

NIGERIA - GENERAL

1993

John Owen-Davies reports on an unusual entry into politics at a critical time

Industrialist takes on Nigeria's woes

STAR 6/1/93.

INDUSTRIALIST Ernest Shonekan, sworn in on Monday as chairman of Nigeria's new civilian Transitional Council, is viewed widely as an economic realist with ability to tackle formidable woes such as high debt and inflation.

The 27-member council, some of whose members have replaced the outgoing Cabinet, has been mandated to help the ruling military to disengage from politics by August 27.

Shonekan, a 56-year-old former lawyer and administrator with a reputation for delegating, assumes the role of unelected Prime Minister in all but name in Africa's most populous nation.

He has generally supported military President Ibrahim Babangida's harsh IMF-backed structural adjustment programme (SAP), including currency devaluation, to

mend an economy hurt by corruption and lower world oil prices in the early 1980s.

"It is clear that we must build on the foundation which SAP has provided and now focus our new priorities on how to ensure sustained growth and development," Shonekan said recently.

"What I would like to see is a commitment to reducing excessive bureaucracy and spending."

Shonekan, appointed from his post as head of the United African Company (UAC) of Nigeria, has spearheaded a campaign against corruption in business.

It remains to be seen how much overall authority he will have while working under a mainly military National Defence and Security Council, also inaugurated on Monday.

Persistent economic woes have pushed many of Opec-member Ni-

geria's 88.5 million people towards poverty and have been a major factor behind the country's poor political development.

In November, General Babangida delayed for the third time since 1990 a full handover to elected civilians after the process got mired in election fraud.

Shonekan enters mainstream politics at a critical time — in a period of political uncertainty and seven months after some of the worst ethnic and religious unrest seen in Nigeria.

He will have to combat growing cynicism over Babangida's civilian rule programme, which civil rights activists and others view as a sham designed to prolong the army's grip on power.

"Shonekan is a good delegator and listener. He is modest by Nigerian standards and very accessible," a UAC official said.

In a move against rampant corruption in Nigeria, he made managers in UAC — 40 percent owned by the Anglo-Dutch food and consumer products company Unilever — sign a code of ethics.

Political sources say Shonekan might be starting a long political career amid general disillusionment with members of Nigeria's civilian elite who are still vying for political power without appearing to have learned past lessons.

His name has cropped up frequently in recent years as a potential elected leader for Nigeria, whose previous republics in 1960-66 and 1979-83 were toppled in army coups.

Shonekan, a Christian, from southern Lagos, is married and has two sons and three daughters. He attended London University in 1962 — Sapa-Reuter □

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So easy to get ²²⁶ into UK

GARNER THOMSON
reports from London.

BBRITISH police are investigating a massive immigration racket which allows thousands of Nigerians, many of them criminals, to enter and stay in Britain.

So efficiently is the scam organised that dealers in Lagos are openly selling £70 (R329) packs containing fake British documents, including bank statements and employers' references.

And officials here report that many of the "immigrants" attend special "schools" in Nigeria in order to be tutored in the ways of (and the way into) their new country.

A British Sunday newspaper, which organised its own investigation, revealed that it proved possible in Lagos to buy anything from false bank statements to prove solvency to bogus tax certificates to prove job and earnings.

A report in this week's Sunday Express suggests that some of the illegal immigrants embark on bank, social security, car loan and student grant frauds once established in Britain.

According to Scotland Yard, eight Nigerian gangs are established in Britain. They alone are responsible for hundreds of millions of pounds in fraud each year. □

610A7 13/1/93

Nigerian tricksters 226

DESPITE a warning by Foreign Affairs to SA businessmen not to pay advance fees in dealings with Nigerians, some had still been fooled by tricksters, the department said yesterday

The latest scam was a letter purportedly from an auditor of a Nigerian corporation claiming to have access to over-invoicing. It says he wants to transfer \$34m to an SA account, with the recipient assured of 25% commission

Company letterheads and bank account details are asked for, and these are used to draw funds illegally from the SA account

Faint, illegible text and markings on the right edge of the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.

Nigeria ready to lift sanctions

Nigeria could lift economic sanctions against South Africa within the next four months, opening sub-Saharan Africa's second-biggest economy to traders from the southern tip of the continent

So says an international trade adviser from the European-based Trade Access firm, which is holding a South African trade exhibition in Nigeria in June this year

Sources

The trade adviser said yesterday that sources in Nigeria had been assured that sanctions would be lifted before the trade fair which is to be held in Lagos, the commercial capital

"We can't hold the trade fair in Nigeria unless the government ends sanctions against

South Africa and we're pretty sure that the fair is going ahead," he said

Nigeria represents an exciting opportunity for South African exporters because its oil-fired economy is heavily dependent on imports of consumer goods

In addition, he said African countries, including Nigeria, wanted to trade with "their African brothers (South Africa)" as "they feel they've been fleeced by Europe and America"

"The general view, whether it's right or wrong, is that South Africa will be the economic saviour of Africa"

He said Nigeria's estimated 113 million people demanded a wide range of goods, from automobile parts to electrical appliances to soap and toothpaste

and cosmetics

Nigeria's merchandise imports increased by 40 percent from the early 1980s to more than \$5.7 billion US dollars at the beginning of this decade

The country is also a member of the Economic Community of West African States, effectively opening a market of over 200 million people to South African exporters

Privatisation

Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP), although slowing somewhat, grew by more than four percent in 1991

Its Structural Adjustment Programme, initiated in 1986 at the behest of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), includes trade liberalisation, financial deregulation and privatisation

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19/1/93
The problem of securing payment for goods was not a hindrance for South African exporters as letters of credit could be confirmed by European banks which have been facilitating British trade in Nigeria, he said

Nigeria is already Britain's second-largest trading partner on the continent after South Africa

The adviser said it was therefore imperative for exporters to capitalise on the African interest being directed at South Africa

South Africa's advantage over Europe in trading with Africa was its close access to these markets and the consequent competitiveness in freight costs, he said — Sapa

A blast for the Father of Independent Africa

Wolmar 12/3-18/3/93

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A renowned Nigerian author and academic has attacked the corruption plaguing post-colonial Africa — and has been forced to flee his own country. Kole Omotoso spoke to **CHRIS LOUW**

"We would rather misgovern ourselves than be governed properly by others!"

THESE sentiments were voiced by Kwame Nkrumah, first premier of Ghana, itself the first African country to shake off the yoke of colonialism in 1956. As one African country after the other took up the struggle for independence from European rulers during the 1960s, Nkrumah's pronouncements became conventional wisdoms all over the continent.

Now, almost four decades later and with most African countries economically devastated, a respected Nigerian academic and author has made it his task to expose the sayings of the Father of Independent Africa as falsehoods. And he has chosen to launch his controversial attack from South African soil.

To add to the irony Professor Kole Omotoso, author of the highly acclaimed novel *Just Before Dawn*, has also chosen an Afrikaans publishing house to launch the book in which he disavows many of the sacred cows of pan-Africanism. Tafelberg Uitgewers, with its close links to the National Party, has gained the rights to publish Omotoso's novel, provisionally titled *The Season of Migration to the South*.

Omotoso, who has a doctorate in Arabic and Islamic studies and now holds a chair in the English department at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in Cape Town, left Nigeria at the beginning of last year after threats from the military government following the publication of his last book.

He chose South Africa after having met the Afrikaans poet, Breyten Breytenbach, and Idasa's Frederik van Zyl Slabbert at international conferences. "Up to that point I had always believed that it was in human nature to justify oppression whenever it was to your advantage. I still find it amazing that Slabbert could leave parliament and join the extra-parliamentary forces. From the Nigerian perspective it was almost impossible to see that whites could ever join the ranks of those fighting for liberation."

Of his first day in South Africa, he vividly remembers the moment when the plane landed at Jan Smuts airport. Stepping on to the tarmac,



Kole Omotoso ... 'Africans have no right to misgovern themselves'

"I had goosepimples all over my body. But in a strange way everything seemed so normal.

"There was no one to arrest me. Paradoxically, I felt as if I was getting out of jail. Van Zyl came to fetch me. As we were driving to his house and I looked around me, I wondered why was I deprived of all these things for so long?"

His new life in South Africa, he says, cannot only be attributed to the threats that made him leave his home country but also to his revulsion with the pervasive corruption that plagues post-colonial Nigeria. It was his thinly disguised references to present and past Nigerian political figures in *Just Before Dawn* that led to court actions and personal threats from the regime.

His pride in Africa's liberation from the colonial yoke — "an incredible story of human achievement" — is jarred by the social, political and economic failures that accompanied independence. "Africans have achieved their freedom, but they have no right to misgovern themselves," he says with anger. (The chapter dealing with the question of what happened after liberation is significantly headed *Operation Successful, Patient Dead*.)

The ultimate failure of Africa, according to Omotoso, was due to the fact that the political leaders never looked beyond liberation, preferring to isolate themselves from the continent's intellectuals. But everything that went wrong

in Africa was not self-induced. Compounding the problems was the hostility that was always shown by the Western world.

He fears that an African National Congress-led government may not learn the lessons of Africa. The ANC comes in for some severe criticism in *Season of Migration*.

The result of Africa's "right to misrule itself" is equally relentlessly exposed.

Omotoso describes how in Nigeria after independence, basics such as water and electricity could not be taken for granted. "In spite of massive earnings from petroleum products, not one metre of rail was added to what the British left in 1960. Roads hastily constructed and never maintained were soon reclaimed by the ever-anxious tropical creepers and undergrowth. Civil war was followed by the most scandalous waste of resources. By 1983, it was clear that there was no other way for Nigeria to go except down... more than 90 percent of Nigerian trained brains went out of the country to the accusation of lack of patriotism. They obviously did not believe that Africans had the right to misrule themselves, no matter how patriotic they might be."

Omotoso situates the moment of his own intellectual liberation at the point where he saw Nkrumah's dictums "as sham", "as statements to be contested and ultimately rejected" and as "an insult to the ordinary people of African countries".

Trying to find a way out of the dead end, Omotoso sets out to reinterpret the history of the past 30 years, and to put these insights into a new historical context, beginning at the first meetings between blacks and whites on the African continent. Unlike pan-Africanists he does not believe that these contacts can only be seen as one-sided invasions. "There is historical proof that many blacks in fact welcomed the white man and that the initial contacts, before the period of unscrupulous imperialism, were in fact mutually beneficial."

Once an ardent believer in the pan-Africanist ideal, Omotoso now has come to the conclusion that a democratic South Africa in the end may have the best potential to "point the way" for the rest of Africa. "I am here to learn where we went wrong and how we can regain the right path to sanity and meaningful existence."

His belief that South Africa may lead the rest of Africa out of the abyss, does not presuppose an uncritical approach to this country. "The signs of apartheid are still all-pervasive. The lack of decent transport to the townships, the absence of theatres in townships. And the amount of cul de sacs in white suburbs must surely qualify for an entry in the *Guinness Book of Records*."

WORLD NEWS Rivalries mar move to civilian rule

Nigeria faces stern test

Sowetan 22/3/93.

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ABUJA — Nigeria's troubled march towards civilian rule faces a stern test next week when 10 000 delegates from two army-created parties meet to select their presidency flag-bearers for a June poll

Political sources say acrimony among some leading candidates and the re-emergence of sectarian and ethnic rivalries threaten to mar the March 27-29 party conventions

Such tensions and undisguised lust for power in a traditionally winner-take-all society led to army coups ousting the previous 1960-66 and 1979-83 eras of civilian rule

"The onus is now on each of the two parties for peaceful, crisis-free conventions," said a source close to the

■ Poll threatened by acrimony and lust for power:

presidency, which has kept a tight grip on the civil rule programme

Last November President Ibrahim Babangida delayed by eight months to August a planned full handover to civilians and ordered fresh primaries after some of the worst poll fraud ever seen in Africa's most populous nation

It was the third delay since 1990

Babangida, in power since 1985, reiterated on Friday that the military would not "delay a day longer than necessary" its withdrawal from the political scene

"I truly believe he wants to hand over on August 27 but with the way

things are going he may have to sort out the mess again," Sarah Jibril, a hopeful in the welfarist Social Democratic Party, said

A candidate in the right-of-centre National Republican Convention said "A lot of money is being handed out by front-runners, just like the old days. We can't predict what Babangida will do if things go wrong again"

Each party will have about 5 000 voting delegates from all 30 states in multi-ethnic Nigeria, whose development has been hurt by rivalries between its mainly Muslim north and largely Christian south — *Sapa-Reuter*

AFRICA NEWS Teheran's designs in

Nigerian rulers may remove gag on CNN

Sowetan 29/3/93 (226)

■ **Minister described American station as 'cultural invasion':**

LAGOS — The Nigerian government, which last month stopped the showing of CNN (Cable News Network) programmes to the public through the medium of national television, has now agreed to resume the broadcasts

The secretary for information, Mr Uche Chukwumerije, last month expressed concern over what he called "wholesale transmission" of foreign news to Nigeria via satellite, adding that such direct and unedited transmission constituted a "cultural invasion" of Nigerian society

But an official statement late last week quoted Chukwumerije as telling the Austrian High Commissioner, Mr J Werner Druml, that CNN was good for the nation because of its news content

The transmission of foreign programmes on national television, under an agreement with a Nigerian company, be-

gan in February with a nine-hour daily broadcast of CNN programmes to Lagos viewers

In the midst of controversy over the suitability or otherwise of the CNN programmes, transmission of the programmes was suspended a month after it started

Some critics of the government described its action as a conspiracy to deprive the poor, who cannot afford to buy satellite dishes, of watching foreign programmes free of charge

The CNN is expected to resume broadcasts on national television on April 1, sources here said

CNN is also gaining some support in South Africa, especially after the coverage it gave to the Gulf War

It now takes over from the SABC when TV closes for the day -- Sapa

SITTING in his top floor office, Chief Ernest Shonekan, chairman of Nigeria's transitional council, stresses his government's commitment to economic reform and ends with a heartfelt plea "For God's sake, help us to succeed because this is Nigeria's last chance."

The office window offers a panoramic view of the country's new capital, Abuja, a monument to Nigeria's malaise. A grandiose project, half-finished as petrodollars ran out, and boasting two luxury hotels in which civil servants and politicians live at the state's expense, its construction has been notorious for inflated contracts and kickbacks.

Shonekan, who chairs the council installed by President Ibrahim Babangida to govern until the delayed transition from military to civilian rule is completed in August, is promising to provide what the soldiers have conspicuously failed to deliver: sound economic management. In recent weeks, he and senior officials have travelled to London, Washington and Paris pleading for Western aid and debt relief.

Yet the transitional council poses an awkward dilemma for Nigeria's Western creditors. Few observers doubt that Africa's most populous nation, burdened by chronic debt amounting to 113% of GDP last year, has no chance of economic regeneration without debt reduction. A recent IMF report concluded that, without debt relief, Nigeria would face an average \$2bn a year balance of payments gap throughout this decade.

The dismal record of the military government, combined with discouraging statements from the civilian presidential candidates, means Western creditors are extremely wary of pouring good money after bad. They are demanding an agreement with the IMF and a lengthy record of sound financial management before they will consider offering debt relief — conditions that the transitional council cannot meet within its short period in office.

To Shonekan, chairman for many years of the Unilever trading subsid-

Nigeria's interim leaders embark on 'mission impossible'

11/4/93.

EDWARD BALLS and TONY HAWKINS

ary, UAC Nigeria, the West's lack of interest seems dangerous.

Nigeria's leaders find it difficult to understand why the West is reacting coolly to his administration's commitments to restoring fiscal discipline, abolishing the distorting domestic fuel subsidy which could bring in an estimated £1.7bn in extra revenue and wipe out this year's projected £775m budget deficit.

Yet while the council intends to make progress in reforming Nigeria's distorted and deteriorating economy — income per head has fallen from \$1 000 a year in 1980 to a mere \$290 in 1991 — the odds appear firmly stacked against it.

First, the council is hampered by the consequences of rash decisions made before it assumed control three months ago. The escalating cost of the protracted election process, combined with the problems of heavy military spending and profligate public procurement practices, meant the budget deficit grew to 9.8% of GDP last year, of which more than half was the result of unaccounted off-budget spending. The deficit has been financed largely by borrowing from the central bank, fuelling rapid monetary growth and resulting in a sharply higher annual inflation rate of 54% by the end of the year, up from 13% in 1991.

The result is that the indicators of financial performance look bleak, in spite of the council's attempts to bring the budget under control.

Inflation has since crept up to more than 60% annually and is expected to accelerate — possibly even double — this year as the effects of last year's excess spending feed through. The council is also being blamed for the military government's inability to meet its debt obligations. In Paris last week Finance Secretary Chief Dele Olashore was on the receiving end of a sharp rebuke from the Paris Club of official creditors angry at the renewed build-up of an estimated \$3bn-\$4bn in arrears and delayed payments to both the public and private sectors.

Second, and more worrying, is the fact that the transitional council has so far been unable to bring its financial management under control, particularly the increasingly chaotic exchange rate system.

A year ago the central bank sanctioned an 80% devaluation of the official naira exchange rate to close the 'distorting' gap between the official fixed rate and the "parallel" market rate, considered by the IMF to be an important indicator of financial mis-

management. But the budget deficit and rocketing inflation have caused this gap to reopen in recent months, despite the loss of much of the country's foreign exchange reserves, as investors try to flee the currency.

But rather than allow the official rate to fall to the parallel rate the council tried to buck the market. It cancelled foreign exchange auctions and then rationed US dollars at the overvalued official rate, a policy which enriches the banking sector while starving importers of necessary foreign exchange.

To World Bank observers, the lack of a clear and sensible exchange rate policy suggests that the military, not the council, is in control of economic policy. The exchange rate confusion casts doubt on the council's ability to push through politically unpopular tax increases and spending cuts which will be needed if the council is to reach an agreement with the IMF.

The third problem for the council is the proximity of the handover to civilian rule, assuming Nigeria's military president does not shift the goalposts once more. Unless the council acts decisively, it is likely to be written off as a lame-duck administration with which the West dare not do business.

But there is a danger that the combination of rising debt and deep-seat-

ed public antipathy towards Western-inspired structural adjustment programmes will persuade the politicians to risk going it alone, thereby cutting off the option of debt relief. Both presidential candidates oppose the increase in petrol prices, now a precondition for an IMF agreement, and neither has given a clear commitment to the reform policies.

Apparently boxed in from all sides, the council leaders privately wonder whether they were correct to ignore friendly advice and take on the job in the first place. But, brief though their tenure may be, the council may still have time to put several irreversible reforms in place, thereby setting the parameters for the next government.

The council has already appointed a budget monitoring committee of prominent businessmen to ensure some accountability and transparency in public finances, it has started the phased removal of the domestic petroleum subsidy, and it is planning to broaden the tax base by the launch of a modified VAT.

In return, the council would commit itself to a "shadow" reform programme with the IMF, which the incoming administration could use to pave the way for an enhanced structural adjustment facility — a source of concessional finance.

A pledge on debt relief is essential to this strategy. The stick the IMF can shake at the new civilian president is the suspension of the shadow programme if he resorts to extra-budgetary spending to reward supporters. Debt reduction is the carrot which, if staged over the life of the facility, would ease pressure on the balance of payments and release funds for social spending. But that carrot is unlikely to appear before Shonekan hands over in August, however, and his plea for help seems unlikely to go unanswered.

"If the Western creditors withhold support and want us to commit suicide then they will lose, as well as us," warns Olashore, hinting at the turmoil elsewhere in Africa as examples of what might happen in Nigeria. "I hope that they are informed enough to prevent that from happening" — Financial Times

10 years of austerity have taken their toll on one of the continent's giants

Nigeria might sink west Africa (226)

IN THE field of economic mismanagement, Nigeria is in a class of its own. Billions of dollars earned during the 1970s oil boom have been squandered on white elephants and kickbacks. An economic reform plan, introduced by President Ibrahim Babangida in 1986, collapsed within three years. Since then frequent promises to do better have not been kept.

In short, calling for help for Nigeria seems akin to supporting a role for a notorious recidivist. Yet the case for supporting economic reform in Nigeria is stronger today than ever, despite this dismal track record.

Burdened by debts and accelerating inflation, and nearing the end of a flawed transition to civilian rule which encourages the short-term instincts of the presidential candidates in June's elec-

tion, there is a risk that Nigeria will experience a Kenyan-style swing to economic populism or worse.

The oil and gas sector might still flourish, but export receipts would be siphoned abroad as the impoverished hinterland deteriorated further.

The West might feel able to look on with equanimity in the short term. Arrears on the country's \$30 billion (about R90 billion) external debt are mounting, but capital flow is in the creditors' favour. Their advice to Nigeria is straightforward: proceed with the June election, but forget the idea of concessional debt anytime soon.

Yet a longer term perspective demands an urgent search for a fresh approach.

Ten years of deepening austerity have exacted a heavy toll on

Nigeria. Sooner or later, the strains will become intolerable, risking the destabilisation of the entire west African region in the process.

A surge in Muslim extremism, lying not far below the surface in Nigeria, and a rise in emigration to southern Europe are two likely consequences. The UN initiative in Somalia has already cost \$1.5 billion (about R4.5 billion), the cost of restoring order in west Africa would be incalculable.

Creditors must grasp what may be a last opportunity to persuade Nigeria's leaders that economic reform makes sense. Of course, the creditors cannot offer debt relief unless they are convinced that the budget deficit is under control.

The principle of an IMF deal as a pre-condition for relief should remain inviolate. But the IMF

should use this month's visit to Nigeria to draw up a shadow reform programme with the reform-minded transitional council. The elected government can then inherit this programme at the August hand-over.

In return, the Paris Club creditors should pledge that staged debt relief will commence as soon as the budget is under control. Conditions should include external monitoring of the central bank and important ministries to ensure transparent accounting of incoming revenues and spending.

Only then might the West persuade both the military leadership and the new civilian president to put prudence before populism. It may not succeed. But it would be better than simply waiting for Nigeria's disaster to happen — Financial Times News Service □

et chosen by SDP

Kingibe in poll

■ Sacked party boss gets
second chance in Nige-
rian elections:

LAGOS — Nigerian presidential candidate Moshood Abiola has chosen fellow Muslim Baba Gana Kingibe, former ambassador and party boss, as his running mate for the June 12 election, it was said yesterday.

Abiola and Kingibe will represent the welfarist Social Democratic Party in Nigeria's first leadership poll after a decade of military rule. They face Bashir Tofa and Sylvester Ugoh of the right-of-centre National Republican Convention.

Kingibe's selection of an all-Muslim ticket followed weeks of agonising in the factionalised SDP, which has its roots in Nigeria's mainly-Christian south.

"I have decided, in the interest of national unity, peace and harmony, that Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe will be my running mate," Abiola

Kingibe (48) from Borno State in the mainly Muslim north, was sacked by the army as SDP boss along with scores of other officials in both parties after two previous rounds of primaries were aborted amid widespread fraud charges.

The British-educated political scientist denied any wrongdoing. He was narrowly defeated by Abiola (55) for the SDP's presidential nomination in March.

Kingibe has been critical of what he calls the military's "loot and boot mentality" — Sapa-Reuter

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Sowetan 3/5/93

Nigeria limping to democracy

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Nigeria is due to try again to return to civilian rule with the holding of presidential elections in June, reports JOE LATAKOMO of The Star Africa Service.

A FIRE which broke out in the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence in Lagos has strengthened speculation that the long-awaited return to civilian rule in Nigeria may be delayed once more by President Ibrahim Babangida.

The prospects of an election have been further clouded by uncertainty over the running mates for the two presidential candidates, Bashir Tofa and Moshood Abiola, and by the possibility of unrest.

None of the candidates have so far announced who their running mates are. But there could well be unrest if the National Electoral Commission does not approve of the vice-presidential nominations, or if there is a rise in the price of fuel, or if shortages develop.

According to provisions in the electoral regulations, the National Electoral Commission has the power to postpone the poll — scheduled for June 12 — in the event of unrest.

The military has not disclosed the cause of the fire, which destroyed much of the defence headquarters.

But it could have serious implications for the country if they view it as a manifestation of unrest.

The date for civilian rule has already been put off three times since 1990 — the last date

was January this year.

Even at the best of times, democracy has been difficult in Nigeria. Ethnic, regional and religious tensions have all played a part in making Africa's most populous country a nightmare for democracy theorists.

Here, as in much of Africa, the swollen State has turned politics into a zero-sum game, where politicians feel compelled to win at any cost.

Because of the high premium on political power, the competition for control has often been desperate and violent. Politicians, even those committed to the principle of democracy, have over the years been willing to use any means necessary in order to acquire power.

Once in power, the victors then set about distributing the booty. And a major aspect of the spoils is employment in the bureaucracy, where ethnic and factional interests replace technical competence.

Babangida, who has committed himself to a handover this time round, has moved swiftly to remove some of the doubts over his intentions.

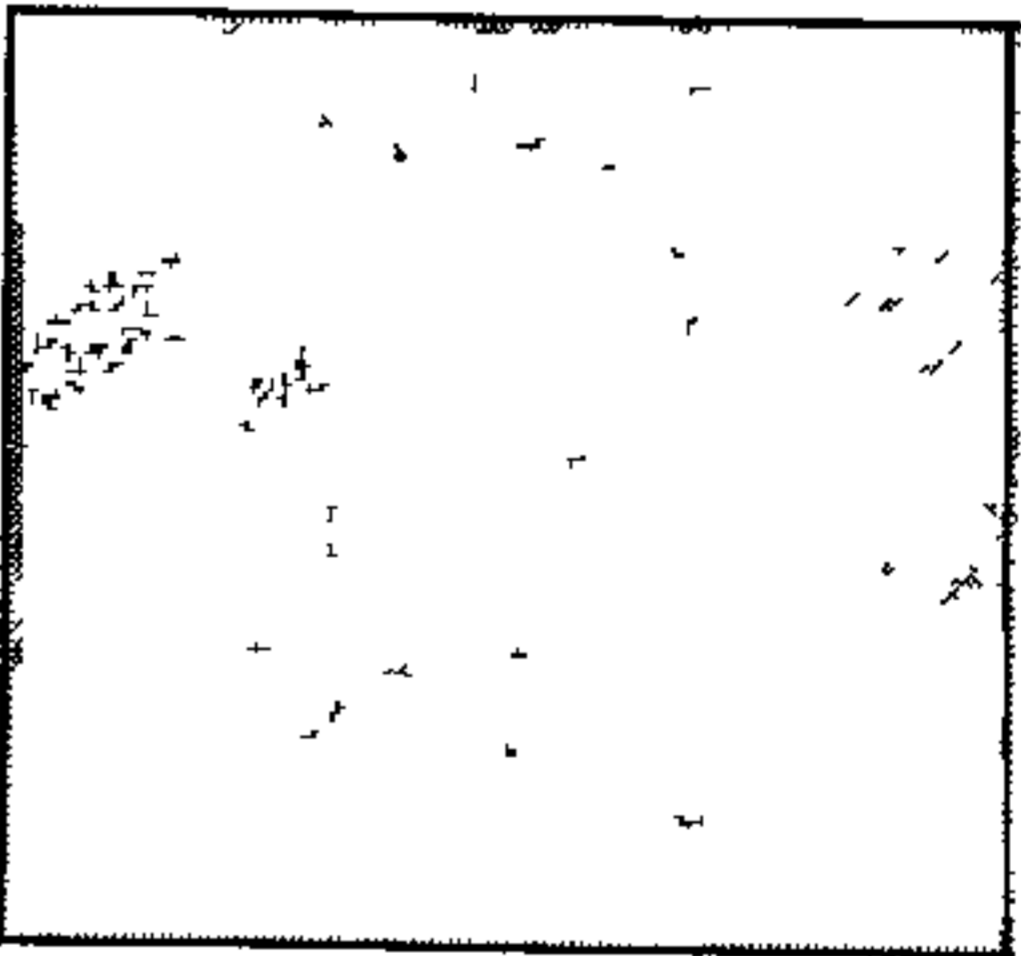
The date for the planned removal of subsidies on fuel has been postponed indefinitely because of fears that fuel price rises could spark off the kind of unrest that would jeopardise

the election.

In doing this, the military government, while ensuring that the election goes on, has shifted the problem to the future. If Nigeria is to meet the conditions demanded by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the new civilian government will have to take the painful decision to increase the fuel price — an act which will cast Babangida as the good guy and the civilian government as the bad boys.

Already there is a groundswell of support for continued military rule, led by Chief Arthur Nzeribe who heads an organisation called Association for a Better Nigeria. The organisation has been demanding that the election be scrapped and has been trying to persuade Babangida to stay in office.

Some Nigerians argue that civilian rule does not necessarily guarantee good government, as was seen when corruption



Babangida... civilian rule?

was rife during the First and Second Republics.

But the government has said in a statement that it "remains committed to ensuring that nothing is done to impede the progress of the transition".

Some former senior officers have warned Babangida against not handing over power. Former defence minister General

Domkat Ball has said "I have never supported any coup but I think that if Babangida does not hand over, he invites a coup for himself".

Babangida seems to have heeded these signals.

There is no doubt that international influences have played a role in persuading Babangida to embark on democratisation. The country's deep indebtedness and the slack oil prices have resulted in Nigeria going the route most Third World countries have taken — seeking relief and aid through World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programmes.

Both these bodies stress the link between economic prosperity and political stability. Whether the presidential election and a return to civilian rule can guarantee such stability remains the challenge for the rulers of the Third Republic of Nigeria. □

Death decree ²⁷⁶⁰

ABUJA: Nigeria's military-led government has passed a decree prescribing the death penalty for sedition. ^{Slimey}

The decree is aimed at quashing secessionist tendencies in Africa's most populous country. ^{9/5/93}

News in brief

Bodies unearthed

POLICE in the Northern Cape have found the bodies of a young woman and her five-month-old baby boy in a shallow grave at Middelputs in the Kuruman district

Police spokesman Captain SM Slingers said yesterday Griet Olyn (22) and her son Jan were from the farm Springbok in the Middelputs district

New trade links

TRADE links between South Africa and Nigeria moved a step closer to being formalised with the arrival in Johannesburg yesterday of a high-powered delegation representing Nigerian business and government interests

Under the auspices of the recently formed Nigerian-Southern Africa Development Consortium, the delegation proposes to increase economic activity between the oil-rich West African state and Southern Africa with South Africa playing an important role in creating a strong African economy

Golden handshakes

MEMBERS of the President's Council, which is to be abolished on June 30, will be compensated according to precedents set at the dissolving of the Senate and the provincial councils,

President FW de Klerk said yesterday *Sawetani 14/5/93*
De Klerk said two considerations valid for the dissolution of the Senate would also apply. ~~(20/1/93)~~

These were that members were prevented from finishing their terms and being elected for another term. Retirement packages would be paid out on June 30 and would not include the five percent salary increase. ~~(20/1/93)~~

Council to make call

CAPE Town householders will be encouraged to run bed-and-breakfast establishments *Sawetani*

The Cape Town City Council says residents will benefit financially, tourism will be enhanced and architectural heritage preserved. A pamphlet says more tourists in Europe stay in bed-and-breakfast and self-catering establishments *14/5/93*

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Omega and Kanoo recently concluded a co-operation agreement Kanoo is one of the largest trading companies in the Gulf

Nigeria seeks closer links

TRADE links between SA and Nigeria moved a step closer to being formalised with the arrival in Johannesburg yesterday of a delegation representing Nigerian business and government interests ~~226~~ (226)

Under the auspices of the recently formed Nigerian Southern Africa Development Consortium (Nisadec), the delegation proposes to increase economic activity between the oil-rich West African state and southern Africa, with SA playing an important role in creating a strong African economy. *BIDOM 14/15/93*

Nisadec, a consortium representing the Nigerian government, central bank and key business interests, is possibly the highest-level delegation to visit SA

Members of the delegation are to meet Finance Minister Derek Keys on Monday in Cape Town as well as Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett. A meeting between the delegation and President F W de Klerk and Foreign Minister Pik Botha has been mooted but not confirmed. Members will have discussions, too, with the ANC — Sapa



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'Treason' of pipeline protesters

W/ mail 21/5 - 27/5/93

By DAVID PALLISTER Lagos

A PROTEST against a new oil pipeline by a small Nigerian tribe has thrust the issue of environmental degradation to the forefront of the Nigerian presidential election campaign

The confrontation, which has led to violence between the tribe and police protecting oil workers, has heightened concern that the elections — already postponed three times in as many years — may not go ahead on June 12

The government of President Ibrahim Babangida has shown extreme sensitivity about the confrontation, issuing a treason decree bearing the death penalty which observers believe is aimed at preventing discussion of the Ogoni tribe's demands. The government has sought to link the tribe's campaign with secessionist ambitions

There have been conflicts between the 500 000-strong Ogoni community of the Niger delta and the oil companies since Shell opened up the first oilfield in 1958. Three years ago an entire village was wiped out by the police

The latest confrontation began at the end of April, when a US firm, Willbros, tried to lay a new pipeline that would take oil from the heart of Ogoni territory to the main port of Bonny. Twelve people were injured when the police opened fire and after several days of stand-off Willbros withdrew

The Ogoni spokesman is Ken Saro-Wiwa, president of the Association of Nigerian Authors. He described the degradation of the area — a mere 150 square miles in one of the most densely populated parts of Africa, which contains eight oilfields, two refineries, a petrochemical works and the flow station for Bonny. All of those pipes are overground

"Our people have no piped water and no electricity. They have been given nothing. Once they were the most docile of people but all of a sudden they woke up. There are five gas flares that burn 24 hours a day. The noise at night is incredible. The air, the land and the water are all polluted"

The Guardian

news in brief

Nurses march to Pretoria

Sowetan 28/5/93

ABOUT 1 200 trainee sisters from five nursing colleges marched on the Union Buildings in Pretoria yesterday to demand the disbandment of the SA Nursing Association and better salaries.

The nurses from Baragwanath, Garankuwa, Bonalesedi, Tshepong and Lebone colleges also rejected the "unilateral rationalisation" of health services by the Transvaal Provincial Administration.

They also demanded that nurses' student representative councils be recognised and the TPA came under fire for increased board and lodging fees.

Students want more funds

Sowetan 28/5/93

ABOUT 50 South African students studying in Nigeria under the Luthuli Memorial Trust are reportedly staging a sit-in at the trust's offices in Lagos to demand an increase in their allowances.

The students have claimed their supervisor has "shunned" them and have criticised the ANC's chief representative in Nigeria for ignoring their plight. A students' representative said the economic situation in Nigeria had "crumbled" with resultant rocketing prices and "we can't cope on our present allowances".

Returnees picket UNHCR

Sowetan 28/5/93

ABOUT 150 returned exiles yesterday besieged the Johannesburg offices of the UN High Commission for Refugees demanding that the organisation pay them their grants.

The returnees, who complained that their families were starving because they had not been given grants amounting to more than R4 000 since their return, vowed they would not leave the offices until their demands were met.

By late yesterday they were still staging a sit-in at the UNHCR offices at the Carlton Centre and vowed not to leave.

New Chinese VW order saves 700 from lay-off

SI Times (Buss)

30/5/93

VOLKSWAGEN SA will supply a further 17 000 left-hand drive Jettas to China, preventing retrenchment of about 700 workers

The order, worth more than R500-million, follows one signed last year for 12 500 second-generation Jettas for FAW-Volkswagen (FAW-VW), a venture between Volkswagen of Germany and the Chinese Government.

The first shipment of this R400-million consignment was made in May last year and 10 000 cars have been

By DON ROBERTSON

delivered. It is expected that deliveries for the new semi-knocked down order will begin next year at a rate of about 1 200 a month.

Trade between China and SA has been in favour of the Chinese. Last year, SA imported goods worth R709-million from China and exported R489-million, most of which was Jettas.

Chairman and managing director Peter Searle says: "We believe exports to be of crucial importance to the

present economic situation in the country. The increased order also protects about 700 jobs at VWSA and many more in the component industry."

Because of the stagnant motor industry, VWSA recently held negotiations with unions about possible forced retrenchment of between 500 and 1 000 workers. A voluntary retrenchment and early retirement programme is still in operation.

Lin Ganwei, president of FAW-Volkswagen, and his

board visited the Uitenhage plant and announced the contract.

He says: "We are pleased to be able to continue our relationship with VWSA and see further opportunities for business as the Chinese economy is developing fast and we require this volume to support us through the start-up phase of our factory in Chang Chung."

The deal will go a long way to restoring VWSA's profitability. In its report for the year to December, Volkswagen AG said VWSA suffered a small loss.

Engen going for a London listing

SI Times (Buss)

30/5/93

ENGEN plans a London Stock Exchange listing, possibly before the yearend, to boost its international expansion

Engen investor relations manager Abbas Gani says the main aims of the listing are to raise the company's international profile and to have structures in place when it needs to raise capital.

"Opportunities knock on our door frequently and we want to have everything in place so that we can take advantage of them quickly."

But the proposed listing is not linked to any specific project or acquisition at this stage, he says.

Engen is believed to be evaluating acquisition options involving oil in West Africa. Its evaluation includes funding its growing exploration in the area.

Engen boss Rob Angel was in London two weeks ago introducing the group to the press, investment analysts and institutions. The group expanded its London office by moving part of its logistics division there a fortnight ago.

Mr Gani says the listing is in line with Engen's wish to be involved in the exploration and production of half of its crude throughput.

By ZILLA EFRAT

"To do this will involve major capital."

One advantage of a London listing is that it could help to overcome the increasing foreign-exchange difficulties that SA companies face when making acquisitions abroad.

Mr Gani says Engen will be listed in London only when the political climate in South Africa is conducive.

He says Gencor's proposed unbundling is regarded favourably by British investors because it will improve the tradeability of Engen shares.

Once Gencor and Genbel release their 70% stake, the number of Engen shares in public hands will jump from 28,2% to 64,6%.

Sanlam is likely to be the largest shareholder with 22%, followed by Rembrandt Group and Old Mutual.

Gencor's unbundling may also result in its selling its 5,8% stake in the Alba and Britannia oilfields in the North Sea because they do not fit in with its core mining business. Engen holds a 2,2% stake in the venture.

Mr Gani says Engen might be interested in buying these interests "if the price is right". It will depend on prospects for crude-oil prices.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Russian gold forecast

RUSSIA lifted its veil of secrecy over gold production and exports, forecasting a steady 1993 production and promising a "balanced and moderate approach" to selling gold on world markets.

Yevgeny Bychkov, chairman of the precious metals committee, told a rare news conference that Russia had produced 146 tons of gold in 1992 and expected to produce the same in 1993.

Exports totalled 98 tons in 1992 and the country, a major producer, had sold 21 tons of gold abroad so far this year.

"I do not think sales of gold will change substantially," Bychkov said. "The government has a balanced and moderate approach to the matter."

Figures for gold production, exports and reserves were for long a closely guarded secret in the Soviet Union.

Eskom to help Cahora Bassa

THE Government has accepted a proposal by Eskom to help finance rehabilitation of the Cahora Bassa hydro-electric scheme in Mozambique, says Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett.

The scheme on the Zambezi River was financed by South Africa, Mozambique and Portugal in 1969, but has worked for only a few weeks.

Zambia buying SA petroleum

ZAMBIA has started importing all its petroleum products from SA after the temporary closure of its only refinery.

Indeni Oil Refinery in Ndola is being reconditioned. Zambia Deputy Energy Minister Colonel Patrick Kafumukache says supplies from SA have already started arriving in Zambia, which intends changing some of its petroleum product suppliers to SA.

Nigeria at SA exhibition

A MAJOR promotional drive is under way in Africa and the Middle East to attract high-level businessmen to South Africa's largest technology show ever, The Africa Initiative.

Nigeria, which still has sanctions against South Africa, is expected to send the largest delegation to this five-day business olympiad to be held at Johannesburg's National Exhibition Centre at the end of August.

SAA heads back to Angola

SAA, in association with Angolan carrier TAAG, will resume weekly flights to Luanda from next Monday. Flights started between Johannesburg and Luanda in April 1992 but were suspended in October due to the unrest in Angola. SAA said the new flights would leave Johannesburg at 9:15am on Mondays arriving in Luanda at 11:50 am.

Racy under investigation

A TRADE AND INDUSTRY inspector has been appointed to investigate the affairs of Racy, which sold its assets to three directors at a discount to net asset value earlier this year. The inspection follows the legal recourse offered disgruntled minority shareholders.

Alfa takes on the biggies

SI Times (Buss)

30/5/93

AS covers were whipped off imported Alfa Romeos in showrooms round the country this week. Brian Taylor, managing director of Alfa Romeo Concessionaires, said: "We are out to nail sales of BMW and Mercedes."

Alfa Romeo has returned with a range of cars not seen in South Africa before.

Mr Taylor says: "If our

By JEREMY WOODS

prices are comparable — and in some cases more competitive — we believe the discerning buyer will prefer a fully imported European-built car to one built here.

Franchises to sell Alfa Romeos are "being snapped up at a frantic rate" both for SA and other African countries.

Nigeria's new capital rises from the bush

By DAVID PALLISTER

FROM afar, on top of one of the granite outcrops that ring the city, it looks like a power station in the bush. But as you get nearer, the gleaming white towers emerge as minarets above the gold-domed marble mosque.

The national mosque is the most prominent building in Abuja, a city 16 years in the making that has only recently begun to function as Nigeria's capital.

With three working sets of traffic lights, a Nigerian novelty, it is one of the largest construction sites in the world.

The most important part of the city lies at the foot of a towering cliff called Aso Rock. Behind a crenellated wall lies the presidential complex.

As an experienced coup maker, Asiwari is nearly a coup victim in Lagos, President

Ibrahim Babangida is acutely aware of security.

Close by is the headquarters of the state security service, and next door is the barracks of the brigade of guards with its first-class housing running up the valley.

Abuja is impressive, with the best communications in Nigeria, but its rise from the bush has been at great cost, not least for the indigenous people who are being pushed off their land.

The German firm of Julius Berger has done much of the construction. The expatriate supervisors live 15 minutes out of town in a self-contained secure compound. It even has a morgue to cope with the regular deaths of local workers on the new road system.

For the 300,000 residents of Abuja, the cost of living is the highest in Nigeria.

Insufficient housing, high rents, power cuts and the national fuel shortage make life as difficult as in Lagos, although it does not have the traffic jams.

