Nigeria's border with Cameroun, which stretches into approximately 1,350 kilometres. It is accessible only by sea. From Enwang, headquarters of

Mbo local government area in Akwa Ibom State, one still requires to spend close to 40 minutes in an engine boat to get to Abana. Like the over a dozen other settlements in the Bakassi Peninsula at the entrance of the Cross River estuary, it is inhabited mainly by people of Nigerian stock. The main

occupation of the people in these parts is fishing, but today, they can no longer catch and eat their fish in peace. Their only crime is that, way back about 200 years ago their ancestors, who were full-blooded Nigerians, settled in a place which happens to be of strategic importance. Apart from having crude oil, the proverbial black gold, (a recent discovery in the peninsula) the area is of great importance both for purposes of political influence and maritime trade.

The whiteman during his

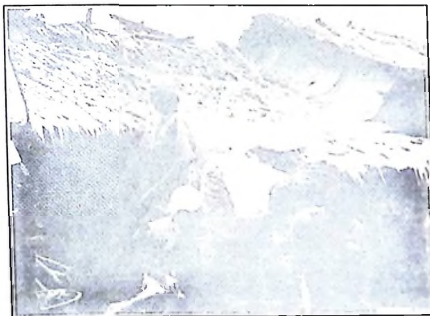
"a gentleman's agreement" between the British and the Germans gave away the fishing settlements to Cameroun.

The Nigerians in the affected area, however, ignored the whiteman's "joke" and continued to regard themselves as part and parcel of the giant of Africa. Cameroun, on its part, did not show much interest in the area until after the Nigerian civil war in 1970.

When the Camerounian adventure in the area started, there were rumours that General Yakubu

Gowon, then Nigeria's head of state, had ceded the fishing communities to Cameroun in appreciation of the role Ahmadu Ahidjo (now late), his opposite number across the border, played in dousing the Biafran rebellion. But what actually happened was that the Gowon regime grumbled, examined the facts of the case, found that it had little moral right

to flex its muscles over the issue, and so kept quiet. And that was the signal the Camerounians were waiting for. Since then they have intensified their adventure in the area, progressively acquiring fully, one fishing port after another. According to Mbo local government officials, at the last count the



Poverty and confusion: Abana community

expedition in Africa, did not fail to notice the strategic importance of the area. From 1887, the British and the Germans squared up for control of the peninsula. The French later joined the fray, but had quite little to show for its adventure in the area. Finally in 1913, disaster struck for the Nigerians in the peninsula when

Camerounians had taken full control of 13 of the fishing settlements, the last being Atabong, which was seized two years ago. The communities Cameroun acquires in the disputed territory, she renames. For instance, Atabong has since become Idiaboto; while Ine Okoi is now Bombo Bedimo; Usak Edet is now Isangele; and Odiong is now Kaube.

The rate at which the Camerounians are going, it seems to be a question of time before Abana and Onosi, the only remaining disputed settlements still controlled by Nigeria, falls into their hands. To demonstrate their impatience in assuming total control of the two remaining communities they have already given Abana a new name: it is now called Jabana. From Atabong (or Idiaboto, depending on which of the two disputing parties you sympathise with) Camerounian gendarme are launching what could be their final onslaught on Abana and Onosi. Last April was a very fruitful month for them in their expansionist campaign. In a lightning strike from Atabong on April 27, the gendarme numbering up to 70, jumped down from their two patrol boats, combed Abana for about 30 minutes and then returned to Atabong with the Nigerian flag securely tucked in their baggage. In its place, the green-red-yellow national flag of Cameroun fluttered in the Abana breeze.

When the gendarme are not raiding to exchange the Camerounian flag for the green-white-green one of Nigeria, they storm the disputed territory either to demand for taxes or to hand electioneering campaign posters. Head or tail, the people of Abana and others in the disputed areas lose. They do not have health centres or schools, what is more, luxuries of modern life such as electricity and pipe-borne water are non-existent. All those things will have to wait until the fate of the people is decided. But the people

are becoming impatient. They believe that the Nigerian government is contributing to their problem by delaying in stating its position on the dispute. The time, said 63-year-old Okokon Ibok, Abana community leader, has come "for the government to tell us where we belong".

Officials of Mbo local government told *Citizen* at Enwang

praying for a return of their 75 horsepower Yamaha W/19 speed boat as at the time *Citizen* visited Enwang. The boat was seized by Camerounian gendarme on April 25 while conveying six community leaders from Abana to Onosi. The six officials, including Okon Inyang, younger brother of Etim Inyang, ex-Nigerian inspector-general of police, were delivering a message

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that "the constant harassment of our people" by Cameroun was a harrowing experience. They spoke of efforts they have made to see that the federal government settles the issue once and for. Their optimism is based on two recent developments. The first is the visit, last May, to the disputed areas by a team of investigators from the office of the federal surveyor-general in Lagos. The other one is the impending visit to Yaounde by Vice President Augustus Aikhomu over the issue. Aikhomu, who serves as chairman of the national boundary commission, had in the second week of June, met with Mbo local government officials and the governors of Akwa Ibom and Cross River states in a bid to get the facts of the case.

Apart from praying for a quick cessation of hostilities in the disputed areas, Mbo local government officials were also

from Chief Joseph Atte, Mbo local government chairman, aimed at mobilising the people towards the visit, two days away, of President Ibrahim Babangida. The six men were tortured for 20 days and then released following the intervention of the Akwa Ibom State government, even then, without their boat.

Okon Ibok, vice chairman of Mbo local government, told *Citizen* at Enwang that the local government had done its best on the running battles with Cameroun and was leaving the rest in the hands of the federal government. "We don't want to make any more statements on the issue", said he: "It is between the federal government and Cameroun. We have met with the vice president and the federal government is taking action on it. The issue will soon be resolved".

By Isaac Umunna, in Mbo, Nigeria and Cameroun



Sokoto State

Race against time

The gentleman's agreement has collapsed, so it is everyman for himself

The governorship race in Sokoto State started later than any other in Nigeria. For months, while candidates campaigned noisily in neighbouring Katsina, Kaduna and Niger states, the race in Sokoto remained at the level of rumour. As late as May, no one had openly declared his intention to contest because, in this highly conservative state, it is almost an abomination to seek power without first being invited to do so. Alhaji Bello Alkali, then state NRC chairman, told *Citizen* in April that "our people are very modest and will not join the race too hastily". Alhaji Abubakar Koko, the SDP chairman, told *Citizen* then that although he had called for governorship volunteers within the party, no one as yet responded.

Things were different last week, at least in the NRC, where the race is already open and keen. Many NRC partisans in Sokoto regard their party's primaries as the real governorship thing, given its sweep of last December's local council elections. Given the lost time, candidates are feverishly trying to make up.

Until last month, there were suggestions that NRC leaders had zoned the governorship to Sokoto Central, in recognition of the fact that former civilian governors Alhaji Shehu Kangiwa and Dr. Garba Nadama were from Kebbi and

Zamfara respectively. In April, Alhaji Bello Alkali confirmed this agreement to *Citizen* but added that the beneficiary zone must produce a candidate "who is acceptable to all, who has already worked hard in the party, not someone recruited from Lagos or Abuja to join an already successful venture. If they cannot produce such a candidate, then any one can contest."

Alkali was apparently not satisfied by Sokoto Central's choice, and last month he resigned as party chairman and entered the race. In many ways, he is today the lead contender, and he is known to be supported by up to 33 of the 37 NRC local government chairmen in the state. It was this pro-Alkali group that tried to remove the acting state

chairman, retired Brigadier Ibrahim Yaro, and replace him with Alhaji Ibrahim Andiye, a supporter of Alkali. In protest, 10 other governorship aspirants in the NRC signed a joint release accusing the former chairman of hijacking the party machinery in the state. Alkali, secretary to the state government from 1985 to 1987, already has in place a well-oiled campaign machinery and moves about with long motorcades.

