

The Analyst

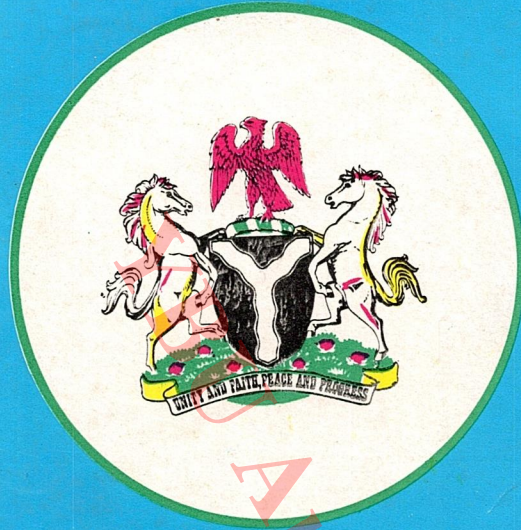
N3.00

Vol. 3, No. 4

says it, as it is

July - August, 1988

UNEMPLOYMENT:
Breeding
Death-Squads



WHY 3RD REPUBLIC IS DOOMED

2 - Party System:
The American Connection

REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE



“Everything comes from God. But human labour is necessary for every profit and capital accumulation... Without human labour no gain will be obtained and there will be no useful result.”

Abdulrahman ibn Khaldun
(1332 — 1406 A.D.)

NOTE:

ibn Khaldun, 14th century North African historian, philosopher and statesman clearly recognised in his *Muqaddimah*, that labour is the source of all wealth in every society nearly six hundred years ago — a fact which today is being denied by the Nigerian bourgeoisie and their intellectual goons, in line with their IMF and World Bank masters. Hence their vicious, but ultimately futile, campaign against those whose labour produces the wealth of this country. The recognition of the fundamental role of labour has deep historical roots!

The Analyst

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*The Analyst is published monthly by
DANSA PUBLICATIONS LTD.,
No. 1 and 2, Baka Street,
Unguwar Sabon Yelwa,
Western Bye-Pass, Kaduna South,
P.O. Box 2736, Kaduna, Nigeria.*

OVERSEAS DISTRIBUTOR

New Beacon Books Ltd.,
76 Stroud Green Road,
London N4 3EN
Telephone: 01-272 4889

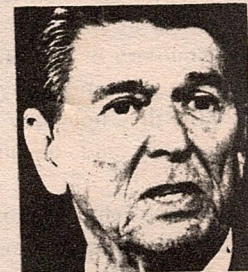
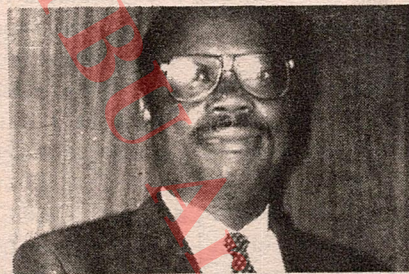
In this **The Analyst**

A DOOMED REPUBLIC



Nigeria is presently agog with the feverish activities of its politicians, both old and new, in anticipation of another return to civil rule in 1992. But what are the chances that this 'Third Republic' will survive where others before it had failed? Turn to page 6 for answers.

AJIBOLA AND THE AMERICAN CONNECTION



Who does Nigeria's Attorney-General, Prince Bola Ajibola, serve: Nigeria or the United States of America? We have a clue to the poser on Page 24.

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COMMENT

WHY THE THIRD REPUBLIC IS DOOMED

Nigeria is now seething with preparations for the transition to yet another civilian regime in 1992. The Constituent Assembly is meeting at Abuja. In cities, towns, villages, all over the country, people are holding daylight and nocturnal meetings, reviving old alignments and forging new alliances, all in readiness for 1992, and the resumption of open political party activity next year.

All of this is a manifestation of one fact about Nigerians – their deep-rooted and indestructible desire for a democratic system of government in which they participate in running their lives and shaping the destiny of their country. True, of course, the two previous attempts, in 1960-66 and 1979-83, to establish a democratic system of government in this country woefully failed. This has bred a lot of cynicism towards electoral politics in general. But this cynicism should not be confused with apathy, or the acceptance of dictatorship, whether military or civilian. This cynicism is borne out of the intense frustration felt by Nigerians for the failure to attain something they hold very dear – a united, progressive, stable, democratic, and genuinely independent Nigerian polity.

It is in the light of these deeply-felt democratic aspirations that it becomes imperative to examine, in an honest and frank manner, whether the present transition programme will lead to the attainment of a stable democratic political system in Nigeria. This frank assessment has to be done, in spite of the fact that some people in positions of power, influence and wealth in this country dismiss such honest and hard-nosed assessments as the rantings of disgruntled anarchists and prophets of doom.

Painful as it is, we must begin by admitting one glaring fact. This fact is that the most fundamental factor which has prevented the emergence of a democratic political system in this country is the economy. This is an economy organised for the sole purpose of the rapacious exploitation of the majority of the people of this country by a handful of Nigerian parasites serving foreign interests. Such a warped economy requires for its survival the chronic condition of the powerlessness of the majority of Nigerians. This dependent capitalist economy cannot afford to allow the majority of Nigerians to exercise any real control over their lives, their natural resources, and the products of their labour.

Of late, this economic system has been shaken by a very severe crisis, which is showing very clearly that for Nigerians to even survive, the system has to be dismantled and replaced by a new economic system, which our working people control, and which is geared to the survival and progress of all of us.

However, even after the glaring failure of this system, the two successive military regimes we have had since the

failure of the last democratic experiment, have been trying very hard to entrench it. The battering the people of Nigeria have taken in the course of the programmes pursued to preserve this system involves, for example, massive unemployment and landlessness. These two scourges alone make people very insecure and leave them open to bribery and manipulation of all sorts.

Then there is the rampant inflation and hunger, compounded by the callous devaluation of the naira which deepens this impoverishment and insecurity, and gives a lot of power to those who have cornered the wealth of the country. When this is accompanied by a very dominant role for middlemen, involved in large-scale and organised food and currency speculation, hoarding and smuggling, very little room is left for genuine democratic activity.

And even that little room is being further hemmed in by the large-scale privatisation of key sectors of the economy, leaving the peasant farmers, workers, and other working people very much at the mercy of these blood-thirsty shylocks, as the current fertilizer famine is showing.

On top of all these is the crushing burden of external debt which, although mostly dubious, has more than doubled in three years, from 10.32 billion dollars on 31st October, 1984, to 24.4 billion dollars on 31st October 1987, in spite of the billions repaid. Using these chains of debt, the governments of the West, directly and through the IMF and the World Bank, are now dictating what our domestic and external policies should be. Instead of repudiating all these dubious debts and courageously turning inwards for our salvation, the government has taken the easy way out by rescheduling most of these unproven debts. Of course, this means increasing the burden, and tying the neck of the incoming civilian government with a huge stone which will inevitably sink it. For example, the 6.5 billion dollars of the debt rescheduled under the 17th of December 1986 agreement with the Paris Club, will generate payments from Nigeria, in the period up to 15th May 1997, of more than 10 billion dollars! Moreover, the bulk of these payments will start from 1st January 1990 and become particularly heavy as from 15th November 1992. Expectation about increased earnings from non-oil exports, liquified natural gas, aluminium, or from another oil bonanza, are mere halucination in the light of the current direction of the world economy.

But if the economic landscape is bleak, the government's dogged determination to impose a two-party system and re-entrench feudalism makes a transformation to democratic rule simply impossible. Reactionary regional, religious, and tribal political forces are being encouraged to thrive, while organisations of workers, farmers, students, youth, and women which try to cut across the nation are being

repressed.

The honourable way out is to recognise these facts and make timely amends. A genuinely democratically-elected body made up of the direct representatives of Nigerian peasants, workers, artisans, small traders, and professionals, and all those who produce the wealth of this country, should be immediately convened, in place of the present elitist collection at Abuja. This people's assembly, which should include elected representatives of the armed forces, should then work out a genuinely Nigerian Economic Recovery

Programme (NERP), built around the intense and systematic utilisation and renewal of our domestic resources, for the revival of our economy on its own independent footing, and in the interest of all the people of Nigeria. On the basis of this patriotic and democratic programme of economic recovery, this people's assembly shall work out a new transition programme and review the 1979 Constitution. This is the only way to start building the foundations for a stable, progressive and democratic Third Republic, which is not doomed to fail before it is born.

LETTERS

Your UPDATE "Stealing the Food of the Starving" in Vol. 3, No.2 of *The Analyst* reminded me of what happened in Bichi Local Government Area of Kano State with the relief materials for the 1972-4 drought.

At that time, the Local Government Council consisted of Alhaji Usman Audu Bichi as Chairman, with Alhaji Garba Bichi, Alhaji Usman Aisi and Alhaji Kabiru Abubakar Bichi as Councillors.

When the relief materials were given to the Local Government to distribute to the starving people of the area, the councillors, excluding the Chairman, shared the grains exclusively among themselves. When this case came to the notice of Bichi Youths Association, a petition was written to the Chairman of the Local Government Council demanding to know why the general public were denied assistance due to them by some merciless selfish few. The Chairman denied knowledge of what happened, but instantly called for a meeting between his council members and the delegates of the Youths Association, with him presiding.

At that meeting, the councillors agreed that they had shared the grains among themselves. All efforts to retrieve the grains proved abortive, as the councillors contended that they have in turn given them out to their henchmen. It is hoped that sooner than later these councillors will be called to account for the food of the starving people of Bichi which they stole, either here or in the hereafter.

*Ya'u Buhari Maitama,
Bichi, Kano.*

Under a different socio-economic setting, my training is supposed to ensure for me the basic comforts due to man - at least good food.

But recently, I woke up one morning with images of Ethiopia on Nigerian streets flashing through my mind. Then

I found the March/April edition of *The Analyst*, when it dawned on me that I hadn't been dreaming.

*R. H. Sha'ato,
Ibadan.*

The unholy marriage between our customs men and food smugglers must be arrested and the policy of handing over land to rapacious tycoons, retired generals and all sorts of blood-sucking middlemen must be halted.

The spectre of hunger in Nigeria is suggestive of the fact that our agricultural policy formulators, both past and present, are bereft of ideas urgently needed to save us from the edge of the precipice.

After all, our hunger is unmistakably man-made, and man-made measures can overcome it.

*Rogers Edo Ochela,
Kamba, Sokoto State.*

The article "Food and Nutrition: Capitalism vs Socialism" (Vol. 3, No.2) is a masterpiece on the comparative analysis of nutrition under capitalism and socialism.

Nigerians can either continue to embrace capitalism and be exploited, sapped, alienated from their only God-given natural asset (land), or change over to Socialism, the Chinese way.

*Bulus U. Obande,
Zaria.*

For a long time, but for some few months lately, I have been one of the most fanatical adherents of your views, in whatever form they come. Of recent it seems to me you have taken to an old Russian proverb which says "The best lies are like margarine, they must at least contain ten per cent butter". The so-called "living testimonies" you presented in your paper are nothing but a pack of lies

so well-dressed.

The case of Mato Uban 'Ya'ya, which you reported took place at Dudunni, actually took place at a large family compound called Gidan-Bango, very close to a town called Juma'a.

The Native Authority and Nigeria Police under the command of Wakilin Doka Sarkin Sullubawa Naini and Mr. Williams respectively, were attacked first with clubs, bow and arrows, and other dangerous weapons, by the family and neighbouring villagers. At that incident, five policemen were killed and several seriously injured. The reason for the descending of the police team on them was that they refused to pay tax, which we all know is important to development in any country. Before then, the then Kankia (District Head), Kankia Sada, did his best to reason with them. They were advised at least on four occasions to desist from such bad acts. For your information, the man you called Mato wasn't killed in the Village Head's house, but on his way to the market, by an unidentified person.

The Rafin Gora massacre, as you called it, wasn't as such; they too provoked the authorities. A truck load of soldiers had to be sent to the area because the people there revolted seriously and the police were powerless against such rebels. They too tried to evade tax. At that place, only God knows the number of policemen who were killed and injured.

For your "Northernization and Education", you should bear in mind it was not easy to make fathers enroll their children in school. In some instances, some parents and their children took to hiding. It is a well-known fact that most of the high-ranking officers in the north are sons of slaves, so why should Sardauna go on wasting public money building schools?

*Kabir Yusufu Mawashi,
Katsina.*

The First Republic: WHY THE CORRUPTION CONTINUED

Your write-ups (*The Analyst*, Vol. 3, No. 3, May-June, 1988) on the nature of the struggles faced by NEPU members in the last decade of colonial rule in Nigeria and during the First Republic are typical "lessons of history" needed in this country. For one, they have indicated that Nigeria is after all not in any way spared from the brutal activities of capitalists.

*Lawal A. Inde,
Malumfashi.*

I cannot help but express the painful fact that your magazine is increasingly addressing itself to discussing (or insulting) personalities (regrettably mostly the dead ones, contrary to the norm observed around here - we do not talk ill of the dead) rather than issues.

One would have thought that in discussing the issue of "Northernization" you will look at it from all angles, but the fact that you chose only the education aspect of "Northernization" and the wordings you used in the write-up and your illustrations betray the fact that you were only out to insult the late Sardauna and Alhaji Isa Kaita.

I will commend you for having the decency to admit the fact that there were *increases* in the number of pupils, primary, secondary, teacher training colleges, etc. in Northern Nigeria between 1957 to 1962, but it is equally condemnable to insinuate that there was "neglect" and "misappropriation of educational funds". You have failed to tell your readers that:

- i. quality of education was the goal of the government of that day;
- ii. products of the "few" schools in the North held themselves as more than equals to their southern counterparts;
- iii. facilities provided in such schools (which were virtually free) such as several sets of uniforms, books, feeding, writing materials, beds and bedding and even spending money! (pocket money) were luxuries that no southern school enjoyed at whatever cost at that time or even now;
- iv. huge grants are given to missionary schools.

To do justice to your effort to condemn anything Sardauna, Emirs/Chiefs and the hateful "Northernization" you must be seen to be balancing your write-ups.

*Muhammad Bukhari Zubairu,
Jimeta-Yola.*

I agree with your comment (*The Analyst*, Vol: 3, No.3, May-June, 1988) in toto. For it has been the same people, operating the same system, and indeed pursuing almost the same policies since independence.

*Halilu T. Gilima,
Dandume, Katsina.*

In twenty-eight years of independence, governments in Nigeria have been overthrown by military coups five times, namely on 15th January 1966, 29th July 1966, on 29th July 1975, on 31st December 1983, and most recently on 27th August 1985. In four of these coups, the coup-makers claimed to seize power in order to save the nation and bring about major improvements in the lives of the people.

The military coup of 15th January 1966, for instance, was hailed as a revolution by many radicals and socialists. In the euphoria of the overthrow of a very corrupt and decrepit regime, many failed to see that the basic underlying economic and social structures and processes, and the external controls, had not been touched by the coup at all. They also failed to see the real nature of the Nigerian Army and its role in the structures which generated the corruption of the civilian regime overthrown. Articles were published inside Nigeria and abroad, in early 1966, by Nigerian socialists and marxists extolling the January 1966 coup as the beginning of a revolution, and so forth. A Nigerian undergraduate student in Britain wrote an article in March 1966, in a student paper of the University of Lancaster, Lancaster Red, which was later republished in The African Communist, (No. 26, Third Quarter, 1966), the journal of the South African Communist Party, in which some of the underlying structures and processes which generated the corruption and bankruptcy which brought down the First Republic were pointed out and the inability of the Nigerian Army to do anything about them reasserted.

Within a few months of the first publication of that article, regional

tension rose sharply, which culminated in the riots, mutinies, pogroms, and a counter-coup, which led directly to the civil war of 1967-70. This tragic development was clearly not foreseen in this article. But we reproduce it below for what it says, twenty-two years ago, about the basis of the continuity between civilian and military regimes in Nigeria, which is so often deliberately obscured in this country, but which lies at the basic level of economic and social structures, and which are at the foundation of any political system. Read on:

The Nigerian Army is another ex-colonial institution and has an officer corps with a social ideology identical to that of the senior civil servants, only theirs has a dash of the Sandhurst contempt for civilians. This makes it constitutionally incapable of destroying the roots of Nigerian corruption and apathy. For these roots are deeply set in the status system of the bureaucracies and in the reaction of the clan and family organizations to the existing pattern of productive relationships between the peasantry on the one hand the the bureaucracy and foreign capitalists on the other. The majors who led the revolt, and the colonels and lieutenant-colonels who replaced the politicians, are in the same social class and in fact have extensive personal connections with permanent secretaries, top corporation executives and other managerial staff whose complete replacement as a ruling group is necessary for any real change in the social and political system.