The mosque perhaps best reflects the realities of Nigeria. Built with the help of a 10-million naira (about £500,000) grant from the government, it was finished six years ago only because of the organisational unity of the Muslim north — the traditional centre of power.

With the same grant, the ecumenical church is still a tower on an empty plot as the southern Christians squabble.

Many people believe that for these reasons the northern candidate, Bashir Tofa, one of the old breed of politicians ousted by the soldiers in 1983, will be sitting below Aso Rock after next month's election. — The Guardian

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Army hands over poisoned chalice

Guardian/W in W/Mund 11/6-17/6 1993 (226)
David Pallister reports
on the first election in
Nigeria for 10 years

NIGERIA'S sixth military regime since independence in 1960 is preparing to bequeath to the civilians of the Third Republic an exhausted, fractious and impoverished country

The soldiers have promised that this weekend's presidential elections — the first for 10 years — they will return to barracks by August 27, the anniversary of Ibrahim Babangida's palace coup of 1985

The politicians will have a daunting task. The years of relatively benevolent dictatorship, assisted by programmes from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have been an unmitigated economic disaster for most of Nigeria's 88 million people

Some diplomats privately give the new government between six months and two years before it succumbs to the corrective (and mercenary) hand of the military

The present transition to civilian rule, begun by President Babangida in 1986, has been a halting process. The handover date has been postponed three times since 1990. Elections at all levels have been cancelled after allegations of corruption. Former politicians have been banned and unbanned

General Babangida has assured the country, in speeches and newspaper advertising, that his commitment to go is irrevocable. But no one will believe it until they see him leave the Aso Rock presidential compound in the capital, Abuja.

Still, a democratic structure of sorts has evolved, even though heavily manipulated. Rejecting the people's own choice of six contending parties in 1989, the government instead created its own creatures — the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC), supposedly "a little to the left and a little to the right"

The candidates who have emerged are the NRC's Bashir Tofa, a northern Muslim industrialist, banker and oil lifter, and for the SDP Chief Mashood Abiola, a southern Yoruba Muslim, whose wide business interests include the chairmanship of IIT Nigeria.

Fear of another postponement by the military has constrained the parties from campaigning too robustly. But in private, senior officials let the insults fly. "They [the SDP] are nothing but a bunch of warlords," said one NRC man. And referring to the IIT connection, another said "Abiola is a foreign agent." As for Mr Tofa, the SDP elders call him "a nonentity" and because of his financial and personal links with the regime "a stooge of Babangida"

Both men have been storming around the federation of 30 states, promising the moon and denying public allegations of financial impropriety

Chief Abiola's most extravagant promise is to abolish poverty. Mr Tofa has concentrated on a more efficient handling of the country's ailing industrial sector, with the help of private enterprise, and dealing with the crippling national debt. Both have spent millions of naira.

But politics in Nigeria is not just about economic management. With

three main ethnic groups, dozens of increasingly articulate minorities and a big Christian-Muslim divide, any Nigerian leader has to present what will be seen nationally as a balanced ticket.

Other percipient observers detect through the ethnic and religious maze another development. "This is the return of the NPN," they say, referring to the National Party of Nigeria led by Shehu Shagari, ousted as president in a military coup in 1983 amid accusations of corruption and economic mismanagement.

Chief Abiola was a state NPN chairman until 1982, just like the present SDP chairman. Mr Tofa was financial secretary to the NPN, his chairman, Hameed Kusamotu, was legal adviser to Shehu Shagari; and his running mate, Sylvester Ugoh, was President Shagari's minister of science and technology. Mr Kusamotu is quite open about trying again. "We were never given a chance," he said in an interview.

In the early 1980s one senior politician, going to the heart of the matter, remarked "There are only two political parties in Nigeria — the NPN and the army"

Put another way, it has been argued that the army is the military wing of the NPN, and that the Nigerian elite, for all its political and ethnic differences, is in fact a tiny homogeneous group passing the parcel of power and the wealth that flows from it.

Massive public corruption and fraud are indisputable, and a common theme of local newspaper commentators. They generally steer clear, however, of investigating a more sinister side: the huge profits made by people in high positions from the burgeoning cocaine trade

SENIOR officers are routinely transformed into multi-millionaires and the lucky few businessmen who win government contracts through patronage display fabulous wealth

The numbers are staggering. A businessman and senior politician in the NRC says "The problem with this country is that more than 60 per cent of oil produced is disposed of illegally. The big guys in government know about this and because they benefit from the deal, nothing is being done to stop it." Official oil income this year is expected to be \$6.3 billion, 80 per cent of revenue

One European has recently been doing business with the generals. "They are just businessmen in uniform," he said. "They think they can get rich in a month"

This state of affairs, extraordinary even by the standards of more repressive Third World dictatorships, has been allowed to happen because in Nigeria there is no accountability in public finances. An anticipated 2 billion naira surplus in 1992 turned out as a deficit of 43.8 billion

Whoever wins this month — and it will be a close call, with Mr Tofa the marginal front-runner — will have to confront an economy with inflation close to 100 per cent, a collapsing currency, interest rates at 12 per cent a month, a \$29 billion foreign debt, disintegrating public services and education system, and increasing poverty

Nigeria ambles casually towards the polls

Start 11/16/1983

NIGERIA is literally crawling towards its first presidential elections in a decade tomorrow as widespread power cuts and fuel shortages have overshadowed the campaign finales by the two military-approved contestants, millionaire Muslim businessmen Bashir Tofa and Moshood Abiola.

The fuel shortages in Africa's biggest oil producer, due first to an aggressive cow and later to a strike, and the extended power failures, caused by low gas pressure at three plants, effectively shut down the country's commercial centre, Lagos,

and left millions of people stranded or caught up in unprecedented traffic jams.

A work-to-rule this week by staff at the State oil company NNPC over wages and working conditions halted production and caused cars with empty petrol tanks to clog the streets.

It also brought shortages of diesel fuel, which companies and wealthy homeowners use to counter the widespread power cuts. The National Elec-

tricity and Power Plc said it was forced to close three regional power plants and could not say when they would resume normal power supplies.

The NNPC workers suspended their strike on Tuesday.

Temporary fuel shortages are routine in Lagos, and chronic scarcities have gripped northern Nigeria for the past two years. But they have been particularly severe in the run-up to the election, the penulti-

Presidential elections with military-approved candidates have failed to stir enthusiasm among hard-pressed voters. KARL MAIER reports from Lagos.

mate stage of General Ibrahim Babangida's delayed transition to civilian rule, which is now scheduled for August 27, press dubbed "a rampaging cow." When the recovering Nigerians had just recovered at the weekend from fuel shortages sparked by a strike of oil tanker drivers angered by the alleged killing of one of their colleagues by what the local driver appeared on television to confirm he was alive, the strike

quickly ended

"The reason you do not see trouble, protests and demonstrations is because all the people want Babangida just to go," said Femi Adeniji, a Lagos motorist who queued for five hours to buy petrol on Tuesday.

The only military ruler to return power to civilians was General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1979. He warned last month that Nigeria, a country of 80 million people and 250 ethnic

groups, was on the verge of breaking up.

Both presidential candidates, Abiola for the Social Democratic Party and Tofa for the National Republican Convention, have spent most of the campaign pledging to build a promised land of low inflation, high employment and a strong national currency.

Neither Tofa (45) nor Abiola (55) has squarely addressed the

problems of rampant corruption, restoring local and foreign investor confidence in the flagging economy, or how to reduce Nigeria's huge foreign debt.

The two candidates have close links to the military and have promised not to investigate financial mismanagement under the Babangida government. Both have been accused of financial wrongdoings themselves. They have also pledged continued support for Nigeria's 16 000-strong military intervention force in Liberia — The Independent News Service □

AFRICA

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New beat, but it's the same (

w/m and 11/6-17/6/93.

*Nigeria is on the brink of its first
civilian elections in 10 years — but
the military still calls the shots*

By **DAVID PALLISTER**

NIGERIA'S sixth military regime since independence in 1960 is preparing to bequeath to its civilians an exhausted, fractious and impoverished country

The soldiers have promised that after next weekend's presidential elections — the first for 10 years — they will return to barracks by August 27, the anniversary of President Ibrahim Babangida's palace coup of 1985

The politicians will have a daunting task. The years of relatively benevolent dictatorship, assisted by programmes from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have been an unmitigated economic disaster for most of Nigeria's 88-million people. Some diplomats, not all of Western persuasion, privately give the new government between six months and two years.

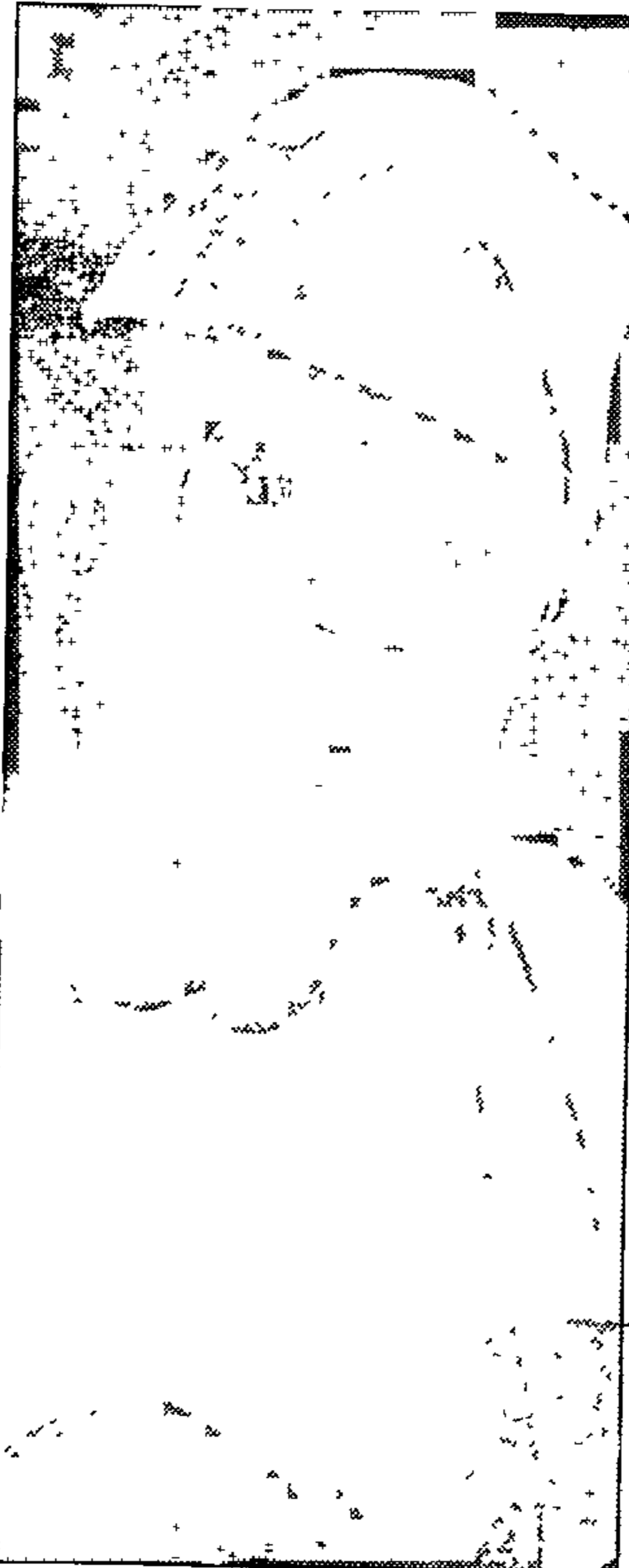
The move to civilian rule, begun by Babangida in 1986, has been a halting process: the handover date has been postponed three times since 1990, elections at all levels have been cancelled after allegations of corruption, former politicians have been banned and unbanned.

Babangida has assured the country, in speeches and newspaper advertising, that his commitment to go is irrevocable. But no one will believe it until they see him leave the Aso Rock presidential compound in the capital, Abuja.

Still, a democratic structure of sorts has evolved, even though heavily manipulated. Rejecting the people's own choice of six contending parties in 1989, the government instead created its own creatures: the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC), supposedly "a little to the left and a little to the right".

The candidates who have emerged are the NRC's Bashir Tofa, a northern Muslim industrialist, banker and oil lifter; and for the SDP Chief Mashood Abiola, a southern Yoruba Muslim, whose wide business interests include the chairmanship of ITT Nigeria.

Abiola has promised to abolish poverty. Tofa has concentrated on a more efficient handling of the country's ailing industrial sector, with the help of private enterprise, and dealing with the crippling national debt.



Marching orders . . . Ibrahim Babangida

But politics in Nigeria is not about economic management as such. With three main ethnic groups, dozens of increasingly articulate minorities and a big Christian-Muslim divide, any Nigerian leader has to present what will be seen nationally as a balanced ticket.

Abiola, who is hoping to break the monopoly of power exercised by the Hausa Fulani axis in the north, got off to a poor start. It was widely held that he should have chosen a southern Christian running mate, preferably one from the important Ibo tribe. Instead, he picked Baba Gana Kinsaha

an articulate and popular ambassador who is also a northern Muslim. The Christians were suspicious, though Abiola made great play about being a man above religion and tribe.

Tofa, on the other hand, covered the main ethnic spread by choosing a Christian Ibo as his vice-president and a Yoruba from the west as party chairman. Although it seemed a perfect combination, there is an increasing recognition among secular and progressive commentators that this quota system has been the bane of Nigerian politics — allowing mediocrity to flourish through patronage.

Other observers detect, through the ethnic and religious maze, another development. "This is the return of the NPN," they say, referring to the National Party of Nigeria led by Shehu Shagari, ousted as president in a military coup in 1983 amid accusations of corruption.

Abiola was a state NPN chairman until 1982, just like the present SDP chairman. Tofa was financial secretary to the NPN, his chairman, Hameed Kusamotu, was legal adviser to Shagari; and his running mate, Sylvester Ugoh, was Shagari's minister of science and technology.

In the early 1980s a senior politician, going to the heart of the matter, remarked: "There are only two political parties in Nigeria: the NPN and the army." It has been argued that the army is the military wing of the NPN and that the Nigerian elite, for all its political and ethnic differences, is in fact a tiny, homogeneous group holding all the power and the wealth that flows from it.

Senior officers are routinely transformed into multi-millionaires and the lucky few businessmen who win government contracts through patronage display fabulous wealth.

The figures are staggering. A businessman and senior politician in the NRC says: "The problem is that more than 60 percent of our oil produced is disposed of illegally. The big guys in government know about this and, because they benefit from the deal, nothing is being done to stop it." Official oil income this year is expected to be \$6.3-billion, 80 percent of revenue.

This state of affairs, extraordinary even by the standards of more repressive Third World dictatorships, has happened because in Nigeria there is no accountability in public finances.

Whoever wins the election will have to confront an economy with inflation close to 100 percent, a collapsing currency, interest rates at 12 percent a month, a \$29-billion foreign debt, disintegrating public services and education system, and rampant poverty. — The Guardian

old drum

Harmony's unheard of in Lagos city (226)

By DAVID PALLISTER ^{with an cut} 11/6-17/6/93

EVERY day the list of calamities grows, making life a surreal battle for survival for the five million long-suffering people of Lagos, a metropolis slowly sinking in its own squalor.

The national electricity power company is dubbed, with wicked Nigerian humour, "no electricity permanently". Whole areas of the city are blacked out every day for 12 hours or more, and one of the few growth industries is the importation of generators.

Typhoid is on the increase and bottled-water sales are booming since polluted water from the Lagos lagoon began seeping into the mains water system a few weeks ago.

Most days the telephone system overloads and collapses for hours at a time. Mobile phones, a new phenomenon for the rich, cost 10 times the annual salary of a young professional.

There are long queues for petrol, but no consistent official explanations for this fuel shortage in an oil-rich country. The World Bank says the four refineries are inefficient, poorly maintained and badly managed.

It is an open secret that the subsidies on petrol encourage smuggling to neighbouring states. At night, tanker drivers divert across the border to Niger, where they make five times the price; and in broad day light women carry jerry cans into Benin.

And then there is the traffic. Whole districts, including the commercial centre, are paralysed much of the day. When the rains flood the streets, frustrations and anger build up. On the unlit Mainland Bridge — the longest in Africa — the body of a dead man lies, oozing blood.

Across the city there are piles of stinking rubbish. On the larger dumps, scavengers with metal tongs and big rucksacks pick their way over the smouldering garbage.

It is little wonder that this nightmare has engendered ever more menacing forms of crime. The government's response, as usual when confronted with intractable problems, has been to set up a task force to investigate.

The police anti-crime squad, meanwhile, is having to deal with armed gangs from Benin who steal half a dozen cars and drive them back in convoys. As a result, shoot-outs on the expressways are routine. — The Guardian

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Tycoon leads in Nigeria election

star 1516193
ABUJA — Publishing tycoon Moshood Abiola of the Social Democratic Party has taken a commanding lead in Nigeria's presidential election after results from almost half the states

He has twice as many votes as rival Bashir Othman. — Sapa-AFP.

Publisher leads Nigerian election

ABUJA — First official results from Nigeria's presidential election showed publishing tycoon Moshood Abiola clearly ahead.

With results from 11 out of the 30 states declared, Abiola had won nine. His opponent in Saturday's election, fellow millionaire Muslim businessman Bashir Tofa, took only two

"We definitely are set for victory. There will be no doubt at all," campaign coordinator Jonathan Zwingina said.

The results were chalked up on a large blackboard yesterday outside the military government's electoral commission headquarters in Abuja, capital of the 30-state federation.

Abiola, from the mainly Christian and Yoruba-dominated west, won the key northern and largely Muslim states of Kaduna and Kano, Tofa's home.

Abiola, 55, also won Ibo-dominated Anambra State, as well as his home state of Lagos. Other victories were in Akwa Ibom, Edo, Kwara, Plateau and the Abuja Federal Capital territory.

Tofa, 45, carried eastern Abia State and the central Kogi for his right-of-centre National Republican Convention (NRC).

Polling figures and vote percentages were not immediately available.

Abiola fought the election under the umbrella of the left-of-centre Social Democratic Party, which like the NRC was created by the military as part of Nigeria's return to civilian rule.

Outgoing president Gen Ibrahim Babangida's military government has ruled Nigeria for the past 10 years. Babangida hands over power to his elected successor on August 27 — Sapa-Reuter.

BIBAY 15/6/93

(226)

Nigerian result on knife-edge

(226)
ARC 16/6/93

GRAHAM LINSOTT
Argus Africa News Service

LAGOS. — The outcome of the Nigerian presidential election was on a knife-edge today, with a High Court order preventing the National Electoral Commission (NEC) announcing the results, which had been expected last night.

The order followed an application by an organisation calling itself the Association for Better Nigeria, which attempted last week to halt Saturday's elections through another court order which was overruled by the NEC.

The new order, by the Chief Justice of Abujah, will last pending the disposal of the earlier application.

Meanwhile, the National Republican Convention (NRC) has called for an annulment of the election, citing widespread rigging and intimidation by the Social Democratic Party, as well as failure by the NEC to communicate that the election would go ahead, in spite of the last-minute court order against it.

It was not clear today what the next move will be, though the Nigerian Press speculates that Professor Humphrey Nwosu, chairman of the NEC, might go ahead and announce the results regardless.

Results released from 14 states before yesterday's crisis showed Chief Moshood Abiola, of the SDP, fairly comfortably ahead of Alhaji Bashir Tofa, of the NRC.

Nigeria on a knife's edge

LAGOS — Nigeria's civil rule programme was in the balance yesterday, ensnared by a court order halting announcement of final presidential poll results

Monday 17/6/93

As tension mounted, the military government's electoral commission and the two political parties called separate crisis meetings

(226)

The deepening political drama since Saturday's election between Moshood Abiola and Bashir Tofa has brought to the surface fears — and hopes — among Nigerians that the army might not relinquish power

Despite a low turnout in many areas, official results from 14 of the 30 states issued on Monday showed Abiola way ahead

His Social Democratic Party (SDP) was ready to celebrate victory as early as Sunday night

Some officials in Tofa's National Republican Convention (NRC) said polling was not "free and fair", sought Abiola's disqualification and demanded a fresh election

The injunction was won by the Association for a Better Nigeria (ABN) which wants Ibrahim Babangida to stay on for a further four years — Sapa-Reuter

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Breaking down old rivalries

Star 17/6/93

226

NIGERIA has embarked on a constitutional experiment — some might call it constitutional transplant surgery — quite as ambitious in its way as the multiparty talks in Kempton Park are trying to achieve in South Africa

The objective is nothing less than to graft on to Africa's most populous and most ethnically and religiously riven country a version of the American constitution. It is, in many respects, a carbon copy.

The religions are Islam and Christianity. The ethnicities are 215. The population is something like 100 million.

And there is a history of a three-way regional competition between north, west and east which led in the late '60s to an attempted secession by the east and a terrible civil war.

Backdrop to the experiment is a failed Westminster-style federation set up at independence in 1960, decades of military rule, and a short-lived attempt, in the '70s, at a return to civilian government.

What chance? Especially when the country is in dire economic trouble, with a deficit running at something like \$30 billion (R95,7 billion)?

It probably depends on the skill of the surgeon.

Military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida seems deliberately to have sliced through the old political cohesions.

He has created 30 states out of the original three regions, each with a strong degree of autonomy.

They held elections last year for state assemblies, and state governors were elected as well.

He created an elected Senate



Although plagued by court challenges and other uncertainties, the Nigerian election is of interest to those trying to construct a new dispensation in South Africa. **GRAHAM LINSOTT** reports from Lagos.

and House of Representatives, just like the United States Congress, though these bodies await the end of military rule before they will be able to legislate.

And last Saturday 39 million registered voters went to the polls to elect a president. It looks like the USA in Africa.

But here's the catch.

People voting in all those elections had to vote either for the National Republican Convention (NRC) or the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

And those parties were established by the military government, which winnowed out the factions of the past.

Here is two-party government, the military said. Take your choice. This is America in Africa. (No place for a Ross Perot.)

Oil-producing Nigeria is a wealthy country with amaz-

ingly wealthy elites. The new system reeks of oligarchy. Bashir Tofa (NRC candidate for president) and Moshood Abiola (SDP candidate) are both wealthy friends of Babangida.

Yet (perhaps the outcome of military rule all these years) no strong groupings with alternative agendas appear to have forced themselves on to the scene. The strongest opposition to the new arrangement seems to have come from a grouping which attempted, through the High Court, to have military rule perpetuated.

The religious dimension of the election has dissipated. Both presidential candidates were Muslims, one with a Christian running mate and the other located in the Christian south, where his electoral support was concentrated.

As a Lagos banker put it to me: "The military government has broken the mould. The religious difference does not matter any more. By creating 30 states, they have destroyed the old regional and ethnic rivalries."

"What is needed now is efficient civilian government so that we can address our economic and social priorities."

The election outcome was uncertain yesterday because of last-minute judicial and political challenges, but if an acceptable outcome was eventually arrived at, Babangida was due to slide into retirement late in August.

The United States Constitution in Africa will be watched with great interest. Not least, one imagines, from Kempton Park, where all kinds of inventive constitutional grafting might be required. □



Awful end . . . a local Santa Tecla, El Salvador resident, Miguel Lopez, sits waiting for rescue workers to find his wife Solla after she was buried beneath a collapsed garbage dump. At least 22 people, mainly women and children living on the site, died in the accident triggered by heavy rains. Picture: AFP

Nigeria tense after poll debacle

226

LAGOS — The suspension of Nigeria's presidential elections yesterday jeopardised the country's troubled transition from military to civilian rule and threatened to spark unrest in the southwest, where the majority Yoruba people voted heavily in favour of the apparent winner, Chief Moshood Abiola

The decision to suspend the elections until further notice, announced by the National Electoral Commission (NEC), came after the National Republican Convention (NRC) — whose candidate, Bashir Tofa, was trailing badly in Saturday's poll

— accused Chief Abiola's Social Democratic Party (SDP) of large-scale vote rigging

A Nigerian court imposed an injunction barring the NEC from publishing any further results. With the results from half of Nigeria's 30 states published on Monday, Chief Abiola (55) was leading Tofa (45) by a wide margin

The election winner was scheduled to be inaugurated on August 27, the day General Ibrahim Babangida had promised to hand over power to an elected civilian president

General Babangida has

Star 17/6/93
delayed the handover three times before, and many observers — including the former head of state, retired General Olusegun Obasanjo — said they feared a fourth postponement was possible

NEC's decision to obey this latest court injunction contrasted sharply with its rejection last week of a High Court ruling ordering it to halt the holding of elections

That order came after a pro-military group, the Association for a Better Nigeria (ABN), brought a case to stop the polls, arguing that civilian politicians were not mature enough at this stage to

rule the country.

The ABN, a shadowy group made up of wealthy businessmen and former politicians, has campaigned for General Babangida's eight-year-old military government to stay on for another four years

The next few days will be critical to maintaining calm, especially in the former capital Lagos and neighbouring states, where Chief Abiola, a flamboyant Yoruba Muslim businessman, is regarded as a saviour — The Independent News Service

●Breaking down old rivalries — Page 17

Graham Linscott reports from Nigeria

Free enterprise and fast dodges

Star 18/6/93

LAGOS is an edge-to-edge street market. It is also a giant dodgem car circuit. This teeming city of five million people, strung across a system of coastal lagoons, is a place of dirt, colour, din, open drains and hustlers. It is the Third World writ large.

Nigeria is the world's fifth-biggest oil producer, but is importing 300 000 barrels of fuel a day.

The reason an explosion at an electricity generating plant temporarily shut off power to three refineries. The close-down was haphazardly done and the refineries have not yet managed to get back into full production.

Lagos runs on diesel. And, to compound the shortage, workers at the diesel bulk supply depot have been on strike.

The reason. One of their number was knocked down and hurt by a cow from the adjacent cattle market. The diesel men are now insisting the cattle dealers be moved from the market they have occupied for 80 years.

Lagos is utterly chaotic, bedlam on wheels. Harare, Gaborone and Umtata are like Knightsbridge by comparison.

The country produces tyres as well as petrol. Its inhabitants try each day to burn up as much of both as they can. The roads are clogged with jostling, weaving traffic — Mercedes-Benzes, battered jalopies, yellow taxis, yellow buses and yellow minibus taxis, passengers hanging on from outside the open doors.

People plan trips across the city carefully, taking into account traffic flow as if consulting a tide table. You just have to go with the stream.

Traffic proceeds by short rushes, seven abreast, across the causeway to Lagos Island, the main business district, the drivers weaving and dodging the whole way. The traffic moves in short rushes because it halts every few hundred metres. Then everyone hoots until the jam clears for a few seconds.

It's not only the drivers who are dodging. Between those seven lanes of traffic, people are out in the road selling things. They are

festooned with leather goods, sunglasses, hurricane lanterns, all kinds of truck. They have loaves of bread for sale, cold drinks, newspapers, magazines.

How does one sell to a moving car? I saw it from close quarters when my driver wanted a street map.

"Eighty naira," said the vendor.

"Forty naira," said the driver, then took off again as the traffic got moving.

"Sixty."

The panting vendor had caught up at the next snarl-up.

"Forty."

The booklet was thrust in at the window. But it was time for another rush.

"Show me my change," demanded the driver as the profusely sweating vendor caught up some 300 m later. Then 40 naira (a naira is worth about 10c) changed hands.

It seemed a hard way to make a living. But it was even harder for the legless beggar, sliding on his hands and bottom between jostling traffic lanes, crying for charity (it would be cruel to say aims). Was this how he lost his legs in the first place?

First World mini-skyscrapers on Lagos Island are hermed round not by shanties but by small, Western-style buildings in a scarcely believable state of dilapidation, every one fronted by a shop of some sort. Street names such as Lawson, Strachan and McCarthy are an improbable echo from the colonial past.

Everywhere the crowds are milling. And everywhere something is for sale — bright African print fabrics, corn on the cob, whisky bottles filled with peanuts. Pavement mechanics change tyres and tinker with engine parts. There is a buzz and a vibrancy to it all. This is free enterprise to gladden the heart of Milton Friedman.

It is pointless to compare Lagos with South African cities. They come from different points on the human compass. To echo every expatriate and every Nigerian I have spoken to, Lagos is something different — The Star Africa Service. □

Nigerian election ends in legal tangle

Star 18/6/93

22b

LAGOS — Two legal rulings threw the Nigerian presidential election process into chaos yesterday as they challenged a previous court order and ordered the publication of the results

In the latest twist in the country's election drama, the Lagos High Court gave the National Electoral Commission (NEC) just 24 hours to publish the results, saying the voters had a right to know them

A similar ruling was made in the High Court in Benin City, southern Nigeria

But on Wednesday, the State-run NEC panel had said it was suspending the presidential election following an injunction issued in the Abuja High Court on Tuesday prohibiting it from announcing the results. All high courts have equal powers

The Abuja court had previously banned the NEC from

holding the elections, a move defied by the NEC which said the court had no power over electoral organisation

Now voters are holding their breath awaiting the NEC's decision on how it will proceed in the face of such contradictory orders, which appear to have come about as a result of the legal system inherited from Nigeria's days as a British colony

It is unclear just what this means for the outcome of the elections designed to restore civilian rule in the country after a decade of military rule

But as the NEC announced the suspension of the elections, military measures were stepped up in the country's major cities, and the liberal Civil Liberties Organisation issued a warning about "apparent manoeuvres by the federal military government and its various agencies to abort the outcome of the election"

Lagos was reported to be calm yesterday, but tension was mounting among the Yoruba people in the south-west who were fearful that their candidate, Moshood Abiola, would be robbed of his victory. Armed patrols were reported to be on the city's streets, as well as in the capitals of the neighbouring states of Ogun and Ondo

A list of the election results published by Abiola's Social Democrat Party (SDP) on Monday gave him a clear win. According to official returns from 14 of the 30 federal states, he had a 2 million vote lead over Bashir Othman Tofa of the centre-right National Republican Convention (NRC)

The NRC has demanded that Saturday's election be declared void and a new one organised, while the SDP called for the resignation of the NEC chairman, Humphrey Nwosu

— Sapa-AFP

Civilian heads for victory in Nigerian polls

Guardian/W in W/mar 18/6-24/6/93 (226)
**David Pallister in London
and Patrick Smith in Lagos**

CHIEF Moshood Abiola, a multi-millionaire Muslim businessman, seemed likely earlier this week to become the first civilian president of Nigeria in 10 years. Provisional results from the weekend's poll gave him a strong lead in 10 of the 13 states where results have been announced.

They showed he had done unexpectedly well in the traditionally conservative north as well as in his home base, the Yoruba-speaking states in the south-west. Seventeen states have yet to declare

Despite an injunction by the National Electoral Commission restricting the publication of results which it has not authenticated, unofficial figures were released by Nigerian and foreign journalists within 36 hours of the end of polling.

There has been relatively little criticism of the conduct of the elections so far. The chairman of the NEC, Humphrey Nwosu, said he expected the elections to be endorsed by local election monitors and the foreign observer groups from Britain, France, Denmark, Canada, India and China.

Chief Abiola, aged 55, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, has

said he will not answer calls or receive visitors at his Lagos residence until the full results are declared. But his campaign co-ordinator, Jonathan Zwingina, said he was happy with the national trend.

Dr Zwingina added that he expected Chief Abiola's presidential rival, Alhaji Bashir Tofa, to "concede defeat sooner rather than later".

Chief Abiola's early lead is seen by political analysts as a significant break with tradition. If elected — and if the military fulfil their pledge to return to barracks on August 27 — he will be the first southerner to hold the presidency in a civilian government since independence in 1960.

All quiet, down on the farm

Guardian/W in W/maul

18/6 - 24/6/93.

226

THE IMPORTANCE of oil hits you the moment you arrive in Lagos. The roads and motorways jammed with masses of vehicles all day long are the most obvious sign.

Thirty years ago Nigeria was a big agricultural country, but its people gradually abandoned their farms and began living only on oil. It is Africa's biggest oil producer with an output of 100 million tonnes a year.

It is planning to reduce its debt in two ways. The first, politically difficult, by raising the price of petrol, the other by increasing its oil reserves and exploiting its big natural gas potential, which is estimated to be 2,600 billion cubic metres

(11th largest in the world). But it wants to share as little as possible in the costs while keeping control of its hydrocarbon resources which are largely concentrated in the Niger delta.

The aim is to increase oil reserves from 20 billion barrels to 25 billion in 1995, and at the same time raise production capacity from 2 million to 2.5 million barrels a day. Several decisions have been taken to this end — tax incentives, opening up the mining areas, and more involvement of local companies. About ten companies, led by Shell, Mobil and Chevron, share about three-quarters of the production. The market is expected to open to 35 companies.

Nigeria's Star 1961/92 election results published

ABUJA — A respected human rights group yesterday released what it said were the banned results of Nigeria's stalled presidential elections, which showed a publishing tycoon winning handsomely over his rival.

The release of the results defied a Wednesday decision by the National Electoral Commission to suppress the outcome of last Saturday's election pending resolution of a lawsuit brought by supporters of the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida.

The lawsuit claimed the balloting was rigged in Britain, which sent most of the foreign observers who monitored the election, said the vote appeared fair. (226)

The Lagos-based Campaign for Democracy said the commission's final tally showed publisher and shipping magnate Moshood K.O. Abiola winning 19 of Nigeria's 30 states to 11 for banker Bashir Othman Tofa.

Official

Abiola also won Abuja, the administrative capital and a separate district, the group said.

The most recent official tallies, from Tuesday, showed Abiola winning 12 states to three for Tofa.

Campaign for Democracy chairman Beko Ransome-Kuti said Abiola also met the criteria that required him to win at least one-third of the vote in at least 20 states. He said Abiola had met the requirement in 28 states.

The results were widely circulated among politicians and rights groups after the electoral commission decided not to release the results of an election meant to lead to Nigeria's first civilian government in a decade.

Some Nigerian news agencies had access to the final results, but the government had banned any publication until the commission released them.

Earlier in the day the editor of an influential newspaper owned by the military government resigned in protest over the failure to announce the country's next president. — Sapa-AP/AFIP

Nigeria poll crisis mounts

By Graham Linscott
Star Africa Service

LAGOS — Nigeria enters its second week of post-election tension today with an increasing clamour for a winner of the presidential elections to be declared and for the process of transition to civilian rule to proceed.

But military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida remains in conclave with his fellow-officers at the new inland capital of Abuja without showing any sign of yielding to pressure for the full election results to be announced.

The closest he has come to pronouncing on the crisis which now grips Africa's largest and potentially wealth-

iest country, after elections which were freer and fairer than any held before, has been to convey a message via the president of the senate that due process of law will prevail.

Although he did say the military government is still committed to handing over to an elected president on August 27, due process of law is already in gridlock with a welter of contradictory orders by various courts.

Diplomatic circles express concern that the legal maze could hold up the transition process indefinitely, creating such constitutional chaos that the military would claim justification for continuing their rule.

A civil rights lawyer says that in terms of the decree promulgating the election,



Babangida . . . under pressure to announce results.

results had to be announced by yesterday, so by now they will be legally void.

Another activist has, meanwhile, himself announced the results and called on the military government to hand over power right away to Chief Moshood Abiola of the Social Democratic Party,

who had seemed comfortably ahead when the results from 14 states had come in and further announcements were halted.

Dr Beko Ransome-Kuti, president of the Campaign for Democracy and the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights, says Chief Abiola won 19 of Nigeria's federal states plus the federal territory.

He won more than a third of the votes in 28 states (needing this minimum in only 10 to secure outright victory). Alhaji Bashir Tofa (National Republican Convention) won 11 states, Dr Ransome-Kuti says.

Such an unofficial tally is possible because results were announced at each polling station immediately after the count. The legal impasse results

from a court order made only days before polling by an Abuja High Court judge, halting the election. It was made on application by an organisation calling itself the Association for Better Nigeria (ABN).

The National Electoral Commission (NEC) disregarded the order, saying the court was not competent to make it.

This week another Abuja High Court judge ordered the NEC to suspend announcing results until the first case was disposed of. The federal attorney-general is proceeding against the NEC for contempt and the NEC is in turn appealing against the original order.

Three state high courts have meanwhile issued orders calling on the NEC to make the results known.

Man willy

Star 21/6/93

(226)



Fraud claimed in Nigerian election

Sowetan 22/6/93. (226)

LAGOS — The Nigerian military authorities boosted police strength in Lagos yesterday as a deadline for a civilian president to be named passed without any announcement.

Police patrols were seen in parts of the city they normally never visit but the situation was reported calm.

The leadership of the centre-left Social Democratic Party, which claims its candidate, Mashood Abiola, was the clear winner of the June 12 election, instructed party followers to maintain complete calm, party sources said.

They did not want Abiola's victory to be compromised by the slightest incident in the streets.

Diplomats expressed fears that unrest could break out after the midnight Sunday deadline passed with no result being

announced. Under a special decree issued in December, the election results were to be published between June 13 and June 20 or declared invalid.

The centre-right National Republican Convention, the other party contesting the poll to elect a civilian president after a decade of military rule, has alleged fraud.

A peaceful demonstration was held on Sunday in the northern state of Kaduna to call for the result to be annulled, state television reported.

Unofficial results gave centre-left SDP candidate Mashood Abiola, from the Yoruba ethnic group in the west, 4.3 million votes, well ahead of the 2.3 million won by his conservative NRC rival, millionaire Moslem businessman Bashir Othman Tofa. — Sapa-AFP.

Ridiculed court says poll is void

Star 22/6/93

226

ABUJA — A federal court yesterday said Nigeria's June 12 presidential elections were void, the latest twist in the country's troubled bid to end military dictatorship.

Chief Justice Dahiru Saleh of the Abuja High Court said the elections were illegal because the National Electoral Commission had ignored a previous ruling ordering that the election not take place.

The court, widely ridiculed in Nigeria, had granted a series of injunctions to a group of supporters of the military dictator, General Ibrahim Babangida. The group alleges that presidential campaigns were rigged and that Babangida must

stay in power.

After the electoral commission ignored the order to scrap the election, the court subsequently ruled that the results be suppressed.

The electoral commission obeyed that order, even though other federal courts have ordered that the results be released. Electoral commission attorney Buhari Bello went to northern Kaduna High Court to file an appeal of the Abuja High Court order.

Moshood KO Abiola, who was leading the balloting when the results were suppressed, urged Nigerians to remain calm and promised he would not launch a "witchhunt" against the military if he is allowed to be-

come president

Critics say Babangida is orchestrating the chaos in order to avoid giving up power, as he promised, on August 27.

"He's just hiding behind the courts. It's pretty obvious that the fellow does not want to go in August," said human rights leader Beko Ransome-Kuti.

He warned his Campaign for Democracy would have to "get the people on to the streets or organise strikes" if there was no resolution soon. Nigeria has remained generally calm, however.

The country has been under military rule for the past decade and for 23 of its 33 years of independence — Sapa-AP

Appeal against order blocking election result

LAGOS — Nigeria's electoral commission yesterday filed a formal appeal against a court order blocking official declaration of the winner of the June 12 presidential elections.

Nigeria has been engulfed in political crisis and uncertainty following the court order, which placed in doubt a plan by the ruling military to hand over to civilians after a decade of rule. *Bay 22/6/93*

The appeal was lodged with the Federal Court of Appeal in Kaduna, court registrar Aliyu Mohammed said. He gave no details.

Mohammed said a date for the appeal against the high court order — issued last Tuesday in favour of the advocates of continued military rule — would probably be set immediately.

The high court in Abuja, the federal capital, issued the order forcing the committee to suspend the announcement of poll results. *(226)*

Unofficial returns then showed southern businessman Moshood Abiola way ahead of his sole rival, northerner Bashir Tofa.

Committee chairman Humphrey Nwosu bowed to the order last Wednesday, an abrupt about turn after he used a military decree to override a similar court ruling to stop the presidential election — the first since the army toppled the republic.

Nwosu said last week the committee would also seek an accelerated hearing at the Abuja court on the substantive petition brought by a shadowy group wanting military President Ibrahim Babangida to stay in power until 1997. — Sapa-Reuter.

Economic links with SA

Nigeria in the offing

2316193

By Graham Linscott
Star News Service

LAGOS — SA and Nigeria could be on the point of forging significant economic links

A Nigerian trade mission was in SA recently and its members speak enthusiastically of the possibility

Officially, of course, no such thing happened. Nigeria observes Organisation of African Unity (OAU) sanctions

As with so many African countries, SA products arrive by devious routes, camouflaged and considerably more expensive than they should be

That could end soon. The Nigerian government is already turning a blind eye to direct contact between its businessmen and their SA counterparts

Business people in Lagos expect that as soon as an interim executive council is in place in SA, sanctions will be lifted

That would normalise relations between the two economic giants of sub-Saharan Africa, with all kinds of potential for mutual benefit

Nigeria has a vast consumer market of something like 100 million people. The big difference between them and the millions in the rest of Africa is that

in Nigeria they are relatively wealthy, thereby making a good market for SA exporters

Many Nigerians could be attracted to SA as tourists. Moneyed Nigerians spend their holidays in Europe or America. They could well be persuaded to head south instead

Nigeria is eager for SA investment and expertise. It has unexploited reserves of iron, tin and bauxite which would be a proposition for SA capital and mining technology

And it's eager for transfer of agricultural expertise

Although they are so different in character and composition

there is a parallel between Nigeria and SA which goes beyond their economic clout. Both are transforming their societies to allow the free market to unlock their potential

A year ago Nigeria dropped foreign exchange controls and was rewarded by an inflow of funds. Now market forces are given free rein

SA clings to exchange controls and still has to manage an immensely more difficult political transition

If it is any consolation, Nigerians are sympathetic. And they still want to do business

Talks on Nigerian election dilemma

226
Star 23/6/93

LAGOS — Anxious Nigerians are likely to hear from their military rulers today whether a troubled programme for a return to civilian rule has finally come unstuck

Military President Ibrahim Babangida has called a meeting of his decision-making National Defence and Security Council (NDSC) for crucial talks on a crisis which has been deepening since the first presidential elections in a decade were held on June 12

An official statement said the talks in Abuja today were to "review the whole situation and take a decision in the light of conflicting signals from various courts".