Prior to this development, party elders from Sokoto Central, said to be led by Alhaji Ibrahim Gusau, Sarkin Malamai, had agreed to draft Alhaji Yerima Sani, the humble former secretary to the civilian government and currently Nigeria's ambassador to Senegal. After three



Alkali and Sani: well oiled campaign machinery

days of intense pressure back in April, Alhaji Yerima still refused to contest. The elders thereafter decided to draft his younger brother, Abdulkadir Sani, until last November the director-general of the ministry of education. Although Alhaji Abdulkadir is also humble and low-keyed, he is seen as Alkali's biggest challenger given the nature of his constituency. His biggest promoters are Alhaji Ibrahim Gusau, Alhaji Shehu Malami, former Sarkin Sudan of Wurno and the veritable kingmaker of Zamfara, Alhaji Isa Mayana. Sources in Sokoto said Alhaji Abdulkadir also has the tacit support of former president Shehu Shagari. He also bid for the support of the Sultan of Sokoto, but Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, who is playing his ace card close to his royal chest, only handed down the routine "Allah ya bada sa'a."

Of the other NRC candidates, two of the most prominent are Alhaji Yahaya Abdulkarim and Alhaji Yahaya Maigari. Abdulkarim, from Talata Mafara, was said to have achieved rapid promotion to the position of permanent secretary for education under former governor Nadama in 1982. Dr. Nadama now supports Abdulkarim, one of the first to enter the race. On the other hand, Yahaya Maigari has not openly joined the race, but *Citizen* has learnt that he is in it. As secretary to the

government from 1987 to 1990, Alhaji Maigari achieved unparalleled power and prominence and practically governed the state. Although he was accused during his tenure as SMG of unduly favouring natives of Gwandu within the civil service, sources say that he initially had difficulty securing the solid support of NRC chieftains in Gwandu for his governorship ambitions. This was because the NRC's leader in Birnin Kebbi, Alhaji Hassan Shayau, is a leading supporter of Bello Alkali. Last week, it was still not clear whether Maigari will openly seek nomination.

Other NRC candidates include Alhaji Abubakar Musa, of Yauri, the former director of customs, as well as his one-time assistant, Alhaji Aliyu Kyari Abdurrahman of Gwadabawa, in Sokoto North. Both former officers of the Customs have noisy campaigns in place. Also in the race is Alhaji Aliyu Jibrin Yelwa, national auditor of the NRC, former director of the Central Bank, former commissioner for finance and deputy chairman executive council during the 1978 transition period. Aliyu comes from Yauri, and is a member of that old emirate's royal family. Yet another candidate is Alhaji Bello Abdullahi, from Sokoto, former personal assistant to President Shehu Shagari. Alhaji Adamu Augie, publicity secretary of the defunct Nigeria National Congress and a veteran broadcaster, is also in the race. Being from Argungu, he shares the same base as Alkali and has campaigned less actively. One more candidate in the NRC is Sidi Atto Makera, wholesaler of Lever Brothers products, who became well-known in Sokoto after his television commercials to promote his wares. Sidi Atto's aides say he has the support of Sultan Ibrahim Dasuki, but this is not easy to confirm.

The race in the SDP has been as yet low-key. After the party's stunning defeat last December, members' morale was boosted when

it won eight local councils through the election tribunals. However, a bitter feud soon ensued when one party faction tried to unseat Abubakar Koko, Sarkin Yakin Gwandu, the party chairman, whom they accused of running the party as a "one-man show". Sources in the SDP said Abubakar Koko's position in the Sokoto SDP is guaranteed by his very close association with retired General Shehu Yar'adua. Although Koko has not declared any interest in the governorship race, many believe that he is the SDP's strongest candidate.

Meanwhile, three other persons have declared their intention to run on the SDP's platform. Potentially the strongest is Alhaji Ahmed Gusau, state chairman of the NLC since 1985, who has the support of most labour unions in his bid. Also bidding is Alhaji Abdulkadir Waziri, best known for his protracted legal battle to unseat Alhaji Muhammadu Arzika from the chairmanship of the state chamber of commerce back in 1984. Waziri also contested, but lost, the chairmanship of Sokoto local government in 1987. The third known SDP candidate is Alhaji Sani Mustapha of Gusau, a former executive of NICON and a leader of the state PFN.

How will this race against time all end up, with the primaries only weeks away? Political observers in Sokoto speculate that the NRC's "elders" in the state may soon convene a meeting at Alhaji Shehu Shagari's farm retreat, 55 kilometres south of Sokoto. There, pundits say the ten NRC candidates will be asked to step down *en masse* and clear the way for a compromise candidate. The one being mentioned last week was Alhaji Hamzat Ahmadu, once principal private secretary to both General Aguiyi-Ironsi and General Gowon, former ambassador to Moscow, former permanent secretary for external affairs and, until last April, Nigeria's ambassador to the USA.

By Mahmud Jega



Koko: SDP's strongest contender

Alhaji appeals to African Re-insurance

The minister of finance and economic development, Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji last week opened the 13th Annual General Assembly of the African Re-insurance Corporation with a plea to African countries to work more closely for social, political and economic development of the continent.



Alhaji

"We observed that with the coming of a united European market, the need for greater Intra-African co-operation in all spheres was non-negotiable," he said. The minister reviewed the volume of funds being exported from Africa through insurance and reinsurance premiums which averaged at 1.4 billion Naira annually and appealed for more efforts by the industry to stem the out flow of funds in the continent.

With 32 members in 1976, the members of the corporation has increased to 39 member states and the African Development Bank. The gross premium income has equally risen from 3.56 million Naira in 1978 to 34.51 million Naira in 1990.

Cadbury Promotes six

Cadbury Nigeria PLC announced the promotion of six senior managers last week. According to Chido Nwakanma, media relations manager of Cadbury, Dr. Emmanuel Taylor formerly instruments engineer was elevated to instruments manager. D. K. Duncan and Bunmi Adetumbi

have also been promoted to operations manager, foods and field sales manager respectively.

Also assigned higher responsibilities in senior management are Ken Attah, now engineering operations manager, Adeyemi Shoyole, engineering services manager and A.A. Ojo, manager (electrics).



Duncan



Adetumbi

Liberty leads

The one-year old Liberty Merchant Bank Limited has recorded an impressive profit record of 14.21 million Naira in its seven and half months of operation. The banks report which ended in March 31, 1991 shows that the gross earnings of the bank during the period under review was 50.42 million Naira respectively.

From the profit, the sum of 10 million Naira has been reserved for

bonus issue. The chairman of the bank, Alhaji Aliko Dangote told the



Dangote

shareholders at the first annual general meeting of the bank in Lagos last week that despite the initial start-up problems and the general economic, industry and regulatory problems "the result of your bank for the seven and a half months period under review demonstrated a very strong starting performance", adding "the results confirm the underlying soundness of our entry strategy into the banking industry and I am particularly pleased to say that they represent the best results so far achieved by

any bank of our age".

Dangote congratulated the staff and management of the bank for a job well done. While welcoming government's untiring efforts at controlling inflation and interest rates, he observed that the frequency and rapidity of policy changes do not augur well for the achievement of a stable and orderly economic environment.

Liberty Merchant Bank Limited obtained its licence on June 28, 1990 and commenced operation on August 15 in the same year.

By Tola Sunday

AFRICA

South Africa

Conference of the people

For the first time in 30 years, the ANC conference holds inside South Africa

Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, who recently returned to South Africa after 35 years in exile, rose last Tuesday to read the opening prayer at the ANC national conference, potentially the greatest since the great Congress of the People back in 1956, which adopted the Freedom Charter. More than 3,000 delegates and hundreds of foreign observers sat in the main hall of the Durban-Westville University in Natal, as Huddleston, the 78-year-old leader of Britain's vibrant Anti-Apartheid movement thanked God for being alive to witness the occasion.

The ANC had many reasons to thank God last week. The 48th conference was being held in Durban, where the organisation held its last conference inside South Africa in 1959. Soon afterwards, it was banned and its leaders went underground. Last week, they reappeared on the dais. Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu each wore a garland of the ANC's gold, black and green colours. Mr. Nelson Mandela, the acknowledged father of all political struggle, delivered the keynote speech of the conference. In it, the Black Moses attempted to cater for the somewhat differing perceptions on issues between the ANC's sagely leadership and its more militant rank-and-file, products of different experiences in the last 30 years of the bitter campaign to dethrone apartheid. Most of the elderly leaders, represented by Oliver Tambo, the president, and Alfred Nzo, the secretary-general, spent three decades in exile and organised the ANC from abroad, meticulously prosecuting the international campaign to

isolate South Africa as well as the armed insurgency. Other leaders such as Mandela, Sisulu and Govan Mbeki spent the entire period in prison and lent the force of their example to the struggle. The younger ANC ranks inside the country, for their part, waged the bitter campaign to "make South Africa ungovernable", a key factor in the White regime's change of heart from racist policies. All sides were embittered by the experience, but the elders also acquired the ability for negotiation and compromise such as the ranks do not have.