"Now to proceed to show this system is a neo-colonialist system. And how any analysis of its corruption always leads back to this basic fact. This fact about Nigeria

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can, of course, be concealed under all sorts of rhetoric about 'under-development', 'emerging nation-hood', 'take-offs', etc., but what it means in terms of the social, economic and cultural existence of the Nigerian peasant and worker is clear and simple. It means exploitation and barrenness. The barrenness of a society in which a luxury-consumer-goods economy is maintained on the back of a poor, diseased, overtaxed and swindled rural population. The role of international capitalism in this system is also quite clear. It is exploitation through industrial and mining activities, trading, contract work for buildings and roads construction, banking and insurance.

"Control of the industrial and manufacturing sector is concentrated in the hands of the United Africa Company, the Nigerian Tobacco Company, John Holt, Taylor Woodrow and a few other German and American firms, The Nigerian Tobacco Company, for instance, is a subsidiary of the international combine, the British American Tobacco Company, and this firm controls about 90% of the supply in cigarettes and an equal size in manufacturing activities. It makes huge profits by fixing low prices for the tobacco farmers, charging high prices for its cigarettes and paying very low wages to its workers. Only recently the workers at its factory in Zaria had to go on strike before they got a long overdue increase. This company with its monopoly of the supply of cigarettes, monopoly in the demand for raw tobacco and in some places even that of seasonal credit to the peasants, exploits the country with an almost callous relish. The other 'giant' in Nigeria is the United Africa Company, a Unilever subsidiary, which has since its withdrawal from a monopoly control of produce-buying established itself in textiles, sugar, beer, vehicle assembly and almost in all fields of manufacturing activity. Shell-BP and the American Gulf Oil now control the increasingly important oil industry emphasizing the bureaucratic-capitalist nature of the economy since petroleum extraction is necessary for monopolies and

through royalties, concessions and special taxes these monopolies build strong links with the bureaucracy.

"Other capitalist firms are concentrated in the highly lucrative market of luxury goods and foods. The Greek firm A.G. Leventis, with other Indian and Levantine merchant houses, specially concentrate on exploiting this need for expensive status consumption of the civil servants, managers, politicians, the comprador and commercial bourgeoisie and the army officers.



Nzeogwu: What a revolution!

"Other firms in the trading sector like Paterson Zochonis, C.F.A.O., and John Holt of Liverpool dominate the wholesale market. For John Holt especially

year. The Chairman assured the shareholders of 'an increasing flow of profits from this source'. There is little reason to believe that the military coup will make any difference to this prediction.

"In building and road construction the big contractors are Costain, Borini Prono, Cappa, Taylor Woodrow and Bogialla. In this sector the profit margins depend directly on the decisions of politicians and civil servants about the location and type of project and the standards of inspection to be imposed when the project is completed. The influence of the foreign governments who provide the loans, grants and other types of 'aid' for these projects is another factor, indefinite but crucial, in this type of exploitation. A classic example of their type of architecture is the Costain Housing Estate in Kaduna, perhaps the best symbol of the sterility of Nigerian bureaucratic-capitalism.

"But a more subtle and pervasive power is in the banks and insurance companies. They are undoubtedly the most powerful institutions through which international capitalism keeps its grip on Nigeria. Barclays Bank D.C.O. and The Bank of West Africa are the two giants. Their tentacles extend right into the rural areas through their special credit arrangements with the produce marketing corporations. These government institutions guarantee their buying agents for bank loans which are used for the purchase of the cash crops — cocoa, groundnuts, etc. — from the peasants. The

"The army lacks the mass following, and the discipline and force of a coherent revolutionary ideology to tackle the roots of our problems."

this together with a monopoly of hire-purchase facilities in some areas has led to high profits. In a statement of accounts, published in *The Financial Times* of February 4th, 1966, John Holt raised its annual profits of £604,000 in 1963-64 to £1,059,000 for the year 1964-65. An increase of over 40% in a single

interest on these loans is, of course, extorted from the peasantry by weight-fixing or by simply tying a peasant to one buyer through seasonal loans and advances until the last ounce of his produce has been sucked out of him.

"This, in brief, is the Nigerian economy. Now the place of

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politicians has been taken by army officers. One party, the Northern Peoples' Congress of the Sardauna of Sokoto and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, seems to have disintegrated. The two older southern parties are still intact. They are solidly composed of the bourgeoisie of Ibadan, Abeokuta, Onitsha and Enugu and their spokesmen the lawyers and journalists. The army officers can hardly govern for much longer without their co-operation. The spineless ruling classes of Northern Nigeria have been scared out of their wits by the sudden death of the Sardauna and it will be some time before they organize themselves again. The army together with the senior civil servants has now proceeded to centralize the country's administration and has also taken other measures very comforting to the foreign investor (ref. *The Economist*, Friday, February 11th, 1966). None of its measures seems to have tackled the basic problems. And nothing in the personality or proclamations of its leaders suggests that they will do so.

"The army is arresting some of the old politicians and might try them for corruption and all sorts of mayhem. But it lacks the mass following, and the discipline and force of a coherent revolutionary ideology to tackle the roots. The army cannot inspire and organize the rural population into a system of producers' cooperatives and later into communes which would become the organs of government in the rural areas; cannot change and expand the educational system; cannot cut down the bureaucracy, reduce its salaries, eliminate all its privileges; cannot reorganize the police force and dismiss most of the present officers. And these are only a few of the changes absolutely essential to even the elimination of corruption. The centralization of the administration will certainly increase unity and the cessation of the old political squabbles will reinforce this. But change in terms of the social, political, economic and cultural existence of the Nigerian peasant and worker is still far off."

By Bala Usman

Why The Second Republic Failed

Ordinarily, a thing is supposed to rise before it eventually falls. This is particularly so with regard to politics. Historically, and even conceptually, polities are supposed to rise, and at least enjoy a period of stability, often called the "golden age", before decay sets in, leading eventually to their fall.

In the case of Nigeria's Second Republic, however, there was never such a rise; nor did any 'golden age' precede an eventual fall. Right from 'Day One', Nigeria's Second Republic was in ruins. It had in fact already fallen even as it was being inaugurated.

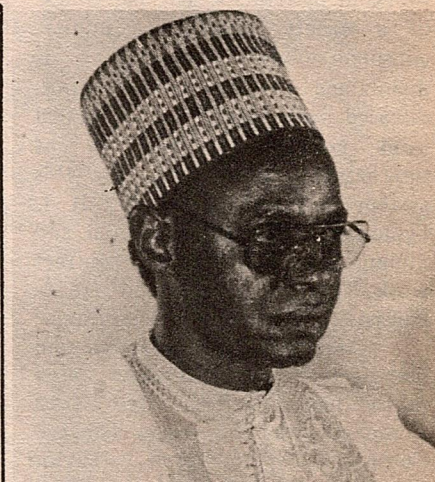
Nor could it have been otherwise considering the circumstances of the birth of this Second Republic: the illegitimate product of an unholy wedlock between a decadent, semi-feudal oligarchy and an anaemic, foreign-controlled and hedonistic bourgeoisie; midwifed by a military junta that had since tasted the forbidden fruits of political office and grown fat from dipping greasy fingers in the public till.

Such were the circumstances of the birth of the Second Republic. Such was its parentage. Such, indeed, were the origins of Nigeria's second attempt, in barely two decades, at establishing a stable bourgeois democracy. But under such circumstances, and with such a parentage, stability was just simply unattainable.

THE ROOTS OF INSTABILITY

At the heart of the failure, and eventual collapse, of the Second Republic was the nature of the social and economic system in operation in the country. This social and economic system was built around crises and instability. The major characteristics of this system may be summarised thus:

(a) Sharp divisions in the society between, on the one hand, a small



Shagari: Captained the Second Republic to a shipwreck.

group of the rich and powerful contractors, 'traditional' rulers, top civil servants, top military and police officers, big foreign and local businessmen and their managers and bankers, and, on the other hand, the vast majority of the population who are workers, peasants, small traders, market women, artisans, etc. Whereas most of Nigeria's wealth is created from the sweat of this majority of struggling Nigerians, the largest proportion of the product of their sweat is acquired, confiscated and consumed by the tiny group of the rich and powerful in the society.

(b) The second significant feature of this political system is that real power, both political, economic, and legal, is in the hands of the tiny group of the rich and powerful who use it not for the benefit of the society as a whole, but rather to suppress the people and to build and amass for themselves, their wives, children and relations vast wealth and fortunes, milked from the resources of the nation.

(c) The third feature of this political and economic system is the total subservience of the rulers of the country to foreign interests in

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politics, economics, foreign policy, and even tastes and fashion. As a result of this slavish dependence on foreigners — particularly the North Americans and Western Europeans — these rulers feel more obliged and accountable to these foreigners and spare no effort in satisfying all their wants even when, as is always the case, these wants are diametrically opposed to the needs and aspirations of their fellow countrymen. The result is that these rulers lose legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of their own citizens.

(d) The fourth characteristic of this political system is the perpetual and bitter struggle between various factions of the rich and powerful rulers of the country for dominant position in the government. This struggle for control of the government is vicious because control of the government is the main source for the accumulation of private fortunes.

(e) The fifth feature is the struggle between the majority who produce the wealth of the country and the tiny band of exploiters and their foreign masters. This struggle is often denied but is nonetheless fundamental.

All these five features of the political and economic system in operation in Nigeria featured prominently during the Second Republic, and they were severally and collectively responsible for the boundless instability, chaos, and eventual overthrow of that regime.

SEEDS OF DECAY

But the seeds of this decay were planted much earlier by the military junta that preceded the Second Republic. That the Obasanjo-Yar Adua junta, as part of its programme, did not deem it necessary to, or was totally incapable of, re-structuring the economy and re-orienting it from its dependent capitalist nature to a more self-reliant and inward-looking one was bad enough. But the junta did not stop at that. By acts of omission and commission, the Obasanjo — Yar Adua junta saddled the yet-to be-born civilian regime with problems which were to prove too burdensome for it.

For instance, the first jumbo loan that Nigeria contracted from external sources was negotiated by the Obasanjo administration. This initially consisted of a loan of one billion U.S. dollars from the international capital market. Indeed, Nigeria's loans rose from N354 million in 1975/76 to N1,598.3 million by October 1979 — a 300% increase. Obviously this was a bad example which the Shagari administration was to follow with unbridled enthusiasm. So much so that by the time of the fall of that administration late in December 1983, the country's external indebtedness was being estimated at about 10 billion U.S. dollars.

Similarly, the origins of the Second Republic's imports orgy can be directly traced to the doorsteps of the military junta. In 1974 the



Obasanjo: Handed power to Shagari.

country's import bill stood at N1,737 million. On the eve of the handing over to the civilian administration in mid-1978, the military junta had raised the country's import bill to N8.7 billion.

But the pernicious seeds of political instability nurtured by the Obasanjo-Yar Adua junta had more to do with the political arrangements they made for transition to civil rule than anything else. Both the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) and the subsequent Constituent Assembly (CA) were loaded with representatives of the rich and powerful, while the workers, peasants and other small-

time producers and processors were literally left out in the cold. Even when two dissenting members of the largely right-wing CDC came out with an alternative draft, inappropriately dubbed the 'Minority Report', this was gratuitously suppressed by the government.

It is little wonder therefore, that the final product of this cynical constitution-making charade ended up bureaucratizing political power; divesting workers, peasants and the masses in general of any form of power besides going to the polling station once every four years. Instead, this constitution put power largely in the hands of the state and federal bureaucracies, the police, the judiciary and the military. These have always been unrepresentative institutions, in content and form. For instance, while the 1979 Constitution, at least in theory, conferred on the electorate ultimate political sovereignty, it at the same time through the back door, imposed a higher authority over them, i.e. the judiciary. The judiciary under that Constitution was given God-like powers over the people by virtue of its being conferred with the power of serving as the ultimate arbiter between the people and their elected representatives on the one hand, and also between contending parties of these elected representatives. The judiciary was given these powers in spite of the fact that it was itself literally unaccountable to anyone. This is why, for instance, the Supreme Court could come out in 1983 with two contradictory verdicts in similar election petitions: while in the case of Nwobodo Vs. Onoh it held that the appellant must prove his case "beyond reasonable doubt", in the case of Omoboriowo Vs. Ajasin it held that all that was required of the appellant is "proof on the balance of probabilities".

But the seeds of instability sowed by the military did not lie only in supervising the crafting of a constitution which was basically insensitive to the yearnings of the people; it also lay in the deliberate interventions which this military regime made, throughout the transition period, to ensure that a favoured candidate won the 1979

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presidential polls. Under obvious 'subterranean' influences from Dodan Barracks, the FEDECO and the police were made to give a tough time to all rivals of the favoured party, i.e. the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). For instance, the home of the PRP's presidential candidate, Mallam Aminu Kano, was teargassed by the police; while his presidential nomination, as well as that of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (NPP), were rejected by FEDECO, until a court belatedly ruled otherwise just on the eve of the elections. This obviously disrupted their electoral campaigns.

Similarly, when the first presidential poll proved indecisive, and a run-off at the electoral college was imminent between Chief Obafemi Awolowo (UPN) and Shehu Shagari (NPN), the FEDECO, with the obvious approval, if not on the instructions, of the Obasanjo government took sides. It announced that the correct interpretation of the constitutional requirement that a presidential candidate must score at least one-quarter of the votes cast at the election in each of at least two-thirds of all the states of the Federation, means that the candidate must score at least a quarter of the votes in 12 and two thirds of the states, instead of a quarter of the votes in at least 13 states, as was then generally understood by everyone. This, in short, amounted to installing the NPN candidate, Shehu Shagari, as president.

This point is strengthened by the



Fatai Williams: NPN sympathiser?

fact that when this FEDECO decision was about to be challenged at the Supreme Court by Chief Awolowo, the Obasanjo-led junta immediately appointed Mr. Justice Fatai Williams — widely believed to be pro-NPN — as the Chief Justice of the Federation. Not many people were therefore surprised when Justice Williams' Supreme Court eventually upheld FEDECO's controversial 12 and 2/3 decision.

But if Obasanjo, FEDECO, the courts and the police were behind the NPN's Shehu Shagari, not so the leadership of literally all the other parties. Even after his swearing-in ceremony, Shagari's presidency was everywhere being scornfully and openly referred to as the "stolen presidency". It was thus with an unnerving limp that the Second Republic took off on 1st October, 1979. This limp was soon to be transformed into a crippling crawl.

INSATIABLE GREED

The fall of the Second Republic was further hastened by the incredible lust for personal comfort and private fortunes by the bulk of the politicians of the Second Republic. Seeing the occupation of public office not as a privilege to diligently and honourably serve the people who put them there, but rather as a golden opportunity to amass wealth, the politicians wasted no time, on assumption of office, in building private fortunes. At the centre, and in the states, legislators awarded themselves fantastic salaries and other perks. For the first nine months of 1980 alone, the members of the National Assembly, made up of 545 legislators, received as much as N44.3 million as salaries and allowances. In the states, the legislators were receiving a basic salary of not less than N13,000 per annum, not counting various sums cornered ostensibly as constituency, travelling, and personal assistant allowances.

At the executive level, governors were spending huge sums as security votes, for which they were not subject to audit accounting. The President himself was allocated a minimum of N150 million every year as security vote for which he did not



Awolowo: Who stole the Presidency?

have to account. In 1983, significantly an election year, President Shehu Shagari's security vote shot up to N300 million!

The ministers and commissioners and the host of party chiefs, bureaucrats and agents and thugs all jumped into the melee. For instance, the various investigation panels set up by the military estimated that during the four year life of the Second Republic, Umaru Dikko, a close aide of Shagari, alone stole over N4 billion using as fronts such companies as Plastinex Investment and Finances; NOGA S.A.; Messrs Balfour and McLaine Ketex; Genepet S.A. and Aprofim S.A. Indeed, from one company alone, i.e. EURO-TRADE, Dikko received as much as N7 million as a kickback for a contract to "clear and distribute" 300,000 bags of parboiled rice.

But this kleptomania was not only limited to top officials like ministers and commissioners. A Lagos military tribunal also found one Mr. Olalere Omiyale, a mid-level accountant with the N.Y.S.C. headquarters, guilty of corrupt self-enrichment of incredible proportions. Mr. Omiyale was found to have illegally acquired so much property within such a short time, a few of which included:

- (a) N6.6 million deposited in 27 different accounts in Osogbo and Lagos;
- (b) 59 houses and landed property;
- (c) a large farm called Ayoola Memorial Farm at Osogbo;
- (d) 45 motor vehicles of different

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makes; and

(e) 7 generators installed in his numerous houses in Lagos and Osogbo.

In addition to all these, the tribunal discovered that Mr. Omiyale also had 3 known houses in London, but these could not be recovered because, strangely, according to the tribunal, it had no jurisdiction to make an order for their recovery. Defending himself, Mr. Omiyale told the tribunal that "only a fool" would refuse money and property "gifts" from a contractor!

Mr. Omiyale's philosophy was, as a rule, the philosophy of the majority of the politicians of the Second Republic. It was this philosophy which led to such monumental frauds as took place in Abuja; and which led to the wave of arson attempts on public buildings all over the country in a desperate effort to cover up the seedy deals. The buildings housing the Federal Ministry of Education, that of External Affairs, and NITEL all went up in flames. And there were others.