At the same time, the Federal Court of Appeal in Kaduna is set to hear an appeal by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) against a lower court ruling that halted the release of final poll results a week ago

NEC's decision to obey the high court in Abuja, the capital, triggered a crisis which political sources say could lead to a new outbreak of the north-south rivalry that helped bring down previous republics in army coups in 1966 and 1983

General Babangida's plan to end military rule on August 27 has also been ensnared in a tangle of other litigation that legal experts say could take more than a month to unravel

"I am optimistic that a statement (after the NDSC meeting) will defuse the whole situation," said a source close to the president, adding Babangida would not stay on beyond August

The meeting of the 14-member NDSC, including Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu, service chiefs and some members of a civilian transitional council, is being held amid public scepticism over Babangida's three-times delayed civil rule programme — Sapa-Reuter

Military govt annuls Nigerian election

BIDAY 24/6/93

ABUJA — Nigeria's military government yesterday cancelled the presidential election held on June 12, as well as legislation governing the transition to civilian rule by August.

The government also said it was "suspending" the state-appointed national electoral commission (226)

An official communique said a 1992 decree governing the transition to civilian rule and a 1993 decree on the presidential election had been "abrogated"

The move confirmed fears expressed by the US and Britain that hardline elements in the military were having second thoughts about fulfilling their pledge to hand over power to a civilian government.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said yesterday he deplored the annulment and said Britain would be reassessing relations with its former colony.

Moshood Abiola, the candidate for the centre-left Social Democratic Party (SDP) which claimed to have won the June 12 election, said he was shocked at the government move.

According to the statement issued by the Nigerian government, the decision to cancel the election was taken to end confusion stemming from legal disputes concerning

results of the election which was to end the regime of Gen Ibrahim Babangida.

"In view of the spate of litigation pending in various courts, the federal military government is compelled to take appropriate steps in order to rescue the judiciary from intra-wrangling," the communique said. It added that the election results were scrapped to "end this ridiculous charade which may culminate in judicial anarchy"

The national electoral commission has been confronted with contradictory court rulings on releasing the outcome of the election, which the SDP claimed to have won according to results it published in violation of the electoral law.

The rival conservative National Republican Convention (NRC) has disputed the SDP claim, complaining of widespread fraud at polling stations and calling for legal action against Abiola, who said in a statement on Monday that "for the first time in the history of Nigeria, a truly national president has emerged".

The SDP said Abiola took 8-million votes to 5.8-million for the conservative NRC's Bashir Othman Tofa.

Under a special decree, the results should have been published by June 20 in order to make the election valid. — Sapa-AFP-Reuter.

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Under a special decree, the results should have been published by June 20 in order to make the election valid — Sapa-AFP-Reuter.

Nigeria plunged into new crisis

Election annulled

Sawalem 24/6/93. (226)

LAGOS — Nigeria's military government yesterday annulled the June 12 presidential election, suspended the National Electoral Commission and repealed decrees on the transition to civilian rule programme, state radio said

The announcement was made in a special broadcast yesterday morning

An official at the presidency in the capital Abuja said "The election has been annulled"

The government statement on the radio said the decision was to save the judiciary from the internal wranglings that followed the election

"Government will not fold its arms or

despair in the face of this unfortunate and unwarranted situation which is fast eroding the esteem, honour and confidence with which the public hold the nation's judiciary," the statement said

Africa's most populous country was plunged into crisis last week after an Abuja high court blocked the release of poll results when candidate Moshood Abiola had a clear lead over his sole rival, Bashir Tofa

Abiola and Tofa, both millionaire Muslim businessmen, emerged from fresh primaries held by the two army-created parties in March — *Sapa-Reuter*

US may drop R70-m aid after Nigerian fiasco (226)

WASHINGTON — The US State Department has expressed outrage over Nigeria's decision to cancel the results of presidential elections and said it may suspend the \$22,8 million (about R70 million) aid programme for that country

"The failure on the part of the military regime to respect the will of the Nigerian people and transition to democracy will have serious implications for US-Nigerian relations," said department spokesman Mike McCurry

He said all aspects of US relations with Nigeria, including the aid programme, are being

reviewed. ARG 24/6/93
Deploring the Nigerian action, Mr McCurry said independent Nigerian monitoring groups and outside observers had said the June 12 election was orderly, fair and free from any serious irregularities

Nigerians hear fate today

226

LAGOS — Nigerians will be told by their military ruler today whether or not civilian rule is within their grasp after nearly two weeks of crisis and upheaval.

General Ibrahim Babangida is due to address the nation after briefing senior officers on "far-reaching decisions" taken by his top military-civilian council.

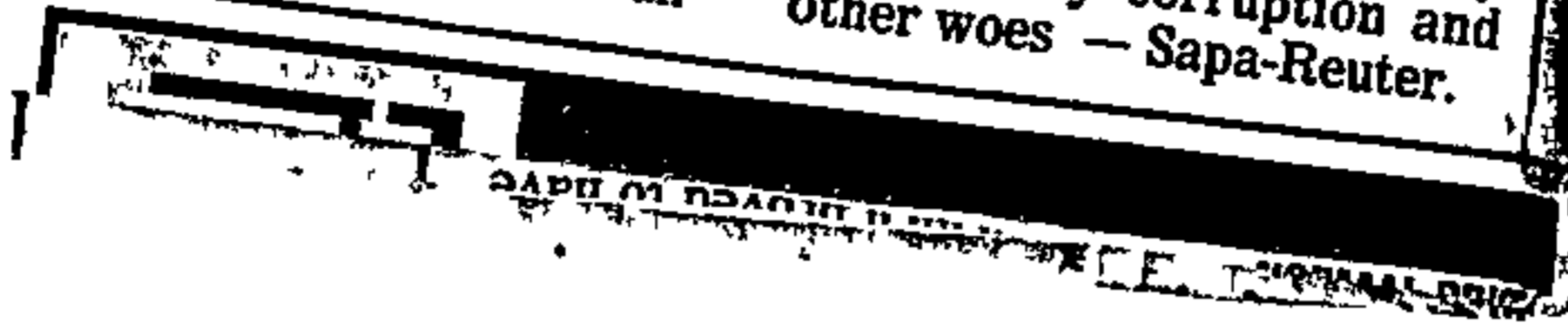
The federal military government yesterday lashed out at both the United States and Britain, saying it had un-

earthed a plot by them to set Nigerians against each other and warned it would take "necessary action" against any country or party that was guilty of "interference in our internal affairs".

Both countries had reacted sharply to Wednesday's scrapping of the June 12 poll.

Both are key trading partners of Nigeria, which wants relief on debts totalling about R92 billion to help mend an oil-fuelled economy battered by corruption and other woes — Sapa-Reuter.

5/20/93



WORLD

UK sends Nigeria to Coventry for annulling election

LONDON — Britain yesterday imposed limited sanctions, including a bar on military training, on Nigeria's military government for annulling its presidential elections, but stopped short of freezing all new aid.

Instead, the foreign office, urging Nigeria to reverse its decision to cancel the June 12 polls, said "All new aid to Nigeria will be reviewed on an individual basis."

The foreign office said in a statement that British military advisers would be withdrawn from Nigeria and no new military training courses would be provided for members of the Nigerian armed forces in Britain. Visas for Nigerian military personnel would also be suspended.

The statement added that the British government was consulting the US and its EC partners over possible further measures.

A foreign office spokesman would not elaborate.

However, it was also reported yesterday from Abuja that Nigeria's military dictator, bitterly criticised for annulling the presidential elections, was considering a new plan for moving the nation to democracy, a high-ranking government official said yesterday.

The official said Gen Ibrahim Babangida was considering turning power over to another military ruler, what would be a new transition to civilian rule.

The new ruler would share power with the civilian parliament elected last year. The new transition plan would open up the political process to all political parties, the official said.

The promise of an open political process may have been prompted by the widespread criticism of the general's decision on Wednesday to annul the presidential elections. The US has threatened to suspend aid to the cash-strapped nation.

The dictator's annulment of the election was the fourth time in three years he had thrown out a timetable for moving Africa's most populous nation to democracy. He had been widely accused of finding new excuses to maintain the military's hold on power — Sapa-AP.

NEWS FEATURE Nigerian polls annulled — why? ● SACP views on foreign investment

An election disaster for Nigeria

Sowetan 25/6/93

■ SIMPLY INADEQUATE The US-style

voting ignored realities of region:

The fruits of office in Nigeria are immense. All kinds of contracts (and the kickbacks resulting) are in the power of military officers

General Ibrahim Babangida himself might well have had every intention of stepping down but the officers around him might not. In which case perhaps it had to be shown that civilian democracy is not for Nigeria

The civilians were unable to run an election properly, let alone govern

A theory that holds no water at all is that the electoral process ran into the morass of court orders and counter-orders — which became the justification for annulment — of its own accord or because Nigerians are excessively litigious

Somebody powerful decided the elections should not be held and arranged for the Association for Better Nigeria to challenge the entire process in the Abuja High Court

And Abuja, the federal territory, is where the military government is located. Given the Byzantine character of Nigerian politics, it is also quite possible that both theories are correct

That the military became dissatisfied with the personalities produced by the presidential screening process, feared disorder and felt like staying on the gravy train anyway

But who could go through a process of state and national elections, presidential primaries and presidential elections — foreign observers invited in — with the intention all along of cancelling the thing?

General Babangida might. He is apparently not displeased at being described as a political Maradona, the equivalent of the Argentinian footballer who dribbles so elaborately and deceptively and is not above deliberately hand-balling into the goal (nor boasting about it afterwards)

It could be that the world has been treated to an exquisite exercise in Maradonism

By Graham Linscott
Argus Africa News Service

22b

LAGOS — There are two broad theories as to why Nigeria's military government should have chosen to undermine — then annul — the country's elections to choose a civilian president

The more charitable is that there came a dawning realisation that the constitution and party system copied so assiduously from the United States — even the party names were more or less cribbed — was simply inadequate. It did not correspond to the regional, ethnic and religious realities of Nigeria, the realities of power

It is possible that the complex and little understood process of American-style presidential primaries produced candidates other than those whom the military government had hoped for. Whoever won between Chief Moshood Abiola (Social Democratic Party) and Alhaji Bashir Tofa (National Republican Convention) might have been perceived to be men lacking the standing to hold together Nigeria's diversity

Powerful group

Observers here note that although both men are Muslims and Tofa is a northerner, he is not a Hausa-Fulani. The powerful Hausa-Fulani ethnic group has traditionally dominated the Muslim North, yet appear to be under-represented in Tofa's NRC

That might explain the paucity of votes drawn by Tofa in a region which should have been his stronghold

And observers here wonder whether a presidency based on the largely Christian South rather than the North — which has traditionally dominated — could have held Nigeria together

So much for the charitable theory. The uncharitable is that the military had no intention of surrendering power on August 27

P.T.O

QUESTIONS ACCEPTED
IDENTIFICATION

Nigeria set to honour date for civilian rule

LAGOS — Nigerian military leader General Ibrahim Babangida said yesterday he would respect the August 27 date fixed for a transition to civilian rule

General Babangida is set to make an address to the nation today in this regard

226 ARG 26/6/93
Britain, in the meantime, has said it would "keep its options open" regarding punitive measures against Africa's most populous country following the Nigerian government's decision to annul Wednesday's elections. British reaction is pending General Babangida's speech today.

The Foreign Office imposed limited military sanctions on Nigeria on Thursday in response to the annulment of the June 12 elections and urged Nigeria's military government to reverse its decision and resume the transition to democratic rule. Nigeria has been seeking relief from Western creditors on debts to help mend an oil-fuelled economy battered by corruption and other woes.

Britain is Nigeria's largest foreign investor and second-largest bilateral aid donor. — Sapa-Reuter-AFP

Nigeria bracing for civil unrest

Star 28/6/93

226

LAGOS — Political uncertainties gripped Nigeria after the military government's announcement of fresh presidential elections to replace an abandoned poll intended to restore the country to civilian rule.

Many people in Africa's most populous nation feared that civil disturbances could erupt after military President Ibrahim Babangida's statement outlining new electoral rules which effectively barred the two candidates in the June 12 vote.

Babangida, in power since 1985, said his administration cancelled the poll after receiving reports of major malpractices, including bribing of electoral officials.

Millionaire southern businessman Moshood Abiola (55), was well ahead of his rival, northerner Bashir Tofa (45), before official results dried up

and the election was cancelled.

Many local and foreign observers said the poll, the first in a decade in a country plagued by electoral violence and by ethnic and religious disputes, was the cleanest and freest since independence from Britain in 1960.

The military has ruled Nigeria for most of its independence years and Babangida said it would have been disastrous if the results of the June 12 poll, a third attempt at establishing a civilian democracy, had been allowed to stand.

State television quoted a government statement saying that Babangida had invited civilian governors of Nigeria's 30 states to a meeting tomorrow.

Babangida, reiterating his determination to hand over power to civilians by August 27, said he would declare a state of emergency if there were any disturbances.

He added the new poll would be held under stricter conditions. These conditions, including a minimum age of 50 and membership of one of the two military-created parties for at least a year, would rule out both Abiola and Tofa.

But Babangida said politicians previously banned from taking part in the civilian rule process would be eligible.

This potentially reopened the contest to 23 candidates, including members of the 1960-66 and 1979-83 republics ousted by the army, who were banned after two rounds of fraudulent primaries last year.

Abiola, saying that full undeclared official results gave him an overwhelming victory, declared himself president-elect last Thursday. He accused a clique in the military of trying to cling to power and called on Nigerians to defend their democratic rights — Sapa-Reuter.

WORLD



Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Colin Powell briefs the media on the Iraqi attack. Picture AP

Babangida calls fresh election

ABUJA — Nigerian military ruler Ibrahim Babangida said on Saturday the country would hold fresh presidential elections to replace the elections his government annulled on Wednesday.

"The National Defence and Security Council has decided that by end of July 1993, the two political parties, under the supervision of a recomposed National Electoral Commission, will put in place the necessary process for the emergence of two presidential candidates," he said.

Babangida, who said on Friday he was determined to hand over power to an elected president by August 27, set new restrictions on who can stand to be president.

Candidates must be at least 50 years old, believe in the corporate existence of Nigeria and must have joined one of the two parties at least a year before the election.

Another condition is that candidates must "possess records of personal, corporate and business interest which do not

conflict with the national interests.

Last Wednesday the government scrapped the June 12 presidential contest between Moshood Abiola, 55, of the Social Democratic Party and Bashir Tofa, 45, of the National Republican Convention.

Under the new rules Tofa cannot run again because of his age.

Abiola was well ahead of Tofa before the authorities stopped releasing results.

Yesterday a newspaper owned by Abiola said it rejected any fresh polls, but it was not clear whether the editorial in the Sunday Concord was written before or after Babangida called for new elections.

Abiola has claimed victory over Tofa based on returns from 14 of Nigeria's 30 states before a June 15 court order stopped the flow of results.

A group seeking extended military rule had won the order to stop the announcement of a winner — Sapa-Reuter.

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Babangida just blew it

Star 30/6/93 (225)
Everything was going right, then Babangida and his military cronies blew the whistle on democracy and put up the West's back, reports NICHOLAS KOTCH from Abidjan.

NIGERIA'S main foreign policy goal and the image it seeks to project as a defender of black interests were both in bad shape this weekend.

The military regime's refusal to accept the result of the June 12 presidential election may do enormous damage to the country's international relations, foreign and African analysts fear.

While African leaders kept an embarrassed silence, Nigeria's dominant allies and partners, the United States and Britain, expressed their shock and anger in public statements.

Officials of the two countries said their governments felt betrayed by General Ibrahim Babangida, the military president, who still insists he will leave office as planned on August 27.

"We trusted him," a Western diplomat said, trying to measure the likely economic and diplomatic fallout from Babangida's intervention.

It stopped millionaire Moshood Abiola from being declared the winner of an election which foreign and Nigerian observers said was the fairest in the country's history.

Analysts said Nigeria's long-standing ambition to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council now looked absurd.

"Forget it. That is out of the window," a Western ambassador serving in West Africa said.

Nigeria's UN campaign, the centre-piece of its foreign policy, was already uphill work.

But it was making progress and the case for an African representative could have been overwhelming if, as may happen, the Security Council's permanent membership changed.

Its population of nearly 90 million makes Nigeria uniquely qualified to defend the interests of blacks whether in the United States, Europe, the Caribbean or Africa.

"They have certainly tarnished that image," a US diplomat said.

The outside world, when it thinks about Nigeria at all, often focuses on violence, corruption and drug smuggling.

This image reflects only part of the truth about a dynamic and entrepreneurial society with few of the post-colonial hangups that still cripple elites in many African countries.

Only Nigerian journalists could write, as they often do, about "our great virile nation".

Nigerians claims to leadership have depended on Babangida's avowed commitment since 1985 to return to civilian rule.

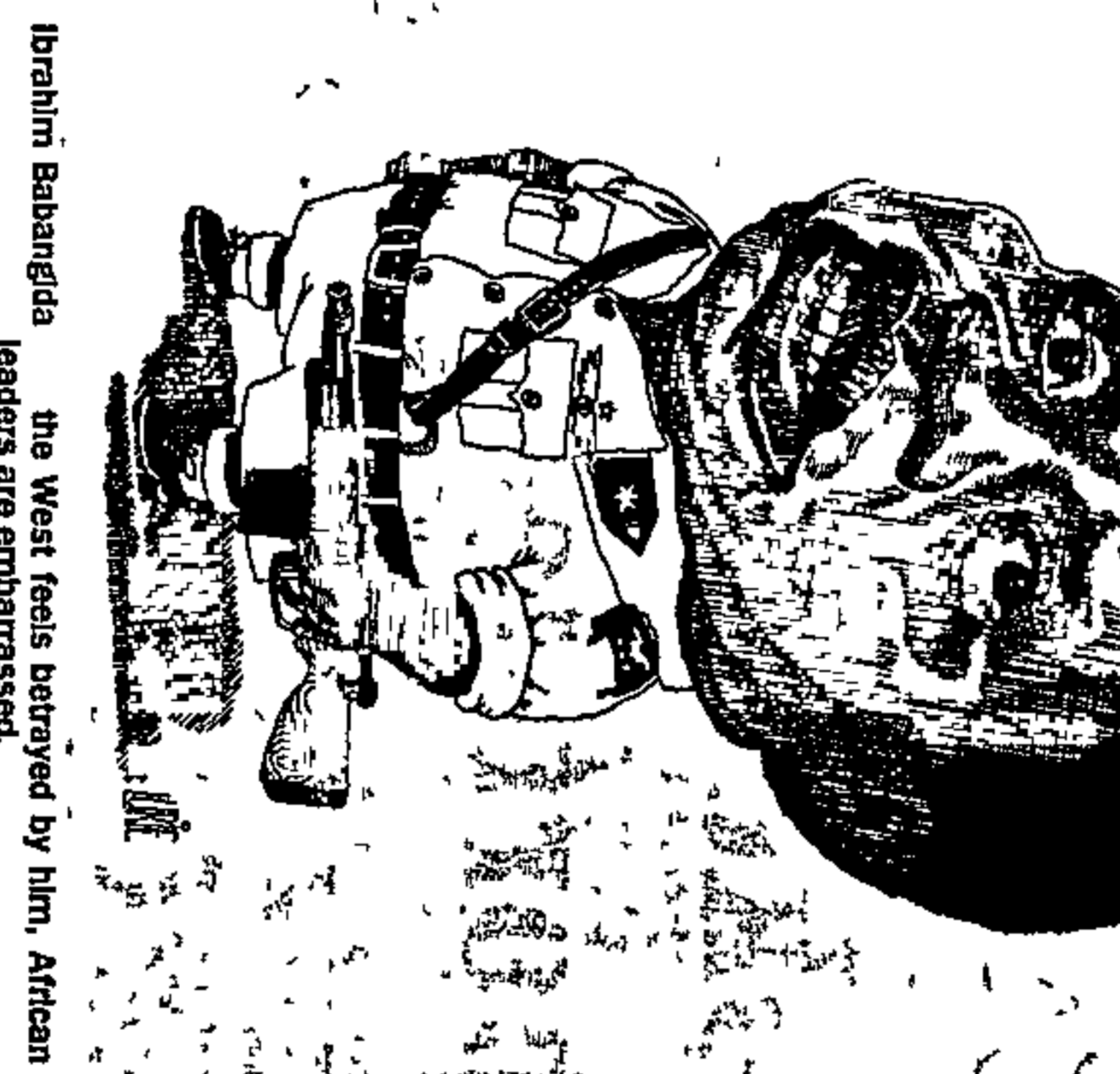
That was what set him apart from African leaders like Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko who have defied international pressure to accept real democracy.

Optimists said a successful handover by the army would restore belief in Africa and silence those who have all but written off the continent.

A US official feared the consequences of a further setback for democracy in Nigeria.

"If more African presidents tell us to go to hell, what reason do we have to worry about aid for the continent?"

An extension of military rule or unrepresentative civilian government will also damage



Ibrahim Babangida the West feels betrayed by him, African leaders are embarrassed.

A shadowy chief's action

Star 30/6/93 (226)
From GRAHAM LINSKOTT in Lagos

POLITICS, business and shady dealing are sinuously intertwined in Nigeria. The man who threw the spanner in the works of the recent election is the very one who took Pak Botila's Department of Foreign Affairs for a R1.6 million ride.

The election ran into legal gridlock when Abimbola Davas successfully applied in the Abuja High Court (just days before) for an order against its being held at all. He was acting on behalf of an organisation calling itself Association for Better Nigeria (ABN), which wants military government to continue until 1997.

Mentioned in the court action was Chief Arthur Nzeribe, beneath whom a large number of mayors and aspirant state government members were said to have agreed to work, jointly and individually, to speak with one voice and adopt one stand nationally.

The business and political magazine Nigerian Economist describes the "antics" of the ABN as being at the centre of attempts to derail the transition to civilian rule. It describes the organisation as being "headed and funded by maverick politician Chief Arthur Nzeribe".

South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs might well use words stronger than maverick.

It was Nzeribe who led it a merry dance back in 1984 with "Project Emigma", involving publication of a magazine sympathetic to the South African viewpoint.

The department deposited its share of the funding in a London bank account, but not Nzeribe. Next thing, the money had disappeared.

Veteran West African journalists note with amusement that when President de Klerk visited Abuja last year, every foreign affairs official asked eagerly for Nzeribe to be pointed out.

Nzeribe? Never heard of him, the Nigerians replied deadpan. — Star Africa Service. □

Star 30/6/93.

Lagos riots over polls

LAGOS — Lawyers shut down courtrooms yesterday and students ignited barricades and battled police in scattered disturbances nationwide to protest against the annulment of the June 12 presidential elections

General Ibrahim Babangida said last week new elections must be held because the previous vote, which he organised, was corrupt

The apparent winner, Moshood Abiola, is a member of the southern Yoruba tribe that has long been shut out of political power.

Human rights activist Beko Ransome Kuti has filed a lawsuit to stop Babangida calling himself president — Sapa-AP.

admission...

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Nigeria holds its breath

226

RACKED by an unprecedented economic crisis, sapped by recurring ethnic and religious strains and frustrated by its inability to renew its elites, Nigeria, "the giant of Africa", is entering a dangerous phase of its history. Nobody had dared to forecast the cancellation of the June 12 presidential election.

The chronic uncertainty in Nigeria has reached its high point with fearful people bracing themselves for disturbances. But nobody dare venture to make forecasts about a country where there is a constant feeling that anything, or nothing, might happen.

The Nigerians called on to choose between the candidates of the two parties authorised to take part in the election, voted without conviction, having learnt a lesson from three postponements of the election. But vote they did and they chose the man they wanted, Moshood Abiola, a Muslim multimillionaire who happens to be of Yoruba ancestry (hence from the south). He is the man who should preside over the destinies of the country after ten years of military rule, eight of them under outgoing president General Ibrahim Babangida.

By cheating the Social Democrats of their victory, the military are taking the risk of disturbing the delicate balance underpinning a federation made up of 30 states with a population of almost 90 million, some 270 ethnic groups, three big rival communities (Ibo, Yoruba and

Hausa-Fulani), Christians, Muslims, animists and followers of hundreds of cults.

Abiola's victory would have meant defeat for the northerners and the end of the Hausa-Fulani hegemony. This was probably the basic reason for cancelling the election.

General Babangida has since promised a new election. By shutting out the prospects of any change of government, the northern oligarchy which spawned the military regime is taking the risk of pushing the southerners to revolt.

Nobel prizewinner Wole Soyinka, who two years ago described the process of moving towards civilian rule as "juju", has called on his fellow Nigerians not to panic and not to react to provocation which could lead to violence.

The break-up of the federation — a prospect which has served as the backdrop to political life in the country — has become a recurring theme since fighting broke out in Yugoslavia and Somalia. But the memory of the murderous Biafran war between the central government and the Ibos living in the east (1967-70) is still very alive and fortunately helps to keep the risk at bay. The economic depression with which the country has been unable to come to grips could, however, heighten the discontent.

If Nigeria tottered, it would cause a disaster on a regional scale.

(June 25)

Guardian (W in W) Mail 217-8/7/93.

Nigerians call for strikes

(226)

Guardian/W in W/Mat 2/7-8/7/93

Chris McGreal in Lagos

OPPONENTS of Nigeria's ruler, Ibrahim Babangida, are considering how best to force his military government from power after it rejected the results of June's presidential race and called a new election from which the winner of the previous vote is barred.

Among the options being studied is the installation of a rival administration headed by the man widely considered to have won the annulled elections, Moshood Abiola. Some opposition leaders are urging a campaign of strikes and civil disobedience.

Gen Babangida has manipulated the drawn-out transition to civilian rule from the beginning — banning presidential candidates, and setting up the only legal political parties — but still the result was not to his liking.

The general ensured the installation of a president sympathetic to the military by cancelling a vote endorsed by international observers as the cleanest in Nigeria's history.

He accused the competing parties of misusing funds, and the candidates with being unfit to govern. The general said court battles over the release of poll results endangered the whole political system.

He promised that the transition to civilian rule would go ahead as planned on August 27 and called new elections. But he imposed a series of conditions for candidates, must be aged 50 or over, and have been members of one of the two army-created parties formed in 1989 for at least one year.

"There is no one in Nigeria who has been a member of any of the parties for one year," said Mr Abiola's running-mate, Baba Gana Kingibe.

Mr Abiola's Social Democratic Party leadership meets organisations such as the Campaign For Democracy, which is among those urging the SDP to set up a parallel government with Mr Abiola at its head, according to its general secretary, Chima Ubani.

"We are saying the president-elect should announce a cabinet and

a government in waiting. We want to take this issue ahead of the Babangida regime and force him to be responsible. For eight years he has set the pace but we want to force him to respond. Mr Abiola is fully prepared to fight. We look at precedents around the world — the Philippines, Yeltsin — and see how they did it," Mr Ubani said.

Nigeria's divided trade union movement is also meeting to decide its response. While the umbrella Nigerian Labour Congress has leaned towards the military government, the opposition is counting on the support of key unions such as oil and banking if it goes ahead with a general strike.

But while Nigerians are clearly angry at the subversion of a limited exercise in democracy, it is not at all clear that they are prepared to face down a military government that has previously shown the will to use force.

"The popular consensus is that the military has to go. The country should be made ungovernable for the Babangida regime," Mr Ubani said.

ARTS

Casting off the 'spectacles of tribal animosity'

W-C/Ward 2/7-8/7/93.

226

AFRICANS must take over the production of their own images in the media. This was the overwhelming call from delegates to the Union of National Radio and Television Organisations of Africa's (Urtna) 30th anniversary celebrations in Nairobi, Kenya, last week.

Speaking at a symposium which formed part of the celebrations, former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda said that "for a long time the world has been conditioned to see Africa through the spectacles of tribal animosities which hinder our attempts to build modern and respectable nations upon the ruins of colonialism, war, famine and corruption".

The responsibility of remaking the African image was laid at the door of Urtna, an association of African broadcasting institutions in Africa. Established in 1962 — its current membership includes radio and television organisations of 48 countries — it aims to promote inter-African co-operation for the development of broadcasting on the continent. Urtna member countries produce programmes which are contributed to a pool from which others can take to flight in their own territories. To gain access to this pool of resources they have to pay an annual membership fee.

"Urtna must assist us to see ourselves as we know and see ourselves. It should help us break the myth that we in Africa

In a demand for African control of Africa's image, delegates to a continent-wide television symposium in Nairobi last week revived some old arguments.

BAFANA KHUMALO was there (and) failed to belong to a race of 'could have beens', said Kaunda.

Calling for involvement by Africans in the media, Nigerian Chief Segun Olusola said that although Africans have had more than their "fair share of the brutal hostilities of war, there has been relatively little coverage of war situations by African broadcasters. Certainly there has been nothing to compare with the overpowering presence in the Yugoslavia and Somali civil wars" by Western — specifically CNN — broadcasters.

Olusola, noting that in most coups in Africa, broadcasting facilities have been targeted first and sometimes completely destroyed by coup plotters, said that broadcasters and broadcasting facilities should be protected along the same lines as the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent. "Violations of such sacred institutions should be visited by appropriate international sanctions and reparations demanded by the international community," he said.



Kenneth Kaunda ... Television must dispel myths about Africans

As a way forward to a new kind of image for Africa, Urtna is planning an African news service to "serve African interests". This service, said Urtna president Garcia Carlos of Angola, would be a counter-measure against the "foreign agencies who focus on African calamities, ignoring the development challenges that the continent is grappling with in the face of harsh economic calamities".

The celebrations were marred by disruptions. Some of the events had to be cancelled because Urtna had not properly organised them. A number of

Acknowledging that use of non-African languages might contribute to the present state of affairs, Kaunda said in his country English is preferred because it is a unifying language. He said Kenya — as an example — had Swahili as a unifying language.

"We don't have that in Zambia and have to rely on English," he said. "If we try to speak one we are inviting trouble."

That view was confirmed in interviews with delegates from Ghana, Benin, Egypt, Ivory Coast and Senegal, who said the use of African languages was not an issue in their respective countries, and that former colonial languages were preferred by local media.

South African broadcasters were barred from participating in Urtna until this year, when observer status was given to M-Net — which organised the live broadcast of the awards ceremony, in conjunction with two Kenyan television networks. Neither M-Net nor any other South African broadcaster has been offered membership, however.

Serote cautioned the organisation against accepting South African broadcasters as members without looking at the kind of broadcasting institutions that come from this country. Although there were changes in South Africa, he said, some people "do not have the interests of black South Africans at heart" and might continue to ensure their marginalisation.



Military divided, confusion rules

Wjward 2/7-8/7/93,

(226)

NIGERIANS know what it is their military government does not want. It is Moshood Abiola as president. General Ibrahim Babangida defied the scorn and anger at his incongruous reasoning to overturn the nearest thing Nigeria has had to a free election. But what the military wants in Chief Abiola's place is less certain.

Some Nigerians see the annulment of the June 12 vote as final evidence of a hidden agenda by Babangida to hold on to power, others that the military's agenda is to instal a sympathetic civilian to the presidency.

What was plain, as Babangida cancelled one election and called another from which the victor of the annulled vote is barred, is that the military government is itself divided. Even before the vote, there was indecision and disagreement within the ruling military council over how to respond to the

The military government in Nigeria acted swiftly to annul the June elections but there is confusion over what it is going to do next. CHRIS MCGREAL reports

looming Abiola victory and the extent to which the army should retain power. One senior officer and close ally of the general has since resigned in protest at the overturning of the election, and others appear set to follow.

Supporters of the military government moved to scupper the election shortly before the vote. There had been rumours in May that the military would not accept an Abiola victory. A small but powerful clique of officers and religious leaders from the north rejected Abiola because, although a Muslim, he is from the south and Yoruba. Other officers feared he might delve into military corruption. Two days before the vote, the shadowy Association for Better Nigeria (ABN) persuaded

the Abuja high court to stop the ballot. The national electoral commission defied the order but the ABN was back in court after the election to halt release of the results. The legal grounds were spurious and the ABN, with its close ties to the military, acted with its approval. The ensuing court battle was the excuse Babangida required. The election was annulled.

There was immediate if shielded dissent within the military. Colonel Abubakar Danyawa Umar, former military governor of Kaduna and commander of an army school, was counted amongst Babangida's closest allies. The colonel played key roles in the 1985 coup that brought the general to power and in putting down a rebellion three

years ago. Last year he threatened to resign if the transition to civilian rule were blocked. After Babangida annulled the election, he did quit, saying he could not explain the government's decision to his men and would not order his troops out against civil protests. Several former staff officers urged the general to stick with the transition programme no matter how difficult.

On Friday, Babangida met his field commanders and the military council. One Nigerian source close to the military says the general's position was threatened in the run-up to the election and that his handling of the election crisis would determine his future. Some field commanders explained to him that ordinary soldiers would not be happy if the transition was scuppered, but a more forceful group won over. Babangida emerged from the meeting flustered and uncertain as he promised that despite overturning the election a democratically-elected president would be installed. But the address to the nation he was to have made that night was postponed.

On Saturday it was again delayed amid further wrangling in the military. One source said the general swung between the alternatives of a second election or allowing the national assembly to choose a new president. The legislature was rejected because Abiola's party holds a majority.

When Babangida's speech finally came there was general disbelief that the government could hope to meet the August 27 deadline for civilian rule with anything resembling a free election. The move was widely derided as disgraceful, divisive, a constitutional joke and political tragicomedy.

The speech was unspecific except for the narrow condition designed to exclude Abiola from competing again. The hurried manner in which the strategy was cobbled together could be seen in the requirement for candidates to have been members of a political party for at least a year. After the government annulled the presidential primaries last year, it ordered fresh registration of their membership. Technically, no-one in Nigeria has been a member of any political party for longer than six months.



Please sir Somali children beg an Italian United Nations soldier for some sweets, but the situation in Mogadishu is calm

Photo: AP

Nigeria to hold new poll

CT 5/1/93 (226)

LAGOS. — Nigeria's military dictatorship, denounced worldwide for declaring the results of the June 12 presidential elections null and void, announced yesterday that a new election would be held on July 31.

However, one of the two parties allowed to compete has said it would boycott the ballot to protest the annulment of the previous election, which it apparently won.

The government published the details of the election in Nigerian newspapers. It said the results of the election would be released on August 3.

No candidates have yet made them-

selves available.

But scores of human rights activists were rounded up by the secret police at the weekend as the dictatorship tried to keep a lid on dissent. It was unclear yesterday how many were jailed.

Among those jailed was physician Dr Beko Ransome-Kuti, head of a broad coalition called Campaign for Democracy. He was released without explanation on Saturday night.

The coalition planned to stage a march on the city today to protest the annulment of the elections — Sapa-AP

Post-election chaos erupts in Nigeria

LAGOS — Thousands of people set buses and tires ablaze, looted shops, hijacked cars and blocked bridges yesterday in a violent protest against the military dictatorship's annulment of the June 12 presidential elections

Police fired tear gas from helicopters and on the ground, but were unable to contain the crowds

The demonstrators were mostly students and supporters of Mr Moshood Abiola who had unilaterally declared victory over Mr Bashir Tofa after the June 12 election, citing unofficial results

Lagos' business area was in disarray, but by mid-morning streets in the normally bustling city were quiet — Sapa-Reuter-AP

Violent protest in Nigeria

Star 6/7/93

LAGOS — Thousands of people set buses and tyres ablaze, looted shops, hijacked cars and blocked bridges yesterday in a violent protest against the military dictatorship's annulment of the June 12 presidential elections. (226)

Police fired teargas from helicopters and on the ground but were unable to contain the crowds of thousands of people gathered in more than 20 sections of Lagos, Nigeria's biggest city

The street violence broke out just hours before major human rights groups planned to march in protest at the government's decision to annul the June 12 elections, which were to return the country to civilian rule

It was the first serious unrest to hit this city of 1.3 million people since the dictatorship on June 16 abruptly voided the results of the presidential balloting reportedly won by business tycoon Moshood K O Abiola.

The military ruler, General Ibrahim Babangida, claimed the voting was rigged and declared that a new ballot must be held on July 31. He has repeatedly reneged on promises to return Nigeria to democracy

In one section of Lagos, Abiola addressed a crowd of about 10 000 people.

"There is absolutely no doubt about the support that you people, all Nigerians, have given to our efforts to install democracy," he said

Babangida's government

has been cracking down on the press and on human rights groups. Scores of activists were detained on Friday, including Nigeria's most prominent civil rights leader, Beko Ransome-Kuti, who was freed on Saturday

The government released the details of the new election on Sunday, but few politicians planned to participate in them.

Abiola's Social Democrats, one of only two parties allowed to compete, said it would boycott the ballot.

Parliament also said it would have nothing to do with the new election and at least 30 high-ranking army officers resigned their commissions to protest against the voiding of the election.

Yesterday, a member of Babangida's latest electoral commission submitted her resignation. "I don't know whom I'm supposed to be serving on this commission," said Tosin Kalai. "Certainly not the Nigerian people who massively expressed their will on June 12"

Babangida's heavy-handed moves have had the effect of bringing together disparate groups. Christian and Muslim leaders were planning to meet this week to discuss how they can intervene jointly in the political crisis

This oil-rich nation has been plunged into economic chaos by corruption and mismanagement. Unprecedented poverty has added to Babangida's unpopularity in a country where fuel, power, water and housing shortages are pervasive. — Sapa-AP



Barricades, looting in Lagos riots

Star 7/7/93
(22b)

LAGOS — Rioters fought police and soldiers yesterday as tens of thousands of people set fires and blocked roads to demand an end to military dictatorship. At least 11 were reported killed

It was the first report of deaths since Lagos protesters began pressuring the government on Monday to recognise the annulled June 12 presidential election that was to end a decade of military rule

The reported winner, businessman Moshood KO Abiola, appealed to people to resist the dictatorship of General Ibrahim Babangida and ignore an ultimatum threatening to dissolve the National Assembly.

"Ignore this latest threat and damn the consequences," Abiola said in a statement

The federal government ordered Lagos state authorities yesterday to bring the situation under control within 24 hours, government-controlled Nigerian Radio reported. It also said the army had been ordered to assist police.

The Pan-African News Agency said soldiers killed several rioters who set a truck on fire in Ikoyi, a well-to-do neighborhood of Lagos

Other witnesses said five people died

In other violence, a mob burned a taxi driver to death after he tried to crash through a human chain and killed a youth, police fatally shot a man as people looted a supermarket, a soldier shot a man to death at a blocked bridge, and police killed a man in a stone-throwing crowd

At least one policeman was clubbed to death yesterday, witnesses said. In addition, a police sergeant beaten by protesters on Monday died yesterday

Markets, shops, banks and businesses were closed and shuttered, but looters broke into dozens of stores for a second day

People hurried through streets hefting televisions on their heads, balancing refrigerators and cookers, on wheelbarrows, and pushing supermarket carts filled with food

Crowds of demonstrators gathered at bus terminals chanting "The military is dead"

Other protesters built barricades of buses, cars and tyres. Most of the barricades were manned by youths armed with rocks and clubs who stopped every moving vehicle and robbed the occupants

Highway overpasses were jammed with thousands of people who hurled rocks at police vehicles — Sapa-AP.

● Babangida wants new elections

Sowetan 7/7/93

Proposal to end Nigerian crisis

ABUJA — President Ibrahim Babangida told Nigeria's main parties yesterday they must either hold new elections or form a national unity government to end the political crisis

Moshood Abiola, the undeclared winner of last month's presidential poll and leader of the Social Democratic Party whose victory

was annulled by Babangida, made the announcement after meeting the president and Bashir Othman Tofa, head of the rival National Republican Convention in Abuja

Tony Aneneh, the SDP chairman, said SDP leaders had asked for extra time to make up their minds — *Sapa-AFP*

226

Roadblocks, running battles as Lagos slides into anarchy

Biday 8/1/93

LAGOS — When people here say the roads are bad, they do not mean potholes. They mean there are thugs with clubs looting everything on wheels. They mean crowds cradling rocks and jamming bridges, waiting for passing motorists.

Lagos has slid into something resembling insanity.

Human rights groups have called a general strike this week to pressure the military dictatorship to recognise the June 12 presidential elections it annulled. Tens of thousands of people are determined to make sure that everybody obeys it.

There are men, women and children staging running battles with police. Many are also cowering in schools and hospitals, afraid to stay home or set foot outdoors.

This city of 1.3-million, the biggest town in Africa's most populous nation, has become a part-time anarchy. The riots start at 7am. No shops are open, no banks dare transact, only the most foolhardy cabbie picks up a fare.

After sunset, the masses disperse. The brutal boys who man the barricades pull the tires, railroad tracks, rocks and scorched trees from the roads and go home. Motorists race to their destinations.

Most blame the dictator, Gen Ibrahim Babangida, for allowing things to get so bad. He organised the presidential elections that were to return this nation of 88.5-million to civilian leadership after a decade of military rule, then annulled them four days later.

But others fear the streak of violence and thieving only helps Babangida, who many accuse of fomenting chaos to find an excuse to stay in power.

On Tuesday, families crowded into tiny Jolad Hospital to find safety while thousands jammed a bridge just outside the door, hurling rocks at the approaching police marching on the deserted freeway below. The police responded with tear gas and gunfire.

The riots broke out on Monday and spread on Tuesday. At least 11 people were reported killed on the second day.

The protests were the first serious unrest since June 16, when Babangida abruptly annulled results of the election he had organised. He said the election was rigged, but many Nigerians accused him of finding a new reason to stay in power.

According to unofficial results, the ballot was won by a one-time Babangida ally, business tycoon Moshood Abiola, who has now denounced the general.

Others viewed the violence as a grim necessity. The hospital's chief physician, Dr R D Olafido, patched two bullet wounds on Tuesday and mended three bones broken at the hellish barricades.

"When all is said and done, we'll see that it was necessary for people to stand up for their rights," he said quietly, holding the X-ray of a cleanly broken ankle up to the light.