All views will be harmonised when the ANC conference issues a final communique on Sunday. Already, five committee reports were ready for consideration by the conference, on issues such as a draft ANC constitution, violence in the black townships, constitutional negotiations with the White regime, methods of building the organisation, as well as strategy and tactics. Mandela's keynote address touched all these issues when he called for the internal rebuilding of the armed ranks of the *Umkhonto we Sizwe* and a reviving of the international campaign for sanctions against South Africa. Both statements were loudly cheered by the youthful delegates. At the same time, Mandela urged the delegates to prepare urgently for participation in all-party talks to be convened by the white regime, possibly in August, which are expected to hammer out a new multi-racial constitution for the country. This suggestion was most pleasing to the ANC elders, as well as to many international observers and the white regime. To impress the world with

the seriousness of its position on the continued isolation of South Africa, the conference refused to admit a goodwill message from Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, who hosted President de Klerk last month.

On Friday, the delegates were expected to vote to elect members of an enlarged national executive committee, formerly of 32 members. No one was expected to stand for president against Nelson Mandela, who will fill the position vacated by



Tambo: glorious retirement

his ailing friend Oliver Tambo. Tambo was expected to be elected to a ceremonial post, and Walter Sisulu would stand unopposed for the post of deputy president. All other top officials were however expected to meet a keen challenge for their posts.

Last week, the world anxiously awaited the final composition and programme of the new ANC leadership, which is expected to assume power in the country very soon.

By Mahmud Jega with agency reports

Algeria

A cage for Islam

Algeria has introduced its own style of pluralism, will it hold?

President Chadli Benjedid appeared all set to repeat the mistakes many before him had made — thinking that the use of force and arrest could successfully emasculate a revolutionary wave, especially one that is religious.

Comparison with Iran here look irresistible. In 1963 when the Shah arrested Imam Khomeini, he didn't stop the revolutionary movement. Rather he was forced by the pressure of revolutionaries to release the Imam. Exile followed which in turn was followed by victory. Whether the struggle of Algerian Muslims would take a similar route is not clear at the moment. But one thing is clear enough.

The arrest of Sheikh Abassi Madani and Sheikh ali bn Hajj, his deputy, and more than 2,000 supporters of the Islamic Salvation Front, FIS, is the easiest way to solidify and confirm the hold of the FIS leadership and effectively spread its authority beyond the urban areas where it has its strongest support.

Apparently expecting an immediate backlash which didn't come, the authorities became encouraged. Security forces took over FIS offices as disturbances, initially restricted to Algiers, spread to various cities including Oran, FLN's capital during the jihad for independence from France and one of its strongholds.

At the last count, tens — according to private sources, hundreds — have been killed with Algiers, Oran, Constantine, Madagama and Mastegnam under fire.

Before taking to the streets, FIS supporters had given their party a clear lead at the ballot box in local elections last year. It trounced the

ruling FLN which scored less than half of what the FIS got.

This partly explains why FLN insists on pushing only the parliamentary elections up front. It redraws the boundaries of constituencies so that its area of support with less than the quarter of the population got as many seats as FIS. Demonstrators went back to the streets demanding a repeal to the new constituency law and the holding of presidential elections simultaneously with the parliamentary one.

Unable to appear democratic to the outside world as he trampled peaceful Islamic demonstrators



Benjedid: almost out?

Madani: What now?

underfoot, Benjedid dropped all pretensions.

He declared a state of emergency, after dismissing his own hand-picked government, cancelled plans for elections and clamped a night curfew. He appointed another hand-picked government and charged it with the responsibility for ushering in the desired political plurality. The first act of Sid Ahmed Ghazali, the new prime minister, was to send the army after Islamic demonstrators again.

While Ghazali struggles to put together the new order that essentially seeks to preserve FLN's hold on the country, there may have been some rethinking and possible re-creation over the decision to experiment with pluralism. On its west Algeria borders a sit-tight and unpopular monarch in Morocco while to the west, reigned Gaddafi, Libya's strongman. Everywhere else in the Arab world — from Egypt to far away Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and an assortment of sheikhdoms — it is either kings or despots.

It shares with most of them a bankrupt economy. With high and rising unemployment, biting inflation and a heavy debt burden, Benjedid's government already has enough troubles without an Islamic struggle. Last year it devalued its currency by 100% and only a hefty (2 billion Dollars) windfall

during the Gulf war helped to moderate its after-effects.

Now with the killings and arrests continuing the toll may surpass that of 1988 when several hundreds were killed, but government stopped short of arresting the leadership. And President Chadli is not expected to call for presidential elections earlier than December 1993 when his term ends. The question now is: will Algerians allow him that much time?

By Adamu Adamu with agency reports

Liberia

Beginning of the end ?

Charles Taylor thinks Liberians, at last, deserve some peace

Out of the jungle, standing before five heads of state, leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL, Charles

Taylor could only say that "the war is over". He might have been acting. But it deserves some credence for the fact that two of his strong backers were among the five presidents that witnessed his hugging of Professor Amos Sawyer. In fact, President Houphouët Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire was the host of the reconciliation meeting that had the presidents of Nigeria, Togo, Gambia and Burkina Faso in attendance.

After the meeting that took place in Cote d'Ivoire's political capital, Yamoussoukro, Charles Taylor, leader of Liberia's main rebel group said he had agreed to work with the interim government of Professor Sawyer, adding, in reference to democratic process, that "we go back to seek a mandate from our people". Taylor who has been the main hurdle against any settlement attempt even added that there will be "no more problems about who will do what". That can be translated as his acceptance of Professor Sawyer's leadership—at least before elections are held in December or early next year.

The summit must then be regarded as a successful one, considering that Taylor stayed till the end, unlike at previous meetings where he either stayed away or walked out midway. Taylor himself said that Liberians can now begin to think of living comfortably, after 18 months of war that has accounted for about 15,000 lives. It is now expected that the ECOWAS summit that took place in Abuja, late last week, would seal whatever plans the organisation has for the successful holding of elections in Liberia.

Charles Taylor's latest attitude must have been the result of the

united manner some leaders in the sub-region have decided to attack the problem. Before the Yamoussoukro summit, the leaders of Nigeria and Gambia can not be said to be the best of friends—they were members of the peace keeping force, ECOMOG—with Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso who are two of the strongest supporters of Charles Taylor. That they were able to come together must have shown Taylor that it is either he accepts their resolutions or he will be on his own. In rebellion, the support of neighbours counts greatly. Charles Taylor knows that quite well.

ECOWAS outgoing chairman, Gambia's Dauda Jawara was reported to have said that the elections scheduled to hold in October have been shifted to allow the electoral commission ample time to organise well. In essence, Liberians should be able to democratically—and comfortably too—go to the polls and elect leaders of their choice. It should also be seen that Professor Amos Sawyer has agreed to just serve as an interim leader and nothing more.

The future of Liberia—and, of course, its people now tests on the concreteness of the new—found unity between the countries that met in Yamoussoukro. Charles Taylor is believed to have been told by his foreign supporters that it's time to allow some peace to reign.

A lasting peace will therefore be expected to be ensured by the insistence of the various heads of state involved in the Liberian crisis to think and act in like manner.

By Rabiou Barde with agency reports



Taylor: foresees no problem



Sawyer: no intention to remain president

WORLD

Britain

The "Empress" bows out

Unable to re-adjust, Thatcher leaves the Commons

Margaret Hilda Thatcher, the first female British prime minister June 28, announced to the world that she would not recontest her London parliamentary seat of Finchley in the next elections.