This mindless looting no doubt contributed in no small measure towards the economic adversity which befell the second half of the Shagari tenure, and to the total loss of legitimacy by the rulers of the Second Republic.

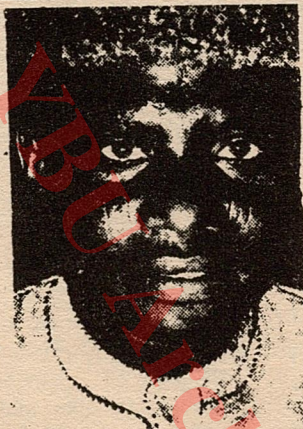
OPEN VEINS

We have already noted that one of the essential characteristics of the political system under which the Second Republic operated was its dependence on foreign countries. One of the greatest evidence of this dependence and subservience to foreign interests was its reliance on imports. The leadership of the Second Republic, in particular, made a virtue out of foreign imports. During the Second Republic everything was brought into this country: from containers of sand to air-freighted parts for assembling motor vehicles.

For instance, whereas in 1979 when Shagari took over from Obasanjo the country's annual food import bill alone stood at N987 million, by 1981 this had shot up to N2.1 billion. And by the dying

months of the regime late in 1983, the country was spending as much as 80 kobo out of every one naira on imports. Indeed, so crucial had imports become to the regime that the Ministry of Commerce had by 1982 become more important than the Cabinet Office, as evidenced by the hive of activity that went on around it. The issuance of import licences had meanwhile become such a racket that the Minister in charge, Bello Maitama Yusuf, became a veritable mogul.

The results were obvious enough: the country's huge resources, particularly from petroleum rents, were siphoned outside and the mass of the people were left



Bello Maitama: At the centre of the import licence racket.

wallowing in abject misery. In 1981, for instance, the revenue coming into government's coffers amounted to N12 billion, but expenditures outstripped this by over N2 billion. By 1982 things had become worse; deficits had gone up to N6.2 billion. Foreign reserves, which stood at N6.4 billion in 1981, had dropped to less than N1 billion by 1983.

By now the regime had become belatedly alarmed. A package of austerity measures, called the Economic Stabilization Act of April 1982 was slapped on the country. It provided for restrictions on imports, new employment and promotion, and on the disbursement of foreign exchange.

But rather than provide relief, this measure only worsened the situation. The country's import-substitution 'industries', which had

all along been conceived and built around the importation of expensive raw materials, machinery and spares from abroad, found themselves in difficult straits. By June 1983 some 100 of these companies had folded up. Everywhere there were retrenchments. The textile industry, for example, which had about 75,000 workers in 1980 had reduced its work force to under 50,000 by the second half of 1983. And those lucky enough to retain their jobs in the public or the private sector had to go for months without being paid their salaries.

Under these trying conditions most of the civilian rulers of the Second Republic, who had all along been cushioned against these difficulties by their fantastic salaries and allowances and massive kick-backs lost even the shreds of credibility and legitimacy which at least some of them might have had in the eyes of the people. Henceforth, their fall from power was only a matter of time.

POWER STRUGGLES

It is already clear that the Obasanjo—Yar 'Adua junta saw in Shehu Shagari and his NPN henchmen the ideal successors to their own mis-rule. That is why the junta spared no efforts — and even broke the very rules it had itself laid down — in its rabid desire to ensure that the NPN succeeded it. The departing military junta thus set the stage for the subversion of laid-down rules in the bitter intra-ruling-class struggle for the capturing and/or retention of political power and control over government.

The problem with this however, is that bad habits, once learned, are very difficult to discard. The Shagari administration throughout the country was to employ similar improper, illegal and even unconstitutional measures not only to capture or retain control over governments, but also to 'punish', harass and intimidate political adversaries. This became very acute when it felt threatened by the rise of popular and democratic forces in an area that it considered its home base — i.e. the northern part of Nigeria. The overall effect, of course, was chaos, lawless-

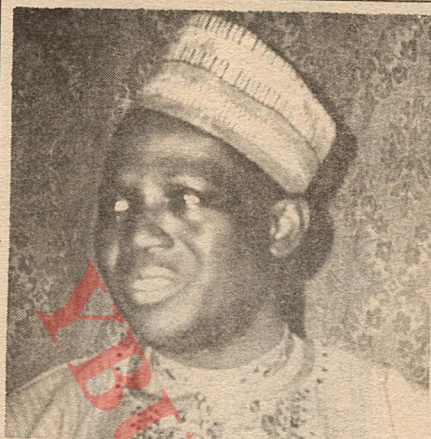
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ness, arbitrariness and the erosion of whatever little legitimacy the political system enjoyed.

Cases of this lawlessness litter the four-year lifespan of the Second Republic. In fact, within seven months of its inauguration, over 300 peasant farmers were massacred in cold blood in Sokoto, the President's home state. There was the case of the illegal deportation of the Majority Leader in the GNPP-dominated Borno State House of Assembly, Alhaji Shugaba Darman, in 1980 by the NPN Federal Government. There was the purported 'amendment' to the Public Order Act in 1980 by the NPN government in a desperate bid to remove control over the state Commissioners of Police from the state governors. There was the case of the ugly confrontation between the Bendel State Governor, Professor Ambrose Alli, and the President, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, also in 1980. There was the illegal appointment by the Federal Government of alternate chief executives in the states the NPN did not control in the guise of Presidential Liaison Officers (PLOs). Then, there was also the 'celebrated' case of the illegal and unconstitutional impeachment of the Kaduna State PRP Governor, Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa, by the NPN-dominated State House of Assembly in June 1981. There was the case of the well-organized rampage in Kano which led to the burning of many public buildings and the killing and

burning of Dr. Bala Mohammed, the Political Adviser to the PRP Governor of Kano State.

But perhaps the height of this mindless employment of all means, crooked or otherwise, to score partisan political points came with the 1983 election. The ruling NPN used all means at its disposal — the electoral commission, the police, the courts, the press, and even the



Umaru Dikko: 'Author' of 'Landslide 83.'

bureaucracy — to manipulate arrangements for the elections, to rig the results, to intimidate adversaries and voters alike, and to suppress legitimate and popular protests.

An indication of the extent to which the NPN was willing to go in rigging the 1983 election was given when in 1982 the late Professor Ayodele Awojobi discovered five

different official versions of the Electoral Act. When Awojobi went to court over the matter, he got a judgement from the Federal High Court in Lagos which directed that "the five versions of the Federal Electoral Act of 1982... be referred to the Inspector General of Police for investigation".

As was to be expected, the nation never heard anything about this again from either the government or the Inspector-General's office.

This massive, desperate and unabashed rigging of the 1983 elections — christened by Umaru Dikko as 'Landslide '83' — was only the logical outcome of a political and economic system, and rule by a cabal lacking any other legitimacy but the use of naked force.

It is thus little wonder that when on the night of 31st December, 1983, Buhari's armoured tanks rolled into the streets of the country's towns and barracks, the Second Republic collapsed like a pack of shabbily-stacked cards. Nobody raised a finger in protest. Instead, there were open and loud sighs of relief, unredeemingly reactionary and fascistic as the putsch leaders were! The rise and fall of the Second Republic has therefore many lessons for all Nigerians. These are lessons which we can only ignore at our peril.

By Richard Umaru

LANDLESSNESS: Time-Bomb Of The Second Republic

A front page story in the *National Concord* of Friday, 8th July, 1988, reported a petition sent to the Secretary to the Sokoto State Government about how rich, powerful and influential people in the state have been depriving Fulani pastoralists of land legally allotted to them as grazing reserves and cattle paths. The petition, signed by a Sokoto prince, Malam Ahmadu Rufa'i Abubakar, on behalf of the cattle rearers, hinted at a collusion between traditional rulers and local notables in this rapacious and illegal activity. It ended with an

appeal to the Government to step in to avoid conflict and mass migration of the Fulani out of the state.

Illegal seizures of grazing reserves and their conversion into large-scale private farms of the rich and powerful is not peculiar to Sokoto State. In fact, it is common all over Nigeria. Fulani herdsmen of the Mambilla Plateau in Gongola State are fast losing vast tracts of pastureland. Similarly, large-scale clearance and fencing of forests and grazing lands have been reported from other parts of the country. All

this is to make way for the establishment of private, large-scale farms, whose contribution to the country's food supply situation to date is, to say the least, dismal. In fact, many of these large-scale 'modern' farms have already gone into bankruptcy or are on the brink of bankruptcy.

The problem of forceful seizure of grazing reserves runs counter to government's position on the matter. In a recent national conference on pastoralism organized by the National Animal Production Research Institute (NAPRI) in Zaria,

the Minister of Science and Technology, Professor Emmanuel Emovon, stated that: "... government policy at settling the pastoral livestock producer emanated from the belief that no substantial animal husbandry could be embarked upon without the producer's right to land". Hence, "... the present administration strongly believes that by making 10% of the country's land area available for lease allocation to grazers, the land problem would not only be ameliorated, but also make the daily activities of the pastoral producers more pleasant".

This is a classic case of double-speak. For while the government advocates a policy of establishing grazing reserves to settle nomadic pastoralists, it looks the other way while cases of private seizures of these reserves are occurring daily. Indeed, among the key participants in the land rape are powerful government functionaries, and their vicious feudal clients and patrons.

Indeed, the problem of land seizure and its private appropriation is not limited to grazing lands. It is even more glaring where it affects the arable farms belonging to the much-oppressed and dispossessed small peasant cultivators of the country. Much of what has gone wrong in this country since independence is attributable to the daylight robbery of people's farmlands, and enclosure of common lands by the powerful and the rich at the expense of the poor people of Nigeria and generations yet unborn. It is a case in which a tiny minority of rich and powerful Nigerians are succeeding in illegally ousting the peoples' legitimate claims to land with the active backing of the police, judiciary, and feudal institutions. A simple glance into the records of Area Courts, Courts of Appeal, and similar institutions all over the country will reveal that the majority of the civil cases brought before them, whether adjudicated or not, relate to the issue of land. The poor people, without legal support, invariably lose their legitimate titles to their land.

Land is a heritage of all human beings, particularly those who live and work on it. Nobody is born with

a piece of land attached to him. He can only be born with a right to use a certain portion of land under one regulation or another. These regulations are determined by social and political arrangements existing in the area where the land is located. The ways in which a social and political system regulates people's access to land determine the social and political stability of a nation.



Emovon: Engages in doublespeak over government's policy.

Nigeria is a huge country, possessing 92.7 million hectares of land, out of which 75 million hectares are arable. But it currently is estimated to have a population of about 100 million people. Simple arithmetic therefore shows that there is only about one hectare of land for each of us. In fact, if one takes only arable land into account, the land available for cultivation per person is only between 0.4 - 0.5 hectares for each Nigerian.

A situation in which the control of both rural and urban land is in the hands of a tiny minority leads to social and political disorder. But as the country limps towards the Third Republic, feudal and feudal-supported land seizures continue to escalate in the rural areas. And in the urban areas the government is more concerned with property development under a bureaucratic and very corrupt system of plot allocation that favours the rich and powerful, particularly those in the armed forces and the police.

This process of land concentration in few hands has continued unabated in spite of the provisions

of the Land Use Act of 1978 which attempts to protect the rights of the poor. In fact, attempts are currently being made by traditional rulers and speculators to force the government to abrogate the Act and to remove any legal stamp to the correct position that the land belongs to the people.

Because of the size of the country, only a few people really grasp the full political implications of this trend. In a country with a large and growing population such as Nigeria, allowing and encouraging a few individuals and companies to corner vast chunks of the country's land is tantamount to institutionalising social and political instability. It is important to note that many of the participants in the recent religious disturbances were rural migrants or sons and daughters of rural migrants, whose ancestral lands were seized by feudal or capitalist notables.

Urban plot allocation has concentrated houses in a few hands, and rents are increasing daily, often amounting to between 30 and 50% of the income of an average Nigerian worker, small trader, or artisan. Thus, the country is increasingly having an urban population of tenants, squatters, and slum-dwellers, daily agonized by the lavish life styles and well-built mansions and castles of the rich, who also happen to own the slums and disease-ridden dwellings in which the majority live.

The Third Republic cannot survive under this despicable condition of oppression and inequality.

The provisions of Chapter 2 of the 1979 Constitution, which have been retained in the 1988 draft constitution, provide in sections 16 (2) that "the State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that the material resources of the community are harnessed for the common good", and "(c) that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of a few individuals or of a group".

But these provisions cannot have

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any effect unless the peasant farmers and urban dwellers are organised, and have the constitutional authority to control the allocation of farm lands and urban plots. At any rate, no political order can survive for long if the majority of the population are oppressed and marginalized by

denying them access to land for farming, grazing, housing, recreation and even where to defecate or get buried. In fact, this lack of concern for justice in the administration of land has eroded the moral authority of political and judicial institutions in the country. The people are

increasingly feeling that they have no obligation to obey the dictates of a predator capitalist state run by a parasitic elite.

By Yahaya Abdullahi.

UNEMPLOYMENT: Breeding The Death Squads

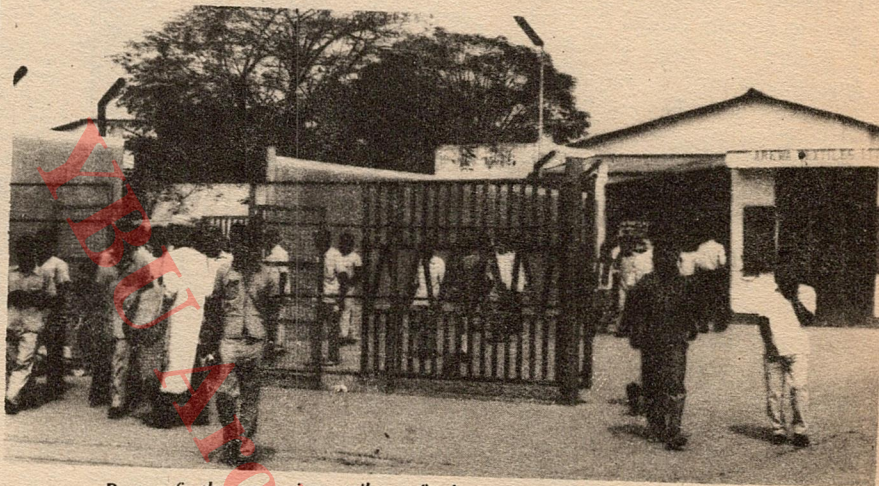
Ikenna Ibeneme obtained his National Certificate in Education (NCE) in 1983 and served in the NYSC in the 1983/84 service year. Subsequently, he roamed the streets of Imo and some other states in a vain search for a job. In January, 1986, his uncle, a supervisor in a textile factory, persuaded him to learn to drive so he could buy an old car for him, for use as a taxi. Four days after Ikenna was issued with a class 'E' driving licence, his uncle was retrenched. And that aborted the plan.

Ikenna had still not secured a job, and has vowed not to waste his energy or to borrow money to go looking for any job.

Ikenna's case is similar to that of Jibril Audu. A graduate in botany, Jibril Audu has spent a year in a fruitless search for a job. Believing the claims by the government that graduates who are unemployed are those who studied irrelevant subjects, he went back to the University and read pharmacy. Two years after graduation he still has no job. Jibril's only consolation is the army of unemployed people he sees carrying shovels, matchets, diggers, etc. milling along Bauchi Road and other streets in Jos.

A conservative estimate puts the figures of unemployed Nigerians at about four million. This excludes the tens of millions of under-employed and semi-employed people in the urban and rural areas all over the country.

Unemployment is not peculiar to Nigeria. Indeed, it is a feature of all capitalist societies — societies where private profit and accumulation by those who do not engage in



Part of the growing tribe of the unemployed in Nigeria.

production is the motive force of the whole economy. That is why even the advanced capitalist countries like the U.S.A., Britain, West Germany, Japan, etc. have high unemployment rates.

However, unemployment is worse in societies like Nigeria whose economies are dominated and controlled by foreign companies with the solid support of a few wealthy indigenous parasites. Here, most of the resources produced by the sweat and blood of Nigerians is transferred abroad rather than reinvested. The larger portion of what is left behind is shared by this handful of Nigerian parasites, many of whom again send their loot abroad. These resources, among other things, go to create employment opportunities in these foreign lands, while the opposite effect is reproduced in Nigeria.

But the problem has its roots in Nigeria's past. The British colonialists were not interested in investing

in productive activities in the country. They were content with extracting minerals and cash crops which served as raw materials for their home industries.

Apart from re-orienting our agriculture towards export production, thus subjecting it to the vagaries of the international market, the colonisers also destroyed the indigenous craft and manufacturing industries. Examples of these include the Akwaete cloth weavers, the Benin carvers and bronze casters, the Awka blacksmiths, the Kano dyers, the Bida metal workers, etc.