"Be careful," he added to a reporter. "The roads are bad" — Sapa-AP

Nigerian parties' peace plan

226 AR24 8/17/73

ABUJA — Nigeria's two political parties have announced their acceptance of a government of national unity to end the crisis brought on by the military's annulment of presidential elections

The left-leaning Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the conservative National Republican Convention (NRC), whose representatives last night met the country's leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, said they were calling for the setting up of a bipartisan committee, which along with members of

Government of national unity agreed to end election crisis

the military government, would choose the members of a government of national unity

The military government, which annulled the June 12 elections, alleging irregularities, earlier gave the two parties the choice between new presidential elections or the setting up of a government of national unity, which would entail the dissolution of existing democratic institutions

A statement signed by the leaders of the two parties, Tony Aneneh for the SDP and Ahmed Kasamoto for the NRC, said the parties had "agreed in principle" to the setting up of a government of national unity, providing existing democratic institutions — notably the parties themselves — were not dissolved

The crisis led to at least 17 deaths in riots over the past three days in Lagos and a threat by the military to intervene directly to re-establish order

The SDP, whose candidate, Moshood Abiola, was believed to have won last month's presidential election, had initially called for the military government to accept the result of the poll

But the military refused, calling instead for fresh elections involving candidates other than the two chosen to run in the first poll

The NRC then accepted the principle of new elections, while the SDP appeared split over how to react — Sapa- AFP



LAST RESTING PLACE: Nigerians pass the body of a riot victim lying in the streets of Lagos yesterday

Before becoming involved in the potentially lucrative Nigerian market, South African businessmen might find it useful to find out what makes the country tick — or not tick. GRAHAM LINSKOTT of the Star Africa Service reports on a recent visit.

'Dash' sends Nigerian economy into a tailspin

Star 8/7/98

226

LAGOS — Some years ago the Nigerian naira was worth about \$1.60. Today there are 25 naira to the dollar at the official rate and about 36 on the black market.

The country — one of the world's leading oil producers — is in an economic tailspin.

It is attributable partly to the slump in world oil prices. But much of it is also attributable to what Nigerians wearily and cynically call the Four As — Ajeokuta, Abuja, army and aluminium.

Ajeokuta is a giant Russian-built steel mill, Nigeria's version of Mossgas.

Abuja is the new federal capital being built an hour's flying time from Lagos. Every federal government building in the former capital is being duplicated at Abuja at enormous cost — enormous not just because of cost escalations, but because of the rake-offs as well.

The military are said to be taking massive kick-backs on contracts awarded. As a diplomatic source put it: "This used to be called the country of 15 percent. That's no longer true — it's the country of 50 percent."

Wasteful

Army is the army — the same one that has annulled the civilian elections and decided to stay on in power.

Any army is almost by definition inefficient and wasteful, even in carrying out its military responsibilities. When it gets into the sphere of civil administration it is considerably worse and when it starts

enriching itself it bleeds the country to death.

Nigerian generals are retiring as dollar millionaires. On army pay that cannot be done.

Aluminium is yet another Mossgas. However, in fairness, there are signs that Nigeria's aluminium smelter might at last be edging into the black, having been a serious economic drain.

Dash — the West African word for baksheesh, cumashaw or plain bribery — has always been prevalent in Nigeria but is now the motivating logic.

If it is practised by the ruling generals, can people on the lower rungs be blamed for doing the same?

It is probably the only way to survive. If you need something you dash somebody to get it for you.

Oil boom

It was all very well during the days of the oil boom. But, as oil revenues have dwindled, so dash seems to have increased and now the whole country is hurting badly.

Nigeria has the cheapest petrol in the world. About 300 000 barrels a day of the crude pumped is assigned to the domestic market. Refined petrol sells at the pumps for the equivalent of a scarcely believable 12 US cents a gallon.

But Nigeria is adjoined by Francophone countries with hard currencies backed by the French franc. The petrol earmarked for internal consumption crosses the borders in tankers, where it

fetches the equivalent of \$3 a gallon. How does it get through the border? The officials are all dashed, of course.

So Nigeria, the world's fifth largest oil producer, has a petrol shortage. I was going by taxi to the airport from Abuja, the federal capital — a considerable distance. Suddenly the taxi started chug-chugging, showing every symptom of fuel problems. The driver shook his head sadly.

"Dey bin puttin' water in de petrol again, sah," he said.

But apparently they did not overdo it. Somehow we made it to the airport.

An even meaner example of adulteration is rife in Nigeria. Fake medical drugs are big business. Various drugs are turned out, bearing the trademark of reputable firms.

They look like pencil tablets but in fact are chalk dust. Too bad about the sick children. So prevalent has this scam become that drugs from Nigeria are barred in countries such as Ghana.

Fake drugs

But not too long ago the police decided enough was enough. They swooped, confiscating huge quantities of fake drugs. As a public relations exercise they arranged to burn them in public. Box after box was piled high for the funeral pyre.

Then somebody looked inside one of the boxes. It was empty. So were all the others. Somebody had stolen all the fake drugs from police custody and they were back in circulation.

The Economist argues that its leader should step down

Star 8/1/93
Need Nigeria become a joke?

(226)

ZAIRE is a large, potentially rich, African country. So is Nigeria, and a better educated one. The rest of the world regards Zaire as a bad joke, because the man at the top there has made it one. Do Nigerians want to go the same way?

That, and not only the issue of democracy as against military rule, is the basic question about the nonsense that President Ibrahim Babangida has inflicted on his country in recent weeks.

He played a leading part in a military coup 10 years ago that got rid of a civilian government as incompetent as it was corrupt, and was soon in power himself. He acted no worse than the average military ruler anywhere, and better than many rulers in Africa, military or not.

He installed no reign of terror. He provoked no secession or civil war, in a country which had already had one disaster of that sort in the 1960s, and whose many religions and ethnic mix would make

it seem quite easy to mismanage into another. The press remains tolerably, though not wholly, unshackled. Trade unions operate, within limits.

But that does not mean that Nigerians are wholeheartedly behind the general. Since about 1990 most of them seem to have come slowly to the view that he has been there too long for any good he may have been doing.

His shilly-shallying over the election has rightly strengthened that view. Nigerian governments under any regime in the foreseeable future will remain shot through with corruption, and military rule has long since seen the rebirth of this disease it was supposed to cure. But corruption does not have to mean farce.

To call an election, allow one's friends to try to get it stopped in the courts, let it proceed nonetheless, annul the result, then announce a fresh version with fancy new conditions to rule out candi-

dates one dislikes — all this sounds more like a comic novel (it was, in fact, written, by Evelyn Waugh, half a century ago) than serious modern government.

Alas, serious government is what Nigeria needs. It is still dithering over a structural-adjustment programme supposedly installed, under pressure from the International Monetary Fund, seven years ago. Fuel subsidies are still in force, though everyone has known for years that they must go. Prices, after a respite in 1990 and 1991, are climbing at about 50 percent a year. The local currency is falling even faster.

General Babangida may have served his country in the past. The best service he could, but won't, now render it would be to declare that the capers of the past few weeks were indeed jokes, the election stands and his newly repeated readiness to quit office on August 27 with it. No joking, and doubtless he could enjoy a well-heeled old age in — why not? — Zaire. □

Star 8/7/93

Unity government for Nigeria agreed

(226)

ABUJA — Nigeria's two political parties last night announced their acceptance of a government of national unity to end the present crisis brought on by the military's annulment of elections.

The left-leaning Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the conservative National Republican Convention (NRC), whose representatives met the country's leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, said they were calling for the setting up of a bipartisan committee, which along with members of the military government, would choose the members of a

government of national unity

The military government, which annulled the June 12 elections alleging irregularities, on Tuesday gave the two parties the choice between new presidential elections or the setting up of a government of national unity, which would entail the dissolution of existing democratic institutions

A statement signed by the leaders of the two parties, Tony Aneneh for the SDP and Ahmed Kasamotu for the NRC, said the parties had "agreed in principle" to the setting up of a government of national unity, pro-

viding existing democratic institutions — notably the parties themselves — were not dissolved

The present crisis led to at least 17 deaths in riots over the past three days in Lagos and a threat by the military to intervene directly to re-establish order

The SDP, whose candidate, Moshood Abiola, was believed to have won last month's presidential election, had initially called for the military government to accept the result of the poll

But the military refused, calling instead for fresh elections involving candidates other than the two cho-

sen to run in the first poll

The NRC then accepted the principle of new elections, while the SDP appeared split over how to react

● The United States warned yesterday of new sanctions if Nigeria's military leadership continued to refuse to allow the transition to civilian rule

A State Department spokesman said Washington was following the situation closely to determine if tougher sanctions were appropriate. Washington already has suspended aid except humanitarian assistance — Sapa-AFP

Nigeria's tragic soap opera continues

WIMCOY 877-1577193

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In 1991 the president of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, announced his programme for transition to civil rule. Categories of Nigerians who were to be barred from engaging in any political activity included civil servants who had not resigned their positions by a given date, ex-convicts, university lecturers (also with a retirement deadline) and military officers who had held political positions. When Babangida added "and that includes myself", there was a standing ovation.

There is very little ovation for Babangida in any corner of Nigeria these days. Since he voided the results in mid-June of the first elections in nearly 10 years of military rule, the general finds himself with widespread revolt on his hands.

Pro-democracy activists have called for a week of demonstrations in protest, to start next Monday, and some 30 senior military officers have threatened to resign. Students have rioted in the streets and there are reports of fatalities.

This episode is the latest in a political tragedy that has also been marked by farce. It began in 1991, when Babangida jailed a number of ex-politicians and retired military officers, whom he accused of politicking behind the scenes, but only a few weeks later he not only set them free — he unbanned them. They could now contest the presidency.

In some Nigerians' minds a niggling doubt was sown if former high-ranking "political soldiers" were now unbanned, what did that make of Babangida's earlier declaration, "and that includes myself"? The Babangida Watch began.

In addition, the conditions set down for registration of parties were so unrealistic that there was widespread suspicion they were designed for mass failure. Of 20-odd starters, only five political parties were provisionally registered and presented to the ruling Armed Forces Council for approval. All five were disqualified.

Also in 1991, the government unwrapped its secret weapon — a two-party system. One would be "a little to the right", the other "a little to the left". Nigerians once again prepared to live with innovation. When the government produced political manifestos for both parties,

Nigeria's best-known novelist, Nobel Prize winner SOYINKA, describes the tragic soap opera of his country's transition to civilian rule.



the process turned truly absurd.

Having unleashed the banned politicians and billionaire generals back on the scene, the government now had to deal with the resultant chaos. Simple enough: reapply the old remedy and ban them all again!

At the same time, the government was building offices for the two parties in all 30 states and made grants of millions of dollars to them, with the proclaimed virtue of ending "money bags" politics. This cost Nigerians a great deal of money but resulted in two presidential candidates of extraordinary private wealth. The military had perfected the art of contradictions until it became a mark of consistency.

And so to the presidential elections last month. They were duly completed on June 12, and by the 13th Moshood Abiola, the Social Democratic Party candidate, was clearly in the lead. The military was confounded because the voting had gone against Bashir Tofa, the

National Republican Convention candidate, whom the government favoured.

Two years ago, Bashir Tofa acquired notoriety by proposing that the Babangida regime stay in power until the year 2000. As the Yoruba proverb reminds us: whose cause will the housefly promote if not that of the leg riddled with sores?

Enter maverick businessman and arms dealer Chief Arthur Nzeribe, a one-time banned, unbanned and again disqualified presidential candidate who was now the leader of the shadowy Association for a Better Nigeria. He had obtained a court injunction to stop the election but voting took place anyway, since military decrees on election matters overruled the courts.

On June 15, Nzeribe obtained a court order restraining the Electoral Commission from announcing any more election results — with half the count already publicly declared. Four other courts of equal jurisdiction issued a

counter order. Commission chairman Professor Humphrey Nwosu chose to obey the lone voice of the restraining court and withheld the remaining results. The military junta proceeded to nullify all court actions, complaining that the judiciary was being brought into disrepute. The Electoral Commission was suspended and all decrees relating to the elections were abrogated. Thus, the elections simply had not taken place.

Babangida and his men emerged on June 26 with another new set of rules. A presidential candidate has to have been in the nominating party for at least a year. That took care of Abiola. Not to appear too obvious, however, the aspiring candidate also had to be not less than 50 years old — which disqualified Tofa. All of which leaves just who in place? Only the referee who has shifted the goal-posts repeatedly after the ball has been netted. Only the man who was to have quit power in 1990, then twice in 1992 and again in January 1993.

Babangida has now declared August 27 as the definitive date when the transition to civilian rule will take place. And he has yet again unbanned the erstwhile banned brigade, so that we may actually resume with the 100-odd candidates!

The Association for a Better Nigeria, the Third Eye, the Council of Elder Statesmen — all exposed as fronts, sponsored by the state security services — are very much alive. So are the various agencies of state terror. Only a week ago, a police helicopter flew over my half-completed home on the outskirts of Abeokuta, circled it twice and flew off — a melodramatic form of intimidation for my stance against the regime.

Nigeria's tragic soap opera has clearly a few more episodes to run. One scripted episode, however, that will not be performed by most Nigerians is hooping out for the new presidential elections — if they every take place.

The people have made their choice and that choice is neither the military nor its surrogates. Possibly Babangida thinks this will be another contest of wills that will fizzle out in favour of the military. It will be, however, more than that. The future of democracy in Nigeria is at stake — The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL NEWS Security around

Lagos is back to life after chaos

Sowetan 9/7/93

LAGOS — Lagos swung back to life yesterday after politicians agreed to an interim national government to end rioting that paralysed Nigeria's biggest city for three days

Independent newspapers said 75 people had been killed and many more injured in the rampage. There has been no official confirmation of casualties and the government denied media reports that soldiers killed 10 people in one incident.

Many businesses in the commercial centre reopened early yesterday and the city centre, which was deserted during the protests, again bustled with traders and traffic.

"The trouble is over. Everyone is returning to work," said Ganiyu Lawal, a newspaper vendor. Scores of people struggled to buy the day's editions from him.

"The go-slows are back," added one rest-

dent, referring to the city's perennial traffic jams (22b)

Troops and tanks were brought in on Wednesday to help end the protests called by activists challenging the military government's scrapping of presidential elections meant to end a decade of army rule.

Military leader General Ibrahim Babangida, in power since 1985, cancelled the June poll alleging malpractices. But he pledged to hand over power to elected civilians on August 27.

What was billed as peaceful protests over the cancelled vote turned into mayhem as hundreds of thousands of unemployed youths in this city of about six million people took over. Gangs of boys looted shops and attacked motorists, forcing a shutdown of businesses in Nigeria's commercial capital - Sapa-Reuters

Nigerian leaders agree on interim government

B1 Day 9/7/93
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hem as hundreds of thousands of unemployed youths in this city of about six million people took over. Gangs of so-called area boys looted shops and attacked motorists, forcing a shutdown of businesses in Nigeria's commercial capital

Nigeria's two army-created political parties agreed late on Wednesday to the formation of an interim national government to help defuse the crisis.

Babangida had given party leaders until today to choose between new elections or an interim national government

"Both parties have agreed on the formation of an interim national government, which, on August 27, will take over from the present military government," Social Democratic Party (SDP) chairman Tony Anenih told a news conference

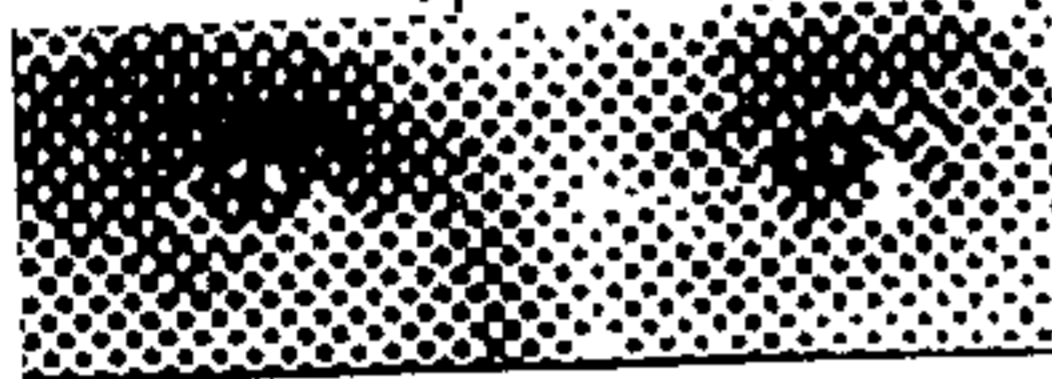
SDP candidate Moshood Abiola claims he defeated fellow Muslim millionaire Bashir Tofa of the National Republican Convention in the June election

State radio said Abiola expressed concern over the indiscriminate destruction of life and property during the demonstrations in Lagos

He appealed to the public to keep calm, adding that justice would prevail

It was not immediately clear if the situation in major western Nigerian cities like Ibadan and Abiola's home town Abeokuta was also back to normal — Sapa-Reuter.

Democracy protest shuts down Lagos



EYEWITNESS

Chris McGreal in Lagos

ANGRY Nigerians virtually shut down their country's largest city, Lagos, on Monday with a strike and demonstrations to demand the military government reinstate the annulled June 12 election and install the presumed victor, Moshood Abiola, as president.

The largest organised anti-government demonstration since the military seized power 10 years ago kicked off a week of protest led by human rights groups against the military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida

The government, which blamed foreign interference for the protest, warned it would take measures to enforce the rule of law and said its opponents should not mistake its patience for weakness. Last week, Gen. Babangida threatened to impose a state of emergency if protesters took to the streets.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators converged on Chief Abiola's house for a rally. Along the way, bands of youths erected barricades of burning tyres and set fire to vehicles. Plumes of smoke rose over the city. Drivers had to display twigs and small branches, a sign of solidarity with the opposition.

In central Lagos, where almost all shops and offices were closed, and in some poorer suburbs, police fired

tear gas at demonstrators. But the security forces kept a low profile.

Demonstrators chanted "Babangida 419" in reference to an anti-corruption law few think has personally bothered the military leader. Others argued about why they were there.

The protest reflected anger, both over the election and at poverty in the face of rampant corruption. "See that bus shelter? Twenty people are sleeping in that bus shelter every night. It's hyper-inflation, and how much is Babangida making?" asked one demonstrator.

Chief Abiola appeared briefly before the thousands of supporters outside his home and appealed to them to behave peacefully. Some of the organisers of the protest saw this as further evidence of lack of leadership in the opposition parties.

Gen Babangida was safely in the capital, Abuja, trying to persuade leaders of Chief Abiola's Social Democratic Party to field a new candidate for fresh elections. If it stands by its promise not to participate, it will leave the National Republican Convention as the only party in the race. The timetable for a new election is still unresolved although the last day of July has been set as a provisional day for the vote.

The protest organiser, the Campaign for Democracy, has called for demonstrations and strikes all week. The campaign leader, Beko Ransome-Kuti, was twice arrested and released by police at the weekend.

● Britain will freeze new aid to Nigeria "until a democratic civilian regime has been installed and is working unhindered", the Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, said

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Guardian in mail

9/7-15/7/93

Star 13/7/93

Military persists with poll

ABUJA — Nigeria's military rulers are pressing ahead with plans for fresh presidential elections — despite the civilian parties' preference for a national interim government to end the political crisis (226)

"Let it be known that there is no alternative to the choice of a president for this country other than by democratic election," said a communique from senior military and police officers in the capital Abuja yesterday.

It said fresh polls were the only solution following the can-

cellation by the military of the June 12 presidential election

The Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention had presented a joint proposal to the government after President Ibrahim Babangida told them to either accept new polls or have all existing levels of government dissolved and an interim government set up instead

The government, in power since 1985, said it scrapped the elections because of malpractices. — Sapa-Reuter

focus on Nigeria

Sowetan 13/7/93

The Nigerian lesson for South Africa, writes **Graham Linscott** of the *Sowetan* Africa News Service, is probably that imported constitutional systems — Westminster or American — are unlikely to be appropriate:

LAGOS — Few countries are as riven by ethnic and other divisions as Nigeria. Its history is one of attempts to balance, accommodate or simply override these divisions, and there are lessons for a divided country such as South Africa

At 90 million-plus, Nigeria has a population more than double South Africa's and it has well over 200 identifiable ethnic groups

It has a significant division along religious lines, coinciding largely with the north-south demarcation formalised by the British during the colonial era. The north is mainly Muslim, the south mainly Christian. While the day-to-day relationship is far from one of Jihad versus Crusade, the configuration does have a high profile. Muslims are anxious that their codes should remain inviolate, Christians worry about sharia law being imposed. It is important that neither should dominate unduly.

Intertwined with the ethnic and religious factors is the regional one — and this has heavy gravitational pull.

It can be traced back to the colonial era. There were originally two separate protectorates of Nigeria — north and south — which were merged in 1914. However, colonial policy pursued indirect rule in the Muslim north — where the traditional emirs, sultans and caliphs ruled much as they always had. In the Christian south there was a more conventional colonial rule.

The result to this day is a high demand in the north for autonomy in local matters and a strong political cohesion and gravitational pull in national affairs, underlined by religious solidarity and backed by having something like half Nigeria's total population.

The south divides into two more regions, east and west, largely along ethnic lines. It was the ethnically Ibo east which attempted in the 1960s to secede as the independent state of Biafra.

The federation set up by the British at independence failed largely because it turned out to be impossible to balance the interests of the three regions. One would always be excluded at federal level.

Collapsed

Once civilian government collapsed there were attempts to centralise administration under military rule, but the realities of a diverse society such as Nigeria's soon meant a return to federalism, this time under regional military governors.

Since then the pattern has been to create more states in an attempt to accommodate ethnic sensitivities. But 200 or more statelets would obviously be an impossibility. At present there are 30, which is a great diversification from the original federation of three regions.



General Ibrahim Babangida ... named parties after American models.

By creating the 30 states, military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida aimed not only to cater for ethnicity, where possible, but neutralise the heavy drag of the three traditional regions.

Holding it all together was supposed to be an American-style two-party system, the parties truly "national" in scope and eschewing narrow religious or ethnic interests. As these parties did not exist, President Babangida constructed them himself, virtually naming them after their American models — Social Democratic Party and National Republican Convention.

But today it all hangs in the balance. The American-style presidential election came and went but the thing was scuppered: the military still rules.

Why, after these elaborate preparations? Did the military come to believe at the last moment that the American model would fail? That it in

fact did not cater for the ethnic particularisms and strong regional drag, especially from the north? That the whole thing would have very soon come apart?

Babangida's intentions remain to be seen. He says he is still committed to civilian rule.

If there is a lesson for South Africa it is probably that imported constitutional systems — American, Westminster or continental European — are unlikely to be appropriate. As in Nigeria, we have our ethnicities (mercifully few) and our strong regional centres of gravity. We also have the legacy of colonial policies and boundary-drawing which could have been wiser.

It will be interesting to see if Babangida produces some kind of African hybrid to suit his country's needs.

That would then certainly be worth South Africans' looking at it more closely.

Nigeria's Babangida plans interim govt

ABUJA — Nigeria's military ruler President Ibrahim Babangida briefed top army brass yesterday on plans for a national interim government to end the country's most serious political crisis in a decade

Babangida precipitated the crisis by invalidating the results of the June 12 presidential election to restore Nigeria to civilian rule

Last week, the Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention told government they accepted the interim government option on condition they had a say in its formation and existing elected officials were retained.

The democrats' Moshood Abiola, 55, the self-declared winner of the June poll, has criticised his party for accepting the interim option, and still insists on being sworn in as president on August 27, the date the military pledged to hand over power

Many members of the national assembly, elected last year, are preparing to vacate their offices in Abuja in the belief that government will dissolve the two-chamber legislature despite the parties' pleas

The state-controlled New Nigeria daily newspaper, in an editorial yesterday, called on the government to

dissolve the national assembly, saying this would allow an interim government, made up of non-partisan members, a freer hand in restructuring the political system. (226)

Babangida's government is reported to have approached former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo to head the proposed national interim government

Obasanjo, who ruled Nigeria between 1976 and 1979, has been highly critical of Babangida's economic policies and his thrice-delayed promises of transition to civil rule — Sapa-Reuter

Star 147193
EC halts aid to Nigeria

BRUSSELS — The European Community yesterday suspended aid to Nigeria in protest against the army's refusal to relinquish power (226)

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EC halts aid to Nigeria in protest

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Community yesterday suspended aid to Nigeria in protest against the army's refusal to relinquish power.

The EC and its 12 member states said they were halting military assistance, restricting visas for soldiers and their families and suspending any new development aid. Nigeria receives more EC aid than any other nation in Africa.

Uncertainty over Nigeria's transition to civilian rule mounted yesterday after the country's two political parties differed over the military government's proposal for new presidential elections. The Social Democratic Party, whose candidate claimed victory in the June 12 poll annulled by President Ibrahim Babangida, rejected any fresh ballot.

— Sapa-Reuter

Nigeria offers investment incentives

JOHN DLUDLU

POTENTIAL SA investors in Nigeria stood to benefit from its current policy of economic deregulation, a Nigerian legal expert said in Johannesburg last night. *Biday*

Speaking at a joint investment seminar organised by local law firm Werksmans and F O Akinrele and Co of Nigeria, Akinrele managing partner Ademola Akinrele said his government was "sincere and open" regarding deregulation. *147193*

This, he said, stemmed from a realisation that Nigeria's economy needed to open up trade with other countries to achieve vitality. *(748)*

Another incentive for doing business with Nigeria was the impending resolution of the impasse following the cancellation of June's election re-

sults by the military government

Akinrele said he believed the resolution would favour a return to civilian rule, which would spur the liberalisation of remaining trade restrictions with other countries. He added that the government "would hopefully provide far better incentives for investors".

He also outlined areas of investment and legal procedures regarding investing in Nigeria, and said the private sector was keen to do business with SA. *(226)*

Akinrele senior associate and tax specialist Oluwatoyin Olashaju said the liberal policy of exchange controls — which included unrestricted

importation of foreign capital — was part of an incentives package. Apart from the central bank, investors could also use the autonomous markets, which were freer and more efficient than the central bank.

Olashaju also outlined several concessions in the Nigerian tax system for foreigners. These included pioneer status, which offered a seven-year tax-free allowance to high-tech-based and labour-intensive projects.

To encourage infrastructural development in rural areas, the tax system allowed for a 100% tax rebate for a period of three years, she said.

Akinrele partner Sean Larkan said plans were afoot to set up an "Africa hot-line", a legal service to assist people interested in trade with African countries, jointly with Saftq.

THERE is an old Yoruba proverb that a good actor knows to vacate the stage when the applause is loudest. It would have been sound advice for Nigeria's military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, before he nullified the country's presidential elections of June 12 and sent his popularity ratings to below zero on the streets of Lagos.

This week, Babangida's ruling military council called another election. Moshood Abiola, the candidate who would have won last time had the election not been cancelled midway through the count, is banned from standing.

"Why have another election when you have had one already?" asked Adenuran Ogunleye, a Lagos taxi driver, with a logic to wither the fanciest political explanation. "We voted on June 12. The world said that election was peaceful, free and fair. Why do we have to do it again?"

The almost unanimous anger in Lagos and other south-western Nigerian cities at the cancellation of the election exploded last week into widespread demonstrations that left dozens dead.

The future of democracy and the transition to civilian rule in Nigeria now hangs in the balance. Opposition politicians, including Abiola's Social Democratic Party, have refused to have anything to do with another election and the Campaign for Democracy, along with the trade unions, is mobilising for a passive resistance campaign in the form of a nationwide stay-at-home until the military hands over power.

People on the streets cannot fathom why Babangida won't let go. Some fear it is because Abiola is a Yoruba, a man from the south in a country long dominated by a clique of northern politicians. Yet, before the results were annulled, Abiola was romping home in every region, even Kano state in the far north.

Ex-military ruler General Olesegun Obasanjo, who handed over to civilian rule in 1979 and who has joined the chorus of criticism of Babangida, said this week "An election that should have been used to strengthen the fabric of Nigerian unity as a result of the nationwide support for the leading candidate is being used to weaken it."

The war in the breakaway state of Biafra in the 1960s, when two million people starved to death, is a grim precaution against secessionist conflict in this ethnically diverse nation. But the current impasse provides an insight into how politicians can cynically manipulate latent ethnicity and regionalism. If Abiola is denied the presidency, Yorubas could read it as a statement that one of their kind can never be president.

Yet, so far, Babangida's actions have united Nigerians across the spectrum. Apart from Obasanjo and others in the Nigerian establishment, Nobel laureate playwright Wole Soyinka has spoken out passionately for democracy.

The Sultan of Sokoto, spiritual leader of the country's 27-million Muslims, who are concentrated in the north of the country, has joined the Christian bishops in demanding that Abiola be proclaimed president-elect. "The time of ethnic conflict has passed completely. We're all Nigerians. Our quarrel is against Babangida's govern-

The show is over, but the general won't go

Like a drunken man in a china shop, Nigeria's General Ibrahim Babangida is being led out by a formerly divided nation now united against him



By
**PHILLIP
VAN
NIEKERK**



Protesters rampage through the streets of Lagos demanding the resignation of military leader General Ibrahim Babangida. Photo AP

ment," says Ogunleye.

This is a country where ideology has long ceased to matter. Much of the support for Abiola is based on the hope that, as a billionaire businessman, he will be able to perform the same miracles in transforming Nigeria's economic mess that he has for himself.

"The president-elect has the experience, the ability, the international contacts, to perform for Nigeria," says Adeyemi Olukokun, a trader, while complaining that the naira, the Nigerian unit of currency, is worth less than toilet paper.

Lagos, once the economic powerhouse of Nigeria, is a city coming apart at the seams. The boom of the 1970s, the bonanza years for this oil-rich nation, went bust a decade ago. It left a foreign debt of \$27-billion, rotting infrastructure and an annual inflation rate of 300 to 500 percent.

Now the best the Nigerian government can conjure up to keep the spirit of the nation from flagging is an advertisement on state-run television. "Hard times are not forever."

Yet in the public mind hard times are inextricably linked to the corruption of the leaders. "The whole system is corrupt, from the top to the bottom," says an exasperated Western diplomat.

Lagos is really two cities. Lagos Island is a district of embassy compounds, international hotels, spanking new Mercedes Benzes and foreign banks with postmodern facades. A crime wave that has deepened with the recession ensures that the buildings in this part of town are surrounded by high walls with spikes on the top. Bank trucks, a favourite target of hijackers, roar through the traffic like ambulances with sirens blazing.

Under the long bridge that spans the Niger

delta, fishermen row from their stilt houses in tiny dugouts to fish in the lagoon waters. Across that bridge, on the mainland, the commercial district stretches for miles. Everything is for sale: the catch of the day alongside compact disc players, yams and chillies next to photostat reductions, unisex haircuts, fanbelts and aluminum doors.

The high level of political sophistication of ordinary Nigerians, who have been waiting for democracy for a long time, is a telling indictment of the country's post-independent record of coups, corruption and mismanagement. It speaks of the real tragedy of Nigeria: of the abuse of a people by a venal, power-hungry political class.

Politicisation is aided by the fact that the city is well-served by a vibrant daily selection of newspapers. People find shade to carefully study the issues of the day in the seven tabloids on sale.

The papers range from the government-owned *Times* through to the more sober *Guardian*, and the opposition mouthpiece, the *National Concord*, whose screaming headlines call on Babangida to "quit now." The outspokenness of the press is refreshing in a country where at least one newspaper, *The News*, has been closed down by the government, and where three human rights activists have been jailed and charged with sedition for distributing pro-democracy leaflets and organising a rally for Abiola.

MA Oguntula, a retired bureaucrat, has observed the grim toll of Nigerian history firsthand. "Even the colonialists gave us freedom without bloodshed. Unlike now, where the people have to fight to regain democracy."

And, despite a leadership vacuum, Nigerians are ready to stand up for their rights.

Obasanjo says there are four ways for Babangida to exit. Firstly, he can go voluntarily. He has said he wants to transfer power to a civilian administration on August 27, his scheduled day of departure and the culmination of an eight-year planned transition to civilian rule.

Yet, if this is democracy, it is fatally flawed. Democracy, as *Guardian* columnist Oatunji Dare writes, "cannot be founded on the methods of the street mugger."

Some observers believe that the calling of a second election is actually a ploy to extend military rule. The military leadership has stressed that an election depends on the politicians playing ball and, as one of the two legal parties has already refused to field a candidate, it is reasonable to assume that it won't happen.

The alternatives, said Obasanjo, were that Babangida — who has shaky support in the armed forces, who voted overwhelmingly for Abiola — would be overthrown by a military coup or through protest and civil disobedience, planning for which is already underway.

Or, said Obasanjo, the people could lead the military ruler out "like a drunken man in a china shop, showing him the way, leading and pushing him to the door without doing too much damage to the items and himself."

Either way, there will be no applause in Nigeria for Babangida when he makes his inevitable exit from the china shop.

STimes
Election date
18/7/93

NIGERIA is pressing ahead with a fresh presidential election despite growing opposition and a court battle to force the military government to reverse its cancellation of last month's poll and to accept the result

The electoral commission said it would hold the new election on August 14, two weeks before military president Ibrahim Babangida has promised to hand over power to civilians

(22b)

Rotten teacher's good lessons

Subject 187493

CARMEL RICKARD says South Africa must take heed of the recent election fiasco in Nigeria

NIGERIANS, enthusiastic about their planned June elections, were keen to offer advice to South Africa. For months before the June 12 polls, experts on that country suggested the authorities here watch Nigeria's transition to democratic civilian rule, as South Africa could learn a lot from the Nigerian model.

Since then, military ruler Ibrahim Babangida has aborted the elections and Nigeria is huddled on the edge of chaos. Ironically, however, the experts proved correct — South Africa can indeed learn much from the Nigerian polls, even if not the lessons originally intended.

Most obviously, Nigeria's experience underscores the lesson of Angola even the most free and fair election means nothing if the losers refuse to accept the results and have the military capacity to ensure the winners cannot take power.

When General Babangida realised the people were not returning his preferred candidate, his junta simply scrapped the elections.

Two other morals from the Nigerian tale seem especially important for lawyers and the civil rights community here (222b)

Drafters are now working on legislation to establish an Independent Electoral Commission to oversee elections in this country. One of the contested issues is whether commission decisions can be appealed to the courts.

The Nigerian fiasco shows what happens if the relationship between the courts and the commission is not clearly spelt out and honoured by all parties — and if members of the commission are not independent of political pressure.

General Babangida passed a decree making the National Electoral Commission the final arbiter of issues relating to the election. Two days before voting began, his Decree 13 was ignored by the courts when the Association for a Better Nigeria won an order barring the polls from going ahead.

The NEC, acting under Decree 13, ignored the court order and said the election should proceed. However,

once the poll results began to emerge, the NEC took a different line.

Renewed court challenges against NEC decisions seemed to shake the commission's confidence in its powers.

Pressure, presumed to come from General Babangida, on key members of the commission is widely believed to have helped the NEC to capitulate.

Four days after the election, the NEC announced it would not, for the moment, issue any further results.

Legal challenges from all sides continued, however, and a week later the government scrapped the election, saying this step was necessary to save the reputation of the courts.

The courts were being brought into disrepute because of all the applications for or against the issuing of election results, and the conflicting outcomes of these applications, the government said.

This points to a third lesson. Nigeria's legal system has fallen into such disrepute over the last few decades

that few people trust court decisions.

Nigerians believe the courts are not independent, and cannot stand their ground against the government or even against powerful individual politicians.

Why the decline? Successive corrupt Nigerian governments have ignored court decisions. Judicial appointments are allegedly often made to repay favours. Many judges are civil servants elevated through the ranks, rather than coming from experienced practising lawyers.

Judges' salaries are so paltry that some moonlight to make ends meet. Allegations of bribery are rife.

Perhaps this is one of the advantages South Africa will enjoy over Nigeria at election time. The legal system in this country steadily lost credibility because of apartheid and a number of political appointees. However, thanks to the integrity and determined independence of key judges, at least compared with Nigeria, this country's courts have considerably more popular respect.

Nigerians must learn how to fish

226 WM23-29/7/93

THE one serene figure amid the swirling currents of Nigerian politics is Bashorun Moshood KO Abiola, the man cheated of certain victory in the June 12 election

The 55-year-old would-be-king holds court from his mansion at MKO Abiola Crescent, Ikeja, outside Lagos. He slips out only to fly to the capital, Abuja, in his personal aeroplane to meet General Ibrahim Babangida.

Resplendent in flowing robes, with a traditional hat perched rakishly on his head, the Mr Big who began his career as a peasant boy selling firewood is supremely confident that he will be president of Nigeria after August 27.

Even if he doesn't, South Africans may soon get to know him well. Abiola confirmed last week that he heads a consortium of Nigerian businessmen who will be launching an African National Congress-supporting daily newspaper in January next year.

The son of an illiterate commoner, Abiola has acquired not only a vast fortune, but great standing among his titles are Commander of the Order of Mono-Togo, Bobagunwa of Egbaland, Bobajuro of Ode Remo, and Oganja of Ojoo.

He is said to have 60 children from numerous wives, but won't name a figure.

Nor does Abiola count his money, which some estimate to be closer to billions than millions. During the election campaign, opponents implied he was tainted by the country's notorious corruption that he himself has promised to root out. He was even accused of "savaging the nation's telephone system." His CV notes pointedly, however, that he "retired honorably" in 1988 as senior executive vice-president of International Telephone Telecommunications for Africa and the Middle East.

Abiola says he has used his millions on burials to send 3 000 children from poor homes to university. His campaign literature describes his philanthropy in vivid terms: "To him, wealth is a manure to be spread around in order to help others grow."

A former boxer, champion athlete and Nigerian national soccer player, he has a full-size soccer field at his house and, during the 1980s, owned his own soccer team, the Abiola Babes.

Strangely, the future of an entire country of more than 100-million people is being decided between two friends of long standing. Babangida's portrait, in military regalia, still hangs in Abiola's ornate living room.

Abiola was not the favoured choice of the pro-democracy activists. Many never bothered to vote because the selection process was rigged. But now they have thrown their weight behind him because the alternative — the extension of military rule — is worse.

The activists want him to take the struggle to the streets. But Abiola does not want to unleash forces that could degenerate into chaos. "If the person who has the sword does not voluntarily hand it over, and you try to take it by force, you will get badly hurt," he warns.

Abiola's style is gentle, congenial persuasion. His living room is filled with emirs from the

The man cheated of victory in last month's Nigerian elections, uses gentle persuasion to get his way. But it may not be enough



By
**PHILLIP
VAN
NIEKERK**



Mr Big — Bashorun Moshood KO Abiola — began his career as a peasant boy selling wood

north, Yoruba traditional leaders and Social Democratic MPs from the eastern Igbo states, who wait to see him as he consults through the night. This quiet coalition-building was how Abiola won the election, marketing himself as the "living bridge" between Nigerians.

Yet it is not easy to see how these tactics will end the Nigerian impasse. Short of a coup or a revolution, Nigeria faces indefinite military rule as hopes have faded that Babangida will keep his promise and shed power on August 27.

As Nigeria waits for Abiola to move, there are those who criticise him for doing too little, and those who condemn him for doing too much.

In the latter category is Emeka Ojukwu, who was only 33 when, as a young army colonel in 1967, he took the eastern Igbo states out of Nigeria and proclaimed independence for the Republic

of Biafra. More than 100 000 people died in battle and up to two million Biafrans starved to death before he surrendered in 1970.

An Oxford-educated historian, the bearded Ojukwu speaks with a passionate, almost poetic, eloquence. "I see dangerous trends manifesting themselves. I see a situation where one area is moving in a different direction from the others."

This time it is the Yoruba-dominated southwest that is moving away from the rest of Nigeria. Abiola is a Yoruba and the demonstrations against military rule have concentrated in the Yoruba heartland.

Most alarming, says Ojukwu, is the fact that the courts have developed regional bias. After the annulment of the election was upheld by a court in the capital Abuja, Abiola applied to court in Lagos to have the election reinstated.

"Everywhere in the world, when you are dissatisfied with a judgment, the answer is to go to a superior court, not to choose your own court and get a separate decision," says Ojukwu.

Ojukwu, who admits that when he led Biafra, he himself indulged in ethnic jingoism, sees the same thing happening again. "Here in Lagos, I already see people digging their trenches."

He accuses Abiola of putting himself above Nigeria. The impasse could be resolved, he says, if Abiola merely steps aside.

One factor that increasingly looks as if it could bring matters to a head is the unease felt by middle-level members of the military.

"I think the military understand that they have lost credibility," says Clement Nwankwo, executive director of the Constitutional Rights Project. "Unless they clean up their own act, there will be a breakdown of discipline and morale."

That implausible scenario — a military *coup d'état* to restore civilian rule — looks increasingly plausible. Abiola has started to make gestures to secure the loyalty of the armed forces.

"Once it becomes clear that the government has no programme to hand over power, people will show that they are prepared to resist," says Nwankwo.

Civil rights groups are continuing to mobilise support for mass action against military rule next month. Nwankwo is one of the idealistic young human rights workers who represent an gratifying counterpoint to the generally venal and self-serving machinations of Nigeria's political class.

In the same mould is trade unionist Glory Afi Kilanko, who heads Women in Nigeria. She is an endangered species — a woman involved in the political debate in Nigeria.

Even in the south, where traditional practices are breaking down, women have been marginalised by the curse of Nigerian politics. "Politics in Nigeria is a rich person's game, and women do not have that much money to put up to participate in elections," says Kilanko.

Kilanko says there is much to get angry about in Nigeria, but she reserves special ire for the women's movement which, funded by the government, is silent during the political crisis.

Of the two candidates, Abiola was the best on women's issues, promising to put women's rights high on the agenda and to set aside four cabinet posts for women.

"Where is the women's movement now?" she asks. "Posterty will not forgive us if we fold our arms and watch our country being dragged into the mud."

She uses a parable to describe the futility of the women being bought off. "There is abject poverty in the country, and people have to struggle to eat. They are not even interested in knowing how to fish, they are only looking out for a basket of fish to be given to them."

"I tell them. Look, if you want to be provided with a basket of fish you will only have one meal. It is better for you to learn how to fish so that you will have food for the rest of your life."

It is a lesson that not only the women's movement has to learn in Nigeria today.