Referred to variously as the "milk snatcher", "Attila the Hun" and, "Iron Lady", Margaret Thatcher, 65, ruled Britain for 11 years - the longest this century - until a back-bench rebellion triggered by embarrassing resignations by cabinet colleagues, her autocratic style of leadership and her strong and rigid views on united Europe forced her hands to resign on November 28, 1990.

A member of parliament since 1959, Thatcher, who had not taken lightly to being a humble back-bench MP again, said the decision to stay out of the House of Commons would make her freer to "say things because people will know I am not waiting in the wings."

Her decision not to re-contest, along with some of her cronies like the rehabilitated Cecil Parkinson and Nicholas Ridley, is expected to give the embattled prime minister John Major, a major breather. Even though he paid tribute to her as a great, dedicated, and patriotic leader, he knows that she does not approve of most of his actions especially in regard to Europe.

She said Major had not seen as much opposition as she had. "You cannot expect a person who has not been into the fire to have the same viewpoint as someone who has been through it all." Asked whether Major would usher in a new political map, she replied, "I hope not."

She also warned the prime minister not to abdicate British sover-

eignty by agreeing to European integration and monetary union as her successor increasingly adopted a conciliatory line on Europe. Other European leaders have not escaped Thatcher's European crusade either. In a scathing attack on President Mitterrand, she said the French think that they would be able to influence the Germans more than any other country and that under the presidency of Jacques Delors, the European Community acquired "a tendency to want to get more powers to the centre."

The inflexible former prime minister said both persons and their notions are misguided. "The stronger Germany becomes, and she will", she said, "the less she will heed others." As for Delors, she said what he was doing was dead wrong because "things put together artificially deny fundamental realities."

The issue of European unity was the bane of Thatcher, yet in 1977 she described Europe as the source of history's greatest endeavour, "whereby the spirit of man, restless and ever ambitious, seeks always to renew itself by reaching outwards and upwards. The challenge for the next generation is to use the growing authority that will come from the greater unity of Europe to span the gaps between the free and the unfree, between the rich and the poor. This is a great role and cannot be carried out by timid minds."

As for the rest of the world, her decision to quit the formal political scene could not have been sooner. Even though she is admired as a self-willed and self-made person, it is difficult to point to any of her poli-

cies that is sympathetic or friendly to third world causes or even designed to foster brotherhood among mankind.

She had aided America to rape other people's rights in Libya, in the Gulf, in the Falklands, in the commonwealth and, South Africa. Poor nations of the world would remember her as an insensitive, tactless and ruthless leader.

However, the world has not heard the last from Margaret Hilda Thatcher. "I will be around. I have a house in central London which will act as a focus not only for people who believe in what I did, but also for people in the academic world" as she works to establish Thatcher



Thatcher: time to leave

Foundation. That way, there would be Thatcher clones from London Moscow and from Tibet to Benin Republic to spread Thatcherism.

By Muhammad Bomol with agency reports

Yugoslavia Truce hurts

The ceasefire agreement arranged by the European Community seems to be holding, but just

Mid-week, fresh fighting broke out in many parts of Slovenia and Croatia between civilian defence units and Yugoslav federal soldiers trapped inside the secessionist territories.

The Yugoslavian chief of staff was quoted as saying that it was too late to effect a truce in Slovenia. He said that the army high command had been forced to start full scale combat even though the ministry of defence had indicated that it wanted federal troops to return to their barracks.

The general's remarks came as Slovenia's prime minister said that his troops had been told to end all hostilities and observe a new unilateral ceasefire. He had earlier in the week been quoted as saying that the troops should only undertake retaliatory attacks.

The prime minister and his ministers had held talks in Ljubljana with three members of the Yugoslavia leadership which included the new president Nemesic. The new Yugoslav president had said at the meeting that a ceasefire was definitely needed to end what was widely reported as "this insanity." Significantly, he told the Slovenian authorities that even though he is the country's commander-in-chief, he had not been informed of what was going on in Slovenia.

The chances of a ceasefire seems to be very slim because the federal army seems to be out of control because most of the serving soldiers in Croatia and Slovenia are the majority Serbs who are now fighting to get out. More importantly, the army has up to now been kept out of any negotiations for a ceasefire and the civilian leaders appear to be at cross purposes with the army.

Indeed, the situation has been compounded by violent demands in

Belgrade for the return of federal soldiers from Slovenia and Croatia. Thousands of Serbs demonstrated Wednesday in front of the Serbian parliament in protest at the deaths of Serbian soldiers in Slovenia. The protests began when relatives of soldiers in army units serving in Slovenia stormed into the parliament disrupting a special session on the crisis.

Fears of worse outbreak of fighting were heightened last week with the sacking of the army commander in Slovenia. General Konrad Kolksek, a Slovenian, was replaced by a Serb. It is thought that his sacking by the federal authorities was because of the army's slow move to secure the borders of Slovenia and Croatia

federal soldiers. One civilian was killed and three soldiers were wounded in an exchange of fire as Croat protesters threw petrol bombs outside an army base near Zagreb. The demonstrators were trying to prevent a column of armoured vehicles moving out of their barracks.

As the crisis becomes more complicated, western nations appear to be ambivalent. Initially, many had protested against the break-up of Yugoslavia, but deplored the use of force to restore unity. British foreign secretary, Douglas Hurd, condemned the use of force to "suppress democratic aspirations" and supported European Community and US calls for an end to the crisis through dialogue.

President George Bush "explored" the resumption of violence and urged all sides to observe the ceasefire worked out with EEC representatives. In what is seen as a clear u-turn, Margaret Tutwiller, a state department spokeswoman, said America would accept the "full independence of the republics of Yugo-

The chances of a ceasefire seems to be very slim because the federal army seems to be out of control because most of the serving soldiers in Croatia and Slovenia are the majority Serbs who are now fighting to get out. More importantly, the army has up to now been kept out of any negotiations for a ceasefire and the civilian leaders appear to be at cross purposes with the army.

after the two's declaration of independence.

The fears were confirmed at weekend as fighting broke out in several parts of Slovenia near the border with Italy and Austria. The army high command had moved more than 100 heavy vehicles around the borders of Croatia and Slovenia, prompting the Croatian defence minister to say that he would defend the republic if war is imposed. The federal soldiers said that Slovenians were preventing their soldiers from returning to their barracks in neighbouring Croatia.

Clashes have also been reported in Croatia between civilians and

slavia," made up of Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia, "if that is what the people decide they want."

She said that "America would respect any framework on which the people of Yugoslavia decide peacefully and democratically." Last week, America had bluntly rejected the secessionist bid and expressed support for a unified Yugoslavia.

By Friday the situation appeared calm as federal soldiers withdrew from the two republics. America said it was considering an arms sales embargo against Yugoslavia.

By Muhammad Bomoj with agency reports



KABIRU YUSUF

our own ministry of external affairs. This country also makes other non-budgetary contributions. The so-called "OAU observer mission" that monitored Namibia's independence, was bankrolled by Nigeria, whose reward was the appointment

Ogaden when your rooms are flooded or the desert has eaten up your farmland. Nigerian foreign policy should be rooted on Nigeria, openly debated and the government should state clearly what it will cost to achieve which objective.

Dangers of "adventures" abroad

Two things usually distinguish Mohammed Haruna's writings: Lucidity and relentless logic. It may not be possible to agree with him always, but there can be no doubt that he defends his position well. Last week, in these pages, he gave qualified support to what some commentators see as our government's penchant for foreign "adventures". It happens that since the last OAU Summit in Abuja, which I saw at close quarters, my mind has dwelled on the same theme, and I find the reasons Haruna gave for his endorsement of foreign adventures, less than convincing.

He argued that the government was right to host Africa in Abuja because as a continental power Nigeria has responsibilities it cannot run away from. And that in any case, we cannot wait until we solve all our domestic problems before we can venture aboard. Haruna concludes that he favours holding such summits once in a long while, "so long as we avoid waste, squandering and graft", which he added "I suspect there were all these" (at the Abuja summit).

The truth is, it is impossible to avoid waste in the pursuit of policies that are not well-focussed and worse, are deliberately self-serving. The OAU is a useful organisation and Nigeria pays the biggest chunk of its annual dues and does so promptly, as recently confirmed by

of Ambassador O. Jalaoso as head of mission. At the sub-regional level, Ike Nwachukwu confirmed the other day that Nigeria has been picking 70 percent of the bill for ECO-MOG operations in Liberia.