These people were thus thrown out of jobs because the colonialists wanted them, and others, to work in the mines, on the construction of roads, rail-lines and ports, etc. Taxes, which had to be paid in the newly-introduced currency, were imposed to compel people to take up wage employment.

The educational system which they introduced was aimed primarily

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at producing people who would occupy the lowest rungs of the colonial administration, and who will join foreign firms as clerks and messengers; and later those who would succeed them.

This type of education is part and parcel of a system which generates unemployment for the majority and wealth for the few. This can be seen from the economic crisis which has engulfed this country since 1982.

For instance, five months after Shagari introduced his Economic Stabilization Programme in April, 1982, 72,000 workers were officially recorded to have been retrenched. In spite of the military coup of December 31st, 1983, ostensibly aimed at 'revamping' the economy, the savage retrenchments only worsened. For example, by April 1984, 84,500 workers were retrenched in the textile industry; 2,689 in the furniture industry; 4,214 in the food industry; 3,500 in the shipping and forwarding industry; and 11,092 in the footwear and rubber industry. In these few sectors alone, the total number of workers retrenched

amounted to 63,995. If we consider the fact that each worker has an average of about 8 dependents to support, directly or indirectly, then the total number of Nigerians thrown into misery by these particular cases is over half a million. Meanwhile, the informal sector which provides succour for millions of unemployed people also came under heavy attack. The kiosks of the petty traders were destroyed, and hawking was banned and punished — all in the name of 'Environmental Sanitation' and economic recovery and discipline. Even bushmeat was not exempted from the ban.

This vicious attack on the people of Nigeria left the foreign companies and their Nigerian frontmen and agents the only beneficiaries. For example, between 1979 and 1985 the UAC dismissed 45% of its workers. It also retrenched 7,000 of its middle and high level employees. However, its profits rose from N24 million in 1980 to N406.2 million in 1985. Similarly, a week after laying off 230 workers in 1987, Lever Brothers declared a profit of N57 million.

Any hopes that this unpatriotic and oppressive trend would be halted or reversed by the Babangida regime was dashed when the regime's first Minister of Finance, Kalu Idika Kalu, declared early in the regime's life that 65% of the workers in the public sector have to be retrenched if the economy is to recover. Although he was later moved to another ministry, this has continued to be the policy of the Babangida administration.

If this policy continues, then anyone hoping for political stability in the Third Republic must have his head examined. There can be no stability when a large section of the nation's labour force is unemployed. These unemployed shall be mobilised by politicians in their bitter struggle for political power as thugs and even death squads. Even before open partisan politics has started, one can see this in the religious and ethnic mobs being regularly unleashed on ordinary people to frighten them and divert attention.

By Andy Okolie

DEBTS: Hemlock Of The Third Republic

The Babangida administration, like the Buhari and Shagari ones before it, is dishing out "progress" reports and voodoo statistics, in a desperate bid to reassure us that there is some light at the end of the tunnel. Seemingly unable or unwilling to ask itself what went wrong and why, or to ask itself where 'its' IMF-inspired and World Bank-sponsored SAP is taking the nation, it has simply settled for the easy and disastrous option of muddling along regardless.

And yet, after so much hardships inflicted on the vast majority of Nigerians, and so many billions of hard currency handed over as debt repayments, the situation is actually worse now than ever before.

By mid-1986, when SAP was introduced, our external debt was officially put at just over US \$15 billion. After two years of SAP,

debt rescheduling and "pass marks" given to the regime's economic programmes by the likes of Margaret Thatcher, George Schultz and Chancellor Kohl, this debt has gone up to at least US \$23.45 billion — and perhaps even as high as US \$27.0 billion, if one goes by the records of our creditors like the *American Express Bank Review*, vol. 15, No.5, of May 18, 1988.

This debt, according to Chief Falae, the Secretary to the Federal Government, increases at the rate of US \$2.3 billion annually, which must be a very conservative estimate indeed! This year alone our government has set aside US \$1.711 billion for debt servicing. Actually, of the estimated US \$7 billion foreign exchange receipt this year, we were expected to pay out US \$5 billion as debt service — the balance of US \$3.3 billion will not be paid out

but is to be added to the principal and rolled over as new debt, with interest charged on it.

Add to this the US \$1.711 billion we are supposed to pay to foreign creditors, another \$3 billion set aside for local contractors and suppliers, one gets not less than 7 billion naira as public debt service charge for 1988. This is equivalent to 51 per cent of this year's estimated Federal Government recurrent expenditure of N13.703 billion.

If we consider in addition the one billion US dollars that the IMF has recently discovered we owe it, plus billions of dollars of further dubious debts still "unverified", one begins to appreciate the seriousness of the chains of debt-slavery that we are being shackled with.

To cap it all, the IMF — World Bank duo is not even satisfied with the implementation of this SAP so

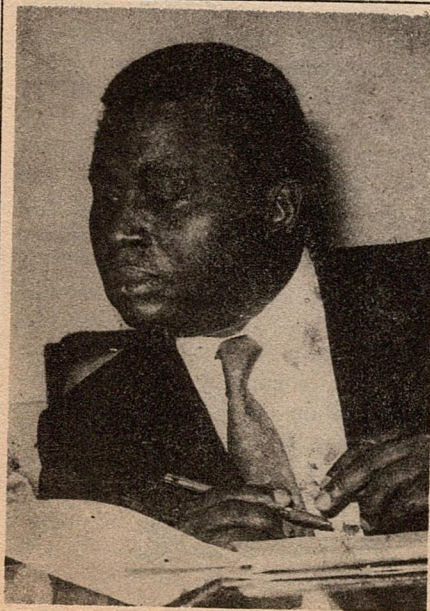
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far. These two, along with the Paris Club of official creditors and the London Club of commercial lenders, want us to be 'restructured' to meet their own requirements, and to fit into the role they have allocated to us in the existing international division of labour as producers of raw materials and consumers of their manufactured goods.

And all these, in spite of the fact that we are supposed to have rescheduled our debts with 14 of 19 so-called creditor nations, and in spite also of our implementing a most socially and economically devastating economic programme.

Government expenditure on health, education and housing has drastically gone down. Prices of food, clothing and drugs have exploded. Production has sharply declined as devaluation hits the costs of machines, spare parts, fertilisers and agricultural chemicals. Unemployment continues to soar. And if usually reliable sources are to be believed, the days of the N70 gallon of engine oil are lurking in the shadows.

However, not all Third World leaders are committed to this mass sale of their people into debt-slavery. As Peru's President, Alan Garcia, has pointed out, "... the foreign debt — as a result of its unjust origins and because of the methods by which it



*Chu Okongwu:
Negotiates the rescheduling*

has been increased — cannot be paid by our countries, because the effort to service it on time will keep our democracies trapped in misery and violence." According to Garcia, we are faced with the choice of "either debt or democracy".

The debt-equity swap, the new magic wand being waved around, that supposedly will help in tackling our debt crisis, will only cover about 5 per cent of our total external debt. Non-oil export earnings have not even measured up to 5 per cent of our foreign exchange earnings, and are not likely to do so in the foreseeable future, as commodity prices — including even oil — continue to collapse on the world market. No foreign direct investment is coming.

All this has very serious implications, not only for the stability of the current regime, but also for the Third Republic. Right now, we are only paying interest on these external debts. And already, the burden is crushing.

But as from 1990, the payment of the principal will also start, of course, along with the payment of the interest, as per the rescheduling



*Falae:
Underestimates Nigeria's debt burden.*

only be empty, but every miserable penny they manage to borrow will have to be spent only with approval from Washington and London. The economy shall finally collapse completely! The anger and desparation that this will generate among

"Those short-sighted and greedy Nigerians whose mouths are already watering over 1990 and 1992 should realise that within a few months after taking over, the treasury will not only be empty, but every miserable penny they manage to borrow will have to be spent only with approval from Washington and London."

agreements already entered into. Needless to say, this is a burden that no regime can shoulder.

Those short-sighted and greedy Nigerians whose mouths are already watering over 1990 and 1992 should realise that within a few months after taking over, the treasury will not

the civilian population and the soldiery will effectively mean that, the transition for them shall *actually* be a TRANSITION to the great beyond: R.I.P.!

*By Sanusi Abubakar and
Richard Umaru.*

Chiefs In The Constitution: CLUTCHING AT A STRAW

One of the most significant democratic advances won by the people of Nigeria since 1966 has been the limitation imposed on the power of traditional rulers over the local government administration, the courts, the prisons and the police. But since the military coup of December 1983, this advance is being systematically reversed, under both the Buhari and the Babangida administrations.

The most recent attack on this is the attempt to entrench a role for the so-called traditional rulers in the Constitution. In a Constitution which is supposed to be for the establishment of a *democratic republic*, the right to public office by virtue of ancestry has been defined and sanctified. Section 8 (4) of the Draft Reviewed Constitution endorsed by the A.F.R.C. (Armed Forces Ruling Council) enshrines anti-democratic privilege by giving a role to traditional rulers whom it defines as "the person who by virtue of his *ancestry* occupies the throne".

To understand the full implications of this erosion of democratic advances, it is necessary to go back to even 1976. In that year, the Murtala/Obasanjo regime introduced significant reforms which further restricted the role of traditional rulers in local government administration. For instance, the District and Village Heads were made employees of the local council to which they were directly responsible. Hitherto they were under the beck and call of Emirs and Chiefs. And when the 1979 Constitution, in Section 7, guaranteed democratically elected local government councils and gave no role in them to traditional rulers, this further advanced the reforms of 1966 which had removed their powers over prisons, judiciary and the police.

In spite of the fact that the Shagari regime, and the two subsequent military governments, have tried to build up the prestige and political power of these decadent institutions, the Political Bureau was

honest enough to report the views of the overwhelming majority of Nigerians towards these so-called traditional rulers: "It is a misnomer, considering the scope and character of the contemporary Nigerian state to call them traditional rulers. They possess no special qualities to enable them to be used in enriching the political system or instilling moral rectitude in public life. It will therefore make no sense to install in the political system, people whose

crisis. In its bid to ride the storm, all manner of imperialist-dictated measures have been undertaken, but to no avail. Instead of improving, the social and economic situation is worsening. Untold hardships are being inflicted on the masses of the people. As a result, there has been a spiralling wave of crimes and social discontent.

The present leadership, lacking a concrete and effective answer to the challenges of the economic crisis, and



Ndayako, Fom Bor: Political Strawmen.

primary qualification is ascribed to status at a time when the people are demanding a truly democratic polity".

For, while in its *White Paper* on the Bureau Report, the government seemed to accept this, it turned around to say in another section of the *White Paper* that the 1979 Constitution would be reviewed to reflect the recommendations of the Dasuki Committee's Report on Local Government Reforms. This apparent contradiction can only be understood by looking at the actual social and political relations in Nigeria today.

As things seem to be falling apart and the centre threatening to fail to hold, the ruling class, by re-entrenching feudalism, is acting to meet certain political exigencies. This development has its economic foundations. Nigeria has been gripped by a shattering economic

insisting on continuing to rule as has been done all along, are clutching at anything available and have decided to roll back our democratic gains by entrenching feudalism.

But this attempt is futile. These traditional rulers are political prostitutes. They are at the centre of the present problems messing up the country at all levels. The Babangida regime is therefore merely clutching at a straw. However, whether the ruling class in Nigeria likes it or not, history has a course. This course may be straight or zig-zag, but it has to be played out.

Therefore the present attempt at giving constitutional recognition to the feudal oligarchies will drag us back and slow down the pace of social development. All this is patch-patch, which will soon burst at the seams.

By Olu Yusuf and Sunday Obaba.

Towards 1992: THE PERSONALITIES

It is now about a year to the time the whistle will, hopefully, be blown for the resumption of partisan politics. But the game is already on in earnest. The state capitals and other big cities, towns and villages are already awash with clandestine political meetings and manoeuvres. Politicians are, under all sorts of guises and excuses, criss-crossing the country, holding secret, nocturnal meetings, reviving old ties and forming new ones. New movements are being launched, groupings are being formed everywhere and alliances are being renewed or forged, some of them perishing almost as fast as they are formed. In short, active politics is back in full swing, with all its excitement, contradictions and tedious divagations. The daily warning and reminder by the authorities that the ban is still on seem almost like an official nod of approval for such clandestine manoeuvres.

There is, of course, nothing unusual or new in all this. Many will recall that one decade ago now, as the country prepared for a return to civil rule in 1979, there were the same going and coming, high-level schemings and feverish politicking and preparations by politicians across the country. The only difference may be that there is now a deeper entrenchment of especially religious conflicts in the society, and an equally more intensified exploitation and manipulation by politicians of primordial and religious sentiments. True, there was then the Shari'a controversy that erupted in the Constituent Assembly, with the high political and communal tension it generated in the country. But ten years ago, there was, at least, some pretence by the politicians to sound and appear national both in the scope of the groupings they formed and the names they chose for them. Among the better known groupings then: National Movement, Club 19, Committee of Friends. Now, even such pretences are thought unnecessary as the country's mainstream



Isa Kaita: Angling for the Grand Patron of a political party?

politicians withdraw further back into their ethnic, religious and regional retreats. Which is why today by far the most prominent groupings, which even seem to have the official stamp of approval, are those that are regional, ethnic or even religious in scope and name. To wit: The Northern Elders Committee, the Eastern Elders Committee, the Western Elders Committee, etc., etc.

But if the method has remained unchanged, so are the personalities. To be sure, there are new entrants to the game — those who, within the past decade or so, have made money and name, and those who have been, or are being, consciously built and propped up by the preceding and present military regimes. Having amassed wealth — the real stuff of bourgeois politics — and the name and power that go with it, these people are now itching for political office. Most notable among them: Chief Michael Ibru, Chief Igbinedion, Mr. Ezekiel Yusuf, Rilwanu Lukman, Dr. Sarki Tafida, and many of the retired generals and the nouveau riche.

Still, the prime movers in all this clandestine politicking are the old horses — the same political figures who have been toying with the destiny of this country and blocking

its progress since colonial times. They it is who today still call the shots. They it is who still pull the strings. Everything still revolves around them. Almost every major political movement, every grouping, is shaped and nurtured in their own image and according to their narrow, limited, world view and political practice. And they are going about things with such zeal and daring that suggests they think nothing of the blanket ban on politicians — a ban which, it must be admitted, the government itself had made nonsense of.

To be sure, a few of the old veterans have left or are leaving the stage. Chief Awo, the towering political force in the old West, is no more. In the old East, the wily, foxy Zik is now bowing to age. Up North, Alhaji Aliyu Makaman Bida, second to the Sardauna in the NPC hierarchy, has long departed to the great beyond. But their lieutenants, who were in it all through and have little else to learn from the masters, are equal to the task and are up and doing. Among the most prominent of these lieutenants: Bisi Onabanjo, Chief Ajasin, Chief Enahoro, Chief Okafor, Chief K.O. Mbadiwe, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, Alhaji Isa Kaita, Jolly Tanko Yusuf. Unlike in the East and West, it would appear that in the North, an acceptable succession formula has been worked out based on a rigid adherence to the leadership hierarchy of the banned N.P.C. — the Northern establishment political machine. Thus, late Makaman Bida, second in command to the Sardauna in the N.P.C.: pecking order, became Chairman of the National Movement that metamorphosed into the N.P.N., which was a re-incarnation of the NPC. Now, we hear, Alhaji Isa Kaita, third in the N.P.C. hierarchy has emerged as the chairman of a new movement that is clearly a re-grouping of the banned N.P.N.

Clearly, nothing has changed. Those still active in Nigeria's mainstream politics and stamping their

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writ on every major political move, are those who have been around since day one. Set in their ways and prejudices, these politicians have not learned nor forgotten anything, in all these years, except that some of them are now beginning to mouth a few radical phrases and slogans that they have only recently memorized in order to appear more fashionable and shore up their chances of getting their political groupings or parties registered. Every opportunity for transition to civil rule, like this one, opens up for them dreamlike horizons, and they jump at it. But their political horizon itself remains forever limited and circumscribed by a political ideology and cosmology that revolves essentially around only three concepts: region, religion, and ethnicity; and one thing: looting of the public wealth.

Given the existing socio-economic system in the country, with its inherent inequalities, injustices, false values and contradictions, perhaps there is something inevitable about this unchanging political scene, with the same actors, dancing to the same tune and in more or less the same style. Money, name, connections, political chicanery and deviousness, and even a certain measure of ruthlessness are the things that count in politics in a system like this one. These politicians, who are now virtually permanent features in the Nigerian political landscape, have these in abundance — having put to maximum advantage the head start they had in being in politics since colonial times and being successors to the British colonialists in the new Nigerian state. Of course, it has not always been a smooth road even for these politicians. They have had to face challenges even from the same classes and people they have been lordling it over, exploiting and manipulating for so long. There is, after all, at least in some parts of this country, a rich tradition of patriotic and progressive politics which offers an alternative to what these politicians have been offering. The fact, though, is that, on the whole, the system has been operating in such a way as to render the vast majority of the Nigerian people too

poor, too powerless and too unorganized to completely push aside these politicians and the tiny class of exploiters they represent.