Press muffled in Nigeria ⁽²²⁶⁾

LAGOS — Nigeria's military government has shut down several newspapers and magazines, journalists said yesterday

CT 24/7/93

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Lagos purge

St. James
LAGOS: Nigeria's military government has shut down four newspaper groups and a radio station in the biggest press clampdown since independence. 257193

Concord Press, Punch, Sketch and Abuja Newsday, as well as the radio station Ogun State Broadcasting Corporation, were closed because they had "succumbed to the influence of money and propagated the selfish interests of certain politicians". The Concord is owned by Moshood Ablola, the man widely believed to have won the scrapped June 12 presidential poll. (226)

Sowetan
**Swazi visit
by Nigerians**
28/7/93

MBABANE — A six-person Nigerian delegation arrived in Swaziland on Monday to deliver a special message to King Mswati.

Nigerian Industry and Technology Minister Mr Alhaji Aminu said he could not disclose the contents of the message from President Ibrahim Babangida. — *Sowetan Correspondents and Sapa* (22b)



NEWS Five die in Nigerian robberies • Pupils take over

Sowetan 28/7/93
Crisis causes unrest

LAGOS — Unidentified men opened fire with automatic weapons at Lagos Airport and at a Michelin company work site in Port Harcourt, killing five people and wounding four, sources said yesterday

It was not known if the two attacks were politically motivated

Five armed men opened fire on a truck carrying money late on Monday at the entrance to the airport and on police

escorting the vehicle, killing three policemen and a driver and seriously wounding two other people, including a driver from the Dutch Embassy, a Western diplomat who witnessed the attack said

On Saturday night about 15 men opened fire with assault rifles at a work site of the French firm Michelin in Port Harcourt, a major economic and petroleum centre, informed sources said

When security guards went to inves-

tigate, a gun battle broke out, leaving one guard dead and two others seriously wounded

Nigeria's military government last month cancelled a presidential election, alleging irregularities. The junta later scheduled a new poll for August 14 and has promised to hand over power to a civilian government on August 27

There are widespread fears in Nigeria of violent unrest breaking out as a result of the political crisis — Sapa-AFP

Africa

Corruption clampdown

28/7/93
NAIROBI — President

Daniel arap Moi has accepted the resignation of his embattled Governor of the Central Bank, Mr Eric Kotut, and ordered the closure of another "politically connected" bank in a clean-up operation aimed at ridding his government of high level corruption. 22b

Several senior officials of the Central Bank were also arrested at the weekend along with executives of a local bank, the Exchange Bank

Star 29/7/93

Nigeria

in bid for coalition

LAGOS — Nigerians were waiting anxiously today for the military government's verdict on a proposal from the country's two rival political parties for an interim government to solve the election crisis. (226)

The Social Democratic Party (SDP), which claimed victory in annulled presidential polls in June, and the National Republican Convention (NRC) submitted the plan to the electoral commission yesterday.

Many people, fearful that the political crisis could result in civil war, would welcome any compromise

Malpractices

But it was unclear whether President Ibrahim Babangida, who scrapped the election citing malpractices and ordered a fresh poll, would accept the proposal

Neither was it clear whether Moshood Abiola, widely believed to have fairly won, would drop his demand to be sworn in as president on August 27, when Babangida promised to step down

SDP officials briefed Abiola last night on the party's decision to back the plan for an interim government, effectively dropping its previous insistence for the government to uphold his apparent election victory

— Sapa-Reuters

Africa

~~in Africa~~
Sowetan 30/1/83

Interim rule is opposed ²²⁶

LAGOS — Moshood Abiola, the man widely believed to have won Nigeria's scrapped presidential election, is opposed to the idea of an interim government favoured by his party, his top aide said yesterday.

"Chief Abiola told the party he does not support the idea of an interim national government," Jonathan Zwingina, Abiola's campaign manager said



INTERNATIONAL NEWS Nigerian leader opts for interim

Sowetan 2/8/93

No rush — Babangida

(226)

LAGOS — Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida is likely to remain in power beyond August 27, the date he promised to return his country to civilian rule, after opting for an interim government in place of a rush election.

"Babangida will still be there. We are still in an endless transition to civil rule," House of Representatives member Mr Tokumbo Afikuyomi told *Reuters*. "It's like Jesus Christ's second coming. Promised for so long but no-

one except the Lord knows when it will happen," he added. Babangida has promised to relinquish power on August 27 after three times delaying his return to civilian rule programme since it started in 1986. The general told leaders of Nigeria's two political parties on Saturday in the capital Abuja that an interim government to conclude the transition process was necessary following the annulment of the June 12 presidential elections. "We should see

the interim government as a consensus arrangement for concluding the transitional agenda of this administration, which was disrupted by the imperative need to nullify the June 12 presidential elections," Babangida said.

The government's cancellation of the poll plunged Africa's most populous nation into its gravest political crisis in a decade and threw Babangida's political programme into disarray — *Sapa-Reuters*.

New 'consensus' Star 218193 govt for Nigeria

LAGOS — Political crisis still grips Nigeria despite military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida's announcement of a "consensus arrangement" for an interim government to smooth the return to democracy.

The plan was heavily criticised by supporters of Moshood Abiola — widely believed to have won the annulled June 12 presidential election.

"There is absolutely no need for an interim government," said Abiola's aide Femi Oredin last night. "It is part of manoeuvres to stop the country and the people from having the government they have elected."

President Babangida told leaders of Nigeria's two political parties on

Saturday "We should see the interim government as a consensus arrangement for concluding the transitional agenda of this administration, which was disrupted by the imperative need to nullify the June 12 presidential elections."

However, he did not elaborate on the role of the military, nor did he give the usual assurances of his commitment to resign on August 27

Details of the stopgap government will be worked out by a committee headed by Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu, a retired admiral, some senior army officers, executives of the two parties, and members of the government.

— Sapa-Reuter.

Fiasco yes, but are you listening, South Africa?

Star 5/18/93

22b

THE final outcome of Nigeria's June 12 presidential elections was to have been the declaration of a president-elect who would assume power for a return to civilian constitutional rule on August 27.

That has not happened. The election has been nullified by the military regime and the electorate rejects that nullification.

It was a weary, apprehensive, deeply cynical and sullen electorate that went to the polls to elect a president. In fact, the majority of the voters did not go to the polls.

Even on the eve of the voting, there was doubt and confusion as to whether the election would occur. Contradictory court rulings had postponed the elections and ordered them to proceed, on the basis of the military's own unambiguous decree that precluded the courts from interfering with the National Electoral Commission's conduct of the elections.

The result of that process seemed to many Nigerians to be a lively illustration of Karl Marx's dictum that history repeats itself first as tragedy and then as farce.

In the party "a little to the left", the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the presidential nominee was not anyone Nigerians had previously recognised as a Leftist or a democrat. Rather, he was one of the country's richest businessmen, the billionaire chairman of ITT Africa, a hugely successful shipping magnate and publisher, Moshood Abiola.

He had stormed out of the right-of-centre party the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) during Nigeria's Second Republic a decade earlier. In 1983 it refused to allow him to contest its presidential nomination. A southerner and a Yoruba, Abiola felt his party, dominated by conservative northern and predominantly Hausa-Fulani elites, had made a commitment at the start of the Republic in 1979 to rotate the presidential nomination to the south in 1983, after it was captured by the northern, Hausa-Fulani Shehu Shagari, who went on to win election as president.

But in 1983 the dominant

LARRY DIAMOND reflects on the lessons South Africa can learn from the Nigerian election fiasco

northern elements in the NPN insisted that Shagari have a chance to contest for a second term as president, and then proceeded to rig him and a wave of other NPN candidates back into power in the most blatantly fraudulent national elections in Nigerian history.

That history, that failure of power to rotate south in 1983, either in the primary or general election, that reimposition of a totally discredited and bankrupt and northern-dominated government on the country, is crucial to understanding the current crisis.

The vast majority of southern Nigerians — as well as Christians and many progressive or populist Muslims in the north — see history repeating itself. They see that the candidate they voted for is being denied national power by what they believe are fraudulent and illegitimate means.

It is a fact that for roughly 29 of Nigeria's 33 years of independence, a northerner has headed the federal government in Nigeria, and the northern Muslim power elite has essentially controlled the highest levels of political power. It is a fact that no southerner has ever won election to head the federal government — until June 12.

There are several stunning things about the 1993 presidential election that mark it as a watershed. Although only half the results had been released when the military put a halt to the process in midstream, the full results have since leaked to the press.

Although the turnout was very low, the voting itself was by various accounts remarkable for its peaceful conduct.

The most unlikely of figures — Abiola, widely regarded as part of the corrupt political class — has become a symbol of the country's aspirations for democracy, and for an end, for all time, to military rule.

By cancelling the June 12 election on the absurd pretext



General Babangida has played his last hand.

of conflicting court rulings, General Ibrahim Babangida has played his last hand. Everything that has followed since has been a desperate and impossible effort to recover some fig leaf of legitimacy for a process that no longer has any shred of it.

There is a tremendous amount at stake here for Nigeria and for Africa, including South Africa. Babangida cannot succeed in manipulating the process one more time, and he cannot remain in power indefinitely. The only question now is how much chaos and bloodshed he is willing to risk plunging his country into in order to hang on to power.

Few people outside Nigeria realise how close it came to a civil war — with northern military units fighting rebel southern units — in the failed coup attempt of 1990, which announced as one of its first proclamations (while briefly in control of the national radio network) that it was temporarily "excising" the five predominantly northern Muslim states from the federation.

And few outsiders realise now how seriously Nigerian leaders of political thought are thinking and talking about secession or separation as the only answer to the recurrent political crises and stalemates.

Africa cannot afford to have Nigeria become another Liberia. The consequences of even large-scale instability in that anchor of west Africa, the world's most populous black country, are too frightening to contemplate.

Nor can Africa, or, for that matter, South Africa, view with detachment another dramatic failure on the part of Nigeria to make democracy work, and to reconcile peacefully, through the play of democratic institutions, the deep ethnic, regional and religious divisions.

For all its destructive corruption, Nigeria has been a leader in the design of institutions to contain and manage and soften ethnic divisions.

Those institutions — including, prominently, federalism and other provisions for decentralising and balancing power and resources — actually began to work during the Second Republic, and might yet (with some revisions) work in a Third Republic, to manage those ethnic cleavages and create new political divisions and identities cutting across them.

There are several lessons here for southern Africa. First, presidentialism has been the curse of Africa precisely because it concentrates so much power in one person and renders politics a zero-sum game. Democracy cannot work in immature political cultures and deeply divided societies when its institutions produce winner-take-all outcomes.

Rigorous

Majoritarian institutions — including presidentialism, unitary government and plurality forms of legislative elections — are therefore ill-advised for most of Africa.

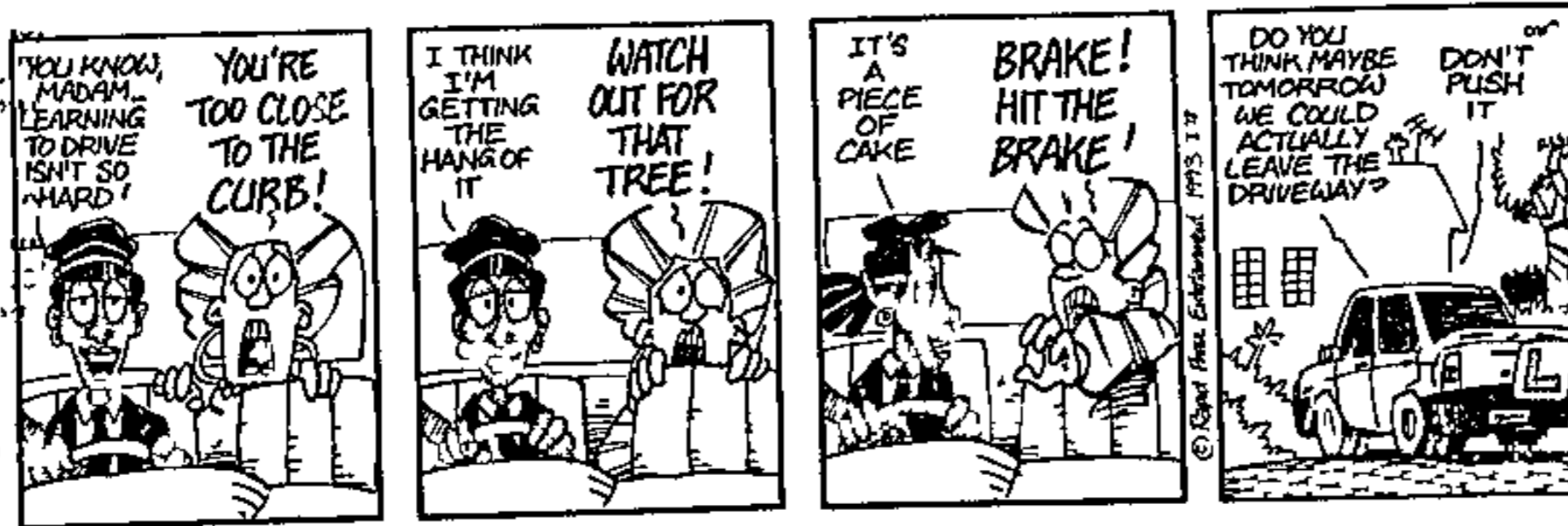
Second, it is very important to take seriously from the beginning the challenge of putting in place truly rigorous, autonomous and powerful institutions and laws to check corruption.

Third, in a situation where there are many ethnic groups with deep mutual divisions and mistrust, power must be shared. No ethnic or racial monopoly of power can endure without provoking deep bitterness, and ultimately hatred and violence. No matter how borders are altered and nations reconfigured, people who see themselves as culturally different will need to learn to live with one another if peace and stability and development are going to be possible.

That means sharing power. It means rotating and voluntarily surrendering power from time to time. And, therefore, it means democracy. □

● Larry Diamond is a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University. This is an edited version of a speech he gave at a recent SA Institute of International Affairs meeting in Johannesburg.

MADAM & EVE By S Francis, H Dugmore & Rico



Clashes

Star 6/18/93

loom in

Nigeria

LAGOS — Nigeria's military government and pro-democracy groups appeared to be heading for a showdown over President Ibrahim Babangida's plan to install an unelected stop-gap administration in the country. (226)

A committee set up to flesh out the plan for an interim government submitted its report on Thursday to General Babangida, who had pledged to restore civilian rule by August 27.

The committee, headed by Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu and including generals and leaders of the two political parties, said the stop-gap government should include both civilians and members of the armed forces, with the former in the majority.

Nigeria was plunged into its most serious political crisis since its 1967-70 civil war after the military government annulled June 12 elections believed to have been won by millionaire businessman Moshood Abiola.

Babangida, who has three times delayed a return to civil rule, has said that an interim government will provide "a cooling-off period" to allow for the easing of tensions. But pro-democracy groups, dismissing this as a ploy to keep the military in power after the promised August 27 deadline, said they would press ahead with plans for peaceful protests.

The Campaign for Democracy (CD) pressure group said its aim was "to demonstrate the implacable commitment of the Nigerian people to the unconditional termination of military rule regardless of the treachery of the political class"

Advising people to stock up on food, it said the protests, planned for August 12-14, would involve peaceful rallies, processions, bonfires and various forms of civil disobedience. — Sapa-Reuter.

Nigeria spurns democracy

(226)

WMM 6-12/8/93

Chris McGreal in Lagos

NIGERIA'S military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, has abandoned his commitment to cede power to a democratic government this month. He now plans to appoint a hand-picked civilian administration that would remain effectively under military control.

Gen Babangida endorsed the creation of a joint political-military committee at the weekend to appoint an interim national government, decide its length in office and oversee new presidential elections. But the powerful military-controlled National Defence and Security Council, which

runs Nigeria, will remain in place after the new administration takes office. And some politicians hinted that the choice of a new president had already been abandoned to the army. While the leaders of Nigeria's only two political parties agreed to collaborate with the military, the presumed winner of June's cancelled presidential vote, Moshood Abiola, denounced the scheme.

"Such a government will be dogged by problems of legitimacy and credibility from the outset. Lacking a popular mandate, it will not be able to tackle the serious economic and social problems confronting the nation," he said.

Star 9/8/93
Babangida may turn civilian

Lagos — Nigeria's military rulers meet this week to decide who will run the country after the deadline for a handover to civilian rule has expired on August 27. One option would be for President Ibrahim Babangida to swap his uniform for a suit and run an interim government (22b)

Reports: by Star Foreign Service, Sapa, Reuter, Financial Times, AP and AFP Pictures: AP, AFP

Arrests by Nigerians

LAGOS — Security agents raided a democracy campaign headquarters and arrested 10 people yesterday, apparently hoping to head off protests from Nigerians expecting a thinly-veiled extension of military rule.

The swoop looked like the start of a crackdown on activists before President Ibrahim Babangida announces his next move after he annulled the election of a successor in June.

Political analysts feel Gen Babangida is considering meeting his August 27 deadline to end 10 years of military rule by making himself head of a nominally civilian government.

The target of yesterday's raid was the home of Beko Ransome-Kuti, which serves as the office of Campaign for Democracy — Sapa-Reuter (226)

BIDay. 11/8/93

Babangida plan 'just a ruse'

LAGOS — President Ibrahim Babangida, who has promised to restore civilian rule in Nigeria on August 27, was meeting senior generals yesterday to seek their support for an unelected stopgap government

But opposition is growing to his plans, which critics consider a ruse to perpetuate military control

(22b)
"The national interim government schemes are no solution to the current political impasse facing the nation," a group of prominent Nigerians declared

"Should the present administration not be terminated on August 27, we urge all Nigerians to embark upon peaceful and non-violent means of expressing their disapproval," the Association for Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria said

Former military rulers Olusegun Obasanjo and Muhammed Buhari are both members of the group
Gen Babangida seized power in 1985 and

began slowly readying Nigeria for the return of civilian rule. But he scuttled his own elaborate preparations by annulling the election of a civilian successor in June

Details of his latest plans are sketchy. Political sources say a Babangida-appointed committee suggested the head and deputy head of the interim government would be civilians, which would exclude Babangida unless he handed in his uniform

Analysts say Babangida's talks with senior military and police officers will be the key forum for deciding the government's next step in the crisis. A meeting of the National Defence and Security Council, the military government's highest decision-making body, will be held tomorrow

Campaign for Democracy, an alliance of civil rights, women's and student groups whose offices were raided by police on Monday, has called for peaceful protests against military rule for tomorrow, Friday and Saturday — Sapa-Reuter

Star 11/8/93

Key questions remain

Lagos — Nigeria's military rulers are pressing on with plans to install an unelected interim government but key questions about its composition remain to be answered

(226)

John Paul II as he arrives yesterday from Mexico in
PICTURE AP

ama.
He was also honoured by
the Queen for his role in the
Gulf War — Sapa-Reuter

Democracy stayaway cripples Lagos again

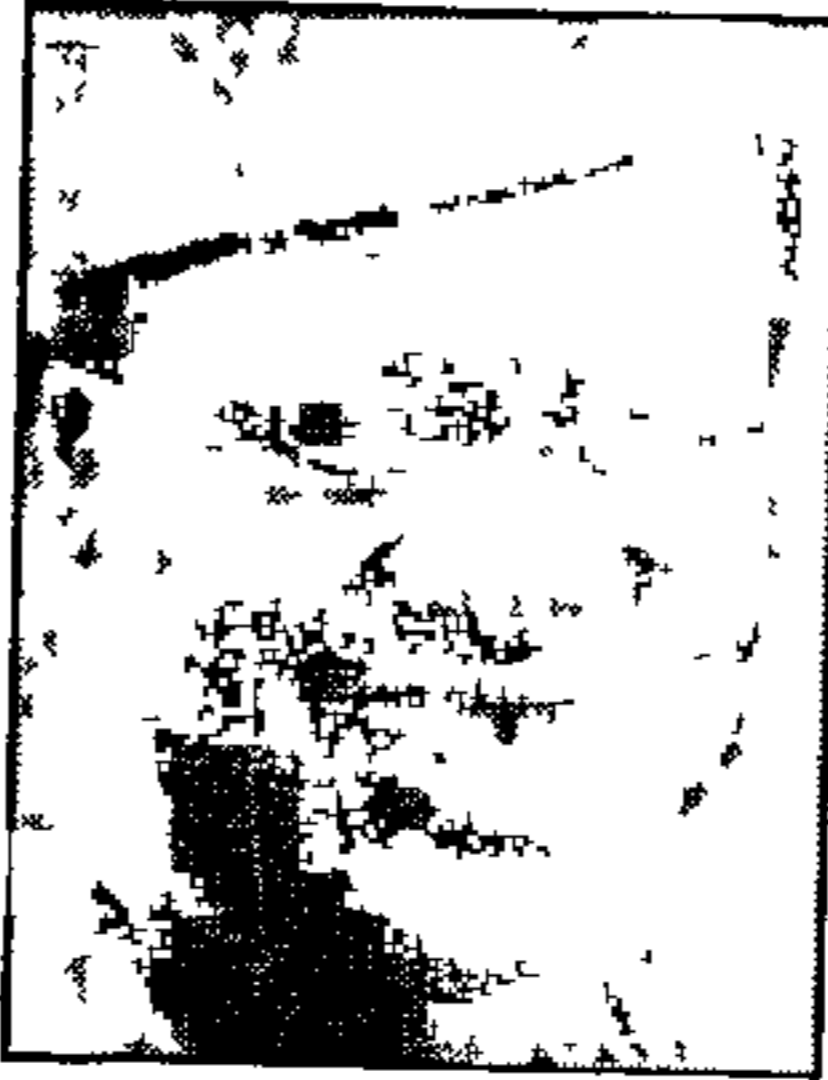
Star 13/8/93

Lagos. — A mass stay-away protest against military rule crippled Nigeria's biggest city, Lagos, yesterday but seemed to have no effect in other cities

The commercial centre of Lagos was almost deserted except for armed police. Most banks and shops were shut.

The Lagos-based Campaign for Democracy called for the protests to last until tomorrow. In July, similar protests crippled Lagos for three days. More than 100 people were killed.

Lagos and the Yoruba-speaking south-west are the home ground of millionaire businessman Moshood Abiola, who is believed to have won the presidential election in June which Nigeria's military ruler, General Ibrahim Babangida, annulled without announcing the result.



Babangida ... said to be revamping villa.

Babangida is now considering the appointment of a stop-gap government. But many Nigerians are expecting only a thinly veiled extension of military control.

The faltering of Babangida's promised return to democracy has thrown Nigeria

into its gravest political crisis in 23 years.

Relations have soured with the United States and the European Community, which have imposed token sanctions to pressure the military to hand over.

Washington on Wednesday banned flights between the US and Lagos's Murtala Muhammed Airport, citing insufficient security at the airport as the reason.

Meanwhile, a Paris newspaper reported yesterday that Babangida was having his Riviera villa, near Cannes, spruced up in anticipation of living in France.

Major improvements, including the addition of two swimming pools and a tennis court, are being made to the villa, reported the newspaper Humanite — Sapa-Reuter-AP.

226

Babangida is 'inciting another Biafra'

WOLE SOYINKA, the Nigerian Nobel laureate, accused the military government this week of pushing the country towards the edge of civil war. At a London press conference he called on the international community to support the results of the annulled June 12 presidential election by imposing an embargo on arms and oil.

"A tiny power-driven group has declared war on the people," he said, describing President Ibrahim Babangida as a "demented improviser"

Meanwhile, Nigeria's military government called the police out in force and threatened to impose a state of emergency in preparation for three days of strikes and other protests to demand recognition of June's annulled presidential election.

The protest comes as Nigerians await General Babangida's decision on the composition and role of the civilian administration he has promised to install at the scheduled transition to democracy in a fortnight.

The proposal before the general is for a hand-picked civilian president to oversee an interim government and elections before the end of next year. But the military would retain the levers of power and the new administration would exclude the widely accepted winner of the June election, Moshood Abiola.

The government has said its decision to overturn that vote is irreversible

WM 13-19/8/93
Death in Nigeria, page 19

Nigerians cry over spilt oil

Chris McGreal reports from the Niger delta on the Ogoni people's response to Shell's pollution record.

JOHN NTORUE says he watched for weeks as a fine spray of petroleum coated the bamboo and palm trees around the Sasiga rivulet until, mixed with acid rain and humid air, it gave the plants the milky brown sheen of a chocolate forest.

The oil spill deprived him of the best of his livelihood tapping palm oil, and cost the surrounding community its water supply. But still the pool of black petroleum kept growing.

"Maybe I'll find another place. I've never seen it like this before. It's killed my chickens and goats. And the smell, it makes you sick," he said.

The pipe from Shell's Korokoro pumping station burst in June. The company says it stemmed the flow the next day, the people of Baranwala-Botem say it was only last week.

Either way, the oil continues to bubble into the stream and wash down to other communities. It is also polluting the already poisonous atmosphere between Shell and Nigeria's Ogoni people that has driven the company's workers from the region.

The Ogoni have added the Sagira spill to the list of environmental hazards they say are routine and overlooked by those responsible. They accuse Shell of racism and the Nigerian government of sacrificing the 500,000 Ogoni people for money.

Demands for a clean-up of pollution, a share of profits and fairer compensation for land are long standing. Recently feeling against the company has coalesced into a political movement and protests which, Shell alleges, include sabotage and attacks on its staff.

Shell withdrew its personnel from the region in January after a worker was beaten up. Since then its pumping stations have been on automatic. Back pressure when the pumps at the Korokoro plant tripped probably caused the leak.

Shell's business development general manager, Nnaemeka Achebe, accuses the Ogonis around Baranwala-Botem of using spills for financial gain. "The community has refused the clean-up for very obvious reasons, because they want to have a showpiece. The longer the mess is around the bigger the claim they can demand."

But the Ogoni grievances are older than the recent confrontations.

In Europe, Shell pushes a green agenda. In South Africa, it buys full-



An Ogoni in festival dress

PHOTOGRAPH HUTCHINSON LIBRARY

page newspaper ads to back human rights for all. But in Nigeria evidence of another policy tares the landscape.

At Ebubu-Elleme, oil spilled across three square miles 23 years ago. The pipeline was repaired, but little effort has been made to remove the caked oil that continues to wash into the Muepene river.

Mr Achebe concedes that the responsibility is Shell's. He says it bought the land and certified it had been cleaned up two decades ago. Almost no oil was removed.

In April 1990, Shell again gave the site a clean bill of health, even though there remained a vast expanse of oil.

Eventually Mr Achebe implicitly conceded Shell had done almost nothing to clean up its pollution as only the Ogonis were making noise.

"Standards 10 or 20 years ago were different from today. Not in Nigeria only, everywhere, in the UK, in America, everywhere. And in the United States there are places now where companies are being required to go back and do some more work on a situation that had been accepted as environmentally acceptable."

Shell says that it confirms to Nigerian law and its own rules. Nigerian standards can be judged by the government-run Okrika petrochemical plant. The lingering smell is like boiled broccoli. The oil sheen on the stream in the town gives it a coating of rainbow colours.

Residents say the air and water are damaging them and their crops. Diar-

rhoea and vomiting are treated as regular complaints. Fish stocks are dead, vegetation stunted.

The writer Ken Saro-Wiwa has spent 25 years campaigning against the conduct of the oil multinationals.

"I've accused them of racism because Shell do in Nigeria, and in Ogoni, what they do not do in other parts of the world."

The environmental crisis has created a burgeoning political movement headed by Mr Saro-Wiwa, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (Mosop). In the past four months he has been imprisoned four times as the campaign has taken on a sharper edge which Shell alleges includes sabotage of its pipelines.

Mosop commands support, but its approach permits the environmental issue to be overshadowed by unrealistic demands for autonomy. Mr Saro-Wiwa argues that without the political battle no one would have noticed the pollution.

"The two things go hand in hand. We've been fighting for the environment for a long time. Nobody listened because the environment was not a serious issue with anybody except those of us who were suffering. But when we made a political case, then that began to draw some attention."

● The government threatened this week to impose a state of emergency as Nigerians braced themselves for a national protest against President Ibrahim Babangida's annulment of the June election.

Nigerian military destroys towns as punishment

Chris McGreal finds Ka, in south-eastern Nigeria, laid waste by the military in punishment for the Ogoni people's aspirations to autonomy.

THE bullet that crumpled Maria Nwiku's legs under her also saved her life. But, as she scrambled in the dirt, it left her helplessly watching the slaughter of her family and destruction of her home by the Nigerian military last week.

Bands of armed men, some in navy and police uniforms, descended on the Ogoni town of Ka last Wednesday lunchtime, announcing their arrival with bursts of gunfire. Within minutes most of the population was fleeing the town of about 5,000 people and the invaders set about their destruction.

As the firing started, Ms Nwiku ran from her house to see what was happening. A bullet caught her in the thigh. She tumbled to the ground, only to watch two of her children felled by gunfire. Soldiers crashed into her home and in a burst of fire murdered her third child and elderly husband. Ms Nwiku struggled to her feet, fear and grief numbing the pain of the bullet wound, and scrambled towards the bush. An explosion turned her head to see her home on fire.

"I had just stepped outside my house when they shot me. My husband died. All of my children died. All of them died. I ran for the bush. I'm sick. There's nothing. My house is gone. My property. Everything is gone," the teacher, aged 35, said. Her children were aged three, five and seven years.

The destruction of Ka was systematic and comprehensive. Homes were razed and crops hacked down. The secondary school was set ablaze with hand grenades. Doors and window frames were ripped out and piled on to bonfires. The mud and wooden walls of tiny homes were smashed in. The market was burnt.

The town is virtually abandoned. A few soldiers and their allies remain. Community leaders say at least 35 people were killed and several hundred are unaccounted for.

Ka's inhabitants cannot return. At the entrance to the town, scrap metal and ruined vehicles have been piled into a barricade. A message chalked on the road declares that Ka is no longer Ogoni territory.

The attackers crossed from Andoni lands over the river, a fact local government officials use to paint the raid on Ka as an ethnic clash they say the military is trying to control. But a series of attacks, and the military's failure to restore

order in Ka, suggests that the army has a hand in the raids which are aimed at punishing a burgeoning movement for autonomy in the oil-rich region.

Ogoni leaders, who have campaigned since the 1960s for their 500,000-strong community to receive a greater share of the rewards from petroleum exports and for international oil companies to clean up environmental hazards, have used the political crisis in Nigeria to increase pressure on the government with demonstrations and threats of sabotage.

The leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (Mosop), Ken Saro-Wiwa, was arrested in June and only released two weeks ago after a heart attack.

His brother, Dr Owens Wiwa, makes an allegation widely heard among the victims that Ogoni members of the police and military were moved from the area days before the attack.

"Three weeks ago all the Ogoni policemen in the area were posted elsewhere. We knew the government was up to something. We have a yam festival about now, and Ogonis returning from other areas for the festival have been attacked," he said.

Mosop has written to Nigeria's military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, alleging the number of deaths runs into the hundreds and that Ogoni schools, churches, markets and homes have been destroyed at 25 sites in the past fortnight.

"No reason has been given for the unprecedented atrocities perpetrated against the Ogoni. Some Ogoni children, women and men have either been killed or starved, tortured and mutilated to death," the letter said, accusing the government of using force and terror to silence Ogoni demands. On Friday night another small town, Tenama, was destroyed.

At the weekend, refugees from Ka gathered at a nearby school. They have no food. An appeal to the state government has brought no response. Most escaped with only the clothes on their backs. They rely on handouts from other Ogoni.

A community leader, Adolphus Meseadaroi, stood at the front of a packed classroom. He was trying to discover who is dead, and who is missing.

"Right now we are missing about 500 people. That's why we are having this meeting today, to be able to identify who is missing from our group. Because since we ran out of the town we haven't seen many of them. There are a lot of children missing because they couldn't run. We went through the bush and they won't know we are here," he said.

Star 16/8/93

Nigerian ruler (226) talks to nation

Lagos — Nigeria's military ruler, President Ibrahim Babangida, is due to address the National Assembly today amid widespread speculation about his true intentions about returning to civilian government.

With less than two weeks to go before his self-imposed deadline of August 27 for transferring power to a civilian president, General Babangida has yet to announce a successor.

Babangida is to speak to a joint session of the senate and house of representatives. Many of the legislative powers of the elected assembly, inaugurated in January, were suspended until the end of military rule.

Nigeria has been enmeshed in political uncertainty since Babangida's government scrapped the results of the June presidential elections, widely believed to have been won fairly by 55-year-old media tycoon Moshood Abiola.

Supporters of Abiola's centre-left Social Democratic Party (SDP) said Babangida, who has delayed the return to civilian rule three times since seizing power in 1985, acted because he wanted to cling to office.

Abiola, who has major financial investments in the West, is now abroad trying to drum up support for his claim to the presidency. — Sapa-Reuter.

Nigeria govt bans Abiola's magazine

Lagos — Nigeria's military government yesterday banned publications from five media houses shut down last month, and imposed a 10-year prison term or a fine for publishing falsehood or rumour. (22b)

The ban affects the Concord publishing house of Chief Moshood Abiola, the "winner" of the annulled June presidential elections.

Police on Sunday arrested four senior editors of Tell magazine, including editor-in-chief Nosa Igebor and his managing editor.

Announcement of the military decrees against the press came after General Ibrahim Babangida postponed an address to a joint session of the National Assembly in which he was expected to unveil plans to deal with Nigeria's political crisis.

In the speech, rescheduled for today, President Babangida was expected to say whether he would remain in power and what form his proposed interim administration of civilians and security forces would take. — The Independent News Service.

Nigerian political crisis 'far from over'

(226)
ARG 18/8/93

□ President has still not named successor

LAGOS — Nigeria's political crisis appeared far from over after President Ibrahim Babangida said he had offered to resign, but failed to name his successor

In what sounded like a valedictory speech to the National Assembly in the capital Abuja, he said yesterday he made the offer to quit after deliberations with heads of the armed forces

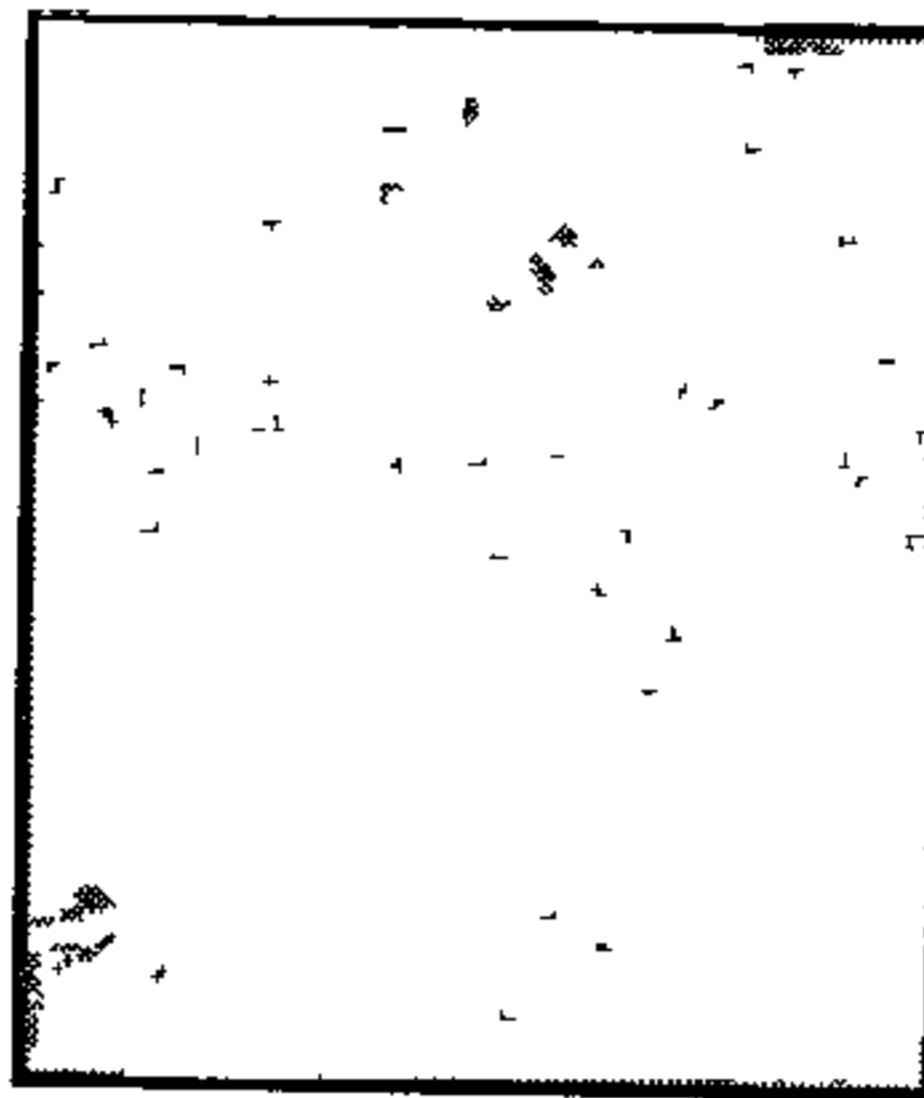
He did not say if the offer had been accepted

Assembly members said the much-heralded speech failed to end speculation about whether the general, in power for eight years, would definitely hand over by August 27 as promised

"The situation is fluid," Senator Segun Bamigbetan said

General Babangida annulled last June's presidential election to choose his civilian successor, which business tycoon Moshood Abiola is generally regarded to have won

The annulment plunged Nigeria into its worst political crisis since the end of the Biafra war 23 years ago and the country's two army-created



GENERAL-ISING: Ibrahim Babangida during his televised speech to the National Assembly yesterday parties and the military later settled on an interim national government to take over

Pro-democracy groups, which back Mr Abiola, consider the idea of an interim government a ruse to perpetuate military rule and last week called a stay-at-home protest which crippled Lagos

General Babangida countered this in his address, saying "It is uncharitable to say this administration is staying

put or that Babangida wants to succeed Babangida"

His critics said by failing to state categorically that he was stepping aside, Mr Babangida had left dangling the possibility of the military controlling the planned interim government

"Until members of the interim government are named and General Babangida is not its leader, it is difficult to say he will indeed hand over", a critic said

One view is that a transitional council now running day-to-day government after Mr Babangida postponed his return to a civil rule programme for the third time last November is that it will be replaced by the interim government

Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu appeared to have boosted that view when he met members of the council in Abuja yesterday and told them to prepare to facilitate a final handover to the interim government on August 25

Nigeria's National Assembly, has not been active since its inauguration last year — Sapa-Reuter

41 2110 124

President offers to resign (22b)

CT 18/8/83

LAGOS, Nigeria — General Ibrahim Babangida told lawmakers yesterday that he has offered to resign as president and commander-in-chief, but refused to say whether he would step down

Nigerian leadership told to step down

Star 2018/93

Lagos — Nigeria's trade unions said yesterday they would launch a national civil disobedience campaign if the country's military leadership did not step down by August 27 (226)

The National Labour Congress (NLC) said the federal military authorities should hand over power to the president of the senate, Iyorchia Ayu

The NLC noted the pledge by military leader General Ibrahim Babangida to set up an interim government, but warned that the proposed mea-

sure should not lead to "an ad hoc arrangement that will be plagued with a legitimacy crisis and a continued suspension of the constitution".

It had also noted Babangida's offer to step down as president and head of the armed forces, and urged the army's higher echelons to follow their leader's example

In Paris the presumed winner of the June presidential elections annulled by Babangida, Mashood Abiola, said he would return to Nigeria on Tuesday — Sapa-AFP.

Nigerian crisis develops

President 'will not ^{Star} keep vow'

23/8/93
226

Lagos — Nigeria entered one of the most crucial weeks in its history today with no indication how, or if, military President Ibrahim Babangida would fulfil his pledge to hand over power to civilians on August 27.

"This is the week that makes or breaks Nigeria," said lawyer Michael Otiog as fears mounted that the political crisis could erupt into widespread violence in Africa's most populous nation.

Moshood Abiola, a millionaire Muslim businessman widely regarded as the winner of annulled presidential elections in June, said General Babangida would not leave office voluntarily.

"Babangida has no intention of honouring his many promises to hand over power to a democratically elected civilian government," Abiola said from London, where he has been rallying support for his claim to the presidency.

The main labour union, the 3.5-million-strong National Labour Congress (NLC), and the 50 000-strong National Union of Petroleum, Energy and Gas Workers (Nupeng), threatened to strike unless Babangida quit by his self-imposed deadline on Friday.

Nupeng, whose strike could cripple crude oil exports, Nigeria's main source of foreign exchange, said power should be handed over

THE military leader of Nigeria can expect defiance if he does not hand over to civilian rule on Friday

to Abiola.

Anonymous leaflets have circulated in Lagos, Nigeria's biggest city, urging people to stay at home from Wednesday and threatening disaster for those who did not obey.

The police said law-abiding citizens had nothing to fear. But thousands of people, fearing a showdown between security forces and democracy activists, have fled to the countryside, especially from Abiola's political stronghold.

Abiola said 168 people were killed, most shot in the back, in initial protests against Babangida's decision to cancel the June 12 election on the grounds of alleged electoral abuses.

The labour congress said Babangida should hand over to senate president Iyorchia Ayu, the country's highest elected official, a demand the government rejected.

Officials said Babangida might announce the composition of the stop-gap government within the next 24 hours. — Sapa-Reuter

Petrol price rise may fuel Nigerian strikes

B/Day 24/8/93

LAGOS — Many service stations closed in Lagos yesterday amid persistent reports that the military authorities were set to announce rises in the price of petrol in Nigeria

There were long lines of cars at petrol stations as pump attendants turned drivers away, saying pumps were empty

Passengers reported that some transport firms had doubled or even tripled fares

The Committee for Defence of Human Rights issued a statement saying "very reliable" sources had told it the government was going to raise petrol prices by 1,000% from yesterday.

The National Union of Petroleum, Energy and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), whose members work in Nigeria's most lucrative industry, said it opposed any price hikes for fuel

NUPENG has threatened to call a strike tomorrow if President Ibrahim Babangida fails to reverse his decision to annul the June election for a civilian president

National Labour Congress secretary-general A M O Amgbo, reiterated that the congress would carry out its threat to launch a mass civil disobedience campaign if Babangida failed to hand over power to a civilian government on Friday, as he had pledged

Information Minister Uche Chukwumerije complained that the National Labour Congress was under the influence of the Social Democratic Party of millionaire Moshood Abiola, apparent winner of the June poll.