It has become a sort of tradition that when our government wants to achieve some objective in Africa, it throws money at the problem. Our African brothers, who privately snicker that we have more money than sense, are happy to come to the party. But as the music warns, "money cannot buy love"; it also does not bring enduring influence. Who were we trying to impress with all those imported cars and generator-operated street lights? We spent so much to get so little. Yet we are told that this is the era of "economic

It has become a sort of tradition that when our government wants to achieve some objective in Africa, it throws money at the problem. Our African brothers, who privately snicker that we have more money than sense, are happy to come to the party.

diplomacy".

Policy makers should monitor closely the views and yearnings of our people and learn lessons from other countries. Nigerians are concerned about Africa, but it is hard to think about the conflict in the

Egypt is a regional power in North Africa and the Middle East. But the Egyptians work on the premise that it is the other smaller Arab countries that need them, not vice-versa. Egypt has only half the population of Nigeria, but it carries far more weight in Arabia than we do in Africa. Whatever you may think of the Sadat/Mubarak government, it pursues an Egypt-centred policy within a Pan-Arab context. Ten years ago, when Egypt unilaterally signed a peace accord with Israel at Camp David, many Arab league countries broke diplomatic relations and moved their headquarters to Tunis. Mubarak was unperturbed. One by one, the rebels have made peace with Cairo, which early this year once again became the headquarters of the league and the unquestionable centre of Arab politics.

The American too know how to use their money to get results. They pay one quarter of the dues of the United Nations, and when it comes to the crunch, as over the Gulf, they can lean on other members to get what they want. But we put personal interest, first. The only time most Nigerian officials become conscientious is when there is money to organise a jamboree or go on a junket. Ministers just mouth phrases to make an impression during network news. Who would have thought "economic diplomacy" could be so uneconomic!

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Nkiru and team mate celebrating goal. Page 48

Citizenship

By OSAKI ABIBI

...LIKE ROGER MILLA DID IN ITALY,
OUR GIRLS WILL SOON DANCE
THE MAKASSA VICTORY DANCE!...

IT'S A GOAL!!....
A GOAL FOR NIGERIA!



...NOT TO WORRY! WE'LL
BOUNCE BACK!.... WE'LL
BEAT THEM!

GOOALL!!....
...NUMBER TWO FOR
NIGERIA!



PAUL BIYA
MUST GO!

GOOOALL!!...
NUMBER THREE!



A..A..ANOTHER
GOAL!!!

PAUL!... FOUR LETTERS!...
...BIYA!... FOUR LETTERS!...

IT'S ALL HIS
FAULT!



Osaki Abibi, 2001/07/17

Customs rip-off

From my base, a two storey building on mafia city's most busy street, I get a good view of what is happening in one of the most thriving second hand cars market. The sort of cars parked in the cool shades of mango trees tell you not to approach dealers for a bargain unless you are really loaded.

Sparkling Mercedes Benz models, the V—boot, and other wide bodied types compete with sleek tourist brand cars imported from Niger Republic. While lesser mortals who are still struggling for three square meals take little or no notice of the second hand car market, neatly dressed yuppies are seen striking deals as crisp banknotes, drafts or cheques exchange hands. The lesser mortals are content to watch and pray for better days.

That is not the end of the story

because the custom and excise officials are not lesser mortals. They were not ready to take the signs of prosperity lying low, more so when it is obvious they are being prevented from "wetting their beak", you know what I mean. So last Tuesday the customs boys descended on the car dealers of Unguwar Kanawa, Kaduna to extort money under the pretence that import duties were not paid for the cars. From nine o'clock in the morning to five in the evening they threatened, harassed and terrorised the "poor" dealers to milk some Kola out of them.

Most of the dealers were unperurbed since they had papers to show that they had paid customs duty at the point of entry. The customs wolves at the border had arranged the usual "wetin we go



chop" affair whereby a fraction of the duty is paid and papers are issued. But don't ask me into whose pockets the money disappeared. Next time you see a GL 6 custom official riding a V—boot and living in his own million Naira villa don't raise brows. *Na patriotism ego chop?*

The Barons

Act 4 — Scene 3

Baron Nababa — (an indigine of Gongola) was assigned his state and Borno with which he was also very familiar having lived in Maiduguri during the days of defunct North Eastern State. His first port of call was the residence of Baron Na Pambjina, alias Baron Maitumbi.

Baron Nababa — Allah yamdini, Baron Maitumbi, you know my mission as you happened to be in Kaduna during the inaugural meeting of our group. There is no need for briefing.

Baron Maitumbi — Quite correct. I have already intimated our colleagues about developments and advised them to be ready to go to Kaduna whenever they are called upon to do so. As you know there are no Barons here except you and

me. There may be a few Baronets outside Yola but they are of little consequence. However, there are many retired senior military/police officers in this state. Gongola state had produced the following:

- 2 Chiefs of Army Staff
- 2 Chiefs of Air Staff
- 2 Inspectors-General of Police
- 1 Chief of Naval Staff

Very impressive by any standard. However, we are yet to produce a commander-in-chief or even his (2nd in-command) Gongola state will continue to demand the right to produce the next civilian head of state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces!

The retired military/police chiefs (all of whom are resident outside the state) should not be approached now as we do not know their attitude towards us. Some regard us as "bloody civilians". One of the retired generals was quoted as having said he did not wish to see democracy thrive in Nigeria in his life

time, that is for the next 30 or so years! If you have to dine with such people you should use long spoons. My dear Baron Nababa your mission in Gongola is over. Please proceed to Borno and greet the Barons over there.

Baron Nababa — you have solved a lot of my problems. However, I will pay courtesy calls on our elders — politicians of the First Republic — here in Yola, Numan and elsewhere. We need their support in future.

Baron Nababa — Drove himself to and from Yola to Maiduguri in less than four hours — a journey that normally takes above five. He went straight to the residence of Baron Jatau (the light skinned one), a short, talkative and rather mercurial fellow. He is fearless and always calls a spade a spade no matter whose ox is gored. He is self confident, uncompromising and somewhat foolhardy for a politician. Because of these attributes, he is sometimes misunderstood by his fellow Barons.

Ray of hope

Throughout life people seek guidance and inspiration from different sources. Some rely on spiritual sources, others lean on inanimate things for succour, while some search for friends and saviours in various garbs. Those who are perfectly guided acquire serenity and this is reflected in what they write.

Why ?

You helped me give birth
To hopes — my hopes
The birth pangs I experienced
You witnessed
You helped me nurture my hopes
To maturity
But my hopes now matured
You led them to the backwoods
And murdered them
Why?

Isaac O. Umunna

Hopes

Sometimes it is a drop
Of gutter rain
Which besmudges the white
Wall.
Sometimes it is a single
Just a single brown
Pimple on the cheek
Which besmirches some
Beauty.
Yet
Often times it is a single ray
That lightens the way
To freedom.

Germination

Memories did swirl
Boredom and hope and lost burnt
In the red metal-wall of the heart;
alone
In the unoccupied expanse of rust
I counted what I gained and what I
lost ...

The Eden and the hell.
Figments and strands
In the pitch cavern of vague
memory
Teased with blue fire my
effeminate armoury
And I, the sole tenant of that mire,
Could not return fire with fire
Or with coloured sands.
When I did ruminare
Castles of air transgrow into
concrete fact
In a slow, day-by-day trip; with
tact
Now, and patience hung over
Time,
I came up above that row and
grime
And today germinate.

Ibrahim Sheme

My friend

When I feel lonely, deprived,
bereft of companionship
I can always lean on you
Knowing that you share my
dreams
When I am frightened, worried
Uncertain of the future
I can always run into your loving
arms
Knowing that I will find succour
When I am sick, weakened by
disease
I can always rely on you
For no matter what happens
You would always remain
My friend.