A society gets the kind of leadership it deserves, it is often said. Perhaps there is some sense in this. But given her size, her large population, and her abundant human and material resources, Nigeria certainly deserves better than to be stuck with a set of leaders who are completely bankrupt of ideas and who, in all the

years since independence, have been doing more to keep the country down than to move her forward. Which is all the more reason why the Nigerian people — workers, peasants, artisans, traders, intellectuals, professionals, students, and others — should now wake up and organize themselves to seize power from those who have been exploiting them.

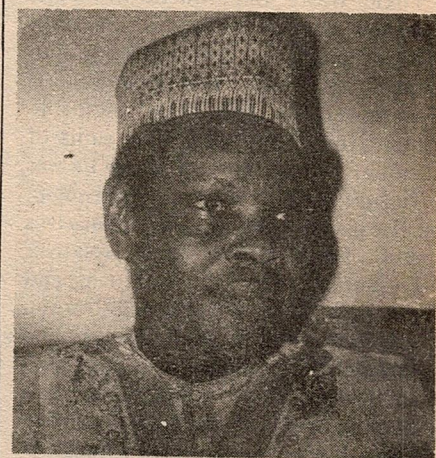
By Rufa'i Ibrahim.

A.B.U.'s Election Crisis: A DRESS REHEARSAL

Even the most cynical observer of the Nigerian scene will agree that the country is slowly heading for the rocks. The Structural Adjustment Programme has battered the economy; hunger and unemployment are tightening their grip on a large section of our people; and to cap it all, the manipulation of religion for political purposes is being undertaken actively and openly to deeply divide Nigerians and prevent them from building a united front against their oppressors.

The events that took place at the Main Campus of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, between Friday, June 10 and Monday, June 13, 1988 send warning signals as to what is likely to come up in 1992. On Friday, June 10, 1988, the student union electioneering campaign climaxed with a rally at the University's Convocation Square. By this time, religion had already been made a major factor in the campaign. This rally was followed on Saturday with voting, which lasted for 14 hours, from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. Counting of votes commenced almost immediately and continued up to the early hours of Monday, June 13, when, at about 1 a.m. supporters of one of the presidential candidates, Salisu Muhammed Lukman, stormed the counting centre and destroyed the ballot papers. The counting of votes was brought to an abrupt end.

From the counting centre, this group marched to the female hostel, Amina Hall, to protest against the



Vice-Chancellor Nanyan Mohammed

females heavy voting in favour of the rival presidential candidate, Steve Awobi: Although things appeared to be normal and classes were conducted on Monday, June 13th, at about 9 p.m. some supporters of the two presidential candidates grouped themselves along religious lines and began hostile manoeuvres. These ended in physical combat between the two groups. Sticks, bottles, stones, knives and similar weapons were freely used by the students against each other, in an engagement resembling pre-19th century warfare. This lasted for about 7 hours. More than 200 students were wounded, and one was killed. Similar developments had also taken place at the Kongo Campus of A.B.U. between Friday, 10 June and Monday, 13 June, 1988.

As 1992 draws nearer and nearer, the two party system which

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the government is determined to impose on Nigeria is encouraging such manipulative politics all over the country, at all levels. The student clashes at A.B.U. have given a warning signal to every patriotic Nigerian about the dangers awaiting the country in the event of the

imposition of the two party system.

Indeed, it is an open secret that in many parts of the country, religion was intensively manipulated during the last local government elections. In fact, this political virus has already infested the Abuja Assembly itself. For example, that

crowd has even failed to elect a deputy leader, and Dodan Barracks had to save them from going for each other's throats by abolishing the post! Otherwise, mid-June would have witnessed two shameful dress rehearsals for 1992: one at Zaria, the other at Abuja!

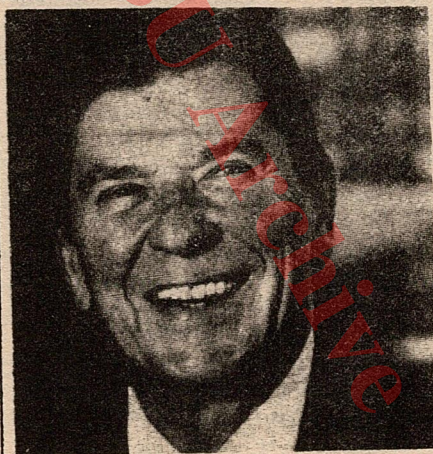
CORRUPTION AND THE CONSTITUTION: Lessons From America

Imagine a country where: the Attorney General is under investigation for four cases of fraud, bribery and corruption; the Head of the Toxic Waste Department has been sacked after allegations of collusion with companies that caused pollution; a top administrator is sentenced to two years imprisonment for embezzeling huge sums of money from a bank of which he was vice-president; senior government officials have been giving themselves and their friends and relatives contracts, taking improper loans, and generally using their offices to make themselves rich; five members of the President's staff have been dismissed for using cocaine; and the country's number two man has been alleged to be in league with cocaine smugglers. Does this sound familiar? Wait a minute, the country in question is NOT Nigeria, or any other country in Africa, for that matter. It is in fact that "bastion of freedom and democracy", God's Own Country, the country which Nigeria is trying in so many ways to emulate — the United States of America, under its astrologer-President, Ronald Reagan. Since Reagan took office in 1981, over 200 top officials of his government have been charged with unethical or illegal conduct.

Congressional investigations into the Iran-Contra scandal have revealed that some of President Reagan's aides, particularly Lt. Col. Oliver North and his gang of corrupt arms-dealers, drug smugglers, and con-men, with the active collusion of the security agencies, have been running an "invisible government" in the United States. This "invisible government" has been conducting crucial aspects of U.S. foreign policy

without the knowledge of the Congress or the people, in flagrant violation of the Constitution and of all the laws of the land.

But how could this happen? Doesn't the United States have a written constitution, which clearly regulates who should conduct U.S. foreign policy? So, why couldn't the



Reagan: Sitting on a can of worms.

U.S. Constitution prevent all of these abuses from occurring? Why couldn't it stop the U.S. government itself from acting as an internal outlaw, riding roughshod over the rights of other sovereign states, and all the time pulling the wool over the eyes of the American people?

Right now, the Constituent Assembly is sitting in Abuja to ratify a new constitution for Nigeria. We are being told that there are constitutional provisions which can contain corruption. And so the legal juggling in Abuja. But does it really mean anything? Have we so soon forgotten the lessons of our recent history? Have we already forgotten that despite all provisions of the 1979

Constitution, the Shagari regime flagrantly violated the human rights of the Nigerian people, going so far as to deport its own citizens, to oppress and even kill its opponents, and to criminally loot the wealth of the country and throw us into our current penury? Where was the constitution when all this was going on? What makes us think things will be any different in the Third Republic?

If we look at the way Reagan and his cronies have governed the United States, we will be able to see clearly the limits of what a constitution can or cannot do, and this should make us look beyond constitutions to find the real solutions for our problems.

As we have mentioned, more officials of the Reagan administration have been indicted for abuse of office, fraud, and corruption than any other previous American administration. And this in a regime whose leader once said he hoped to leave a legacy of "high morality". Take, for instance, the case of James Beggs, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). While he was working for a big defence contractor (General Dynamics) Beggs illegally arranged for reimbursements on an Army project. Another of Reagan's top aides, the Secretary of Agriculture (equivalent to a Minister) ensured that his business partner received a \$400,000 low-interest loan from the Ministry he heads. Similarly, David Fischer, personal assistant to the President, is now under investigation for having received \$50,000 a month to arrange private meetings between the President and large contributors to the cause of the Nicaraguan contra

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bandits. Richard Perle, Assistant Secretary of Defence, was said to have lobbied for the Army to buy weapons from an Israeli company where he previously worked as a consultant. Thomas Reed, Special Assistant to the President for National Security, resigned after he was investigated by a grand jury for criminal charges of perjury, falsifying documents, and insider trading on the stock market. And the list goes on and on.

TOXIC WASTE

Among the most interesting charges of corruption for us in Nigeria are those involving officials of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, with our experience of the toxic waste dumped in Koko fresh in mind. For instance, Anne Gorsuch Burford, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, resigned after charges that she manipulated Agency policy to benefit Republican Party politicians and her friends (i.e. she used her position to protect certain polluters, whom she was supposed to control.) Another official of the EPA, the Director of International Activities, Robert Funkhauser, resigned after allegations that he helped Dow Chemical (a major producer of toxic waste) exert undue influence on the U.S. position in international talks on the trade in toxic chemicals. John

Hernandez, the acting Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, also resigned after allegations that he allowed Dow Chemical to edit a report that was critical of that company. Also, Rita Lavelle, Head of Toxic Waste Cleanup, EPA, was sacked after allegations that she showed favouritism to certain major polluters. With the top administrators of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency clearly in the pocket of the major polluting companies, Nigeria can expect little support from the U.S. government in its attempt to keep toxic waste from being dumped on the African continent.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Perhaps the most scandalous of all the scandals involves the Attorney General of the United States, Edwin Meese, a close friend of the President. Meese failed to disclose that he appointed to high government positions seven of his friends who had "helped him financially" (i.e. given him money). He is presently being questioned in the investigation of the Wedtech affair, where he is alleged to have arranged a meeting in the White House for executives of the Wedtech Corporation in 1981 (with the implication that he was helping them to secure contracts). The latest revelations concern his role in a contract to build an oil pipeline from Iraq through Jordan to the Gulf of Aqaba — a multi-billion dollar project proposed by Bechtel Corporation in 1983, a company which formerly employed George Schultz and a host of other administration officials. It seems that Iraq was afraid that the Israelis would attack the pipeline, and thus a plan was concocted to pay off the Israeli Labour Party in exchange for a promise not to destroy the pipeline. Meese's support was enlisted to ensure these payments, even though the Attorney General is the U.S. official responsible for prosecuting U.S. citizens and companies who try to bribe foreign officials. After all of these charges and allegations, Meese has announced his intention to resign from office.



Rita Lavelle:
Fired for conniving with polluters.

So where was the Constitution in all of this? The Reagan administration's attitude to the law of the land can best be summed up by Miss Fawn Hall, Oliver North's secretary, who told the Congressional investigating committee: "I believe sometimes one has to go above the written law". No doubt Shagari and his cohorts would have heartily agreed.

Will a new constitution solve Nigeria's political problems and ensure long term stability in the country? The answer is clearly in the negative. In America, the government — despite the beautiful words, "We, the people. . . ." enshrined in the U.S. Constitution — is not accountable to the people of the country, but rules in the interest of its own privileged class, and can thus ignore the wishes and needs of the majority of the working people. Similarly, in Nigeria, a new constitution cannot create democracy or political stability so long as political power and the wealth of the country are in the hands of a parasitic few. Until the working people — who produce the wealth of the country but never enjoy any of it — organise themselves to rule in their own interest, democracy in Nigeria will continue to be an elusive dream, the rosy words and promises enshrined in the constitution notwithstanding.

By Patrick Obi



Edwin Meese:
Forced out because of corruption.

Update I:

Imposing Two Parties: THE POLITICS OF HYPOCRISY AND DECEIT

Wonders will never end, says an old adage. And although the leopard may change its spots, it never ceases to be a leopard.

As with the leopard, so with human beings. In Nigeria today there are multi-millionaires who have realized that in order for them to protect and increase their loot, they have to appear in a new guise. Financed by an obscenely and dubiously rich and politically ambitious retired Major General, they are actively taking advantage of the decision of the government to impose a two party system on Nigeria to pose as 'progressives', claiming a commitment to national independence, probity in public life, full employment, a productive economy and welfare for the masses.

A draft manifesto of one of their political parties in-the-making makes this clear. As is obvious from the list of those associated with this manifesto, they are actually opposed—in every pore of their skin and every hair on their body—to any question of national independence, welfare for the masses, and a productive economy.

As for probity in public life, their own record is that of the systematic destruction of probity in public life. A few examples will suffice:

AMINU TIJJANI: Left the Zaria Native Authority with a seamy record, only to continue with the same as a close confidant of Governor Abba Kyari of the North-Central State (1971 — 75) and of President Shehu Shagari (1979 — 83).

SELCAN MINER: As SMG, Benue-Plateau State, played a leading role in the plunder of the State under the Gowon regime.

BAMANGA TUKUR: Joined the Nigerian Ports Authority as poor as Job — left it as a multi-millionaire without having worked for even a kobo of that fortune.

ROTIMI WILLIAMS: Poses as Nigeria's leading legal authority but actually uses this image to milk his clients to make his millions, in cash and in landed property.

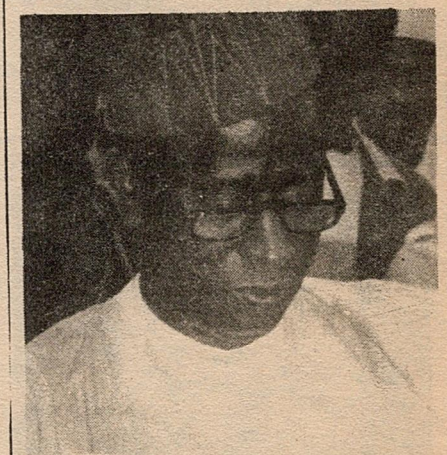
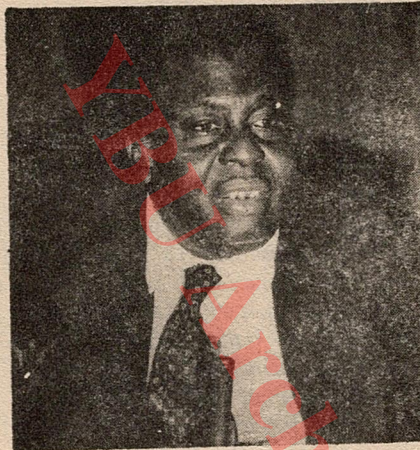
MUSA MUSAWA: Well-known leech, he has now turned to large-scale land seizures and the milking of cotton

the unabashed auctioning of precious public assets in Benue State.

But as they say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Please read on:

A PROGRAMME OF ACTION

To give effect to the principles



Rotimi Williams, Aminu Tijjani, Musa Musawa, Atom Kpera: The proof of the pudding...

farmers, since the White Paper on the Babalakin Commission Report is not yet officially released and the P.R.P. treasury is, of course, no longer available.

BRIGADIER ATOM KPERA (Rtd): Rapacious role in various military regimes is well-known, culminating in

enunciated above, we pledge ourselves to the following common programme of action:

NATIONAL IDEOLOGY:

To implement the philosophy and ideology of socialism as the new basis of our socio-economic development. To strive hard to achieve this new

UPDATE

social order and consolidate it, if and only if, the Progressive Movement becomes a political party.

The party will be guided by democratic and humanistic principles in all its actions.

NATIONAL QUESTION:

To promote and defend the unity of the peoples of Nigeria over and above all sectional interest;

To preserve and defend the constitution, and to uphold the due process of law as an institution which sees limits to governmental power;

To protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons lawfully residing in Nigeria without regard to their ethnic origin, sex, religion or political affiliation;

To adhere strictly to the constitutional provision that Nigeria is a secular state;

To ensure, promote and defend the process of democratic elections and open democratic activity in all organs of government, and the elimination of all feudal and fascist practices which violate the fundamental human rights of anyone;

To afford opportunities to hold the highest political, military and bureaucratic offices in the country to every section of country;

To conduct in the interest of equity, efficiency in national planning, and public security, an objective census of the national population and implement the national identity scheme.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

To pursue a purposeful and dynamic foreign policy directed towards Nigeria's national interest and the achievement of a more just and peaceful world;

To support African unity and the liberation struggle of all peoples of Africa, black peoples everywhere and all oppressed peoples fighting for liberation from imperialism and its aggressive instruments, apartheid and racism in whatever form, whether in the Middle East, South Africa, Central and South America or elsewhere in the world.

PROBITY IN PUBLIC LIFE

To subject all party men to a strict code of party discipline their breach of which will lead to their expulsion from the party;

To strengthen the officers of the law

for the investigation and punishment of all indictable offences committed by public officers;

To require all public officers to subscribe to a justiceable code of conduct and to declare their assets on the assumption of office; and

To effect a radical change in the style of government and the national life style in order to create a new sense of patriotism and devotion to the nation.

THE ECONOMY

To enhance the productive capacity of the Nigerian state in order to create the circumstances for full employment and for the enhancement of the quality of life for the people;

To promote scientific and technical research and other creative innovations to maximize productivity in industry and agriculture;

To impose state control regulations on all strategic sectors of the economy, particularly in heavy industries, banking, insurance, the exploitation of mineral resources and the creation of essential infrastructure;

To establish new and modern industries in each state of the Federation in order to ensure rapid and balanced development and the increase and spread of employment opportunities.