Abiola, meanwhile, said he had decided not to return to Lagos today as initially planned

Abiola, who has been campaigning in the US and Europe for support for his bid to force the Nigerian military government to

turn over power to an elected civilian president on August 27, said he wanted to return home "as soon as possible"

Babangida, who annulled the June poll citing alleged rigging even though international observers certified it as free and fair, had set Friday as the date for a hand-over to civilian rule after a decade of military government (226)

But despite widespread domestic opposition and world condemnation, Babangida is now planning to hand over power to a civilian-headed interim government to run the country until December 31, 1994 after new elections are held

In an apparent response to the country's main trade union's decision to call a strike if Babangida did not quit power by his Friday deadline, Nigeria's military government said it planned to restructure the union

Chukwumerije said the plan was to make membership of the National Labour Congress voluntary in line with the International Labour Organisation's standards, it was reported

Voluntary membership would severely reduce the funds the congress gets through a compulsory check-off system

Anonymous leaflets have circulated widely in Lagos, urging people to stay at home from tomorrow and threatening disaster for those who did not obey

The police said law abiding citizens had nothing to fear. But thousands of people, fearing a showdown between security forces and democracy activists, have fled to the countryside

Babangida told the National Assembly last Tuesday that he had made an offer to military chiefs to step aside. He did not say whether they accepted his offer — Sapa-AFP-Reuter

Babangida will quit tomorrow — aide ^(22b)

CT 24/8/93

LAGOS — Nigeria's military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida, under pressure from trade unions and pro-democracy groups to hand over power, will step down tomorrow, a senior aide said yesterday.

"I can assure you that he is leaving on Wednesday," said the aide, who asked not to be named.

Pro-democracy activists had urged Nigerians to resume a campaign of civil disobedience for three days from Wednesday to force Gen Babangida to surrender power to the winner of a June 12 presidential election annulled by the military government.

Government officials said Mr Ernest Shonekan, head of a transitional cabinet that had run day-to-day government since January, was likely to be named head of an interim government to take over — Sapa-Reuter

Babangida to quit amid controversy

Star 24/8/93

Lagos — Nigerian military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida plans to step down tomorrow, said a senior aide, but pro-democracy organisations are expected to continue their campaign of civil disobedience.

Pro-democracy activists are demanding that Babangida hand over power to Mo-shood Abiola, a business tycoon generally regarded as the winner of the annulled June 12 presidential election.

But senior officials said Babangida would hand over to Ernest Shonekan, who has headed a transitional Cabinet since January when the general postponed for a third time his promised return of Nigeria to full democracy.

A senior aide to Babangida, who has been criticised at home and abroad since he nullified the poll in which Abiola claimed victory, said yesterday that the president would quit two days before his own self-imposed hand-over deadline of August 27.

"I can assure you that he is leaving on Wednesday," said the aide anonymously.

Babangida, visiting the eastern city of Enugu yesterday, said he was honoured to be there "as I prepare to leave the stage".

Senior officials interpreted this remark as the general's clearest indication yet of his plans to step down.

They said the army would stage a final send-off parade for the 52-year-old general in the capital Abuja tomorrow.

Officials said Shonekan, a

NIGERIAN military president's expected choice of democratic successor could spark domestic upheaval

former chairman of Nigeria's biggest conglomerate, UAC, would organise a fresh presidential election to return Nigeria to full democratic rule.

But pro-democracy movements have urged Nigerians to resume their campaign of civil disobedience from tomorrow to Friday to force a handover to Abiola.

The main trade union organisation, NLC, which claims a membership of about 3.5 million, and Nupeng, which groups 50 000 workers in the vital oil sector, have both decided to strike from Saturday if Babangida stays on.

Shonekan comes from Abeokuta town in southwestern Nigeria, like Abiola.

Political sources said his appointment was a tactical move on the part of the military to break Abiola's solid support in his home region.

They said several other people had been considered for the job, many of them prominent economists.

Nigeria's economy, already in deep trouble from huge foreign debt and a sharp reduction in oil revenues, has taken a battering from the current political impasse. — Sapa-Reuter.

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OUT OF AFRICA



(226) ARG 25/8/93

NIGERIA: Military ruler Ibrahim Babangida will step down tomorrow, state radio said. Pro-democracy campaigners organising three days of civil disobedience to demand the presidency be handed to Moshood Abiola, the man widely believed to have won June's annulled election, said the demonstrations would still start today.

ZIMBABWE: Lord Carrington, who chaired a conference that ended white minority rule in Zimbabwe, said he hoped President Robert Mugabe and white farmers would end a dispute over the forced redistribution of their land to blacks. (225) CRZ/8/93

SOMALIA: Nearly 400 US special forces will be sent to Somalia to help quell mounting violence around Mogadishu but Pentagon officials denied their mission was to seize warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid.

ANGOLA: The government rejected an attempt by Nelson Mandela and King Hassan of Morocco to arrange a peace summit between President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Unita rebel leader Jonas Savimbi. (225) ARG 25/8/93

Babangida farewell *B/Day*

LAGOS — Nigeria's military ruler Gen Ibrahim Babangida would be making a farewell broadcast to the nation tomorrow, aides said yesterday. *258193*

They expected him to swear in an interim government shortly afterwards.

Babangida's decision to step down tomorrow, instead of today, still meant he was doing so before a self-imposed deadline to relinquish power, they said.

Babangida annulled an election in June widely believed to have been won by business tycoon Moshood Abiola, but said he would hand over to an interim government by August 27.

The military top brass met in the capital Abuja yesterday to put finishing touches to plans to instal the unelected government.

Officials said industrialist Ernest Shonekan, head of the current transitional cabinet, was likely to lead it. *(226)*

Pro-democracy campaigners said even if Babangida stepped down this week they would not stop protests to force the government to instate Abiola.

— Sapa-Reuter

WORLD

Edited by Frederick Cleary

Deadline near for Babangida

Star 25/8/93

THE tension rises still higher as Nigeria awaits President Babangida's next move

Lagos — Nigeria is tense as the final hours tick by toward a deadline for democracy. Few people expect the military to relinquish power, but fewer still know how the end game will be played out.

The government of General Ibrahim Babangida said yesterday that the general would retire tomorrow, swear in a new government and bid farewell one day before his long-promised deadline for returning Nigeria to civilian government after a decade of military rule.

He planned a military parade tomorrow in the sleepy central Nigerian village he built into an opulent capital, Abuja.

But the new government is already discredited — before it has been formed. By scrapping the results of the June 12 civilian presidential election, Babangida, who took power in 1985, has set the stage for the military to remain in power under civilian guise.

"We've waited eight years. We can wait three more days," said Babq anaKingbe, a former diplomat who was



Babangida has said he will retire tomorrow.

(226)

the vice-presidential candidate of Moshood KO Abiola, the apparent winner of the nullified June election.

Members of the lower legislative chamber yesterday called on Babangida to head the interim government. Legislator Iroya Gagari said the members wanted Babangida to stay in office to ensure "oneness of the Nigerian nation", according to Nigerian television, monitored in London by the BBC.

In the meantime, the nation's oil workers union and 41 other industrial labour groups, under the umbrella of the Nigerian Labour Congress, planned to strike from today, to shut down the economy and pressure Babangida to resign.

A smaller general strike

last month, mostly in Abiola's tribal stronghold of Lagos, resulted in a crackdown leading to the deaths of more than 100 people.

Civilian politicians predict that Babangida will choose as head of the new interim government Ernest Shonekan, a once-respected businessman who holds the essentially empty title of chief executive of the government.

But even the best assumptions have been confounded in the past by the mercurial Babangida.

"It's a problem in this country that we dwell on point A and in the meantime they trot out point B," said Kingibe.

"We shall see. He (Babangida) did say he will swear in a democratically elected president. We shall see where he will have found him."

The elected National Assembly, two houses mirroring the US congressional system, is equally confused as to what the general will do.

"So many names have surfaced," said Senator Wande Abimbola, the majority leader. "Things change from day to day, what one hears I would say we're as sceptical as ever."

"There is no outcome that would be acceptable that would involve Babangida having any role at all," said Larry Diamond, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institute in Washington, who studies Nigerian politics — Sapa-AP

Stay-home protest stills bustling Lagos

Biday 26/8/93

LAGOS — A pro-democracy protest brought Nigeria's biggest city, Lagos, to a virtual standstill yesterday, one day before military ruler Gen Ibrahim Babangida was due to stand down

The stay-at-home protest to force Babangida's military government to hand power to business tycoon Moshood Abiola, widely acknowledged victor of an annulled June 12 presidential election, once again appeared confined to Abiola's home area

But Abiola himself remained undaunted, dismissing Babangida's plan to hand over to an unelected civilian-led interim government today as a ploy "Anybody who is put there will be a surrogate," Abiola, who has been outside Nigeria since early August to drum up foreign support, told a British radio station

An alliance of 30 civil liberties groups, led by the Campaign for Democracy, called yesterday's nationwide protest

It was planned to last three days. Most banks and shops in the normally bustling commercial centre of Lagos stayed closed. Traffic was light with little public transport on the streets

But the impact of the protest seemed to have been limited to Abiola's southwest home region

Even in Lagos itself life began returning to the city of six-million people as some previously shut banks and shops opened for business after there were no signs of violence.

More than 100 people were killed in Lagos when rioting youths hijacked a similar protest in early July (226)

A Reuter reporter said that life in the inland capital Abuja, where a military parade will bid farewell to Babangida today, was normal

In the northern cities of Sokoto, Kaduna and Kano residents contacted by telephone said people were going about their business, apparently oblivious to the protest call

Many Nigerians remain sceptical about the president's intentions

Pro-democracy campaigners say Babangida, who has delayed his plans to relinquish power three times and has often changed the rules governing the transition to civilian rule, was likely to continue to exert control from the sidelines

Officials say industrialist Ernest Shonekan, head of the current transitional council or cabinet, is likely to head the interim government that will complete the military's programme for returning Nigeria to civilian rule — Sapa-Reuter

ready discredited ● White Swazi claims his rights

Sowetan 26/8/93

Nigeria is tense

226

LAGOS — Nigeria was tense yesterday as the final hours were ticking toward a deadline for democracy. Few people expect the military to relinquish power but fewer still know how the end game will be played out.

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■ BABANGIDA FAREWELL Final hours

ticking towards a deadline for long-

awaited democracy:

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"We've waited eight years. We can wait three more days," said BabqanaKingib, a former diplomat who was

the vice-presidential candidate of Moshood Abiola, the apparent winner of the nullified June election. Babangida orchestrated the election then annulled it, claiming it was rigged.

Members of the lower legislative chamber have called on Babangida to head the interim government — *Sapa-AP*

Babangida poised to cede power in Lagos

□ Crisis grows over 'caretaker' legitimacy (27b)

ABUJA — Military President Ibrahim Babangida is bowing to pressure to quit today, but this is unlikely to end a political impasse that has brought Nigeria's two biggest cities to a standstill on the eve of the handover.

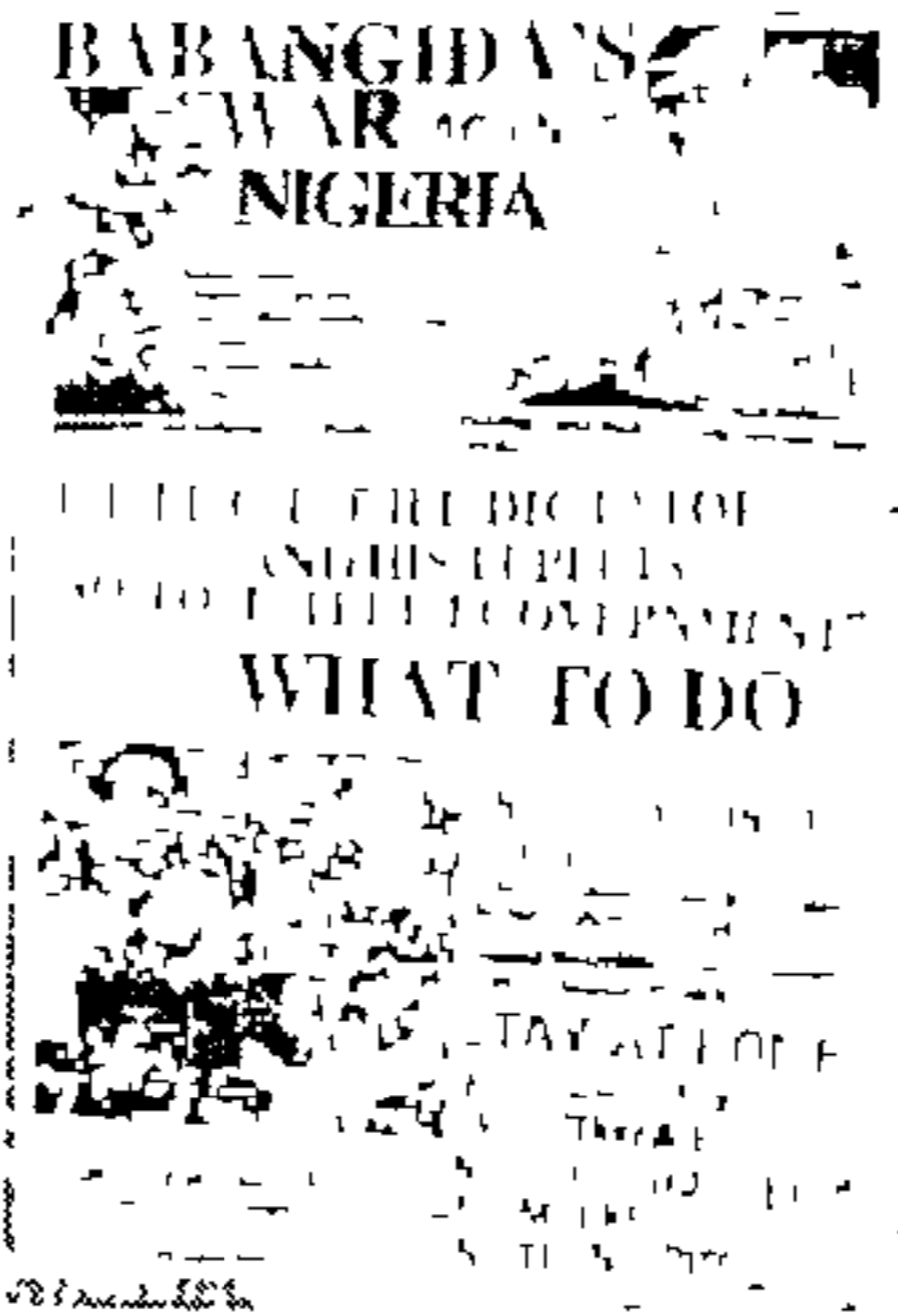
"I don't expect the handover to be the end of this crisis," House of Representatives member Arinze Abwah said.

General Babangida is handing over to an appointed caretaker government agreed to between the military and the two parties to end a crisis set off by his annulment of a June 12 presidential election, believed to have been won by businessman Moshood Abiola

Mr Abiola, who has been abroad since August 3 canvassing international support for his claim to the presidency, dismissed the handover set for midday in the capital Abuja as a ruse

"Anybody put there will be a surrogate," he said in London, adding such a government would lack legitimacy.

Nigerian political sources said the 56-year-old multi-millionaire was not expected to



STRIKE CALL: A poster backing the stoppage seen on the streets of Lagos yesterday.

drop his claim

"Abiola is a very determined man, a fighter and will not let this thing just go away," one said

Mr Abiola has near-total support in his home region in the economically strong southwest

Lagos and Ibadan were once again crippled by protests calling for him to be sworn in as president tomorrow, the day

General Babangida originally set to return Nigeria to full democracy. **ARG 26/8/93**

In an earlier protest, 168 people were killed

The Campaign for Democracy (CD), an alliance of 30 civil rights groups, called for yesterday's nationwide protest to last for three days.

Banks and shops were closed in the two cities in Mr Abiola's home region but the impact elsewhere was virtually nil

In Abuja, it was business as usual as the military rehearsed a parade to bid General Babangida farewell.

He is due to broadcast late in the evening after the new government is sworn in

Ernest Shonekan, who has headed a transitional Cabinet since January when General Babangida postponed for a third time his promised return to full democracy, will head the interim government

The rest of his team is not yet known but officials said Mr Shonekan would be only head of government, the position he virtually holds now, not commander-in-chief of the armed forces. — Sapa-Reuter.

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Star 26/8/98

Nigerian crisis 'not over'

Abuja — Military President Ibrahim Babangida is bowing to pressure to quit today but this is unlikely to end a political impasse that brought Nigeria's two biggest cities to a standstill yesterday.

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Ernest Shonekan, who has headed a transitional Cabinet since January, when Babangida postponed for a third time his promised return to full democracy, will head the interim government. — Sapa-Reuter

AFRICA NEWS Confusion reigns as Nigerian junta ke

Sowetan 27/8/93

Farewell Babangida?

South African Association Press

ABUJA — A farewell parade for Nigerian military ruler Ibrahim Babangida got under way in Abuja yesterday attended by the leader, his family and senior military officials as he prepared to step down

The ceremony was being held to mark the transfer of power to an interim administration ending both Babangida's eight years in power and

his 30-year army career, but still no details were forthcoming of an interim government to which he has said he will hand over

Special flight

Some 60 diplomats arrived from Lagos aboard a special flight chartered by the Nigerian foreign ministry to attend the ceremony held on a parade ground the size of a football pitch known as "Ibrahim Babangida Square", in this city which is the country's new capital

The parade could also be followed by the departure of other senior junta members, the influential *Guardian* newspaper reported yesterday, citing military sources

But confusion reigned yesterday as the junta again declined to announce the composition of the interim government, which is expected to rule until the end of 1994

(22b)
Junta critics accuse the military of wanting to cling to power by behind-the-scenes manipulation of the interim administration

Babangida steps down as his successor is named

B'Day 27/8/93

ABUJA — Nigerian military leader Ibrahim Babangida stepped down yesterday after eight years in power and his successor as head of state was named as businessman Ernest Shonekan.

Shonekan would also be interim prime minister, a member of the transitional council announced after a farewell military parade in Babangida's honour. The other members of the 18-person transitional government were not yet known.

Shonekan, 57, who studied law in Britain, was chairman of the United Africa Company, black Africa's biggest private firm. He has chaired the transition council since last January.

The interim government, expected to rule until the end of 1994 and then hand over to an elected civilian administration, was scheduled to be sworn in yesterday. Babangida, 52, was also to address the nation in a

farewell speech.

Junta critics accuse the military of wanting to cling to power by behind-the-scenes manipulation of the interim administration

Babangida had repeatedly pledged to step down by today, the eighth anniversary of his accession in a bloodless coup (22b)

Meanwhile tension remained high in the economic capital Lagos. Streets stayed deserted early yesterday, the second day of a civil disobedience campaign by pro-democracy groups to protest against the military's refusal to appoint as president Moshood Abiola, the Muslim millionaire widely regarded as having won the June 12 presidential elections annulled by Babangida.

Nigeria's strongest labour movement, the National Labour Congress, vowed to launch indefinite protests from midnight today if the military had not transferred power to the Senate speaker by then

Several Nigerian senators and members of the house of representatives had decided to boycott Babangida's farewell ceremony in protest against his decision to hand over power to an interim government instead, one senator said.

Last week the senate urged Babangida to hand over to Senate speaker Iyorchia Ayu on August 27, as stated in the 1989 constitution, which was approved by the outgoing military administration.

Two successive sessions of the house of representatives, the lower house, broke up in chaos this week as opposition MPs chanted the name of Abiola, while others shouted their support for Babangida

In London, Abiola, who contested the poll for the Social Democratic Party, said: "Many people don't believe that he (Babangida) will go. He will merely replace himself with one of his surrogates." — Sapa-AFP.

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Sowetan 30/8/93

Ernest Shonekan may be a front

ON THE EIGHTH anniversary of the coup which brought down the government of President Muhammad Buhari and brought him to power in 1985, Nigerian military leader General Ibrahim Babangida stepped down last week in favour of an unelected civilian-led government

Industrialist Mr Ernest Shonekan, who has headed the country's Transitional Council since January (when Babangida founded it to allay fears that he had no intention of going ahead with the hand-over to civilian rule) was sworn in by Chief Justice Mohammed Bello as the new head of state

Two questions arise, however. First, was Babangida, whose star has been waning over the last two years, pushed or did he jump?

Sham

Second, is the whole exercise just a sham, with Shonekan fronting for the military while they continue to rule the country from behind the scenes?

Shonekan will remain in office to organise a new presidential election, which could take anything from six months to two years. But while some see him as the realist who can turn Nigeria's economy around, people in his own constituency have accused him of betraying the nation

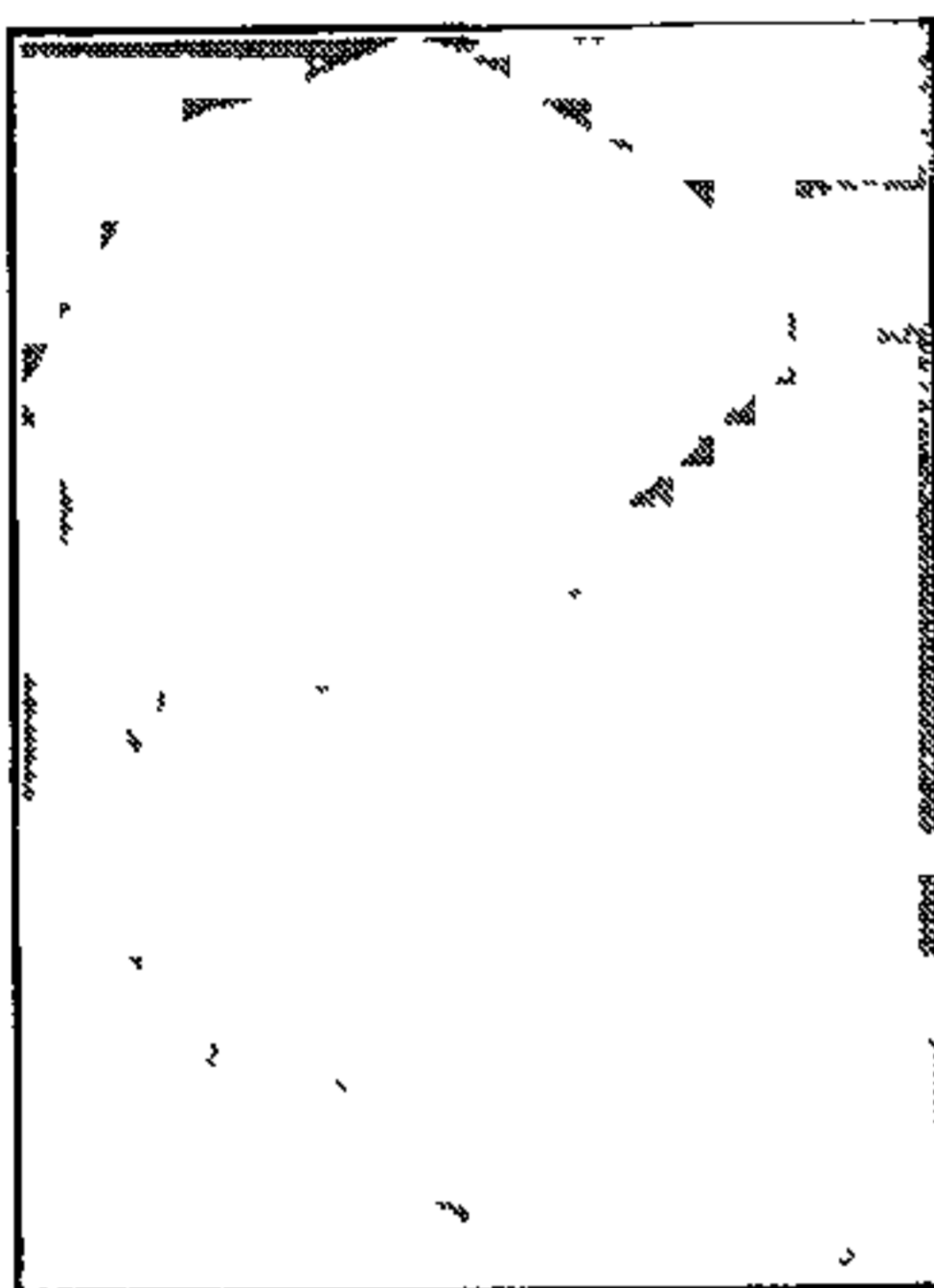
The Social Democratic Party of Mr Moshood Abiola, who came out well ahead in the June 12 election, believe that power will remain with the military. So, too, do the trade unions, who have threatened to call strikes to press their demand for an elected government

As Babangida stepped down, the two major cities in the country, Lagos and Ibadan were brought to a standstill by a stayaway called in protest over the handover

Shonekan heads a new Interim Federal Executive Council made up of 32 members and holds the *de facto* position of Prime Minister. A puzzling appointment is that of General Sani Abacha as Secretary of Defence, for he was known to be the leader of a faction in the National Defence and Security Council which expressed doubts as to whether Babangida was committed to handing over

MILITARY RULE Nigerian leader

Ibrahim Babangida steps down after eight years. But has he relinquished power? Joe Latakomo reports:



General Ibrahim Babangida

At this stage, it is not known who else from the NDSC may have been included in the new IFEC. Others who shared Abacha's view, that Babangida should step down are Lieutenant-General Joshua Dogonyaro and Vice-Admiral Muratal Nyako

Their stance was known to have precipitated deep divisions within the NDC which sent shockwaves through the international community following Babangida's decision to annul the June 12 elections. Babangida's credibility within the military had also been eroded by the support of Mr Francis Arthur Nzeribe, who campaigned under the banner of the Association for a Better Nigeria for continued military rule under Babangida. The ABN was perceived to be a front set up by Babangida

Since the annulment of the election, tensions have continued to grow and the divisions grow sharper between Babangida and his chief ally, Admiral Augustus Aikhomu, on the one hand, and Abacha and Dogonyaro

on the other

Babangida also turned more and more to the Co-ordinator of National Security, Brigadier-General Halilu Akilu, who seemed increasingly to be running the country and taking decisions — often contrary to Babangida's own decisions. Even before the election results began to emerge, Akilu is reported to have said that Abiola would become president "over my dead body"

That Babangida was not in full control emerged during a diplomatic row between Nigeria and Washington over the expulsion of American diplomat Mr Michael O'Brien. On June 11, Foreign Affairs Secretary Mr Matthew Mbu gave him 72 hours to leave the country after a statement that cancellation or delay of the June 12 elections would be unacceptable to Washington. The ambassador, Mr William Swing, met with Babangida and it was agreed a statement would be issued regretting the incident. Mbu would announce that O'Brien could serve out his remaining three weeks in the country

Authority diminished

The following day, however, Akilu sent security officers to escort O'Brien to the airport, and Swing was eventually told that the president expected the diplomat to leave that night. This weakening of power was often covered up by statements that Babangida was dictatorial, but his inability to control Akilu was so evident even within the military that his authority diminished

In 1992, Akilu ordered the arrest of three officers who had complained about him to Babangida. They were detained at the airport, and publicly put into leg-irons before Babangida eventually stepped in and ordered

their release

This lack of decisive authority is seen to have played a part in Babangida's annulling the elections, as some members of the army were not happy with Abiola, who was not seen as a friend of the military

There were in addition fears that Abiola and a new civilian government might institute corruption investigations, and those officers who were conspicuously better off from kick-backs and fuel smuggling — including Babangida himself — felt that they needed someone on their side in a civilian government

Babangida recruited Shonekan from the United Africa Company, of which he is chief executive, to head the Transitional Council in January

The TC and the National Defence and Security Council were set up in December as

"interim organs of government to ensure the military's smooth handover to a civilian-led government"

Shonekan has visited British Prime Minister Mr John Major (who worked as a bank manager in Nigeria during the 1960s), and the military hopes that the relationship they struck will put him in good stead to get the British to resume donor aid that was suspended when Babangida annulled the elections

But Shonekan and his team face a daunting task. The economy of the country is debt-ridden. Growth has been low, while inflation has been running at around 200 percent. Unemployment is growing in leaps, particularly in the urban areas which can become political hot-beds. The whole political structure is fragile

226

edited by Frederick Cleary

Lagos — A strike over the military's installation of an unelected government worsened Nigeria's petrol crisis yesterday, further crippling the main city, Lagos.

People queued for hours outside petrol stations. Drivers jostled and yelled in the scramble for petrol and there were frequent fistfights among motorists.

"I have been here since yesterday morning," said motorist Dike Azubike, his car in the middle of a queue about half a kilometre long in the Lagos suburb of Ikeja.

Public utilities like water and electricity appeared to be operating normally but

the fuel shortage that has plagued oil-producing Nigeria worsened as drivers refused to lift fuel at refineries.

The strike, called by the 3.5 million-strong umbrella trade union, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), began on Saturday at the same time as a strike by the 50 000-strong oil workers' union Nupeng.

A spokesman for industrialist Ernest Shonekan, head of the interim government which is the target of the

strike action, said the new administration was preparing an official response.

The petroleum workers want power handed to Moshood Abiola, widely acknowledged winner of Nigeria's June 12 presidential election annulled by former military president Ibrahim Babangida. Babangida quit the army and presidency on Thursday.

Shonekan, previously head of a transitional Cabinet, was sworn in as head of a government that will last six

months, and is to conduct a fresh election and hand over power by March 31.

Both the NLC and Nupeng are also protesting against the former military government's introduction of a new expensive grade of petrol.

Political sources said Shonekan was canvassing for support for his interim government from Nigeria's south-western region, Abiola's political stronghold.

But they said his task was bound to be made more com-

Strike fuels crisis in Nigeria

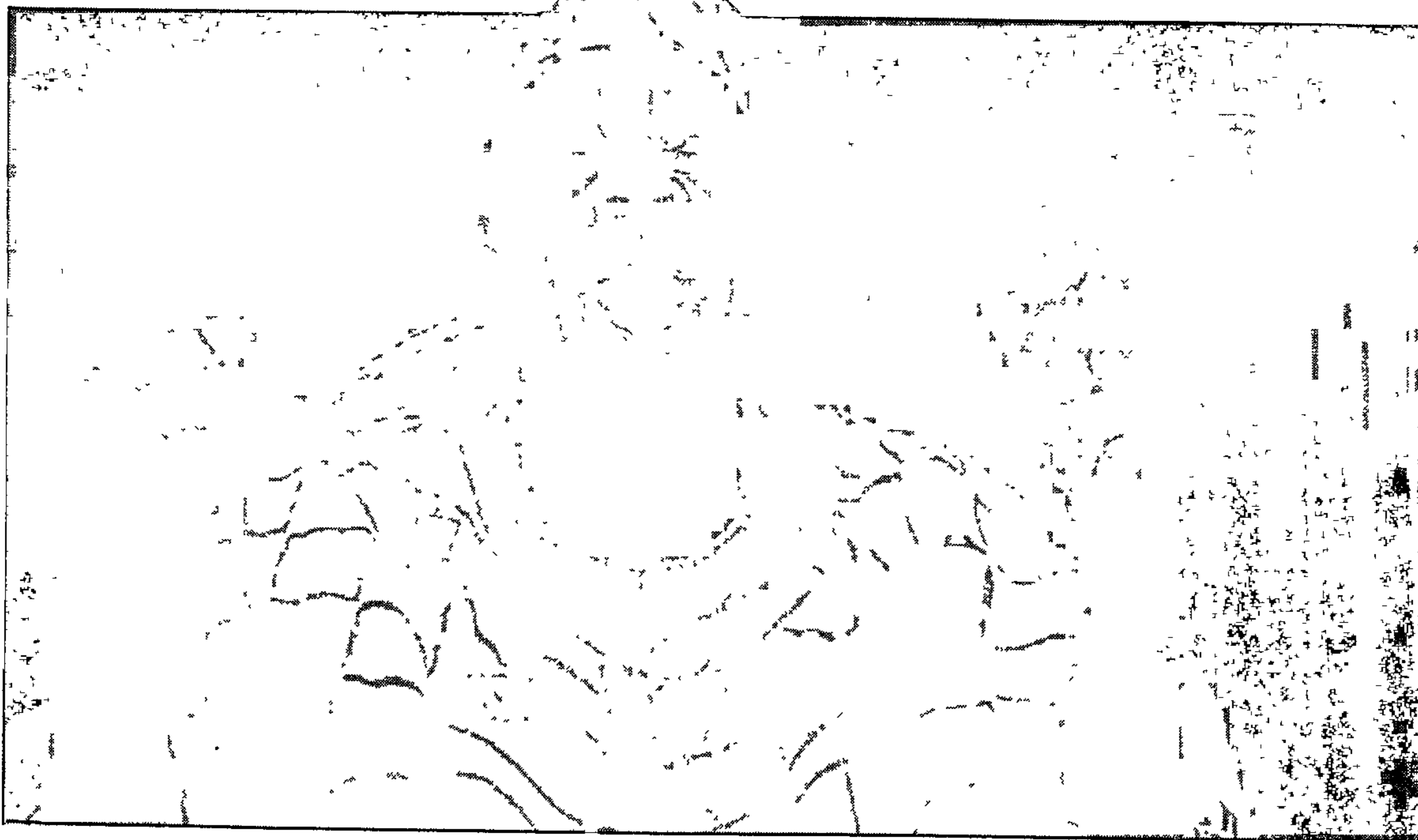
Star 20/8/93

plicated by the current strikes.

Abiola himself has vowed to return to Nigeria by the end of the week to set up his government.

Defence Secretary-General Sani Abacha on Saturday urged the armed forces to give their full backing to the interim government, a signal that the army would move against any alternative government — Sapa-Reuter.

► **A front for the military? — Page 9**



Moshood Abiola he was way ahead in Nigeria's June election, but the new "power behind the throne" Brigadier-General Halilu Akilu, has said the apparent winner would be president "over my dead body"

The demand for an elected government in Nigeria is growing, amid fears that the appointment of the latest head of state is just a sham. Joe Latakomo reports for the *Star Africa Service*

Star 30/8/93

A front for the military?

On the eighth anniversary of the coup which brought down the government of President Muhammadu Buhari and brought him to power in 1985, Nigerian military leader Ibrahim Babangida stepped down last week in favour of an unelected civilian-led government

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Two questions arise

■ Was Babangida, whose star has been waning over the last two years, pushed or did he jump?

■ Is the whole exercise just a sham, with Shonekan fronting for the military while they continue to rule the country from behind the scenes?

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alist who can turn Nigeria's economy around, people in his own constituency have accused him of betraying the nation

The Social Democratic Party of Moshood Abiola, who came out well ahead in the June 12 election, believe that power will remain with the military. So, too, do the trade unions, who have threatened to call strikes to press their demand for an elected government

As Babangida 'stepped' down, the two major cities in the country, Lagos and Ibadan, were brought to a standstill by a stayaway called in protest over the handover

Faction leader

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Abiola supporters have, however, threatened to ensure that no fresh elections are held in their strongholds in the south-west and in the middle belt

For the moment, however, it looks like Shonekan will be playing the military tune

The demand for an elected government in Nigeria is growing, amid fears that the appointment of the latest head of state is just a sham. Joe Latakomo reports for the Star Africa Service

Star 30/8/93

A front for the military?

226

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■ Is the whole exercise just a sham, with Shonekan fronting for the military while they continue to rule the country from behind the scenes?

Shonekan will remain in office to organise a new presidential election, which could take anything from six months to two years. But while some see him as the re-

alist who can turn Nigeria's economy around, people in his own constituency have accused him of betraying the nation.

The Social Democratic Party of Moshood Abiola, who came out well ahead in the June 12 election, believe that power will remain with the military. So, too, do the trade unions, who have threatened to call strikes to press their demand for an elected government.

As Babangida stepped down the two major cities in the country, Lagos and Ibadan, were brought to a standstill by a stayaway called in protest over the handover.

Faction leader

Shonekan heads a new Interim Federal Executive Council made up of 32 members and holds the *de facto* position of Prime Minister.

A puzzling appointment is that of General Sam Abacha as Secretary of Defence. He was known to be the leader of a faction in the National Defence and Security Council which expressed doubts as to whether Babangida was committed to handing over

At this stage, it is not known who else from the NDSC may have been included in the new IFEC. Others who shared Abacha's view that Babangida should step down are Lieutenant-General Joshua Dogonyaro and Vice-Admiral Muratal Nyako.

Their stance was known to have precipitated deep divisions within the NDC which sent shockwaves through the international community following Babangida's decision to annul the June 12 elections. Babangida's credibility within the military had also been eroded by the support from Francis Arthur Nzeribe, who campaigned under the banner of the Association for a Better Nigeria for continued military rule under Babangida. The ABN was perceived to be a front set up by Babangida.

Since the annulment of the election, tensions have continued to grow, and the divisions grow sharper between Babangida and his chief ally, Admiral Augustus Aikhomu, on the one hand, and Abacha and Dogonyaro on the other.

He was seen to turn more and more to the Co-ordinator of National Security, Briga-

dier-General Hablu Akilu, who seemed increasingly to be running the country and taking decisions, often contrary to Babangida's own decisions. Even before the election results began to emerge, Akilu is reported to have said that Abiola would become president "over my dead body".

That Babangida was not in full control emerged during a diplomatic row between Nigeria and Washington over the expulsion of an American diplomat Michael O'Brien. On June 11, Foreign Affairs Secretary Matthew Mbu gave him 72 hours to leave the country after a statement that cancellation or delay of the June 12 election would be unacceptable to Washington.

Ambassador William Swing met Babangida and it was agreed a statement would be issued regretting the incident. Mbu would announce that O'Brien could serve out his remaining three weeks in the country.

The following day, however, Akilu sent security officers to escort O'Brien to the airport, and Swing was eventually told that the President expected the diplomat to leave that night.

This weakening of power was often covered up by statements that Babangida was dictatorial, but his inability to control Akilu was so evident even within the military that his authority diminished.

In 1992, Akilu ordered the arrest of three officers who had complained about him to Babangida. They were detained at the airport, and publicly put into leg-irons before Babangida eventually stepped in and ordered their release. This lack of decisive authority is seen to have played a part in Babangida annulling the elections, as some members of the army were not happy with Abiola, who was not seen as a friend of the military.

Donor aid

There were fears that Abiola and a new civilian government might institute corruption investigations, and those officers who were conspicuously better off from kickbacks and fuel smuggling, including Babangida himself, felt that they needed someone on their side in a civilian government.

Babangida recruited Shonekan from the United Africa

Company, of which he is chief executive, to head the Transitional Council in January. The TC and the National Defence and Security Council were set up in December.

Shonekan has visited British Prime Minister John Major (who worked as a bank manager in Nigeria during the '60s), and the military hopes that the relationship they struck will put him in good stead to get the British to resume donor aid that was suspended when Babangida annulled the elections.

But Shonekan and his team face a daunting task. The economy of the country is debt-ridden. Growth has been low, while inflation has been running at about 200 percent. Unemployment is growing in leaps, particularly in the urban areas which can become political hot-beds. The whole political structure is fragile.

Abiola supporters have, however, threatened to ensure that no fresh elections are held in their strongholds in the south-west and in the middle belt.

For the moment, however, it looks like Shonekan will be playing the military tune

Strike paralyzes Nigeria

LAGOS — Petrol stations ran out of fuel and air traffic was grounded nationwide yesterday as a three-day-old strike for democracy began paralyzing the nation

Thousands of passengers were stranded at the 17 domestic and international airports. Although some flights continued, many were grounded by fuel shortages caused by oil workers' strikes and walk-outs by air traffic controllers.

Gen Ibrahim Babangida retired on Thursday after eight years in power, turning government over to a widely opposed group of hand-picked supporters.

The 41-union Nigerian Labour Congress, which claims 4-million members in key sectors such as the oil industry, began a strike on Saturday in an effort to force out the new government.

"He (Babangida) has installed people who are answerable to him alone," said Labour Congress official Ezekiel Anzaku.

The interim government, headed by businessman and Babangida supporter Ernest Shonekan, has promised to hold new elections early next year.

But, rattled by the intensifying strike action, the new government made efforts

yesterday to reach labour leaders who have gone underground to avoid arrest.

Babangida triggered the unrest by invalidating the results of the June 12 presidential election that was to return the nation to democracy after a decade of military rule.

The ballot was apparently won by business tycoon Moshood Abiola (226).

Nigerian media reported that the government was also considering a decree making it illegal for people to campaign for the release of the election results.

The Civil Liberties Organisation condemned the plans as an effort to "induce collective amnesia."

Abiola, who is in the US lobbying for stringent sanctions against Nigeria, has promised to return home this week to set up his own government.

In Lagos, which is the commercial centre and Nigeria's biggest city, almost all of the more than 1 000 petrol stations ran out of fuel.

At the two Lagos ports that handle 60% of the country's imports and exports, no oil tankers have been loaded since the strike began. Oil provides 80% of government revenue — Sapa-AP

Star 1/9/93
Nigeria strike goes ahead
(226)

Lagos — Nigerian trade unions pressed ahead with a general strike against an unelected interim government.

The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) was due to hold talks with the government yesterday, but said this did not

mean the union recognised the interim administration headed by Ernest Shonekan.