My Ebenezer

At times I swagger dizzily
Along the ham packed streets
Searing endlessly for an exit
Out of life's mazy tunnel
But all is futile
For no light shines at the end of the
tunnel



And the whole world seems dark
and dreary
The road is rough and rugged
And my future seems bleak
The powers of darkness
Offer no respite to my ailing ear
I lift my hands in supplication
Unto him who moulds by life
At that moment
A solitary light beams ahead
I stagger hopefully towards it
And then, it brightens suddenly
Revealing a dazzling form
Jesus, my Ebenezer
I can always rely on him
For he eases my pains
And drives away my fears.

Ifeanyi Omen

Uprightness

Oh my heart, heavy with thoughts
Though light, lightened with hope
Existence, a mystery it seems
But simple, if lighted with thoughts
I question and query
Finding my answers
But soon dissipate in oblivion
As faulty reasoning
I know not how to reason well
As I always wish I did
But where lies a criterion?
Subject of my thought
Master of my faith
I seek uprightness.

Mohammad Adamu Nababa

Ulcer: Frank answers

Medical researchers are identifying warning signals that will help predict your chance of getting a peptic ulcer. Yet many mysteries about the disorder remain unanswered. Do the genes you inherit determine your chance of developing an ulcer? Or is stress the culprit? The answer is probably a combination of these two factors, with other influences playing a role, too. Here's report on the latest findings about the detection and treatment of this complex digestive disorder.

A peptic ulcer is a hole or crater-like sore in the lining of the stomach or duodenum, the first segment of the small intestine just below the stomach. Duodenal ulcer is about four times more prevalent than gastric ulcer (ulcer of the stomach lining).

An ulcer results from the stomach's digesting part of itself. Powerful digestive juices that contain hydrochloric acid and pepsin (a protein digesting enzyme) erode the membrane lining instead of simply doing their job of breaking down food for absorption in the bloodstream. Even normal amounts of digestive juices can cause ulcers when the lining is weak.

How widespread is the problem?

According to estimates by the National Center for Health Statistics, over 20 million Americans will have a peptic ulcer at some time in their lives. Each year about 6000 Americans die from ulcer complications. While the proportion of women who have the disorder is increasing, the overall incidence of peptic ulcer actually is declining somewhat. (medical researchers have yet to pinpoint the exact cause of the decline.)

All age groups are affected, but the disease is most prevalent in adults between the ages of 25 and 50,

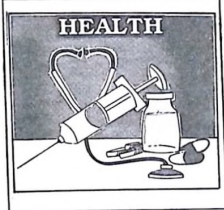
By Dan Kaercher

usually the most productive years in a person's life.

What causes ulcers?

Most authorities believe that emotional stress and tension, which can stimulate the secretion of excess acid and pepsin, do play a role in creating ulcers. However, since many people under constant stress never get ulcers, it's clear that other factors must be present as well.

Those contributors may include the regular use of aspirin,



which can irritate the sensitive stomach lining, and smoking cigarettes. An inherited susceptibility to

ulcers may be another cause. But authorities agree that the most important contributing factor is an imbalance between the level of stomach acid and the tolerance of the stomach lining to stomach acid.

What are the symptoms?

Usually, the first clue is a burning or gnawing pain in the upper abdomen. Often, the pain resembles a hunger pang and disappears when food is eaten. You may experience indigestion or a bloated feeling, or you may have no symptoms at all. The ulcers that give no warning signs can be most dangerous: Victims often don't seek treatment until serious complications occur. These can include bleeding and perforation (when the ulcer erodes so deeply that a hole is opened and digestive juices leak out).

How are ulcers diagnosed?

Most ulcers can be detected by X-ray studies of the gastrointestinal tract. When doctors still are in doubt, they can use a fiberoptic endoscope (the procedure is called *endoscopy*) to detect ulcers. The endoscope is a highly flexible fiber glass instrument that can pass through the mouth down to allow the doctor an excellent closeup view of stomach and intestinal lining.

Culled from *Better Homes*

Peptic ulcer myths

Probably no other widespread health problem is shrouded by as many misconceptions as peptic ulcer. Recent advances in ulcer research have vastly improved diagnosis and treatment of the disorder—and exposed many myths. For example:

“The hard-driving, high-pressure executive automatically has a high risk of developing an ulcer.” There is no scientific evidence to support this generalization. In fact, many individuals who live with constant stress do not develop ulcers, while others who are under less stress do.

“Ulcers heal best with a bland

diet and plenty of milk.” False. There is no evidence that any particular diet is either beneficial or harmful for the condition. While milk initially neutralizes stomach acid, the calcium and protein in milk later stimulate acid secretion; in fact, a milk diet often stimulates the production of more acid than in neutralizes.

“Women are rarely affected.” This may have been true two decades ago, when there was only one female ulcer victim for every 20 male victims. But today, women are catching up fast: The ratio is now one female ulcer patient for every two male patients.

Ben Enwonwu

Toast to an Icon

Ben Enwonwu, the internationally famous sculptor turns seventy this week

The imposing one-story structure is draped in white. Forming a buffer around it, are shaped openings from an outer wall set against a large expanse of land overlooking the lagoon. A Cathedral? Palace? A mango tree clings caressingly to the building, branches resting on the roof. All around are trees: palms, pines, whistling plants and shrubs of various shades swaying in harmony to the cool evening breeze. No sign of the sculptures for which he has become synonymous with. Neither could any painting be seen. But behind the house, tucked away from the prying eyes of the public, a solitary apprentice is putting finishing touches to a sculptural work ...

A taxi drives in. Alighting from it is a medium sized man, in three piece suit, bespectacled, a large umbrella thrust in front of him, receding hair, all grey, the only betrayal of his three score and ten year sojourn on earth. He squints as you rise to greet him. Introductions over, he asks you to wait as he had another urgent business to attend to. He dashes in and is out in no time, settling into the waiting cab which zooms off. You stand askance, wondering at the sheer energy of the man

Ben Enwonwu! He is one artist that can be said to have been "born and made". Born 1921 in Onitsha to a traditional carver and keeper of the village shrine, Chief Odigwe Enwonwu, he took an unusual interest in the traditional carvings adorning the grove. He was attracted to the forms. At four, he was already

drawing with broomsticks on wet earth! When he turned five, he began to carve images on soft wood dubbed "making man." In secondary school, his talent in sculpture was spotted and he was given a special scholarship to study under the late Kenneth Murray, an art education officer in the then colonial service. In 1944, he got another scholarship, this time from Shell Company, to study in the United Kingdom. He went first to Goldsmith College and then to Slade at Ruskin, Ashmolean, Oxford where he bagged a first class degree in sculpture!

In 1984, he enrolled into the university of London to study, of all courses, social anthropology! even became a fellow of the reputable Royal Anthropological Institute — as well as member, Hampstead Arts and Artists International. In 1966 the University of Lagos made him a



Enwonwu: "born and made"

fellow and he was appointed a professor at the University of Ife two years later. In 1969, he was awarded a doctor of literature, for his writings in art.....

Presently, he arrives, in a bluish Mercedes Benz car, driving himself! He smiles as he sees you this time, ushering you in, even apologising but not without noting a domestic staff sitting despondently by you "What's the matter with you? He queries. "Why are you looking so dull? You've not eaten....." He went on and on. The flustered staff stands, manages a wry smile, dusting his trousers nervously and stutters something to the effect that he has not eaten. "Why?" Is there nothing in the kitchen? Go, go find something to eat, fast". At the door, he accosts his cook. "Have you eaten?" he asks.

"Yes, sir" the cook replies.

"What did you eat?"

"Yam with vegetable oil".

"Don't you know how to make palm oil?"

"I know, sir" "Look", he tells him, "many of the palm fruits are already ripe. Mill them for use". With that he opens the door to the sitting room. His world came to the fore. The settees, the stools, the glass topped dining table and the arm chairs have carvings of different designs on them, with chandeliers, larger than life size paintings, sculptural works, mainly busts, and framed portraits adorning the large room, it is an artist's haven.

"Meet Njideka," he announces, abruptly, pointing to a petite fair skinned girl sedately seated in one of the settees. "She is a painter. A graduate from the University of Ife." The girl smiles, shyly, in acknowledgement making no move to stand. You smile back.