THE WELFARE OF THE MASSES

To establish a national minimum wage and the regular payment of salaries and allowances for all wage earners;

To initiate programmes of rural development centred around peasant farmers, the promotion of cooperative societies in the production and marketing of farm product, the establishment of agro-based industries; the the elimination of the influence of landlords, and

To make land available to the tiller especially the small scale agricultural producer who has in the past fed the nation but is today alienated from the land in many parts of the federation;

To abolish throughout the Federation the system of community tax and cattle tax otherwise known as haraji and jangali respectively, since these typify the major instruments of feudal and colonial oppression,

exploitation and extortion;

To initiate a programme of urban renewal to save old towns and cities from decay, congestion and filth and to build new towns to promote the work, health and happiness of all our people;

To establish free, universal and purposeful education at all levels;

To create a free and effective health care system based on the building of adequate centres and hospitals in each of the local government areas in the Federation, and based also on the intensification of drug research and drug production locally and the extension of the preventive aspects of health care;

To advance the social and economic conditions of workers, subsistence farmers, teachers and other producers of goods and services in the country.

STRATEGIC COMMITTEE

Alhaji Aminu Tijjani (Chairman)

Alhaji Bello Kirfi

Alhaji Musa Musawa

Senator Nosike Ikpo

Dr. Onu

Mr. Nyong

Chief Akintunde Rotimi

Hajiya Hasana Tijjani

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Chief Kola Daisi

Mr. P. Ojukwu

Mr. Sam Asuamah

Mrs. Florence Ita Giwa

Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed

Mr. Emeka Ofuluwa

Alhaji Muh. Buhari

Mrs. Maria Okwu

Alhaji Musa Gwadabe

FINANCE

Chief R. A. Williams (Chairman)

Barrister J.C. P. Nwokolo

Alhaji Bamanga Tukur

Mr. Selcan Miner

Alhaji Abdul Rasaq

Prof. Damachi

Alhaji Ahmad Mohammed

Mr. Eddy Ugbordaga

STATE REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Sam Udo Akagh — Akwa Ibom

Mr. Jacob Nwokolo — Anambra

Alh. Bello Kirfi — Bauchi

Mr. Nosike Ikpo — Bendel

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Brig. Atom Kpera — Benue
Alhaji Muhammadu — Borno
Mrs. Florence Ita-Giwa — Cross River
Alh. Bamanga Tukur — Gongola
Dr. Onu — Imo
Alh. Aminu Tijjani — Kaduna

Alh. Musa Gwadabe — Kano
Alh. Musa Musawa — Katsina
Dr. Ade John / Mr. Adewale Bello — Kwara
Alhaji R. A. Williams — Lagos
Alhaji S.A. Musa — Niger

Mr. Seni Solade — Ogun
Chief Akintunde — Ondo
Mr. Kanmi Osobu — Oyo
Mr. Selcan Miner — Plateau
Mr. Zuofa — Rivers
Alh. Abubakar Musa — Sokoto

Update II:

Imposing Two Parties: THE AMERICAN CONNECTION

Many Nigerians shake their heads and wonder why the Babangida regime is so determined to impose a two party system on Nigerians, in spite of the glaring evidence that it is very unpopular, it is profoundly anti-democratic, and will almost certainly be very unstable, as it will polarise politics along regional and religious lines. President Babangida even went out of his way to tell the Constituent Assembly not to bother to discuss the issue, as it is one over which the government has made up its mind.

What is very strange is that this dogged determination to impose the anti-democratic two party system on Nigeria is not accompanied by any attempt to give reasons why this system is suitable for us now.

The Political Bureau, with seven political scientists on it, four of whom were full professors of political science, did not even attempt to justify its recommendation that Nigeria should have a two party system. All the Bureau did in its section on the two party system was to cite some of the arguments against it, which it never even attempted to refute. The Bureau said:

“THE TWO PARTY OPTION

There are concrete fears in a two-party system. These fears rest essentially on the existing north/south dichotomy and the problem of religion. Those who fear the effect of these two cleavages on the Nigerian political scene point to the experience of the 1963/64 Federal election when the Action Group and the NCNC both southern political parties, came together in a marriage of convenience called the United



Mr Justice Buba Ardo:
Bulldozed his views over the CRC.

Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) against the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) a northern-dominated alliance. Political party formation on the basis of religion, in particular Christians coming together against Muslims, is seen to constitute the greater danger. Examples of Lebanon and Northern Ireland are cited to support this fear.”

But without any attempt to explain away these very real fears, the Bureau, like a robot, went straightaway to make the preposterous recommendation that:

“Despite the above, we have come to the conclusion that a two party system is best for Nigeria at this time.”

The Bureau never — anywhere — explained why and how they came to this conclusion.

The Armed Forces Ruling Council, in the White Paper on the Bureau’s report, just flatly accepted this unjustified recommendation.

The Constitution Review Com-

mittee, when it came to discuss the issue, clearly had the majority of its members against the two party system. But when the report of its fourth sub-committee, dealing with the issue, came to be deliberated upon, at its plenary session on Thursday, 7th January, 1988, the Chairman, Mr. Justice Buba Ardo, bulldozed through the two party system in the face of strong and vocal opposition by the majority of the C.R.C. members. Significantly, the issue was deliberately kept until right at the end of the day. In spite of this tactic of the Chairman, who was clearly acting under government instructions, the way the proceedings went reveals the extent to which powerful forces are determined to ram through the two party system and impose it on us, without any rhyme or reason.

KANGAROO-COURT STYLE

In fact, the C.R.C. members were intimidated a number of times, but over the issue of the two party system they seem to have reflected the views of the majority of Nigerians. For example, on Monday, 12th October, 1987, one of the members with close business connections with top members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council, and with sinister business circles in America, Mr. Baba Adi, warned that:

“Mr. Chairman, I think we should stop deceiving ourselves. The government appointed us to do a job, and the government gave us a guideline. . . we should get on with the job. If anyone thinks he is radical enough not to rubber stamp the government’s decisions he should resign.”

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In spite of this primitive and vulgar attempt at intimidation over the two party issue, some members of the C.R.C. refused to agree to rubber stamp the government's decision, and the Chairman had to bulldoze it through, as the Official Record of Proceedings of the Constitution Review Committee, vol. III, part - F, Day 22-27, pages 98 - 100, reveals graphically:

"PROF. IJALAYE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to humbly crave your indulgence to ask a question about political parties. For example, we have examined the pronouncement of the present government that the country is committed to two political parties. Are we going to mention this in the Constitution?

SEVERAL MEMBERS: No.

CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

PROF. IJALAYE: My question is that on section 201, I was thinking that in line with the thinking of the present Government, Section 201 should have two subsections. The first will say: *There shall be two political parties.* Then the provision we have there now will become subsection (2). The way it is now is so nebulous that I am suggesting that the first one should be 201 (1) to say: *There shall be two political parties,* section 201 (2) should be what we have there.

ALHAJI AUDU: Mr. Chairman, there is an existing legislation under which we are operating the two party system, which will continue throughout the transition.

SEVERAL MEMBERS: No!

CHAIRMAN: The whole idea is that we want to go with the Government. If they have indicated that definitely this country must have a two political party system and no more, let us try to persuade the country as a whole by putting it in the Constitution to let them get used to the idea that there are only two political parties. I think that is all right.

DR. BELLO MOHAMMED: Mr. Chairman, we have discussed this earlier exhaustively and we did not accept that we should write into the Constitution that there should be two political parties. Even in the 1979 Constitution, it was not specified what number of political

parties we should have. I think that it suffices that the National Electoral Commission should have power to register political parties.

CHAIRMAN: We want to guide the Electoral Commission. They should know that there are only two parties. They should not go and cause confusion.

DR. MOHAMMED: They already know. The President has already told them.

DR. C. E. ABEBE (OFR): Mr. Chairman, I think that in our various discussions here, we have already acknowledged the acceptance of two political parties and made amend-



*Bola Ajibola:
Erand Boy of the Americans*

ments to various Sections accordingly. Why should we now be shy of saying the truth?

CHAIRMAN: Yes, at this very late stage.

DR. YADUDU: Mr. Chairman, for the record, we should also express our dissent for this decision because in all seriousness if we put it in the Constitution, we are making it extremely difficult if tomorrow when the civilian regime comes along and want to change it, we know that to change the constitution is not easy. I think that we are not helping the people of this country by putting it in the Constitution. We have to state our reasons for the records that there is nothing we are doing to derogate from the decision of the Federal Government if we do not put it in the Constitution. They have the Decree and it will be there,

and when there is need to change it, it can be changed. We are simply saying that here, we are not simplifying matters, we are making it extremely difficult and we are saddling the posterity of this nation with this cumbersome decision which is manifestly wrong.

CHAIRMAN: I thought it would have a sort of persuasive effect if we put it in the Constitution. People would get used to it. That is how we are helping the people of this country to learn to live with it.

ALHAJI AMINU (OFR): Mr. Chairman, there was a rider during our discussion on this issue. We did say that we noted the stand of the Government and we would go with it but some of us adduced a number of reasons, in fact, against this decision. That being the case we agreed that this is one of the areas where we would make some strong recommendation to the Government to consider.

ALHAJI WAZIRI: Mr. Chairman, by putting a very rigid condition in the Constitution that there will be two political parties, we are not helping the country at all. As a politician, I know that we have to give a very wide latitude of selection whereas if you narrow down the latitude, you are forcing the people to go either left or right which is not the intention of their movement. We have narrowed the parties to only two. We have seen the example of the problem in the local government elections. Another one is now in the offing. I do not think that it is proper for us to impose on ourselves a condition that is so rigid that we cannot create a flexible situation. What I think is that we should create a proviso that when the civilians come into power in 1992, the National Assembly should, if they deem it fit, by way of resolution, create more political parties. When we say that there shall be only two political parties and end it there, we are making the whole thing very difficult. Let us provide for a resolution of the National Assembly to change the system without having to go through the whole system of amending the Constitution.

CHAIRMAN: You have spoken as a former politician and speaking as an

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onlooker, I see that throughout Africa, the tendency is for countries to have only one political party, a unitary system. Therefore, are we not really in a more advantageous position if we have two political parties? What is there to quarrel with? We are having two political parties as against one party in other countries.

MR. KOKORI: Mr. Chairman, the third one should be the Labour Party. (Laughter)

MRS. FATI ABUBAKAR: Mr. Chairman, already, we have made provisions which tally with the two party system. So, whether we put it there or not, when the time comes for the National Assembly to amend it if they want more than two parties, they will amend the Constitution. So, why are we shy of putting it there?

CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mrs. Abubakar, all that they will do is to say: *There shall be five political parties or one as the case may be.* It is a very minor amendment.

MEMBERS: Yes.

PROF. (MRS.) AKANDE: Mr. Chairman, Miss Azigbo has just kindly brought to my attention the minutes of Friday, 4th of December 1987, the 15th Plenary Session, and I would like members to have an overnight look at page 3, 4 and 5 on this question of Traditional Council and where they will fit in. I am just trying to help both the high table and low table. The decision there is



President Babangida appointed the C.R.C.

very clear.

CHAIRMAN: Decision on what?
 PROF. (MRS.) AKANDE: The decision over the Traditional Council and where they will fit in the Constitution.

CHAIRMAN: That is all right. What I want to refer to is under Section 206 — Annual Report on — (Interruptions) Are we closing?

SEVERAL MEMBERS: No. (Interruptions)

CHAIRMAN: That being so, we are stopping at Section 201 which has been amended. We are resuming on Section 203.

SOME MEMBERS: No, we have taken Section 205.

CHAIRMAN: All right, we will start from Section 206 tomorrow. Will someone move for adjournment?"

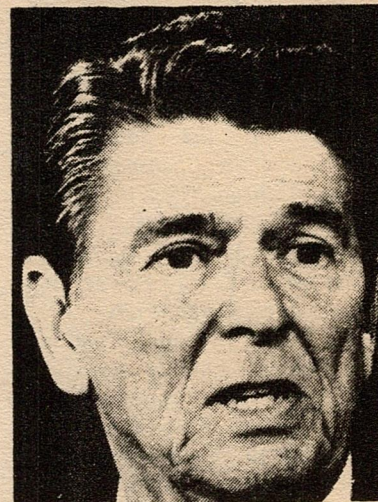
The meeting adjourned at 5.55 p.m.!

The abject silence of the Political Bureau over the benefits of the two party system for Nigeria, combined with the crude arm-twisting tactics used by the Chairman of the C.R.C., Justice Buba Ardo, over the two party system, had made many Nigerians wonder whether the force behind the attempt to impose the two party system on us goes beyond the Babangida regime and is derived from the external forces which have got this regime in their grip. There was, in the first place, the shameful and farcical scene at the meeting of the C.R.C. on Monday, 12th October, 1987 when the Attorney General of the Federation, Prince Bola Ajibola, pompously presented himself before the Committee as a messenger of the United States government. In his own words, according to the official record of proceedings, he said:

"May I on behalf of the Government and people of the United States of America and through myself (sic), present to the Chairman these documents."

According to him, these documents were copies of the American constitution and of a book called The Decision in Philadelphia, which were given to him by the U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Princeton Lyman, to give to the C.R.C.!

It is now an open secret that Ambassador Lyman was at the Nicon Noga Hilton, Abuja, on the day



Reagan:
 His agent Princeton Lyman in Abuja to direct Proceedings for Uncle Sam.

President Babangida inaugurated the Constituent Assembly and was seen in deep discussions with some of the men of 'timber and calibre' now controlling the Assembly.

But, even long before all this, it is at the United States Congress, as far back as September 1979, that one finds a systematic attempt to theoretically justify the need to restrict political party competition in Nigeria. This attempt came from Professor C. Sylvester Whitaker, of Rutgers University, U.S.A., who is a leading American State Department consultant on Nigeria, who monitored the Constitution Drafting Committee so closely in 1976 that he was forced to leave one of the Federal Government Special Guest Houses on Bar Beach because some of the members of the C.D.C. found him too nosey and inquisitive.

At hearings on Nigeria's return to civil rule, before the Sub-Committee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the U.S. House of Representatives, on 26th September 1979, Professor Whitaker set out his theory that excessive political party competition in Nigeria was the major cause of instability, and that the need to contain this was one of the important new departures of the 1979 Constitution. Whitaker argued that:

"In practice, the rules of western liberal system interacted with the realities of the profoundly plural nature of Nigeria's social make up to

promote, however unwittingly, increasingly destructive forces of regional political rivalry and ultimately enmity. . . . some of the main features of this bitter regionalism and the dynamics of the unrestrained political party competition that came with it, should be noted."

Coming to the 1979 Constitution, Whitaker said:

"The crux of this new departure is a machinery of representation that is deliberately designed to break the explosive past connection between competitive party politics and disintegrative tendencies. . . . The area of innovation that I believe may have occasioned the boldest strokes is that of the regulation of political parties."

As all Nigerians know, that "bold stroke" of regulating political party competition in the 1979 Constitution still left open enough democratic space for popular and patriotic political forces challenging the status quo to emerge and to even gain control of some state governments through the 1979 elections. In the context of Nigeria today, with the peasantry, workers, artisans, petty traders, and even the bulk of the middle class more intensively battered, exploited and oppressed, these forces are likely to emerge much stronger, more radicalised, and more broadly-based; and are likely to win elections all over the country.

A democratic, multi-party political system therefore constitutes a serious danger to Western imperialist interests in this country today, and the two party system has been "Made in America" and is being rammed through by the government clearly acting under imperialist instructions. This is the only reasonable explanation for the dogged determination of the Babangida regime to impose a two party system in the face of the open opposition to it by the overwhelming majority of the people of Nigeria. And this is precisely why all popular, democratic and patriotic political forces in Nigeria must resolutely resist the imposition of the two party system.

Update III:

Anglo — Nigerian Debt Treaty of 1987: DEFINING THE TERMS OF A NEW SLAVERY

Very few Nigerians know that in December 1987, in the name of Queen Elizabeth of the United Kingdom, Sir Geoffrey Howe, the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, tabled before the British Parliament a document, Command 269, under Treaty Series No. 55 (1987) titled "The United Kingdom/Nigeria Debt Agreement No.1 (1986)".

This document is a treaty which binds Nigeria to certain terms and conditions for the repayment of debts which Britain is claiming against it, most of which are still unverified.

The treaty itself was sent to the Ministry of Finance, Chu S.P. Okongwu, by the British High Commissioner in Nigeria, Sir Martin Evans, with a covering letter dated

United Kingdom/Nigeria Debt Agreement No. 1 (1986)' and which shall enter into force on the date of your reply."

With incredible speed, which must have broken all records of official correspondence on such matters, Dr. Chu S.P. Okongwu replied on the same day, accepting all the conditions therein. Wrote Dr. Okongwu: *"I have the honour to confirm that the terms and conditions set out in the Annex to your Note are acceptable to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and that your Note, together with its Annex and this reply shall constitute an Agreement between our two Governments in this matter which shall be known as 'The United Kingdom/Nigeria Debt Agreement No. 1 (1986)' and which shall enter*



Okongwu, Thatcher: On her Majesty's Service.