Nigerian unions are protesting against the annulment of last June's presidential election by former military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida. — Sapa-Reuter

Wednesday September 1 1993 SOWETAN

INTERNATIONAL NEWS UN under

Stayaway in Lagos

Sowetan 11/9/93

LAGOS — Most people stayed away from work in Lagos yesterday despite a government appeal to unions to call off their strike against Nigeria's unelected caretaker administration

Banks, shops and factories remained closed in the commercial capital

Residents said a persistent fuel shortage, worsened by the refusal of tanker drivers to lift a new expensive petrol, had forced most public transport off the roads

A senior Nigerian oil official said loading delays were still being experienced at Nigeria's largest oil terminal, Bonny, in the southeast be-

cause work was still not being done at night

But the official said production of crude oil, Nigeria's economic backbone, was not yet affected

Ernest Shonekan, the head of the interim national government, was due to make his maiden broadcast to the nation later yesterday outlining his plans for the next six months (226)

Moshood Abiola, the unofficial winner of the June 12 poll which the former military government annulled, has called for United Nations sanctions against Shonekan's administration — *Sapa-Reuter*

solve Nigeria's problems

Strikes grip Nigeria

Sowetan 2/9/93

■ LENGTHY DISPUTE Trade unions

square up to unpopular leader:

LAGOS — Nigerian trade unions pressed ahead with a general strike against an unelected interim government and some appeared ready for a lengthy dispute

A 20-member delegation from the main union, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) headed for the capital Abuja yesterday for talks with the government (226)

But NLC vice-president Mr Gabriel Falade told reporters that agreeing to attend talks did not mean the union recognised the interim administration headed by Mr Ernest Shonekan

"When you are invited by a friend, you just need to go there and see what is happening," Falade said

Shonekan, in a maiden broadcast to the nation on Tuesday night, called for an end to the strikes and in return pledged a dialogue with aggrieved interest groups

The strikes, entering their fifth day

yesterday and spreading to other southern states, were simultaneously called by the NLC and the junior oil workers union Nupeng Both are protesting against the annulment of last June's presidential election by former military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida The poll was widely believed to have been won by businessman Mr Moshood Abiola Shonekan said election was history and pleaded with his countrymen "Please give this government a chance" Nupeng has specifically demanded that the results of the June election be published and the winner installed "This strike is indefinite and won't end until our demands are met," Nupeng official Mr Amiolemen Adams said, "If Shonekan does not step down he is going to make the masses of this country suffer more" Shonekan promised to complete his assignment within seven months by ending Nigeria's six-year-old return to a civil programme — Sapa-Reuter

hit ● Kenya's ruler 'allows ethnic cleansing'

Sowetan 3/9/93

'Strike to end soon'

LAGOS - Nigeria's interim government said it expected trade unions to call off their five-day-old general strike after talks between the government and unions

"The union delegates agreed in principle to call off the strike but pointed out they didn't have the mandate to do so immediately," information secretary Mr Uche Chukwumerije said at the end of negotiations on Wednesday night

Union delegates refused to comment after the talks but said their central working committee, the Nigerian Labour

■ **SEEKING MANDATE** Nigeria's govt says unions have agreed to halt stoppage:

Congress's decision-making body, was due to meet. The government side at the talks which lasted many hours, included Chukwumerije and the new oil secretary, Mr Don Etebet

Labour was represented at the negotiations in the inland capital, Abuja, by a 20-member delegation including representatives of the powerful oil workers

union, Nupeng

Nupeng's strike has left the country without fuel, stranding thousands of motorists

(226)
The government called the talks after the unions began an indefinite strike last Saturday to protest at the installation of an unelected government by the former military rulers - Sapa-Reuter

Nigeria's oil men defiant

Lagos — Leaders of Nigeria's oil workers said they would go ahead with a pro-democracy strike even though the central trade union body decided to order a return to work.

The general strike has paralysed major cities, adding to the political turmoil which has gripped Nigeria since presidential elections in June were annulled. (226)

The main trade union, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), said yesterday it was ending the six-day-old strike after the new interim unelected government agreed to shelve plans to introduce a high-priced petrol.

NLC president Pascal Bafyau told reporters the strike had made an impact even though it failed to achieve the demand for the installation of a democratic government.

But the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers, one of NLC's 41 affiliate unions, said the political demand was paramount and its members would remain on strike.

The affiliate, acting independently of NLC, called out its members on Saturday to try to force the interim government to step down in favour of Moshood Abiola, widely regarded as the winner of the scrapped June election. — Sapa-Reuter.

OUT OF AFRICA



Call for SA to join SADC

MBABANE (Swaziland) — Leaders of the Southern African Development Community ended their annual conference with a call to South Africa to join the group.

"We challenge the people of South Africa that by the time we meet again next year they will have joined SADC," group chairman President Quett Masire of Botswana told the closing ceremony last night.

The SADC — Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe — was formed 13 years ago to lessen economic dependence on South Africa. ARG 6/9/93

Vow to halt rebels

ALGIERS. — Algeria's new Prime Minister Redha Malek has vowed to pursue a hardline battle against Muslim fundamentalists seeking a radical Islamic state

Troubleshooter

KINSHASA (Zaire). — United Nations special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi has returned to Kinshasa for more consultations with political factions Mr Brahimi, who visited Zaire last month, is charged by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali with finding a solution to the country's crisis

Protests planned

LAGOS (Nigeria). — Pro-democracy activists plan protests to force military-installed head of state Ernest Shonekan to hand over power to the winner of June's annulled presidential election, Moshood Abiola, by October 1. ARG 6/9/93 (226)

Fuel strike bid

LAGOS. — Nigeria's unelected interim government, battling for support, has called in the army to break a fuel strike. Pump stations have been dry since tanker drivers refused to take petroleum products from Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation depots.

Victims caught in web of corruption

Wm 10-16/9/93

Chris McGreal reports on Nigerian frauds designed to trap greedy foreign businessmen (226)



Money talks. corruption is Nigeria's third biggest hard currency earner

THE AMERICAN doctor had already handed over thousands of pounds to win a contract to supply drugs to the Nigerian army when he began to take seriously warnings that he was enmeshed in one of the world's most extensive webs of organized fraud

Colonel Mahamoud Santuraki, a Nigerian fraud investigator, urged the doctor, John White, aged 44, to fly to Lagos from Switzerland last month to help trap the conmen

Two days before he was due to leave, the American was found dead in his hotel room. The initial conclusion was death by natural causes brought on by excessive drinking. Col Santuraki is not sure

White fell prey to what Nigerians have dubbed a "419", after the section of the West Nigerian penal code during the colonial era which criminalised deception to obtain money, goods or services

The 419 is an all-encompassing name for a sometimes complex but often simple con industry that a United States banking investigation estimated is Nigeria's third largest source of hard currency

The targets range from US businesses, defrauded of \$2 million in a single scam, to a few thousand pounds swindled from eastern Europeans. Even South Africa's foreign minister, Pik Botha, has fallen victim

Mr Botha was caught out by his own scheming. One of Nigeria's most controversial politicians approached him to underwrite a new African magazine. The Nigerian promised sympathetic coverage for Pretoria, but cautioned that the South African link was to be kept secret.

A deal was struck. The politician and Mr Botha's foreign ministry were each to put £320,000 in a British bank account from which either could withdraw. Mr Botha put his money in, the politician took it out.

While some fall victim to their own stupidity, others are trapped by their greed, blithely handing tens of thousands of pounds to "officials" in the hope of making easy money from suspect deals. The British are among the primary targets, and the most willing victims. New Scotland Yard has a detective working full time on Nigerian 419 cases.

His counterpart in Nigeria is Col Santuraki, a former military intelligence officer whose Task Force on Trade Malpractices was set up in November to replace a unit whose officials had been taking money from the villains and the victims.

"Why these things succeed is sim-

ply the gullibility of the businessmen involved," the colonel said. "Through the strong desire to make profits, they tend to believe certain things, no matter how outrageous."

Honest and dishonest victims alike fall for demands for up-front payments — bribes or taxes on fake deals — often succumbing to the realistic expectation that graft is necessary to secure a deal in Nigeria.

In April Nigeria's Central Bank warned "gullible victims" against falling into the trap "because they want to reap where they did not sow."

The bank was talking about invitations that often arrive by fax or in the mail. A typical letter is one dated February 15 this year and sent to firms in Britain and the US. It purports to be from an official within the state-owned oil company wanting to launder a \$50.5 million profit from overcharging on contracts. An instant windfall of 30 per cent — about £11 million — is offered for the use of a bank account. All that is required are blank copies of the firm's notepaper and invoices, all signed, and its bank details.

Some are taken in, despite the poor wording of the letter, and discover their accounts have been cleaned out using the notepaper and invoices to arrange cash transfers.

New Scotland Yard knows of 500,000 such letters sent around the world from Nigeria last year.

The dead American doctor, John White, had brokered a number of legitimate deals in Lagos, but had once fallen victim to a scam. In an attempt to recover his money he contacted Col Santuraki. When the doctor received a new proposal, he again called the colonel.

"A few weeks ago he rang me from Switzerland to say he had had a call from a general who told him to arrange for the provision of drugs for Nigerian troops in Liberia," the colonel said. "He called him General Umar

Belo. I told him there is no general bearing that name.

"At one point, he told the criminals that maybe they were fake. So when they discovered that he had talked to me, they threatened him."

"I told him he should play along until we were ready to make an arrest, but he told them most of the things I had said to him. Eventually they threatened to kill him. Unfortunately he died. The first report said natural causes but we don't know for sure."

Two years ago a British businessman, David Rollings, was murdered in a Lagos hotel room after trying to recover £2 million conned from a colleague. At least one other Briton and an American have been killed by 419 gangs.

Foreign investigators in Lagos say there is no doubt that government officials either actively participate in 419s, or are paid to look the other way.

But Col Santuraki said "Nobody inside the government is involved. I concede that there may be some criminal elements inside the system who make available letterheads or tell these criminals the procedure."

"Even though Nigerians are the ones who generally initiate this, foreigners too can be held responsible for wanting to take money without work. There are cases where people get genuinely duped, but they are few."

As foreigners are not only victims, but part of a criminal conspiracy, it might seem appropriate to discourage them by locking up a few. So how many foreigners has Col Santuraki prosecuted?

"We leave that to the courts," he said, sighing. "If the courts want them, the embassies will be contacted."

Prosecuting foreigners might reveal the full extent of the task force's efforts in tracking down Nigerians. It has yet to secure a single conviction or return a penny to foreign victims.

Uganda's Asians head home

The Washington Post

Tammerlin Drummond in Kampala

SHERAHI JAFFER had just opened a \$15 million hotel in Kampala when Idi Amin ordered all Asians to leave the country within 90 days.

"Someone from the military had told me I was a fool to build the hotel because they were just going to take it away from me," said Jaffer, 68, the Ugandan-born son of an Indian cotton trader who immigrated around the turn of the century. "But I never thought they would just take our property without compensating us and throw us out."

Yet on August 9, 1972, Amin did just that. Accusing Asians — namely Indian and Pakistani immigrants — of exploiting blacks and "milking the economy," the former dictator stripped them of everything they owned, then deported them. More than a third of the 70,000 people affected were Ugandan citizens.

Jaffer, then a member of Uganda's Parliament, joined the Asian exodus to Canada, Britain, the United States and India. Accompanied by his wife and six children, he eventually resettled in British Columbia and bought a poultry farm there.

Now he is among the 2,000 Asians who have returned to Uganda under a new government policy to reclaim the land and buildings that they left behind two decades ago. The 8,000 properties affected — now worth about \$800 million — include mansions, apartment buildings, commercial complexes and tea and sugar plantations, many of which are empty and in a state of utter disrepair.

The official policy to return expropriated property began in 1982 under then-president Milton Obote. But it was only last year when the World Bank threatened to withhold a \$125 million structural adjustment loan to Uganda that government officials began acting in earnest. Hoping to finally close this chapter in the nation's history, the authorities have set an October 30 deadline for submitting claims. After that, any property not spoken for will be auctioned off.

Many Ugandans believe the return of Asian investors is a crucial step toward rebuilding a nation still reeling from decades of civil war, but others resent their return to their former positions of economic dominance.

"A lot of people are bitter because Asians are taking back what they thought had become theirs," said Margaret Ndekera, a 35-year-old black Ugandan businesswoman.

So far, about 2,000 of the confiscated properties have been returned to their pre-1972 owners. Entire blocks in downtown Kampala have changed hands, sparking a renova-

tion frenzy.

But more than half of the properties have yet to be claimed, according to the Departed Asians Property Custodian Board (DAPCB), a government panel acting on compensation requests.

Mumtaz Kassam, an Asian attorney who represents dozens of clients seeking repossession, insists that government officials should be doing more to locate the legal owners.

"We've asked them to at least make up lists with the addresses of the properties, but they say it would cost too much," said Kassam, 36, who first returned in 1986 to reclaim her family's 200-acre coffee farm.

Forming a potentially volatile backdrop to the government's policy are racial tensions rooted in Uganda's colonial past.

Long before the arrival of the British in the late 19th century, Indian merchants based in Zanzibar controlled much of the trade among East Africa, the Arabian peninsula and India. In later years, British colonials imported indentured Indians to build the Ugandan railway.

From the late 19th century to the end of World War II, a key element of British colonial strategy was to promote the entry of Asians into the commercial sector while at the same time blocking the development of African trade. While Asians were granted exclusive rights to buy and market local produce, blacks were denied the same opportunities and relegated to peasant farming.

Over time, the gulf between the two classes widened, fueling anti-Asian sentiment. And by 1972, the pent-up frustrations of black Africans were ripe for exploitation by Amin.

But the move also plunged the country into economic chaos. Many firms quickly collapsed due to a lack of capital, dwindling inventories and a lack of business experience on the part of the new owners. Within three years, the government was faced with a slew of bankrupt businesses and an economy in shambles.

Still, despite the terror that Amin later unleashed on the Ugandan people, many black Ugandans hold up the 1972 expulsions as one of the few positive legacies of his regime. For the first time, they argue, black Africans had access to commercial markets.

The repossessions have pitted the current occupants — many have been renting from the government for as little as 10 percent of market value — against the returning owners.

Despite the more than 2,000 properties reposessed so far, only about 400 Asians have come back to stay. "Most people come, sell off their property and go back to wherever they came from," said Ruth Namirembe Olje, a spokeswoman for the DAPCB. "Many of them don't want a repeat of their experience in 1972."

Abiola returns to Nigeria

LAGOS — Moshood Abiola, the man widely believed to have won Nigeria's annulled presidential election, will return home on Sunday from a prolonged tour lobbying for foreign support, his deputy said.

"We decided it was time he returned home," Baba Gana Kingibe, Abiola's running mate in the June 12 election, said yesterday. *Biday*

Former military ruler Gen Ibrahim Babangida, who annulled the June election, handed power to an unelected interim government two weeks ago.

The government, headed by industrialist Ernest Shonekan, has tried to pacify Nigeria's southwestern region, Abiola's home area, but support for the wealthy businessman there remains strong. *10/9/83*

Abiola has been abroad since August 3 canvassing international support for his claim to the presidency and has twice postponed returning to Nigeria for fear of his security. *(226)*

"We advised him to return as we think it is safe and he has agreed," Kingibe said. — Sapa-Reuter

Nigerian arrests alleged

(226) ARG 18/9/93
LAGOS — A Nigerian civil rights group has alleged that six of its members were arrested over protests against the installation of the country's unelected interim government.

The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights, an affiliate of the Campaign for Democracy (CD) pressure group, said in a statement yesterday three people were detained after police broke up a rally against the government in a remote area of Lagos on Friday. The other three were arrested on Thursday, it said.

Abiola to return to Nigeria

LAGOS — Moshhood Abiola, the undeclared winner of Nigeria's scrapped presidential election, is due to come home tomorrow.

His return is likely to increase the tempo of Nigeria's crisis, particularly if he heeds the call of pro-democracy groups to form an alternative government to challenge the interim, unelected administration of Ernest Shonekan.

Mr Abiola has been abroad since August 3, seeking support for his claim to the leadership of Africa's most populous country.

The business tycoon had planned to return on September 12 but delayed the homecoming after fears were expressed that his opponents might disrupt a reception rally for him.

Nigeria plunged into its worst crisis in decades after former military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida annulled the June 12 presidential poll widely believed to have been won by Mr Abiola — Sapa-Reuter

Exiled election winner to return to Nigeria

Sowetan 24/9/93

22b

LAGOS — Moshood Abiola, the unofficial winner of Nigeria's annulled presidential elections in June, has pledged to return "in peace" in a letter to his compatriots published in the press in Lagos yesterday

"After 43 days abroad, I intend, Insha' Allah (God willing), to arrive back in Lagos on Friday September 24 1993," Abiola's letter said

"I return in peace"

The Muslim millionaire businessman from the Yoruba southwest left the country to canvas support in Europe and the United States after the military junta of former President Ibrahim Babangida annulled the poll, alleging irregularities

"I appeal to all those who may wish to welcome me back, to do so in as peaceful an

■ PEACE VOW Winner of Nigeria's annulled presidential elections promises peace:

atmosphere as that which prevailed during the landmark event of June 12 1993, when the fairest and most peaceful election in the history of Nigeria took place, and was so hailed both nationally and internationally," Abiola wrote

Left leaning

Officials in Abiola's left-leaning Social Democratic Party told the press they expected his plane to land at Lagos airport on Friday

The party has formed a committee to mobilise his supporters across the country and arrange a

welcome for him at the airport

The SDP announced that he had soundly defeated the rival candidate of the right-of-centre National Republican Convention on unofficial results, but the junta refused to release the final figures though international monitors had said the poll was fair

On August 26 Babangida stepped down, handing over to an unelected civilian leader, Ernest Shonekan, whose interim government was given a brief to prepare for new presidential elections next year — Sapa-AFP

ARG 25/9/93

'We want MKO' cry Nigerians

LAGOS. — Nigeria's would-be president has ended his seven-week absence and has returned home to a tumultuous hero's welcome by 100 000 supporters anxious for the tycoon to govern their country

Publishing magnate Moshood K O Abiola, criticised by some supporters for staying away from the troubled nation since August 3, touched down at the Lagos airport aboard an Air France Boeing 747 jumbo jet

At least 100 000 people mobbed the airport, and hundreds of police tried unsuccessfully to keep them from rushing to the aircraft and yanking down barricades. The crowd was generally peaceful, however.

"MKO is our man!" the crowds chanted, waving placards saying "We want MKO for president"

Abiola, who took 30 minutes to reach his car at the airport tarmac while bodyguards pushed through the joyous crowd, looked cheerful as he waved to the masses. He made no remarks.

Abiola was winning the June 12 presidential ballot aimed at ending a decade of military rule when the dictator at the time, General Ibrahim Babangida, declared the election void.

Critics accused Babangida of trying to maintain the military's grip on power and opposing Abiola because he would have been the first southerner elected president of an ethnically polarised nation dominated politically by northerners.

The nation was paralysed by unrest and three sets of general strikes until Babangida finally resigned on August 26 but still refused to recognise Abiola. The general instead appointed a civilian supporter, Ernest Shonekan, to lead an interim government that promised to hold new elections on February 19.

Abiola still aims to claim the presidency — Sapa-AP

Crisis as top opposition party officials quit

NAIROBI — Kenya's official

opposition party, Ford Kenya, has been plunged into crisis by the resignation of four top party officials, including vice-chairman Paul Muite in the last two weeks.

The crisis appears to have considerably undermined the effectiveness of the party which had been seen as a possible alternative to President Daniel arap Moi's ruling party.

Even though the next election is due only in 1997, opponents of Moi's government had hoped that Ford Kenya would use the next few years to consolidate their position as a strong alternative, particularly in the areas where Moi's party has become vulnerable because of violence and ethnic strife.

The four who resigned stated as their reason unhappiness over an admission by party chairman, veteran politician Oginga Odinga, that he had received the equivalent of R1-million from the scandal-ridden Goldenberg Company.

Secretary-general of the party, activist lawyer Gitobu Inanyara was sacked for calling the pay-off a bribe to stop the party from investigating the multi-million dollar scandal in which the company was involved.

The only white member of the policy-making national executive committee, Robert Shaw, tendered his resignation as deputy economics spokesman.

Goldenberg is reported to have received millions of Kenya shillings from the government as export compensation for fictitious gold and diamond exports. Both the Kenya vice-president, George Saitoh, who features prominently in the scandal, and the company's chairman, Kamlesh Patni, have denied they violated government regulations. Saitoh was said to have given the company preferential treatment when he was finance minister and assisted it to earn up to 100-million US dollars from the treasury.

Some opposition members have called for their prosecution. Two months ago, the government announced that it had launched investigations, but

so far nothing has been heard of the progress of those investigations.

The Ford Kenya problems started when in July Odinga admitted that he had received a donation from Goldenberg following widespread rumours. But the 81-year-old leader said he received the money in good faith and did not know the contributor was the same Patni linked to the Goldenberg Company. However, Odinga seems to have made a tactical error of judgment by privately appealing to his subordinates to stop discussing the

Goldenberg affair.

As leader of the opposition, Odinga is chairman of the Public Accounts Committee which is currently probing the scandal. Other opposition leaders have called on Odinga to resign from the committee in view of his connection, but he has so far refused to do so.

In his notice of resignation, Shaw said that Ford Kenya had been smeared by Odinga's actions. He said that the party could no longer be the champion of greater accountability, transparency and integrity.

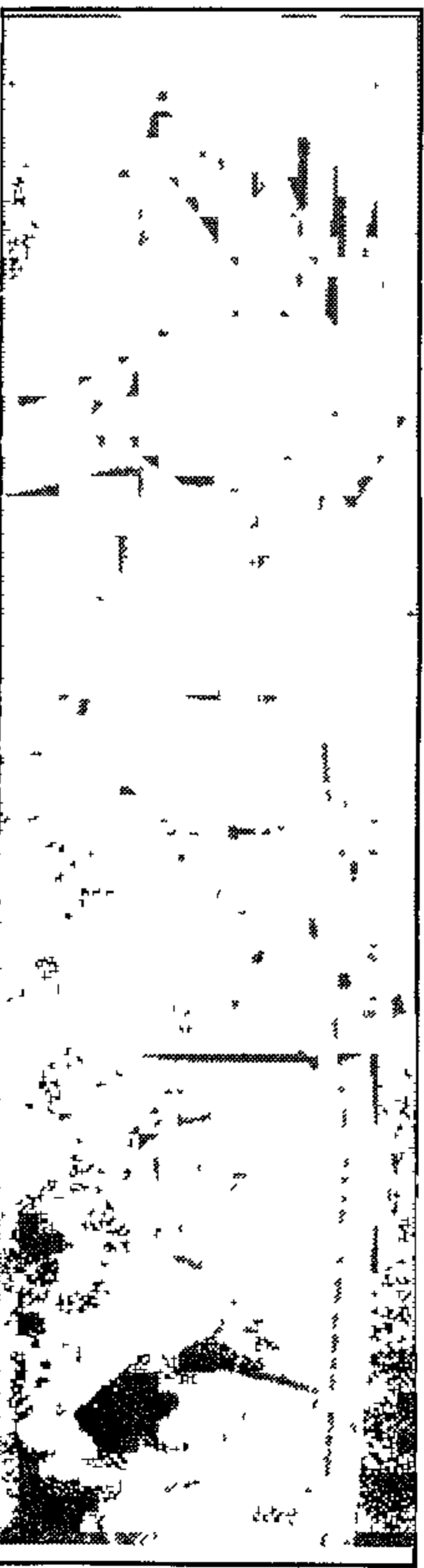
226

1/10/93

Sowetan

Apart from the Goldenberg affair, some members of the opposition have also complained about Odinga's open rapport with Moi, the man he failed to oust during last December's first multi-party elections in three decades. Odinga argues that co-operation with Moi is the only means of attracting development to areas that overwhelmingly voted against the ruling party. Government officials have often said that only pro-Kanu areas would benefit from Moi's rule.

— Sowetan Correspondent



Kenyan president Moi waves to Kanu Party leaders outside Parliament.

Crisis as Nigerian govt ruled illegal

Biday 11/11/93

LAGOS — Nigeria faced a constitutional crisis yesterday after the Lagos High Court declared its military-appointed stopgap government illegal.

Judge Dolapo Akinsanya, ruling in a case brought by thwarted presidential contender Moshood Abiola, said former military ruler Ibrahim Babangida had no authority to appoint the interim government led by Ernest Shonekan to take his place when he stepped down on August 26.

"President Babangida has no legitimate power to sign a decree after August 26 1993, after his exit, so the decree is void and of no effect," declared Akinsanya.

Thousands cheered the verdict and poured on to the streets of Lagos calling for Abiola's installation in the presidency, which he is widely believed to have won in a June 12 election annulled by Babangida.

Legal experts said the government would probably ignore the verdict while appealing to higher courts.

Shonekan, also under fire for dissolving local councils and raising petrol prices, is due to make a "state of the nation" address to the elected national assembly today in which he would seek support on a wide range of controversial issues.

The assembly will sit in a joint session of the House of Representatives and the Senate, which has a new leadership largely favourable to the interim government.

The judge ordered that a civilian constitution, drawn up under Babangida in 1989 but never implemented, be put into effect. (226)

Abiola is now expected to press his claim to the presidency more forcefully. His first court challenge failed when Babangida was still in power and the Supreme Court ruled it lacked jurisdiction to hear the case.

Akinsanya's judgment said: "A judge is not meant to shy away from the law of the state."

Shonekan's government, whose tenure is supposed to end on March 31 1994, triggered a new controversy on Monday when it dissolved all local councils ahead of fresh presidential and local council polls in February.

The government plans to appoint administrators to oversee the local councils before the February poll.

The new elections are being boycotted in southwestern Nigeria, Abiola's political stronghold, but the electoral commission says it is going normally in other parts of the country. — Sapa-Reuter.

Riots in Lagos as fuel price soars

B/Say 12/11/93

LAGOS — Rioters blocked major roads in Nigeria's biggest city, Lagos, yesterday in protest against a rise of more than 600% in fuel prices. (22b)

Witnesses said vehicles stopped using Ikorodu Road, the main expressway linking Lagos Island with the mainland, after hundreds of young demonstrators lit bonfires. The youths demanded fuel from cars to feed their fires.

Others commandeered cars to drive around shouting slogans against the stopgap government of Ernest Shonekan, who was appointed in August by departing military ruler Ibrahim Babangida.

The government is also under pressure to quit following a Lagos high court declaration that it is illegal.

Judge Dolapo Akinsanya gave the ruling in a suit brought by Moshood Abiola, the billionaire businessman who says he won the presidential election on June 12 that was annulled.

Abiola's supporters immediately called on caretaker head of state Ernest Shonekan to resign, but his government said it was appealing against the ruling.

The new petrol price is still among the cheapest in the world but Abiola and many other Nigerians say it will give impetus to high inflation.

Vehicles were turned back at the Ojota area of Ibrahim Babangida Boulevard, also linking the mainland with the island. There were no re-

ports of clashes with the police. Central Lagos, where most of Nigeria's leading banks have their headquarters, was not affected.

Transport fares have more than doubled and diesel and paraffin, the poor man's cooking fuel, also increased more than 600%.

Most motorists on the mainland carried green leaves on their vehicles to indicate support for the protest or to avoid being a target of attack.

Many commuters at bus stops away from the protests expressed anger at the fuel price increase.

"I don't support the use of violence but something needs to be done to make those in power realise there is a limit to which ordinary people can be pushed," said a public servant.

Nigeria has for years sold oil products in the domestic market at some of the cheapest prices in the world. A 6% hike in petrol prices triggered nationwide riots in 1988.

The labour movement, including the radical oil workers' union, Nupeng, has condemned the higher fuel prices, which it says will spur a general round of price rises. Inflation is already close to 100% a year.

The government, under pressure from the local oil industry and foreign creditors to cut domestic fuel subsidies, said Monday's price increases were necessary for refiners and marketers to offset production costs. — Sapa-Reuter.

Unions call for general strike

Nigerian fuel hikes spark riots

Star 12/1/93
226

Lagos — Nigeria's political crisis deepened yesterday when trade unions called for an all-out indefinite strike from Monday after the unelected government raised fuel prices by 600 percent

Rioters blocked major roads in Lagos yesterday in protest at the fuel price rise and hundreds of demonstrating youths lit bonfires on the main road linking Lagos Island with the mainland.

"After 72 hours, workers should stay at home if the price increase is not reversed," the umbrella Nigeria Labour Congress said in a statement on Thursday

Several critics said the price rise would cause more hardship in a country already mired in high inflation

The demonstrations were also aimed at forcing the government, led by industrialist Ernest Shonekan, to resign in favour of Moshood Abiola, who was widely believed to have won annulled presidential elections in June.

Transport fares have more than doubled since Monday when the prices of petrol, diesel and paraffin were raised.

The umbrella Campaign for Democracy pressure group said it would set a date for its own protests, and the National Association of Nigerian Students called on all students to join the demon-

THE country has been in crisis since June elections were annulled

strations

Nigeria has been enmeshed in crisis since military ruler Ibrahim Babangida annulled the June ballot and later installed Shonekan before stepping down.

Abiola won a court verdict on Wednesday declaring that Shonekan's stopgap government was illegal

The government said it would appeal against the decision and Shonekan, in a state of the nation address to the elected national assembly, made clear that he would not quit.

"Despite political and legal obstacles, we will still go along to carry out our mandate," he said. "The interim government may be a child of circumstance, but it is high time we came to terms with the reality of our circumstances."

Fuel prices have long been a sensitive issue in the country. Strikes by the labour congress and the powerful oil workers unions NUPENG and PENGASSAN in August forced the government to cancel a similar planned increase. — Sapa-Reuter.

Nigerians to strike over

700% fuel rise
(226) CTIS/11/93

LAGOS — Nigerians braced themselves for a general strike today, stocking up on food as labour leaders ignored a government call for talks about a 700% increase in fuel prices

Information secretary Mr Uche Chukwumerije said government officials had hoped to meet officials of the 42-union Nigerian Labour Congress yesterday

Labour leaders said they were boycotting the proposed talks after ordering its four million members to stay off work today unless the price hike was rescinded

Yesterday the Campaign for Democracy called for mass action — including bonfires — against the "atrocious increases" — Sapa-AP

Nigerian govt hopes to avert strike through talks

Biday 15/11/93

LAGOS — Nigeria's unelected government, embroiled in a major political crisis, invited trade union leaders for talks yesterday to try to avert an indefinite national strike, but it was uncertain if they would turn up.

The umbrella organisation Nigeria Labour Congress did not respond immediately to the invitation for a meeting in the capital Abuja.

The congress said earlier it would call all its 3.5-million members out on strike today unless the government rescinds a 600% fuel price hike.

Announcing the invitation Oil Minister Don Etiebet said the government wanted the unions to suggest alternative ways of averting a collapse of Nigeria's vital oil industry. He said the state oil company was facing a severe cash squeeze and mounting losses meant that fuel distributors would go out of business unless domestic fuel prices were raised.

The government said the talks would be to resolve issues under the government's policy of having dialogue with all aggrieved parties.

Protests had taken place in several Nigerian cities since the cost of petrol at filling stations rose to five naira a litre from 0.7 naira. Prices of other oil products were also increased.

A general strike would compound the political crisis which had gripped Nigeria since military ruler Ibrahim Babangida annulled presidential elections in June and installed a handpicked interim government before stepping down.

Businessman Moshood Abiola, who claimed victory in the election, won a court order last Wednesday declaring that the interim government, headed by industrialist Ernest Shonekan was illegal.

Abiola's supporters, including pro-democracy groups based in Lagos, said they would mobilise non-union members to join the general strike with the aim of forcing the government to quit.

The Campaign for Democracy said it had decided to call for demonstrations next Thursday and Friday to give added weight to the strike.

"The (campaign's) action will take the form of demonstrations, processions, bonfires, barricades and other necessary forms of mass action," it said.

Shonekan insisted that he would not step down before completing his assignment of conducting a fresh presidential election and then handing over to the winner by March 31 1994.

His government said it would introduce a welfare package to cushion the impact of the fuel price increases. "The government appeals to Nigerians to remain calm and go about their legitimate businesses," Shonekan said.

Nigeria had been under pressure from its creditors to remove fuel subsidies, but Etiebet said the current rise was intended only to help refiners and fuel distributors to recover some of their costs.

"Subsidies we haven't touched," he said. "If we have to touch them, the price will be two or three times higher than this." — Sapa-Reuter.

Star 15/11/93

Nigeria in bid to avert fuel strikes

Lagos — Nigeria's military-appointed government said it hoped to hold talks today with trade union chiefs to avert a strike over huge fuel price rises.

Yesterday the government invited union leaders to attend talks to resolve the dispute. (22b)

Information Secretary Uche Chukwumerije said yesterday: "The formal invitation has been sent to them. They haven't yet said yes."

The strike threat adds to the problems of the government, which the High Court last week declared illegal in the latest twist in a five-month political crisis.

Ernest Shonekan's government was appointed in August by military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida, who stepped down after annulling June's presidential election. The election was generally believed to have been won by business tycoon Moshood Abiola.

The 3.5 million-strong Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), which includes the powerful oil workers' unions,

Nupeng and Pengassan, has not said whether the strike would go ahead today or would be suspended for the talks.

Chukwumerije said he expected the NLC to reply to the talks invitation after a meeting of its central committee today.

Oil minister Don Etebet says the fuel price increases are needed to save Nigeria's vital but cash-strapped oil sector.

Protests have taken place in some Nigerian cities since filling stations started selling petrol at five naira (23c) a litre, up from 0.70 naira (3c) last Monday.

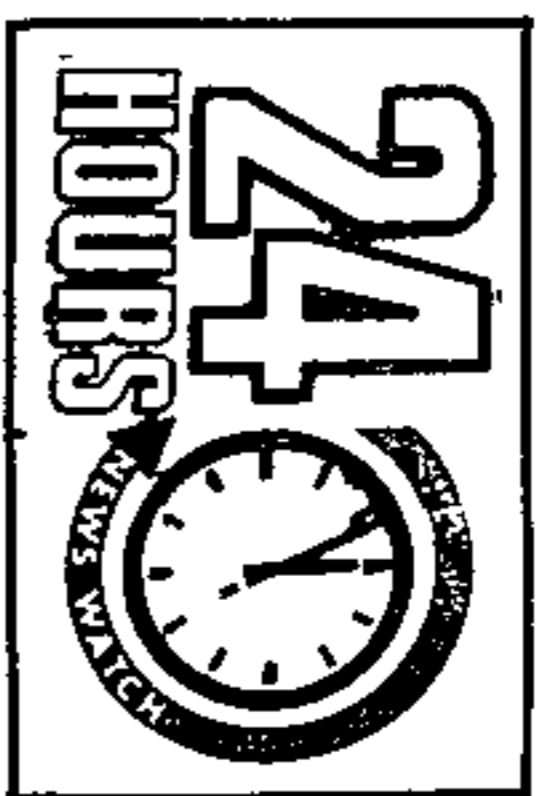
Election

The government has made it clear it has no intention of resigning before a fresh presidential election is held, by March 1994.

It says it is aware the fuel price increases will affect Nigerians but said it intends to introduce a welfare package to cushion the effects, and appealed for calm. — Sapa-Reuter.

NIGERIA

Back to military rule



ARCT18/11/93 (22b)

Powerful general takes over after unelected civilian leader quits

Sapa-Reuter reports from Lagos

NIGERIA returned to military rule when its unelected civilian leader, Ernest Shonekan, threw in the towel after just 82 days in office in the face of mounting domestic problems

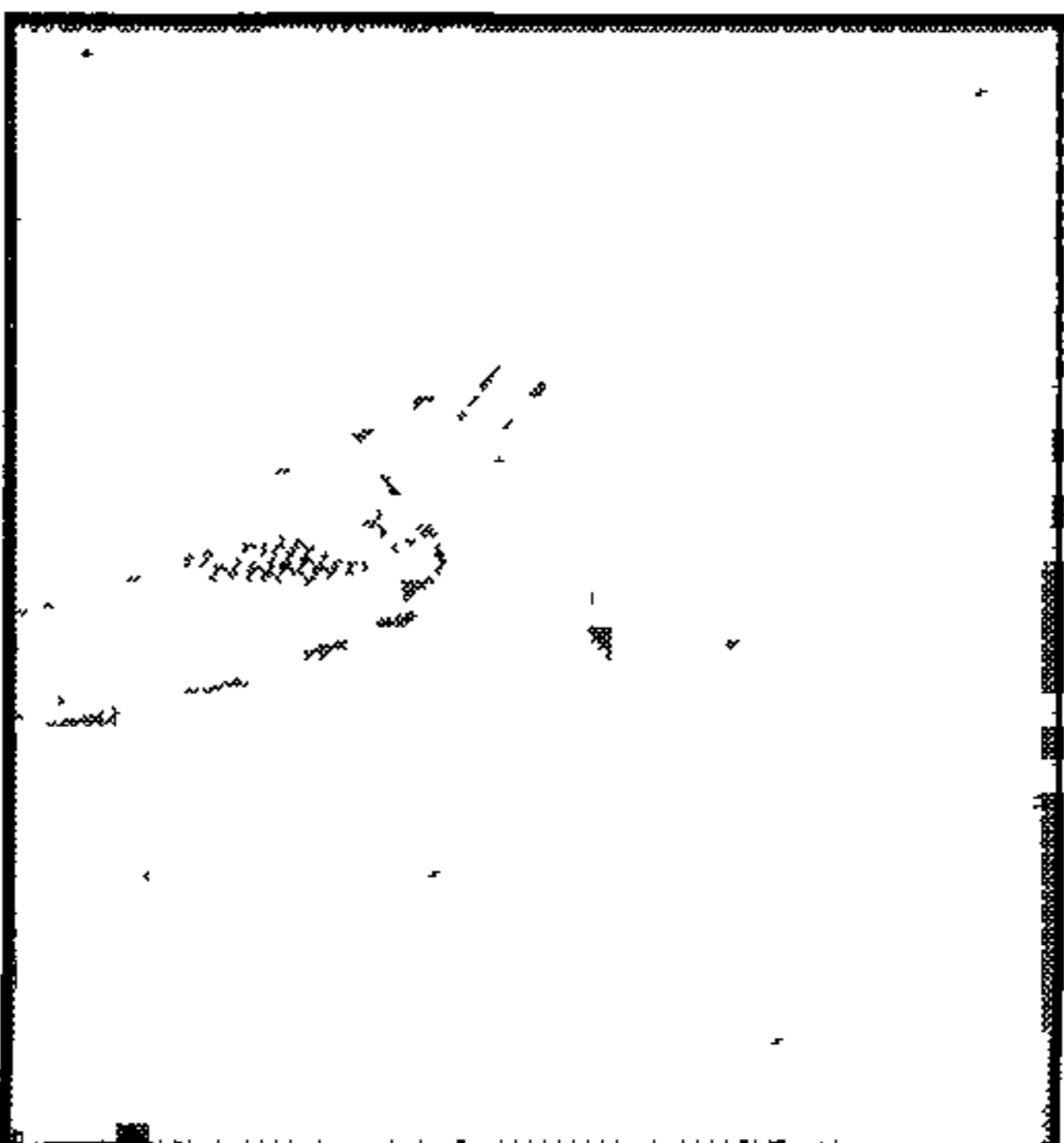
General Sam Abacha, the most powerful military officer in the country, took over as head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces after Mr Shonekan resigned last night

The interim government which Mr Shonekan, a lawyer and industrialist, led was put together by former military ruler Ibrahim Babangida

Babangida, who had been in power for eight years, left his oil-exporting nation in crisis when he annulled an election which was held in June to choose his civilian successor

Billionaire businessman Moshood Abiola, who was widely believed to have won the June election, has vehemently opposed the government of Mr Shonekan, a fellow Yoruba, and last week he won a court ruling declaring the administration to be illegal

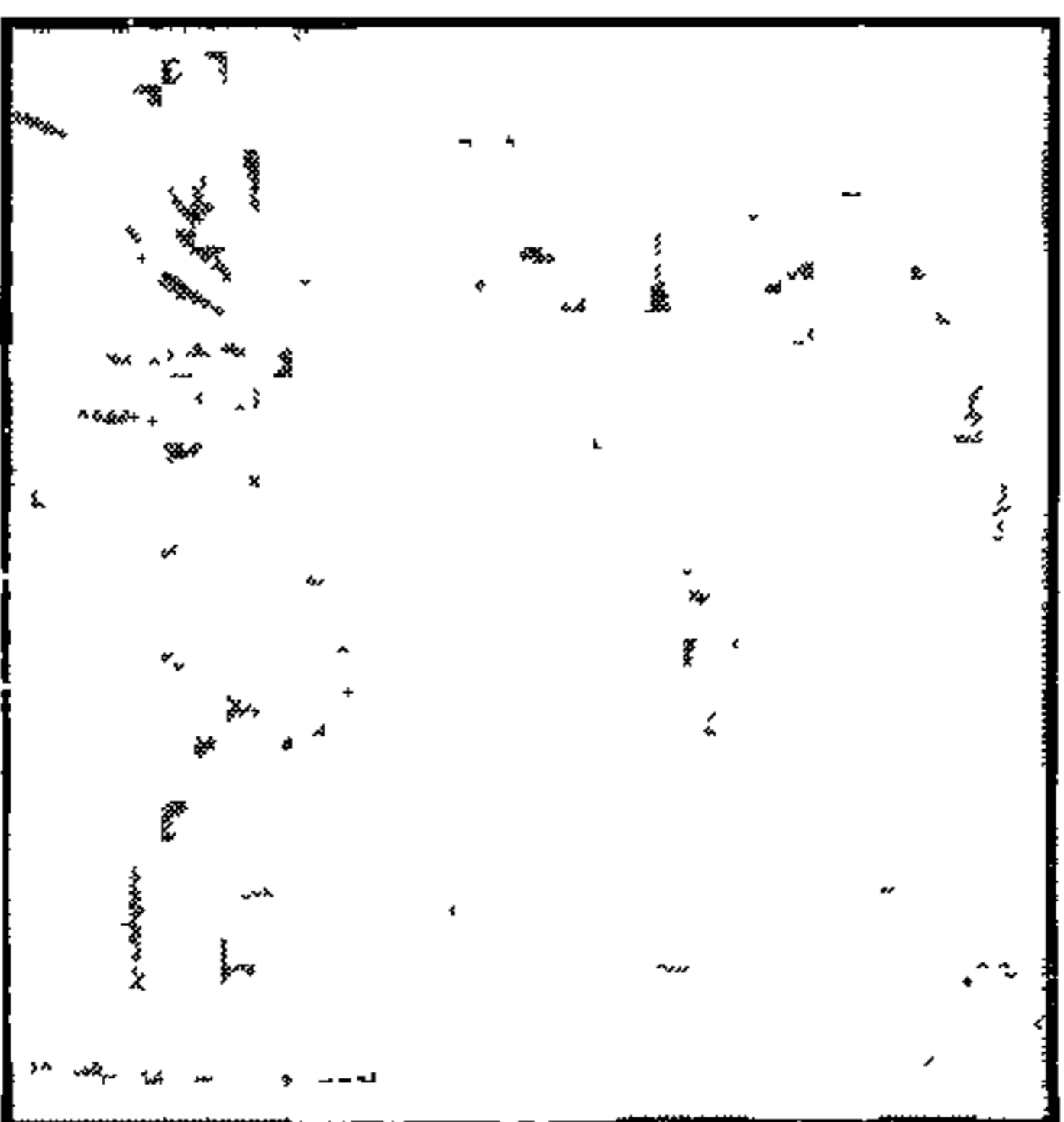
A few days later Mr Shone-



ERNEST SHONEKAN: Quit after 82 days as head of state

kan faced the full wrath of labour unions when workers embarked on a general strike to protest against a huge rise in fuel prices in a country, Africa's most populous, that has become accustomed to cheap petrol supplies

"In the light of recent events, and after due consideration of all the facts, I am left with no alternative but to take the most honourable and dignified step of resigning with immediate effect," Mr Shonekan, 57, said in a statement read by an announcer



IBRAHIM BABANGIDA: Annulled the results of the June election

on state television

The statement said he made his decision after consulting military chiefs including General Abacha, who is 50

"They expressed serious concern about the general uneasiness in the country and apparent lack of stability over the past few months," the statement said

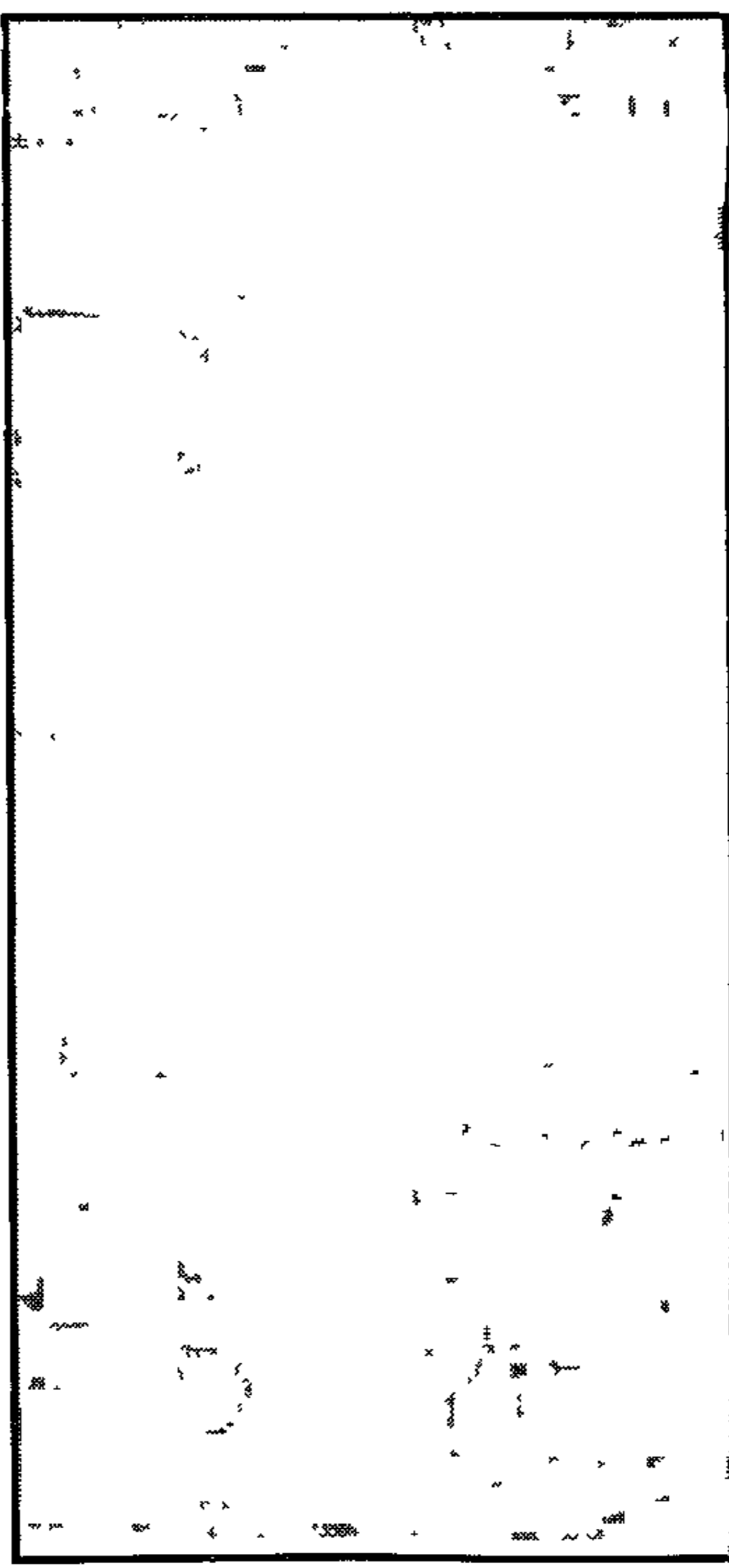
"They spoke about restiveness in the rank and file in the military"

Mr Shonekan's resignation

was announced on radio while reporters were waiting for a news conference that had been called last night by General Abacha

Diplomats said it was too early to speculate on what General Abacha's programme might be but they said it was possible senior officers wanted the general to clear up the political impasse precipitated by Babangida when he annulled the election

The unity of Nigeria, which has 88 million people from more than 250 ethnic groups,



RAMPAGE: Demonstrators set fire to tyres in the streets of Lagos in protest against the annulment of the presidential elections by General Babangida.

has been under severe strain since the annulment

Mr Abiola is the first Yoruba to have apparently won Nigeria's presidency through an election and his ethnic group in south-western Nigeria has felt deeply cheated by the annulment

"It will be interesting to see whether Abacha will restore the election results or stay in power," one diplomat said

Western countries have strongly opposed continued military rule in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation

Britain, Nigeria's former colonial power, said in reaction to Mr Shonekan's resignation that it was urgently consulting with other countries on what further steps to take

Token sanctions imposed by the United States and European Community nations after the annulment remain in place

General Abacha, a short dapper man who wears dark glasses in public, inherits the strike over fuel price hikes as

well demonstrations pro-democracy groups have planned for today and tomorrow in their long campaign to force Mr Shonekan to quit for Mr Abiola

The union had been due to resume negotiations today in the capital Abuja with the now defunct Shonekan government

Their strike has shut most banks and businesses since Monday and created a fuel shortage in the biggest city Lagos

General takes over as domestic problems mount

Nigerian leader quits

Star 18/11/93

Lagos — Nigeria returned to military rule last night when unelected leader Ernest Shonekan, faced with mounting domestic problems, threw in the towel after just 82 days in office.