"I have to go and change," he says, moving away at once to an adjoining room. You sit. He is transformed on his return. Over flannel trousers, short sleeve shirt

and bathroom slippers on his feet, is an apron flowing down his knees! He moves straight to the kitchen coming out shortly with two cups of insulating coffee; for him and the girl.

He begins by making a confession which jolts you. "Actually I am more of a sculptor than a painter," he says. Why then do people refer to you as a sculptor and a painter? You ask. "Well, I had to study painting and still do. But with sculpture I am really at home. It is second nature to me." So how has he been able to combine both? What are the basic differences? You ask further. He smiles, the art historian and lecturer in him taking over. "In sculpture you deal with forms in the round. You do not use colour in sculpture since the round figures are self explanatory." He continues: "On the contrary in painting you deal with forms on a flat surface. Here, you have to draw and use colour(s) to get your message across....."

For a confessed student of painting, Ben Enwonwu has quite a collection. These include his works in oil such as "Tutu," "Chickwe and

really stands out attracting commissions from the high and the mighty across the world. His works best ride the prestigious United Nations headquarters in New York and grace the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. In fact, as far back as 1957, the Queen of England, invited him specially to do a bronze statue of her.

"Didn't you know?" he asks, suddenly, eyes glittering in excitement. You tell him you were not even born then. "Oh, you are a baby," he says, in a singsong, striding about the room. "The Queen sat for me for days," he continues, "at Buckingham Palace!"

It was the high point of his career as a sculptor. It meant recognition at the highest level since the Queen in his words, "usually sends for the most advanced artist in the commonwealth." The resulting full length bronze statue stands at the famed Royal British Academy Gallery and the Tate Gallery. His launch into the international fora was only just beginning....

For Ben Enwonwu, recognition as a gifted sculptor really dates back to his secondary school days, 1937

Art at the Musee d'Art Moderne in Paris. He has since held several solo exhibitions in Britain, United States and other world capitals, giving lectures on the side....

What does he think about inspiration in art? you ask. The man busy arranging his works for his oncoming exhibition, ignores question, sending the girl instead to bring in "the female forms." As the figures arrive, he picks them up one after the other asking the girl's opinion on right price tags. The amount you hear mentioned on each work is mind-boggling. And the man has the prices in pounds, the niece converting to Naira! You repeat your question. Again silence. Then suddenly, glancing at you and noticing you are getting uncomfortable, he says, "Inspiration can come at any time. The artist may not even be aware of it. It is like a blessing. When you get inspiration for a work, it is usually very great. Like my 'Anyanwu' (at the National Museum) it was inspired and it is a great work."

In Nigeria, Ben Enwonwu is something of an icon in the world of arts. He is revered by both contemporaries and younger artists alike. His monumental works include "Shango" (opposite NEPA) headquarters in Marina) and the "Risen Christ" (at the University of Ibadan). A member of the British Empire (MBE), he also holds the Nigerian National Merit Award....

Now can he truly say he has achieved perfection in his art? you ask. He shakes his head violently, walking briskly to a far end of the room sorting out some portraits. "Nobody can achieve perfection", he says. "You can only strive for excellence. that's why I keep working. I'm still searching for excellence."

You rise, toasting to his health but he is nowhere to be found in the room as you turn. You hear his voice issuing out instructions outside and you realise he is already working with his apprentice!

By Oji Onoko

He was attracted to the forms. At four, he was already drawing with broomsticks on wet earth! When he turned five, he began to carve images on soft wood dubbed "making man".

Caro" (story of Baifra), "Ogbanje," "Road side Market," "Mrs. Evelyn Brume" and Genevieve." Chief Rotimi Williams, Mrs. Iyabo Atta, Tonkin Jackson and Caroline (in sepia) are amongst his portraits. There are others, "Little Ben and Dominic" (drawing in black), Joanna Clark of Accra (in charcoal), Marjorie (in pencil)...

But it is in sculpture that he

precisely, when his work was first exhibited alongside another students at Zwemmer Gallery in London. In 1938, he was at the Glasgow Empire exhibition and a year later was awarded prize money including a bronze medal for his works now amongst IBM's Art collection in San Francisco. In 1946, Sir Julian Huxley invited him to participate in the International Exhibition of Modern

John West Newspapers Limited Jakande's troubles

An insider spills the beans on the goings-on at John West

What would you do if you worked for 19 months and got paid for only 11 months? This was the issue raised by a "save our soul" letter to newspaper editors, 7 June, by one Aduroja Ajai "an insider" in the John West Newspaper Limited, publishers of *Lagos Evening News* and *Daily News*. In his letter titled "Is Jakande A Slave Dealer?" Ajai alleged that between November 1989 and May 1991 a period of 19 months, staffers of the company, owned by Lateef Jakande, the erstwhile civilian governor of Lagos State, had a rough time getting paid for their labour. At times, said Ajai, staff salaries remained unpaid for five consecutive months. This is precisely what happened between November 1989 and March 1990 as staffers went back home to their loved ones without

their monthly remuneration.

But in between April and July 1990 the company put a grin on their faces when, except in May, they got full pay. The grin was to disappear again in the following five months when the company was only able to pay the September salary leaving the workers with arrears of another four months. By this time, the staff had started grumbling aloud about the implications of the intermittent payment of salaries, and management's silence over the outstanding 9 months areas. This prompted a memorandum from the chairman, Alhaji Jakande to the staff, pledging that "with effect from January 1991 salaries and allowances, including overtime authorised by the company, will be paid every month as and when due". The chairman also undertook to ensure that "all arrears of salaries and allowances up to December 31, 1990 including final entitlements excluding overtime will be spread over a period of twelve months or more and paid by monthly instalment." That was December 21, 1990 and between January and April, this year, management kept its promise of ensuring prompt payment of salaries. But, by June 7, when Ajai dispatched his SOS, the 9 months arrears accumulated since 1989, remained unpaid. Ajai's complaint now is the company's failure to pay the arrears and its inability to pay salaries regularly, for the May and June salaries are outstanding, has the tendency to predispose its reporters to brown envelope. He is also of the view that the workers welfare is also in dan-

ger.

Alhaji Jakande admitted to *Citizen* last week that it was true that the company had problems with staff salaries but insisted that they have all been paid. He placed the problems at the doorstep of the current economic situation in the country arguing that John West Newspaper Limited is not the only company that has such problems. Said Alhaji Jakande "the company is currently faced with cash crunch like many other companies but we have decided to prune down cost of production rather than retrench our workers." Even this option has not helped matters.

Citizen investigation last week, showed that the company's accounts is still in the red. Circulation had dropped considerably and the paper's advert executives had been finding it increasingly difficult to sell space.

Consequently, management had to curtail editorial trips as cost saving measure. However, the most enduring consequence of financial problem of the company is the morale among staff. A senior staff who demanded anonymity put the situation this way: "In five years, this is the worst I have seen. Our pay is meagre and even this stipend comes in most irregular bit. If things continue to go bad, we will have to offer early retirement".

However, Chief Tunde Bamgbose, the *Daily News* editor, see it differently: "John West Publication Limited is a happy place to work; it is a place where the leadership understands what journalism is all about". Given Alhaji Jakande's experience as a man who has survived many hazards in journalism, Bamgbose may be right but one fact remains clear that the former action governor may have to do more than cutting to surmount the current problems bedeviling his company.

By Samson Ojo



Jakande: we are being frugal

Congratulations



President Ibrahim Babangida, CFR, fss, mni



Alhaji Mustapha Bida

Dangi group of Companies send hearty congratulations to the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, President Ibrahim Babangida for the successful hosting of the 27th summit of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

We also rejoice with Mr. President as he takes over the mantle of leadership as the Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

The election of President Ibrahim Babangida, CFR, fss, mni, clearly testifies to the leadership quality of Nigerian foreign policy and Diplomacy under President Babangida administration. It also signifies the acceptance by the leaders and peoples of Africa of Nigeria's role in the African continent.

We wish you a successful tenure of office!

Long live The Federal Republic of Nigeria!

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Amazing Amazons

Nigerian female football team brushes aside all opposition to qualify for the FIFA World Cup in China

Nigerian female football team, the Amazons brought their adventure in a sport which, until recently, remained the exclusive terrain of their menfolk, to a successful climax penultimate Sunday at the Stade Ominisport in Younde, the Cameroun's capital city, defying all odds from very hostile opponents, the Amazons lived up to their name by qualifying as the sole African representative to the maiden edition of the FIFA organised World Female Soccer tournament coming up in November this year, in China.