May 18, 1987. In the letter the High Commissioner specifically requested thus:

" . . . If these terms and conditions are acceptable to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I have the honour to propose that this Note, together with its Annex and your reply to that effect shall constitute an Agreement between the two Governments in this matter which shall be known as 'The

into force today".

What is really shocking about this treaty is that not only does it bind Nigeria, hand and foot, to pay unverified debts of billions of naira from that 18th day of May, 1987 up to the 15th day of November, 1997, but some of its terms violate the laws of Nigeria and even call into question Nigeria's continued existence as a single sovereign entity.

For example, in Section 1 (q) of

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that treaty, which Chu Okongwu committed us to in such a hurry, the Federal Government is made liable for private sector debts supposedly guaranteed by state governments, even though under our laws no state government can guarantee any external debt in any form whatsoever. In the same section, the continued existence of our dear country as a single sovereign entity is called into question by the sinister reference to state governments as "federated states", as if we are already a confederation or on the way to national disintegration. This is what the section provides:

"(q) 'Public Sector Debtor' means the Federal Government of Nigeria, its federated states, any public entity wholly owned by the Federal Republic of Nigeria or one of its federated states, or any private sector body the Debt of which is guaranteed by either the Federal Republic of Nigeria or one of its federated states;"

Specifically sinister, in the context of the transition programme, is the way in which the payment of most of these debts has been re-scheduled to start either from 1st

January, 1990, and to continue for five years to 31st December, 1995; or to commence on 15th November, 1992, and to end on 14th November 1997.



NIGERIA

Treaty Series No. 55 (1987)

Exchange of Notes

between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

constituting the United Kingdom/Nigeria Debt Agreement No. 1 (1986)

Lagos, 18 May 1987

[The Agreement entered into force on 18 May 1987]

The rate of interest was also fixed at 0.5% above the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR), which is more than twice as high as what many Third World countries get.

What is very clear from this development which is hidden from most Nigerians is that this treaty, reminiscent of 19th century treaties signed by the likes of Lugard and Goldie, is actually setting out

and defining the terms of a new form of our enslavement. In the 19th century, many chiefs signed away the birthrights and land of their people with similar speed in exchange for a bottle of gin or some trinkets. They also never allowed their people to know that they signed, and by the time the British traders, missionaries, and soldiers moved in to take over, it was too late.

Clearly the debt question is central to any meaningful transition in Nigeria. Yet, while our dear country is being further manacled by treaties such as these, most of the people who are supposed to be representatives of Nigerians in the Constituent Assembly at Abuja are apparently not bothered about this at all. The least that is expected of them, if they are to make their exercise meaningful in the eyes of Nigerians and the outside world, is to demand to be informed about all such treaties which bind present and future generations of Nigerians to debt bondage. If the British Parliament knows, why not the Constituent Assembly and the people of Nigeria?

ISSUE

THE PROSCRIPTION OF ASUU

On Thursday July 7, 1988, the Minister of Education, Jibril Aminu, looking haggard and nervous, announced in a broadcast over the network service of the Nigerian Television Authority, at about 10 p.m., that the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has been proscribed by the Federal Government. This government sledge-hammer on ASUU came barely two hours after the expiration of the 48-hour ultimatum given to the union by the Education Minister on Tuesday, July 5, at 8 p.m. to call off its strike or face the wrath of the government.

Members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities, together with the Senior Staff Association of Universities, and on some campuses with the junior staff union, NASU, embarked on an indefinite strike on

Friday, July 1, 1988, to back up their demand for the implementation of the Elongated Salary Structure (ESS) in the universities. The new salary structure was announced by President Babangida in his 1988 budget speech. The civil service and other parastatals of government have been on the ESS since February of this year. The armed forces have also received their ESS arrears and joined a new salary structure.

However, the government attempts to justify the proscription, in the name of the interest of the nation. But on this, it cannot convince even its own sycophants. If the government had implemented the new salary structure in the universities like it did to others, there would have been no strike on this matter. Indeed, university staff cannot but lose their patience with

the government after waiting for six long months, when food prices alone quadrupled, without any sign that they will be paid the arrears and the new scale. In retrospect, it is evident that the delay in payment of the ESS to the university workers for over 6 months was a deliberate ploy to entice ASUU into a strike action so as to provide a justification for a long-planned proscription of ASUU.

It is now becoming a tradition of this government to invent excuses in order to interfere in the affairs of trade unions and such organisations, in flagrant violation of established laws and procedures. For example, on February 29, 1988, without any justification, the government dissolved the Nigerian Labour Congress and placed it under an agent of Lonrho, the notorious Anglo-South African conglomerate,

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alleging that there was an election crisis between two "factions", when in fact there was nothing like that.

In the case of the dispute between ASUU and the Federal Government, the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity had taken the case to the Industrial Arbitration Panel (IAP), to adjudicate. The IAP, on Tuesday July 5, 1988, ordered ASUU to call off the strike; it also restrained both the union and the government and directed them to appear before it on Friday, July 8, 1988. The Minister of Education, however, went on television that same day to threaten and intimidate the striking members of ASUU.

THE WORLD BANK PROGRAMME

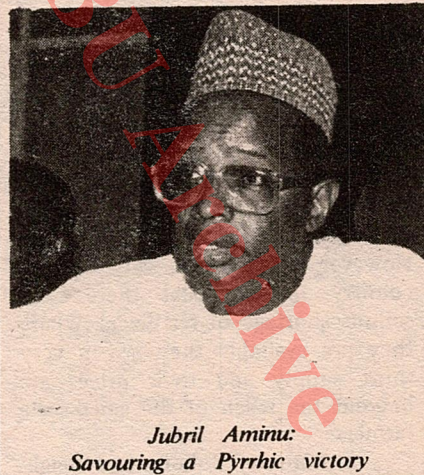
But actually the swift move to proscribe ASUU is part and parcel of the wider effort to stifle dissenting voices against the government's Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), which like a monster has been sucking life out of the overwhelming majority of Nigerians, and wrecking the foundations of the economy. It is also obvious that the government merely used the strike by ASUU to proscribe the union in order to hand over the Nigerian university system to the IMF and World Bank vampires and embark on massive retrenchment to implement the World Bank's programme of "rationalisation" of Nigerian universities, in order to make them much smaller, and largely commercial enterprises like the universities in the United States of America. This programme, which involves the phasing out of most post-graduate programmes in Nigerian universities, also makes it impossible for all the new universities to survive, by its punitive requirements over any form of expansion of students, staff, building and equipment.

This World Bank programme was categorically rejected for Africa at the conference of Vice-chancellors of African universities, held in Harare, Zimbabwe, last year. It was clearly understood at that conference that the IMF and the World Bank, and their masters, hold the view that Africans do not need university education beyond the most limited

and elementary levels. It is this World Bank position, as articulated in its specific programme for Nigeria, which the Federal Government is now trying to impose, starting with the proscription of ASUU on Thursday, July 7, 1988.

JIBRIL AMINU'S ROLE

Those who have followed Jibril Aminu's entire bureaucratic career in the Nigerian university system, from his arrival as a lecturer in the University of Ibadan in 1973-74; to his becoming a senior lecturer, and moving to Lagos as Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC) only one year later, in 1974-75; to his being catapulted to a "professorship" in the College of Medical Sciences in the University of Maiduguri in 1979;



Jibril Aminu:
Savouring a Pyrrhic victory

to his visiting "professorship" at Howard University, College of Medicine, Washington D.C. 1979-80, will not be surprised that the Federal Government, and above it, the World Bank, find in him a ready tool for such imposition of a clearly unacceptable and destructive programme. For Jibril Aminu's disdain and contempt for those he has power over is only exceeded by his sycophancy towards those he is serving.

Jibril Aminu's sycophancy is such that, in spite of his posturing over moral and religious values, when that cretin with a well known record of crimes, Joseph Wayas, was President of the Senate, he, Aminu, presented Wayas to the students and the rest of the convocation of the

University of Maiduguri, on 11 December, 1981, in this way, as:

"Dr. Joseph Wayas, at 40 years of age the President of Senate by election, is the epitome of rapid personal propulsion. Leaders in this country usually bring into office the background of long years of public service or of brilliant military careers. Dr. Joseph Wayas brings a different background, popularity, good character and steady hard work. He proves the point that opportunities are around in this country for those who work for them".

Nauseating though Jibril Aminu's ways are, he is only a tool for the Federal Government and its Western patrons and masters. The smoke should not be confused with the fire. He played the same role in 1976-78 when at the NUC he tried to impose American universities over Nigerian universities, through the notorious linkages scheme. This scheme, which was worked out by the USAID Agency of the American Department of State, through the innocent-sounding, Overseas Liaison Committee of the American Council on Education (OLC), was set out in the report of May 1977, by an OLC team, titled *Future Nigerian-U.S. Linkages in Higher Education*, prepared under USAID contract no. AID/sod C-15.

It was exposed later in 1977 by staff and students of Nigerian universities as a complete sell-out of the Nigerian university system to the United States of America. The Obasanjo regime backed out. But it seems that some of its essentials were only put in a cooler and are now to be imposed through the World Bank. The proscription of ASUU is only the first step in this resumed battle to subjugate Nigerian universities to the United States of America.

BEYOND THE PROSCRIPTION

Determined though the Federal Government is to proscribe ASUU, the serious limitations of the ASUU leadership at the national level, and in several of the branches, made things much easier. These limitations cannot be swept under the carpet using the pretence of fraternity, which this type of leadership seems to have never even heard of.



Jega: A general without an army.

The national leadership of ASUU since 1986 has been characterised by a very narrow support-base among the members of the union in all universities. Not only did this leadership fail to even appreciate this limitation, but it promoted it, and by 1987, in the national executive council election, only the delegates representing about 40% of the total paid-up membership participated. In the name of a clearly bogus militancy and confused by their own empty rhetoric, this national leadership refused to continue building a solid democratic foundation for ASUU, and went for intimidation, blackmail and threats. If a member does not see any sense in their dubious postures and big words, then he is labelled a "government agent". This comes from the same people who run to the C.G.S. Aikhomu and publicly praise him to the skies at the drop of a hat.

What is more, the credibility that ASUU had built was seriously eroded by the way the union's widely articulated commitment to probity and public accountability was betrayed. The whole sordid Iyayi-Ekpoma consultancy contract saga; the Nwala finances probe and what happened to the report, were continued with the failure of the leadership to submit even an Internal Auditors report for 1986-87. The resultant loss in the credibility of the union was not only external, but also internal.

These were worsened by the fact that the government systematically tried to take advantage of every disagreement within ASUU and made some of its media organs, and even those of Abiola and Ibru, available for the ASUU leadership to attack and malign members of the union

who do not agree with it. All these, and many other limitations, should not be swept under the carpet. Like all limitations in life and nature, they can be overcome, once they are recognised and understood.

This means that it is no use going around whining and crying over the proscription of ASUU or taking some fanciful but empty postures for the media. Honest self-criticism is what is required first, and a clear grasp of the nature, capacity

and the economic and political context in which ASUU operates.

With these, ASUU can be rebuilt on a principled, democratic and patriotic foundation with a broad base in the academic community, and as a genuinely integral part of the progressive and popular movement fighting for the total liberation of Nigeria. The proscription is no doubt a set-back, but it also creates an opportunity for an honest self-examination and re-construction on a solid and democratic basis.

SPOTLIGHT

FERTILIZER: NASKO Vs NAFCON

Reports from various parts of the country indicate that rainfall this year in many parts may be more adequate than earlier feared. But adequacy, or even abundance, of rainfall is not by itself an assurance of a good harvest. The fertility of the soil also has to be enhanced through the application of fertilizers. However reports from all over the country indicate that there is a serious shortage of fertilizers. Where they are available they are in very short supply and their prices are beyond the reach of the small-scale farmers.

In Kaduna, Sokoto and neighbouring states, a 50 kg. bag of NPK fertilizer now sells at between N25 and N30 as opposed to the official price of N10!. This very serious situation was recently confirmed by no other authority than the Minister of Agriculture, Major-General Gado Nasko, when, in a statement issued in Abuja and widely carried in the media on Monday 18th July, 1988, he attributed the current fertilizer shortage to middlemen and the National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria (NAFCON). General Nasko said that NAFCON has failed to honour an order for fertilizer already paid for by several state governments. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, according to him, deposited N103 million last year with NAFCON. Instead of supplying

the fertilizer ordered, he said that NAFCON turned around to ask for another payment of N122 million.

But surely the Minister is only passing the buck, and it will come back to him and the government of which he is a leading member.

The NAFCON fertilizer works based at Onne, near Port Harcourt, is a joint-venture project between the Federal Government and M. W. Kellogg of U.S.A. It was built with heavy foreign loans, some of which may never have been used for the project. It is operated with a high level of imports of components and raw materials, besides the gas.

With the sharp devaluation of the naira, it cannot service its foreign debts unless it sells its fertilizer and earns foreign exchange. So, as Chief Olu Falae said recently, it is oriented towards exports to earn foreign exchange.

All this indicates that NAFCON fertilizer is priced not in naira, but in U.S. dollars, even if paid for in its naira equivalent. This central role of earning of foreign exchange by NAFCON must be well known to the Minister, and as Falae points out, it is very much part of the Structural Adjustment Programme, which is the government's basic pillar.

If Nigerian farmers cannot be supplied with fertilizer to use to get good harvests, it is simply too bad. They have to adjust to SAP. There is

SPOTLIGHT

no conflict between General Nasko and General (Manager) NAFCON. The Onne fertilizer is basically for export.

Very soon, most Nigerian farmers may have to go back to our traditional farmyard manure. The Minister's explanations for the

fertilizer shortage are nothing but a smokescreen for SAP.

By Yahaya Abdullahi

MEMORIAL LECTURE: Struggles Of The Talakawa

A packed audience in the banquet hall of the Daula Hotel, Kano, on Sunday, 10th July 1988, in the afternoon, heard some of the gory details of the reign of terror unleashed in the 1950s on the *talakawa* (common people) of the Northern Region of Nigeria by the British colonialists, through their Native Authorities (NAs) and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) henchmen and agents. This was during the 5th Bala Mohammed Memorial Lecture, held to honour the memory of the martyr; Dr. Bala Mohammed, who was assassinated at his house in Kano on Friday, 10th July, 1981.

This public lecture, titled *Gwagwarmayar Talakawan Nijeriya Da Turawan Mulkin Mallaka: 1945 - 60* ("The Struggle of the Common People of Nigeria Against Colonialism: 1945 - 60") was delivered by a veteran of the independence struggle in Nigeria, Malam Lawan Danbazau, one of the leading intellectuals and organisers of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), the radical nationalist party which led the *talakawa* to challenge the British and their NA oligarchy. The Chairman of the lecture was Alhaji Lili Gabari, another seasoned veteran of the NEPU struggles, who was a colleague of Dr. Bala Mohammed when both served as political advisers to the PRP Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Mohammed Abubakar Rimi.

Malam Lawan Danbazau, the author of a number of books on politics and political history, and an Islamic scholar in his own right, brought out in the lecture how the NPC was made a political party by the British overnight, in October 1950, when the growing political strength of the NEPU frightened

them. He mentioned the role of a British colonial officer in the government secretariat in Kaduna, one Mr. Scott. Setting out why the British were determined to crush the NEPU, he gave detailed accounts of some of the atrocities committed by the NAs and the NPC, backed by the British. He emphasised that it was the struggles of the common people like those led by the NEPU and

The audience was filled with enthusiastic youths and also grizzled old veterans of the NEPU struggle, who started to recount their bitter experiences and debunk some of the political myths bandied about in recent years about the independence struggle and the First Republic. Some of these accounts were very vivid, moving, and inspiring. It was agreed at the end of the question



Cross Section of participants at the Bala Memorial Lecture.

others like the General Strike of 1945 and the trade union and mass movement in the early NCNC which forced the British to grant independence to Nigeria. But he pointed out that the British repressed these popular and radical currents of Nigerian nationalism and handed over to their lackeys, in order to continue with the exploitation of Nigeria.

time at the lecture that every effort should be made by all those committed to continuing the struggle of the NEPU to record and write the history of the martyrs of this epoch so that their heroism can be properly understood and can serve as a lesson and as an inspiration in the present and in future battles for the total liberation of Nigeria and Africa.