The Amazons achieved their spectacular and historic victory in style, and with a touch of class too. They were not just one of the strugglers in the race to bag African slot for the first female world football tournament who happened to qualify by a streak of good luck. They bested all their opponents with resounding victories in all the qualifying matches they played from Lagos to Accra, Conakry and Younde.

In Younde, on June 30, the national female soccer team capped their efforts with the coveted African ticket to China by handing a humiliating four-goal defeat to Indomitable Lionesses of Cameroun, to bring the aggregate score to 6-0 having defeated them 2-0 in Lagos two weeks earlier.

It was indeed a sweet victory because the decisive showdown was to be the toughest test of the Amazons who had silenced Ghana and Guinea in their unwavering determination to qualify for the China tournament. Even though the Indomitable Lionesses made it to



Nkiru and team mate: celebrating a goal

the final courtesy of walk-overs against their previous opponents, the Nigerian ladies were not given much chances of surviving the Younde encounter. Some of the reasons for this pessimistic posture have to do with the uneven records of football rivalry between the two countries which in the past had ended in favour of Cameroun at crucial stages. Nigeria had learnt to regard her neighbour to the west as a difficult opponent to handle in football since the Indomitable Lions twice denied her the African Cup of Nations in 1984 in Cote d'Ivoire and in 1988 in Morocco. But the most memorable defeat Nigeria suffered from Cameroun was in 1989 when the Indomitable Lions shattered the Super Eagles' dream of taking Nigeria to her first world cup appearance in Italy last year.

What a twist of irony! It was in the same Stade de'Ominisport in

Younde where Lions' irrepressible forward Oman Biyick's goal sent the Super Eagles dream crashing that the Amazons humiliated the Camerounians and ended the Lionesses' ambition of hoisting their country's flag in China come November. One man whose career is inextricably linked with the sadness and joy of the Stade de'Ominisport is Paul Hamilton, the national football coach. At the end of the 1989 encounter, he walked out of the stadium with a long face and sorrow laden heart. But on that Sunday, Hamilton who again led the girls to Cameroun, was a sharp contrast of his grim image of two years ago. He was beside himself with joy and he did not pretend to hide it. "I am happy. Joy fills my heart this day and I will describe this victory as God's gift", he was quoted as saying after the match.

The success of the female team

is like a dream that comes true too soon, at least for many keen observers of the development of the game among women in the country. Until some few months to the competition, women soccer was not recognised by the Nigeria Football Association (NFA). But for the resilient spirit of the girls and their coaches — Hamilton and Ismaila Mabo—and the solid support and encouragement from the first lady Mrs. Maryam Babangida, the Amazons would have ended up as also—ran.

When the female team surprisingly passed their first trial



with a 5-1 drubbing of Ghana at the National Stadium in March, many people regarded the victory as a lucky break that should not call for celebration. But the Amazons proved them wrong when they went to Accra a fortnight later to silence the Lady Black Stars with 2-1 to bring the goal aggregate in their first two matches against Ghana to 7-2.

Guinea was a different ball game. Unlike Ghana and Nigeria, Guinea has been playing organised female soccer for over eight years, and their female team was being touted as one of the best in the continent. This credential made the Amazon and their handlers a bit apprehensive when the Guineans invaded Lagos on Saturday, May 4, hoping to humiliate their host at the national stadium. But the contrary was the case. The Nigerian ladies shocked the Guineans with three unreplied goals, and followed up the feat with 2-0 bashing in Conakry to silence the francophone country whose coach, Amara Sylla, was hoping to pay the Nigerians back in the return leg.

After four straight victories, it became quite clear that there was no stopping the Amazons. Not even the tough encounter they had with the Lionesses in Lagos which saw them scoring only two goals towards the tail end of the match. At the end of the first leg match, the girls and their coaches were bubbling with

confidence and were looking beyond the second leg match. Team keeper Ann Agumanu gave expression to the surge of confidence among her team mates when she said "we'll beat them in Younde. We'll defend our goals and still qualify". Agumanu's prophetic vow came true when Nkiru Okosieme (scored twice), Uche Eucharia and Rita Nwadike, slammed four goals into the Indomitable Lionesses net in Younde all in the game's second half to qualify for the first female world cup in China.

Praises and accolade go to the Amazons for their big guts and their will to win but the girls are giving it all to the first Lady Maryam Babangida. According to Florence Omagbemi, Amazons skipper, the team would probably not have achieved such feat but for the moral and material supports of the first lady. "She gave us encouragement and told us to play for her", said the female team captain, citing the reception the first lady organised for them at the Dodan Barracks and the flight tickets she gave them for the return leg of their match against Ghana, as some of the factors "that helped us to realise what was at stake". Omagbemi who is a playmaker also attributed part of their overall victories to coach Hamilton, whom she said motivated them and "told us those things that made us to play the match of our lives".

For the female team, this is the beginning of a bigger task ahead, and their handlers have a very crucial job of putting the team in shape for the China tournament. It is not just enough to emerge African best team; they need to follow it up by striving to be the best also in the world. Hamilton and Mabo should now embark on the challenge task of grooming the female team to achieve the same fame as the country's under-17 team, the Golden Eagles, who stunned the world to win FIFA-JVC world cup in the same China, six years ago.

Eucheria, Okunawa (top and centre) and Hamilton: true grit

By Joe Olajuwon

ADAMU ADAMU S

DEFINITIONS
IN HUMOUR

Re-inventing the keel

It often happens that while there is much wit in wise sayings and proverbs there is much more when the sayings are twisted out of the ordinary, to say other than what they normally say. Try to see if you know, or even remember, the original. If you can't, then this is the original for you, and just as true.

- * Blood is thicker than butter
- * As you sow, so shall you feed
- * As you saw, so shall you weep
- * Love at first slight
- * Love is grind
- * Murmur is a great traveller
- * Rumour is a great leveller
- * Every rogue has his way
- * Every vogue has its day
- * Every tongue has its say
- * Every day for the theft, one day for the honour
- * A profit without owner

women. I drew brickbats from some of them near me. Today I again quote, this time from *Instant Quotation Dictionary*, various definitions of woman by eminent personages, both men and women. I like the quotations because they seem to put men as frame of reference — and at obvious disadvantage, ko?

There is nothing enduring in life for a woman except what she builds in a man's heart.

— Judith Anderson

The way to fight a woman is with your hat. Grab it and run.

— John Barrymore

She is not made to be the admiration of all, but the happiness of one.

— Edmund Burke

Being a woman is a terribly difficult task since it consists principally in dealing with men.

— Joseph Conrad

A woman's guess is much more accurate than a man's certainty.

— Rudyard Kipling

Of all rights of women, the

Nixon wanted piece with owner; and he got it, the name of the piece is Vietnam — and it is at peace. The Vietnamese took the honour. So now you know, or do you?

Man o' woe

The other time I quoted some definitions of

greatest is to be a mother.

— Lin Yutang

Sakana

I introduced *Sakana* and some of its chieftaincy (or emirtaincy if you prefer) title holders. Now, I begin to define what it means. But whatever else it may mean, there is one thing underlying it — procrastination. The tendency to look at, rather than do a piece of work; the tendency to put off what you ought to put on, the tendency to endure what you should enjoy — that is *Sakana*. So here we go — if you have the time. If not, you can keep the magazine and finish reading it next year, when you probably can have the time, the frame of mind, the desire to read — and have nothing else less taxing to do.

Nothing is really work unless you would rather be doing something else.

— J.M. Barrie

Work is the greatest thing in the world, so we should always save some of it for tomorrow.

— Don Herold

Don't tell me that worry doesn't do any good. I know better. The things I worry about don't happen.

— Anon

The reason why worry kills more people than work is that more people worry than work.

Robert Frost

Worry is interest paid on trouble before it is due.

W.R. Inge

When it is due, the compound interest is the first fruit of Sakana.

— M.A. Jumba

I like work; it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours.

— J.K. Jerome

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