The Re-assassination Of Walter Rodney

On the 13th of June, 1980, one of the most outstanding historians of Africa and the Caribbean, and a dedicated fighter for the working people, was cold-bloodedly assassinated. The comrades and family of Rodney pursued the assassins who were clearly agents of the government of Guyana, and forced further investigations into the matter. But because of the involvement of the government of Guyana in this heinous crime, the coroner's jury which investigated the matter passed a verdict which amounted to a re-assassination of Walter Rodney. This is what Friends For Jamaica, a Caribbean newsletter of February, 1988, exposed, as published below:

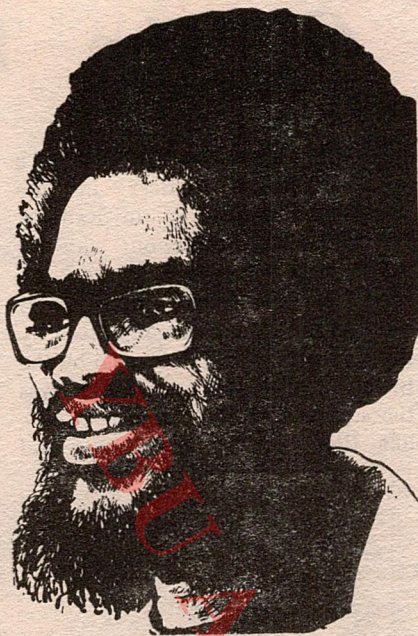
"A coroner's jury, on Feb. 15, found that Dr. Walter Rodney, world-reknowned historian and co-leader of the Working People's Alliance of Guyana, died on June 13, 1980 by accident or mis-adventure. This decision in the two-week-old inquest came hours after the defense team, headed by Senior Counsel Doodnauth Singh, withdrew from the proceedings.

"The defense team, representing the interests of the Rodney family and the WPA, withdrew after Coroner Pratt refused to grant more time for Donald Rodney to appear and after he rejected submissions that the court should facilitate the return of other witnesses from abroad.

"The defence team had repeatedly asked the court for a list of witnesses summoned. This was never furnished by the coroner.

"The decision to hold an inquest was made public in mid-1987. The WPA in October 1987 called on the Regime to fix a date in order to allow for time so that witnesses who are outside of Guyana could attend and to give the family and colleagues of Rodney time to prepare.

"There was no response. Suddenly, on Jan. 28th, the Regime



Walter Rodney: *Matyr of the people*

announced that the inquest would begin on Feb.1, giving the family and the WPA only 72 hours to prepare. None of the main witnesses were properly summoned, nor were any arrangements made to get them to testify.

"Donald Rodney, living in exile in London, had repeatedly indicated his willingness to testify. At the time the inquest ended, he was still making arrangements to travel.

"Gregory Smith, Sgt. of the Guyana Defence Force in June 1980, the man who Donald Rodney claims planted the explosive device on Walter Rodney, who now lives in Cayenne (French Guyana), was not summoned. Smith, who the WPA claims was at that time an agent of the Regime, disappeared on the night of June 13, 1980. It is widely believed that agents of the PNC helped him to escape. Smith's whereabouts became known early in 1987 after Walter's widow, Pat Rodney, located him and pointed the press in his direction.

"In interviews with Guyanese and Caribbean press and radio, Smith spoke of his involvement and said he was willing to testify.

"Over the 7 years since the assassination, no attempt was made to charge Smith for murder and no serious attempt was made to find him. WPA co-leader Eusi Kwayana in repeated attempts tried to bring charges against Smith for murder in the Guyana Courts. The Regime, despite public knowledge of the whereabouts of Smith, refused to move for an extradition order to bring him back to Guyana.

"The other witnesses not summoned were the British forensic specialists brought specially from London to assist in determining the nature of the explosive device.

"The other witnesses not summoned were the British forensic specialists brought specially from London to assist in determining the nature of the explosive device.

"The Working People's Alliance, in a statement soon after the decision, said: 'The inquest has turned out to be a demonstration inquest to get it out of the way and for the record.' The WPA statement further stated that it has verbatim records of proceedings at the inquest, and promised to turn over these records to a competent panel for evaluation. 'The WPA will take care to see that those who compile the (US) State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights are furnished with the full transcripts,' added the WPA in their statement.

"The conduct and arrangements for the Rodney inquest demonstrates that the Hoyte-Green dictatorship will stop at nothing in their quest to look democratic, but at the same time laying the basis to deepen their control over the country and establishing their brand of a "civilian" form of dictatorship.

"It is widely accepted in Guyana that they were out to assassinate Walter Rodney a second time."

STRUGGLES IN THE FRONTLINE

The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale (I)

Between November 1987 and March 1988, a fierce battle with mechanised infantry, heavy artillery, tanks, helicopter gunships and fighter bomber aircraft, involving about 20,000 troops, was fought at the south-eastern Angolan town of Cuito Cuanavale. The outcome of this battle, fought in the Angolan province of Cuando Cubango, which, because of its remoteness, the Portuguese used to call "the end of the earth", had decisively shifted the the balance of forces on the Angola-Namibia battlefield of the frontline in southern Africa. Nothing illustrates this shift in the balance of forces more vividly than the fact that thirteen years ago, when the South African Forces (SADF) invaded Angola, this invasion was first formally admitted when P.W. Botha, then the racists Minister of Defence, states in August, 1975, that South Africa had sent a 30-man patrol into Angola to protect the South Africans working at the Caluenque pumping station of the Ruacana Falls Hydroelectric Scheme. A few weeks ago, on Monday, 27th June, 1988, it was within a few kilometres of this pumping station at Caluenque that South African troops retreating from Cuito Cuanavale clashed with units of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAPLA) and lost twenty-six men, in ground and air combat. This engagement was part of the decisive push southwards by FAPLA, and the Cuban internationalist brigades assisted them in taking effective control of most of the Angolan side of the border with Namibia, a large part of which had been under virtual South African military occupation since 1977.

MEDIA COVER-UP

This decisive advance in the war of liberation in Southern Africa, achieved at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale and the subsequent FAPLA push to the Namibian border, has hardly been reported in the Nigerian print and electronic media. This is in spite of the fact that it was one of the key developments that led to the scuttling of the

Babangida-Moi arrangement, hatched under the direction of Thatcher and Reagan, to legitimise the Unita bandits between October 1987 - January 1988. That is, between General Babangida's visit to Kenya and Mrs. Thatcher's visit to Nigeria. The Battle of Cuito Cuanavale was also just coming to a victorious conclusion when the Nigerian Defence Minister, Lt.-General Domkat Bali, visited the Frontline States in March of this year.

This failure of the Nigerian media to inform the people of Nigeria about this victory, of crucial importance to the future of Africa, is not just because of the intense pre-occupation with domestic economic

them because they demonstrate, in practice, what a people's army, and a people's militia, assisted by the socialist countries, can achieve, even against a vicious, heavily armed and equipped fascist enemy like that of the South African racists. It shows them that even at the level of conventional military combat capability, the future of Africa is going to be socialist, and there is nothing they can do about it, except plan how to escape with their loot to Europe and America and live as "rich wogs", with no self-respect or dignity.

ASCENDANT SOCIALISM

The Nigerian ruling class is



Savimbi: America's Stooge

and political problems. This pre-occupation did not prevent the Nigerian media covering the French elections, the tours of the Pope, the shape of Michael Jackson's nose, or gossip about British princesses.

The virtual blacking-out of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in the Nigerian media is due to the deeply-felt fear and hatred, by the owners and controllers of these media, towards the governments and liberation movements of Southern Africa, which are committed to people's power, socialism and genuine pan-Africanism rooted in these. Victories like those at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale are really frightening for

behaving like a stupid ostrich. They are not prepared to even start coming face-to-face with the hard facts of what is actually taking place in the southern part, and over most of the African continent. These are the hard facts that the forces fighting against Western imperialism, and for national liberation and socialism, are becoming not just psychologically, ideologically and politically, but also militarily, ascendant over most of the continent, except in West and Central Africa, where it is largely French military occupation and overt and covert Anglo-French intervention which is keeping the lid on.

STRUGGLES IN THE FRONTLINE

Even when someone among the Nigerian ruling class with a certain amount of foresight, like General Obasanjo, tries to bring out the crucial developments taking place in Southern Africa, he is virtually blacked out. For example, in an interview with Lindsay Barrett, in *West Africa* of 13th June 1988, Obasanjo pointed out, after a recent visit to Angola, that: "The military situation in Angola in terms of cost to the Angolans and their supporters has been very high, both in terms of life and limb, and in economic terms as well. But the morale of the Angolans is also very high. The Angolan soldiers are improving daily in terms of their organisation as well as in terms of their fighting ability and spirit. The case of Cuito Cuanavale is a case in point. That town has become a symbol of resistance and fighting spirit of the Angolan forces." Obasanjo was completely ignored by the owners and controllers of the Nigerian media, who continued to reproduce Western news agency reports, which of course deliberately obscure the strategic significance of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. Obasanjo had in that interview clearly rejected any suggestion of legitimising the Unita bandits, and approved of the Angolan government's policy of clemency for those bandits who lay down their arms. As he says, the Angolans have successfully done with the FNLA bandits. He said he even met one of the pardoned former FNLA "prime ministers".

But whether the present leaders of Nigeria, or those they are grooming to succeed them, like it or not, the worker-peasant state being built by the MPLA in Angola, and courageously defended by FAPLA, has come to stay. The Angolan revolution, which the great patriot and martyr, Murtala Muhammed, defended against imperialist and racist onslaughts, and paid for it with his life, is irreversible.

SOUTH AFRICAN OCCUPATION

The fact of the matter is that the strategic significance of the Angolan victory at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale cannot be covered up by

the subjective wishes of Reagan, Thatcher, Botha, or of any African reactionary. For, since the invasion of Angola, code-named "Operation Reindeer" in 1977, and particularly since "Operation Smokeshell" of June 1980 and "Operation Protea", launched in August 1981, the South African racists have occupied large parts of the Namibe and Cunene Provinces bordering Namibia, and installed and equipped Unita bandit bases in Cuanda Cubango Province. Their decisive superiority in air and armour over the Angolans in those provinces and even in the air space further north has enabled them to protect Unita bandits and attack and bomb Angolan bases at will. This superiority has also enabled them to protect Unita terrorists, causing large-scale disruption of all activities in many provinces of central Angola.

In a major offensive in August 1983, FAPLA smashed up the main Unita units at the Battle of Congamba in Moxico Province. But the South African air force came in and heavily bombed the Angolan forces, which had to retreat with heavy casualties.

The South African racists followed the victory with a major invasion code-named "Operation Askari" in December 1983. This was meant to decisively finish off the units of SWAPO's Peoples' Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and also rout FAPLA.



Captured South African gun.
(Courtesy of Gramma).

The South Africans found that the Battle of Congamba was not such a decisive victory. FAPLA had re-equipped, and with better training,

anti-aircraft missiles and other advanced weapons they were able to shoot down up to ten South African planes and reduce the racists' armour and artillery superiority. For the first time, the superiority in ground and air weaponry of SADF was being challenged by FAPLA, even though the Angolans took a heavy beating. On 11th January 1984, at a meeting in Moscow with Angolan leaders, the Soviet Union and Cuba promised to strengthen Angolan defences.

FAPLA PREPARES

Political mobilisation and education, professional and technical training, and the expansion of the People's Defence Organisation (OPD) were intensified after the December 1983 setbacks. The size of the army was increased from about 30,000 to 36,000. The airforce was almost doubled to 2,000 men, but instead of Mig-17 and Mig-21 aircraft, it had got by 1985, 141 combat aircraft including 25 Mig-25s and an anti-aircraft defence system made up of 20 SAM-3, 72 SAM-6, 48 SAM-8 and SAM-9 surface-to-air missiles.

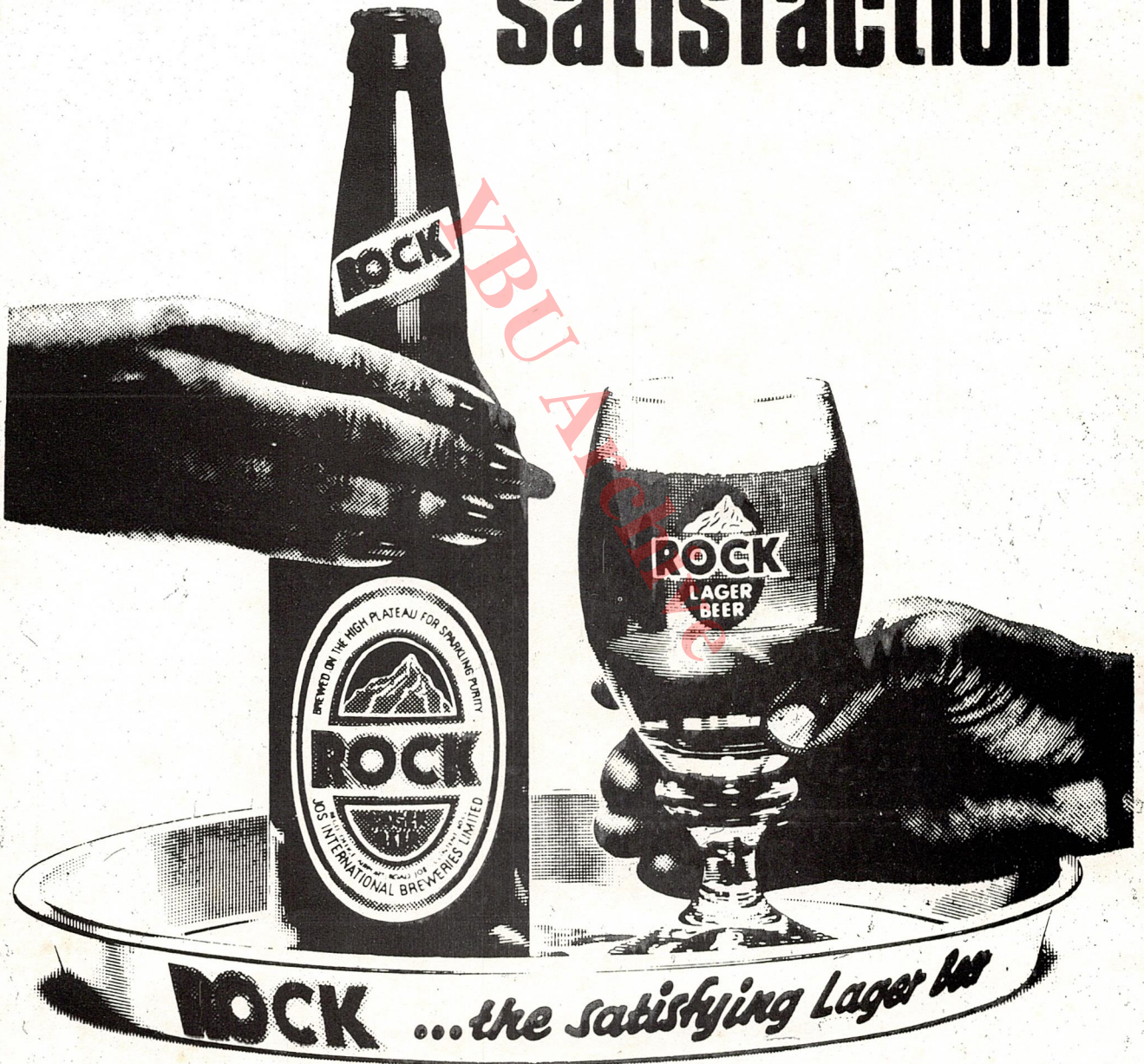
The army got over 500 tanks, 50 BM-21 122 mm rocket launchers and many more howitzers, mortars and anti-tank rockets. The navy had also been built with up to 1,500 officers and men, and fast-attack boats.

The Cuban brigades of about 20,000 troops provided the backbone of the intensified training, together with about 700 Soviet and 500 German Democratic Republic advisers. The Cubans also provided support troops in the central and northern provinces as a guarantee against any South African *blitzkrieg*, coordinated with an attack from Zaire, as had happened in 1975/76.

The military regions created in 1983 to coordinate all political, economic and military affairs were consolidated. Dedicated young officers, with a high level of revolutionary morality and political commitment, professional training, and combat experience, were given commands. Training and discipline were raised at all levels.

TO BE CONTINUED

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Glory to Those Who Fall in Combat!

Some day, in the future,
When the people have defeated the lackeys of imperialism,
and this war has come to an end,
however hardened by a tough and difficult life,
will have their eyes filled with tears,
when they remember their sons and daughters,
their nieces and nephews, those youths
who lived here, next door to each of them,
and heroically, gave their lives that the people might be free,
that conditions might be created where there would be neither
tyranny nor exploitation.

Some day, in the future,
when the people have defeated the lackeys of imperialism,
and this war has come to an end,
the future revolutionaries of tomorrow,
will not mourn the heroes of the people,
they will rather behold their image with respect and admiration.

Soaked in the blood of martyrs,
of those who willingly gave their lives for the people
and to clear the way for the revolution,
the future revolutionaries of tomorrow,
moved by an indomitable spirit,
will crush those who,
frightened by the success of the revolution,
attempt to betray the blood of our heroes.

The future revolutionaries of tomorrow and the people
will build socialism with their own strength,
learning from the generous example of our heroes
and endowed with the highest revolutionary virtues
they will carry the revolution through to and the end.

— *Battle Hymn of FAPLA, Angola's Revolutionary Armed Forces.*