The top military man in the country, General Sani Abacha (50), took over as head of State and commander in chief of the armed forces after Shonekan resigned.

Shonekan's interim government was put together by former military ruler Ibrahim Babangida, who began Nigeria's slide into crisis when he annulled elections called in June to choose his civilian

AFRICA'S most populous country returns to military rule amid calls for the recognition of annulled elections

successor

Billionaire Moshood Abiola, who was widely believed to have won the election, obtained a court ruling last week invalidating Shonekan's government.

A few days later Shonekan faced the full wrath of labour unions when workers em-

barked on a general strike to protest against a huge rise in fuel prices

"In the light of recent events, and after due consideration of all the facts, I am left with no alternative but to take the most honourable and dignified step of resigning with immediate effect," Shonekan (57) said in a statement read by an announcer on State television.

Shonekan said the chiefs expressed concern about the mounting unrest and "spoke about restiveness in the rank and file in the military."

Diplomats said it was too early to speculate on what Abacha's next step would be

But he would have to attempt to resolve the series of crises sparked by the annulment

The unity of Nigeria, which has 88 million people from more than 250 ethnic groups, has been under severe strain since the annulment.

Western countries have strongly opposed continued military rule in Nigeria.

Token sanctions imposed by the US and European Community nations after the annulment remain in place. Britain, Nigeria's former colonial master, said it would consult other countries on what further steps to take in the light of Shonekan's resignation — Sapa-Reuter

226

Fingers in oil barrel

Star 19/11/93

How much revenue is truly accruing to Nigeria from the export of her black gold — crude oil? How is the revenue disbursed, and how many barrels of crude oil are lifted ashore daily?

These are some of the worrying questions the Nigerian interim national government and concerned citizens are asking as the nation's searchlight is beamed on the corrupt-ridden and mismanaged Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the sole custodian of the country's crude oil and its revenue.

Although Nigeria exports 2.1 million barrels a day, the revenue is not properly accounted for as almost 50 percent of it is siphoned into private pockets.

The NNPC, the world's sixth biggest non-American oil-producing company, has no records of its earnings and spendings over the past decade, according to investigations.

The NNPC's last audited account was in 1984, then late by

CORRUPTION may destroy Nigeria's oil industry, reports Kunle Adekoya in Abuja

(226)

eight years.

In a bid to expose some of the shady deals and purify the NNPC, the interim national government, through its Secretary of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Chief Don Etiebet, has begun preliminary investigations to expose all contracts alleged to have been awarded without recourse to due process by the recently dissolved boards of NNPC and its four subsidiaries.

A major side effect of the era of misappropriation and maladministration has been the artificial and acute shortages of petroleum products that have become a permanent feature in Nigeria, due largely to a grossly inefficient distribution system

— DPA Features

No to politics, democracy

Nigeria's new ruler gets tough

Star 19/11/93

Lagos — Nigeria's new military leader, General Sani Abacha, has announced sweeping changes to stem the country's slide into chaos, but it is uncertain how groups with conflicting interests will react.

Abacha, in his maiden broadcast last night, banned politics and dismantled all democratic institutions.

The ban effectively ended the nation's seven-year march to democracy, derailed in June when former military ruler Ibrahim Babangida annulled elections to choose his civilian successor.

The reaction of businessman Moshood Abiola, who was poised to win the June poll, is critical to what happens in south-west Nigeria, Abiola's home region.

The region has been the centre of riots and protests since Babangida annulled the June poll and handed power to the stop-gap government of Ernest Shonekan.

Shonekan, faced with mounting problems that were

almost tearing Nigeria apart, finally gave up the leadership on Wednesday, and the military asked Abacha to step in.

In a no-nonsense, 10-minute address, Abacha said he would not tolerate trouble from any quarter. (226)

"We will not condone nor tolerate any act of indiscipline. Any attempt to test our will, will be decisively dealt with," he warned.

Abacha ended the ban imposed on some newspapers by Babangida and said he would establish a conference to chart Nigeria's future constitution and ways of forming new parties, two measures that may please pro-democracy campaigners.

But the first test to his authority will be a continuing strike by workers against a fuel price rise.

Most banks and businesses have closed since the strike.

Abacha pledged to reorganise the military, police, customs and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. — Sapa-Reuter.

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CT 19/11/93
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LAGOS. — Nigeria's new military leadership said yesterday the interim government no longer existed after the resignation of its head, Mr Ernest Shonekan

Military spokesman Brigadier-General Fred Chijuka told reporters the new head of state, General Sani Abacha, had the full support of the armed forces and had met officers from the rank of brigadier upwards for talks

General Abacha, the defence minister and only serving military officer in the unelected government, assumed power on Wednesday after Mr Shonekan's surprise resignation

The industrialist threw in the towel amid a general strike over his government's widely unpopular decision to raise fuel prices sixfold. Pro-democracy activists also held more protests against his military-installed government, declared illegal by a Lagos high court last week

The National Assembly in the inland capital, Abuja, did not sit yesterday — Sapa-Reuter

Nigeria strongman in big clampdown

Democratic institutions are dissolved

ARG 19/11/93 (276)

LAGOS — Nigeria's military put paid to civilian rule as new leader Sani Abacha dissolved democratic institutions in a wave of decrees, amid reports that he would stay in power for at least 18 months

In his first broadcast as leader late last night, General Abacha dissolved the two-chamber parliament as well as the country's two political parties and its 30 regional councils and decreed the creation of a provisional ruling council headed by military leaders

He also abolished the national electoral commission, which had been charged with organising civilian presidential elections on February 19. Military sources said there were no plans to hold the elections

Earlier yesterday the military dismissed Ernest Shonekan's civilian government, which had been installed as an interim administration on August 26 by the outgoing junta under Ibrahim Babangida, and suspended parliament

Army spokesman Fred Chijuka insisted that the takeover, which followed five months of political and social turmoil sparked by the junta's voiding of a presidential election last June, was "not a military coup"

General Abacha said the country would be run by a provisional council with full legisla-

tive powers

Under his chairmanship the council would include the armed forces chief of staff, the army chief of staff, the commander of the army, navy and air force and the police inspector-general, he added

General Abacha, who took over as head of state and armed forces commander-in-chief on Wednesday after Mr Shonekan's resignation, would remain in power for as long as was necessary "to put the country back on its feet", a high-level military source said

General Abacha's mandate would last at least 18 months but should not exceed two years. Military sources said the provisional council would consist of "95 percent civilians"

General Abacha meanwhile added that Nigeria's 30 regional councils would be placed under the control of military brigade commanders "until (civilian) administrators are appointed"

He also decreed a clampdown on civil disobedience in the wake of four days of strikes and protests aimed at forcing authorities to rescind a recent seven- to nine-fold increase in fuel prices

General Abacha said a conference would quickly be convened to determine Nigeria's future constitutional structure, adding that it would recommend the creation of genuine political parties endorsed by the civilian population — Sapa-AP

Nigeria back to military rule

AFTER seven years of living on a promise of democracy, Africa's most populous nation is back to military rule and analysts fear this could be for a long time.

General Sani Abacha, Nigeria's top army officer, assumed power on Wednesday when the civilian picked by the military to complete a troubled transition to democracy gave up the effort.

Military commanders began taking over from elected civilian governors on Friday as Nigeria's new dictator followed through on his decision to sweep away all traces of democracy.

Nigerians were shocked that Gen Abacha was dissolving the 30 state governments, the federal legislature and all local councils

That effectively dismantled nearly a decade of progress toward a system of elected government made under former dictator General Ibrahim Babangida, who resigned in August after installing civilian Ernest Shonekan.

Army brigade commanders began moving into government offices in several cities, including Lagos, the commercial capital, and Port Harcourt, the petroleum capital.

State-run Radio Nigeria reported that a shakeup in the military was under way and Abacha "would not brook any nonsense".

Abacha, 50, a US-trained soldier who helped lead military coups in 1983 and 1985, also banned all politi-

By JAMES JUKWEY
in Lagos

cal activity. He said he was running the country as head of a military council and would organise a constitutional conference to come up with a new system of democracy.

Campaign spokesman Shina Loremikan said police clashed with unarmed protesters in south-western Akure and Abeokuta and several parts of Lagos.

Dozens of students were arrested and some were charged in a Lagos magistrate's court with rioting and possessing subversive material belonging to the Campaign for Democracy, he said.

Abacha in his first broadcast on Thursday banned politics, scrapped political parties, sacked the National Assembly and elected state governors and dissolved the electoral commission. — Sapa-Reuter

Nigerian govt cuts fuel prices

Lagos — Nigeria's new military government cleared its first hurdle yesterday by agreeing to cut fuel prices in a deal with trade unions to end a week-old strike

New military ruler General Sam Abacha inherited the crisis from the interim government of Ernest Shonekan, who resigned last week. Shonekan's government raised oil product prices by more than 600 percent two weeks ago

Now the military government has agreed that the price rises should be shaved back to just over 400 percent

That was enough to persuade labour leader Pascal Bafyau to direct members of his Nigeria Labour Congress to return to work today, but it still means the ordinary Nigerian faces a huge leap in public transportation costs and that inflation, already around 100 percent annually, will

be further inflamed.

Analysts said Abacha may find other challenges facing his five-day-old administration harder to overcome, including reviving the economy and winning support for his policies

The government had been under pressure from the domestic oil industry and foreign creditors to cut oil subsidies to generate revenue and curb smuggling.

Fuel pricing is a sensitive issue in Opec-member Nigeria, but Shonekan's government said it needed to post the huge increases in order to help pay off foreign creditors and get its ailing oil industry back in order.

The prices agreed between the government and the unions are below the level the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation says it needs to break even and to pay for restoring its refineries

— Sapa-Reuter

Nigerian strike ends as army rulers cut fuel price

BIDAY 23/11/93

LAGOS — Nigerian unions ended a week-old general strike and ordered workers back to their jobs yesterday after the country's new military government cleared its first hurdle on Sunday by agreeing to cut fuel prices (226)

New military ruler Gen Sani Abacha inherited the crisis from the interim government of Ernest Shonekan, who resigned last Wednesday. Shonekan's government raised the prices of oil products by more than 600% two weeks ago.

Now the military government has agreed that the price rises should be reduced to just over 400%.

That was enough to persuade labour leader Pascal Bafyau to direct members of his Nigeria Labour Congress to return to work yesterday, but it still means the ordinary Nigerian faces a huge leap in public transport costs and inflation, already around 100% a year, will be further inflamed.

Banks and shops, closed since the strike began last week, opened early yesterday in Lagos. There were few police on the streets.

"Most of our staff are back," said

the manager of one bank in central Lagos, where traffic again jammed the streets.

However, analysts say Abacha may find other challenges to his five-day-old administration harder to overcome, including reviving an exhausted economy and winning local and international support for his policies. The government had been under pressure from the domestic oil industry and foreign creditors to cut oil subsidies to generate revenue and curb massive smuggling.

Fuel pricing is a sensitive issue in Nigeria, an Opec member, but Shonekan's government said it needed the huge increases to help pay off foreign creditors and get its ailing oil industry back in order.

The prices agreed between the government and the unions are below the level the state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation says it needs to break even and to pay for restoring its crumbling refineries.

And it is uncertain whether the new prices will get approval from the IMF, which Nigeria needs to help persuade mainly Western creditors

to forgive a large chunk of the roughly \$30bn it owes them.

At the weekend Abacha met some foreign diplomats, including those from leading Western creditor nations, which have criticised the military takeover.

Last Thursday Abacha banned politics and dissolved all democratically elected institutions, scuttling a seven-year-old plan for a phased transition to democracy begun by his military predecessor, Gen Ibrahim Babangida.

Local pro-democracy groups have condemned what they describe as Abacha's coup in a country that has been ruled by soldiers for 23 of its 33 years of independence from Britain.

Defence spokesman Brig Fred Chijuka said the ambassadors of Japan and Egypt had been told on Sunday that the change in leadership was to ensure the country did not degenerate to a level where "we would start to kill ourselves".

He said Abacha's administration did not intend "perpetuating itself in power" and that it was very different from Babangida's government — Sapa-Reuter.

Nigerian rulers seek way out of impasse

ARG 23/11/93

221

□ Deepening crisis as military leaders dither

LAGOS. — Nigeria is drifting without effective government as the new military rulers cast about for a political strategy to rescue Africa's most populous nation from a deepening crisis sparked by the annulment of presidential elections in June.

The November 17 coup d'état by General Sani Abacha was designed to pre-empt action by junior officers who were plotting to overthrow the political and military elite, who most Nigerians blame for running what was once one of Africa's richest countries into the ground through misrule and corruption.

Diplomatic sources said a group of disgruntled brigadiers and colonels were planning a bloody overthrow of the unelected interim government installed by the former military president Ibrahim Babangida before his departure from office on 26 August.

"Abacha himself would have been swept aside," said a diplomatic source.

"He is now treading a very fine line, with a narrow base of support, and it will be difficult for him to come through it."

The lower ranks of the army have been increasingly frus-

trated by the non-payment of salaries and by poor conditions.

Added to this is a rising wave of secessionist feeling fostered by General Babangida's decision to abort the June 12 presidential elections and deprive Chief Moshood Abiola, a Muslim millionaire from the Yoruba-dominated south-west, of certain victory.

No Yoruba has ever been elected president, and there is resentment in the south-west over what is perceived as domination by northern politicians.

General Abacha, who became Nigeria's third leader in as many months, gained some breathing space on Sunday by reaching an agreement with the 3.5 million-strong Nigeria Labour Congress, to call off its week-old strike in return for reducing a fuel price rise from 600 to 360 percent.

Raising fuel prices was one of the last measures taken by Ernest Shonekan's interim government. It followed a ruling by a Lagos high court that his administration was illegal.

It became clear that Chief Shonekan's plans to hold fresh elections on February 19 next year were untenable after a voter registration drive met by a complete boycott in southwestern Nigeria.

General Abacha and Chief

Abiola met yesterday in an attempt to heal the deep political wounds inflicted by General Babangida's decision to scrap his eight-year transition programme to civilian rule.

General Abacha has been working to set up a military-controlled "provisional ruling council", which would include some prominent civilians, to run the country.

He was expected to name the current Chief of Defence Staff, Lieutenant-General Oladipo Diya, a Yoruba Christian, as his deputy, and put Lieutenant-General Jerry Useni, who comes from a politically important military clique known as the "Langtang mafia", in the ruling council's number three position.

But many observers doubted that the new council, effectively a carbon copy of General Babangida's defunct Armed Forces Ruling Council, would placate the more radical junior officers clamouring for a complete break from the past.

General Abacha is widely perceived as a continuation of the Babangida government. He was a key plotter in both the 1983 coup, which overthrew Nigeria's last elected government headed by Shehu Shagari.

— The Independent, London

Nigeria's new rulers named

Star 24/11/93

Lagos — Nigeria's new military ruler General Sani Abacha yesterday named the 11 members of the country's Provisional Ruling Council — to be the top ruling body — including four civilians, a military spokesman said.

Baba Gana Kingibe, the running-mate of Moshood Abiola, presumed winner of June 12 presi-

dential elections annulled by the then-military junta, was given the foreign ministry portfolio, the spokesman said.

Abacha, who took power on November 17, kept the defence ministry portfolio he had held as the only soldier in the transitional administration of Ernest Shonekan, installed by the junta in August. — Sapa-AFP

Radicals on Nigeria's ruling council

LAGOS — Nigeria's military appears to have succeeded in weakening opposition forces by announcing the appointment of some radicals to the country's new ruling council

Sani Abacha's week-old government appointed Baba Gana Kingibe, the running mate of thwarted presidential candidate Moshood Abiola — who claims he won the June 12 elections, which were annulled

It was not immediately clear if Mr Kingibe, a former ambas-

sador, would take the job

But Beko Ransome-Kuti, national leader of the umbrella Campaign for Democracy pressure group, said "It means Baba Gana Kingibe has de-camped"

Apart from Mr Kingibe, the other civilian members of the 11-man Provisional Ruling Council due to be inaugurated today are Alex Ibru, publisher of the Lagos Guardian newspaper, and radical lawyer Olu Onagoruwa

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General Abacha is chairman of the council and also retains his post as defence minister

The June 12 presidential election was annulled by former military ruler Ibrahim Babangida, plunging Nigeria into its worst crisis since the 1967-70 Biafra civil war in which a million Nigerians died

General Babangida handed over to industrialist Ernest Shonekan, who was replaced last Wednesday by General Abacha. Sapa-Reuter

ARG 24/11/93

Nigeria's new rulers

hope to bring peace

226

APR 25/11/93

LAGOS — Nigerian military leader Sam Abacha has sworn in a provisional ruling council, which includes a close ally of thwarted presidential candidate Moshood Abiola

A week after reimposing army rule, General Abacha held the ceremony in Lagos, where the military has its headquarters, far from the inland capital of Abuja

General Abacha is chairman of the 11-man policy council, which includes military chiefs

One of four civilian members is Baba Gana Kingibe, Mr Abiola's running mate in presidential elections in June, annulled by the ruling generals

Mr Kingibe said after taking his oath he agreed to serve the military to help solve the crisis created by the annulment

"I do not have any scales over my eyes as I join the council," he told reporters

Radical constitutional lawyer Olu Onagoruwa was the only member of the council named on Tuesday who was not present yesterday

Defence spokesman Fred Chijuka said Mr Onagoruwa, the new Federal Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, was abroad but had accepted the appointment

"He will be sworn in at a later date," General Chijuka said.

General Abacha became Nigeria's seventh military ruler when he assumed power last Wednesday following the resignation of interim leader Ernest Shonekan

Mr Shonekan was hand-picked in August by the then military president Ibrahim Babangida, who voided presidential elections in June, precipitating a crisis that led to General Abacha's takeover

Mr Abiola and Mr Kingibe claimed victory in the June poll and won a court challenge to the legality of Mr. Shone-

kan's regime Supporters of the two have denounced Mr Kingibe's new appointment

Mr Kingibe said later he had had consultations with the new military rulers and was convinced of their determination to take Nigeria forward

Politicians had no alternative but to set aside their differences to pull Nigeria from its crisis, he said

Mr Kingibe, a former ambassador, has the task of convincing Western nations not to impose sanctions on Nigeria because of the military's return to power

"The threat of sanctions by some international communities can only complicate our problems," General Abacha told council members

"We need the sympathy, understanding and co-operation of our peoples and the international community in our efforts at nation building," he said

General Abacha said earlier that his stay would be brief, his main programme being to set up a national conference to decide the political structure Nigerians wanted Sapa-Reuter

Nigerians riot over fuel price

(226) WM 19-25/11/93

Chris McGreal

ANTI-GOVERNMENT protests provoked by a sharp rise in fuel prices rocked Lagos this week as Nigeria's military-installed administration faced a double political crisis. The high court ruled that the government was illegal and the results of June's annulled election should be respected.

The government, which has promised fresh elections in February, was already on the defensive after dissolving one of Nigeria's few democratic institutions, the local councils, a move that its opponents claimed was aimed at further centralising power.

The Nigeria Labour Congress said in a communiqué after a central committee meeting in Lagos yesterday that the increase in petrol prices must be reversed by Sunday night or workers would strike on Monday.

Youths blocked Lagos's main roads in demonstrations against the seven-fold petrol price increase — from less than 2p a litre to about 15p.

At the sprawling working-class Oshodi market thousands of people marched to demand the fuel price increase be withdrawn and the government resign. Students joined the protests, hurling rocks at government cars and clashing with police, who responded with tear gas. Several prominent Nigerians, including a former foreign minister, Bolaji Akinyemi, warned that the country could again be descending into chaos.

The fuel price rise forced up the cost of public transport, food shipped across the country, and the kerosene which poorer Nigerians use to cook.

After the upper house of the national assembly voted to condemn the increase, the oil minister, Don Etiebet, denied that the government had bowed to pressure from Western creditors to cut spending by dropping the petrol subsidy. He said it was aimed at helping oil firms cover the cost of refining.

The increase is also designed to curb extensive smuggling of cheap petrol to neighbouring countries, often creating shortages in Nigeria. Before he left office in August, the former military ruler, Ibrahim Babangida, tried to impose a price increase. But the man he installed as head of the interim government after 10 years of army rule, Ernest Shonekan, overturned the rise in the face of a national strike that shut down Lagos and other cities.

Trade unions and pro-democracy groups threatened a new round of strikes not just to protest against the fuel price increase but to demand that Chief Shonekan resign after Wednesday's ruling in the Lagos high court in favour of the man widely held to have won June's overturned vote, Moshood Abiola.

Judge Dolapo Akinsanya told a courtroom packed with Abiola supporters that Gen Babangida had no constitutional right to impose a hand-picked government to replace him.

The judge ordered that Nigeria's civilian constitution should be implemented, installing Chief Abiola as president. His supporters jammed Lagos streets in celebration as he demanded the resignation of Chief Shonekan, still popularly viewed as heavily dependent on the military for his authority.

In Abeokuta, the south-western city that is home to both chiefs, protesters burned two cars at the home of Chief Shonekan's brother, Fatai. In the capital, Abuja, fights erupted in the lower house of the legislature after Abiola and Shonekan supporters shouted one another down during a debate on the legitimacy of the government.

The government says it will appeal against the high court ruling up to the supreme court if necessary, where it is likely to be overturned. The supreme court ruled in an earlier case that Gen Babangida was free to do virtually anything he wanted.

Trickery put Abacha in power in Nigeria

WM 3-9/12/93

(226)

Chris McGreal in Lagos unravels the machiavellian double-game of Nigeria's new ruler, Sani Abacha

NIGERIA'S new military leader lured both the shortlived, civilian-led government he overthrew two weeks ago and its opponents to their demise, according to a member of the cabinet of Ernest Shonekan, the deposed head of state.

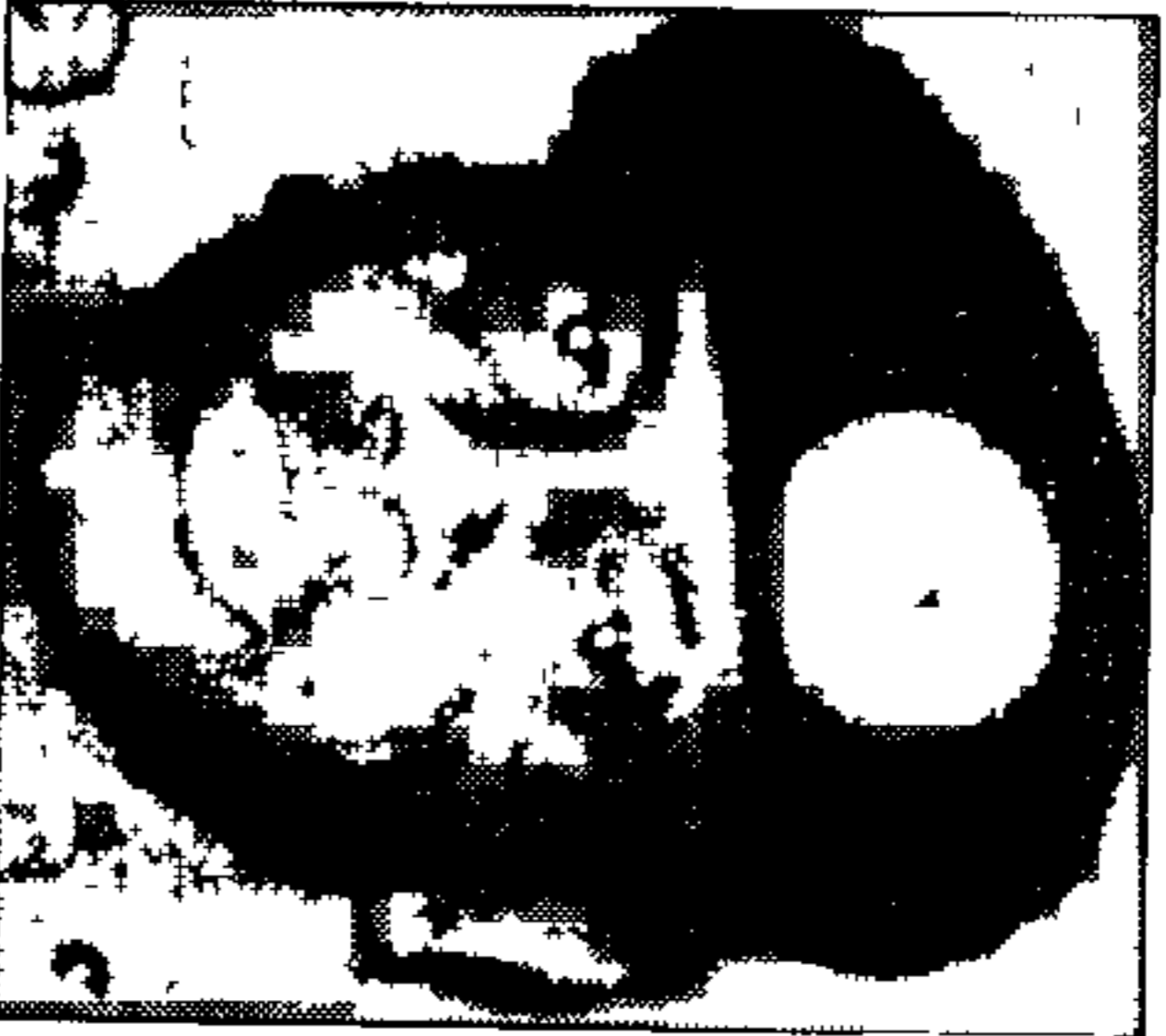
But he said General Sani Abacha seized power more swiftly than planned, launching his coup even though he knew the national strike used to justify it was about to be resolved, after discovering his name on a death list drawn up by junior officers planning their own takeover.

The source said as soon as the military installed the interim administration, after annulling June's presidential election, Gen Abacha used his role as defence minister to undermine it.

At meetings of the policy-making general purposes committee, which included Chief Shonekan, the central bank governor and the oil secretary, Gen Abacha endorsed the imposition of a seven-fold petrol-price increase thought necessary to revive the economy.

The committee expected resistance from the unions and public, but, although asked, the general failed to provide the necessary security forces to cope with the crisis.

The source said this was only one



Abacha: Lured the civilian government and its opposition to their demise

way Gen Abacha intended to ensure the government collapsed so as to justify another military takeover. "Abacha created a conducive environment to make Chief Shonekan and the government appear weak and unable to govern the country, which then facilitated a takeover. He had this plan to move in, to take over, from day one."

After the coup, the general said he had no alternative but to eradicate democratic structures and ban political activity, because the civilian administration and its opponents had dragged Nigeria to the brink of civil war. The national strike was spreading, and there were violent street protests in some areas.

Gen Abacha struck hours before a

meeting between the unions and administration, which was expected by many to end the protest. He ordered Chief Shonekan to invite the military to take over, but the chief refused, saying he had staked his reputation on establishing democracy.

Chief Shonekan resigned, refusing to justify the military's actions. Four days later the unions settled the strike on terms not unlike those the government would have offered.

According to the source, while Gen Abacha was setting up the government for a fall he was also luring its opponents. Moshood Abiola, winner of June's overturned vote, had fled to Britain, and the cabinet had agreed not to let him return, saying his campaign was stirring regional and ethnic tensions. But Gen Abacha gave Chief Abiola the go-ahead to fly back to Nigeria.

The source said: "Almost all the cabinet members were up in arms. There was a very stormy cabinet meeting, because the British government had agreed with us they would cooperate to stop him returning. Abacha actually helped bring him back, knowing it would help stir problems."

The general used the favour to good effect. After Chief Abiola's return, Gen Abacha met him and other Shonekan opponents, leading them to believe that if he took over, he would reinstate the June vote.

"After that the politicians were openly canvassing the military to come in. They were telling Abacha it was the only way to restore order, the

only way to avoid confusion. They didn't know it would lead to their own demise. The politicians were stupid. They ran in to his trap. Abacha knew that the stopping of Abiola was a popular military decision. He knew they couldn't restore June 12."

Gen Abacha had concluded that since the election, Chief Abiola had alienated his large numbers of supporters in the north by portraying the annulment as motivated primarily by ethnic and regional differences. His assessment proved correct. Last week he brought Chief Abiola's running-mate and several of his most prominent allies into the new government.

But there was one element beyond his control. In persuading Chief Shonekan to step down, Gen Abacha warned he was heading off a more bloody affair planned by junior and middle-ranking officers. Outsiders close to the army say divisions run deep, and Gen Abacha's was not the only coup in the making.

What the general has not made public is the existence of a list of 93 names headed "A Christmas present to the Nigerian people." It was drawn up by junior officers who thought the only way to shake up the system was to shoot those responsible for its shortcomings. Their list included Gen Abacha, the former dictator Gen Ibrahim Babangida, and Chief Abiola.

A source close to the military said "The idea was to clear out the whole lot and start again. There is a thread in the military that believes Nigeria cannot move forward until those same people who keep causing the problems are disposed of."

"The question now is: if Abacha was on their list, will they be any happier with what's happened? He might have headed off trouble for the moment, but I don't think we can say those officers are placated."

UK imposes ²²⁶ new sanctions on Nigeria

ARG 3/12/93

□ Foreign aid offer withdrawn

LONDON — Britain has announced a new range of sanctions against Nigeria, the former colony where a military dictatorship last week tightened its grip on power with a purge of senior officers.

Foreign Office Minister Alastair Goodlad told parliament the government was likely to refuse new export licenses for defence equipment to Nigeria and would send home Nigerian military students on courses in Britain.

Nigerian defence attaches would be barred from moving outside London without prior permission, he said.

In a written reply to a lawmaker's question, Mr Goodlad said the Overseas Development Administration, which dispenses Britain's foreign aid, had withdrawn the offer of a £23 million (R111,5 mil-

lion) grant for the power sector.

Britain's decision is part of a European Community programme "to press the new regime to take urgent steps to restore democratic rule, unhindered by the military", he said.

The Foreign Office said an announcement about Community-wide measures was expected today in Brussels.

Nigeria's newest military dictator, General Sani Abacha, seized power from a military-installed civilian government on November 17, promising to clean up corruption and then install democracy.

But General Abacha, who helped engineer military coups in 1983 and 1985, has dismantled all forms of elected government and banned all political activity. — Sapa-AP

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Transaction TA44

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Customer Name

Material Number

Description

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Business Report

Nigeria heads for ⁽²²⁶⁾ crisis on low oil price _{of 17/12/93}

LAGOS. — Low global oil prices are compounding Nigeria's economic woes as its military rulers face high foreign debt service obligations and calls to revive an import-dependent economy, analysts said.

"Nigeria faces a huge financial gap, and it's hard to see where the government will get the extra revenue it's going to need," a manager at a Lagos-based bank said.

If world oil prices stay around the current \$14 per barrel level Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings in 1994 will be far short of what it needs to repay debts and fund domestic growth.

Bankers say Nigeria's accumulated foreign debt repayment arrears are likely to be between \$5bn and \$6bn at the start of 1994 up from \$3,4bn at end-1992.

The calendar 1993 budget anticipated official foreign exchange earnings of \$7,9bn, including about \$6,3bn from oil sales based on a selling price of \$17,5 per barrel. — Sapa-Reuter

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NIGERIA - GENERAL

1994

Nigeria's debt crisis

Nigeria's new budget, reversing economic reform, has left the country with no prospect of satisfying International Monetary Fund terms for debt rescheduling and will deepen the balance of payments crisis

Nigeria needs to reschedule last year's unpaid debts to the Paris Club of official creditors, worth more than \$4.5 billion, but the fund's mission due in Lagos later this month is unlikely to produce a clean bill of health in view of the increased regulation of the economy, removal of export incentives and the continued funding of uneconomic industrial projects outlined in the budget

Without rescheduling, external debt service this year is expected to reach \$6 billion, or 97 percent of foreign exchange earnings, says Finance Minister Kalu Idika Kalu

The government has provided for \$1.8 billion of external debt payments this year, out of forecast government revenue of \$6.5 billion based on an Opec oil production quota of 1.8 million barrels a day at an average price of \$14 per barrel.

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) will receive more than 62 percent of forecast revenue to fund its joint ventures with the international oil companies

Star 24/1/94
NIGERIA'S budget represents a turnaround in economic policy that puts paid to its chances of solving the balance of payments dilemma. Paul Adams in Abuja reports (226)

According to Oil Minister Don Etebet, this year's budget allocation would make up the shortfall in investment in recent years which has seen NNPC fail to meet its costs for the past six months, and a decline in Nigeria's production capacity

The budget gives priority to some notorious projects such as the Ajaokuta Steelworks, the aluminium smelter and the new capital in Abuja which, says a budget monitoring committee, should no longer be funded

The remainder of the budget leaves little scope to maintain the size of government, and its target of a balanced budget would require harsh cuts in spending

The budget is a U-turn in policy for the finance minister, who has argued forcefully

until now for complete deregulation of the economy and an early medium-term agreement with the IMF

Kalu said he saw the budget measures as inevitable if Nigeria is to stimulate industrial output, estimated to be about 35 percent of capacity, and stabilise the value of the naira, which fell from about N25 to the dollar to about N49 in the past 12 months

Kalu, who was finance minister in 1986 when former military president General Ibrahim Babangida floated the naira to free the Nigerian economy, said Abacha's measures were not a "total retreat from free markets"

He justified the ban on free movement of capital into Nigeria by saying the government had to ensure that priority sectors were adequately funded. This is despite official figures showing that over 75 percent of foreign exchange sold by the government went directly to industry

"This must be the only government in the world which thinks that you can strengthen the foreign exchange rate by cutting interest rates," said a Lagos banker

The 1994 policy places a large burden on the Central Bank of Nigeria, which has to allocate scarce foreign exchange to commercial banks — Financial Times.

Abacha declares war on corruption 226

WM 28/1-3/2/94

Nigeria's new leader has pledged himself to root out graft, but the last regime's errors are off limits, reports **Michèle Maringues**

Le Monde

LIKE ALL military offensives, this one also has a code name WAIC — War Against Indiscipline and Corruption — is an ambitious programme which Nigeria's new head, General Sani Abacha, hopes will gain him the trust of a nation shaken by unending political crisis

For several weeks now the law courts, police, customs service, postal department, central bank, nationalised oil firms and public utilities have been subjected to a searching scrutiny from which they are expected to emerge "regenerated"

The campaign, announced back on November 18, is nothing very new, however, since almost every Nigerian military regime — this is the seventh — has promised to clean up the country on seizing power. The daily *Vanguard* recalls that in 1984 General Mohammed Buhari launched a "war on indiscipline", aimed all too often at underlings in the administration and even ordinary citizens guilty of nothing more than urinating in the street

The public nevertheless remembers that during his eight years in power General Ibrahim Babangida never once claimed to be combating corruption. As his detractors point out, it was as if he considered corruption to be a necessary evil, a veritable facet of government, which he utilised with consummate skill

Since he was forced out of office in August 1993, the struggle to wipe out corruption is back on the agenda. Two months after taking office, Ernest Shonekan, the man who briefly succeeded Babangida, also tackled the problem of cleaning out the civil service and opened an investigation into the powerful nationalised petroleum corporation, NNPC, which brings in 80 per cent of Nigeria's hard currency

earnings. The investigation led to the dismissal of all its top officials

Later, General Abacha took the same tack with a very military briskness. The purge particularly affected the national telecommunications agency, and 152 operators of the Lagos central telephone exchange were suspended. They were accused of illegally making money by selling international communications. On January 5, the chief executive officer of Nipost (postal service) along with three of his assistants were sacked for allegedly making fraudulent transactions involving several million dollars, while the department's 23,000 employees hadn't been paid their November and December salaries

• The Supreme Court's 14 judges have been asked to explain why they accepted gifts of luxury Mercedes limousines from Babangida a fortnight before he stepped down •

The next day, General Abacha set up a commission which will draw up before the end of February a detailed report on reorganising the Customs service, where heads have already begun to roll. A commission is also investigating the working of the judiciary, which has become "excessively politicised". The Supreme Court's 14 judges have been asked to explain why they accepted gifts of luxury Mercedes limousines from Babangida a fortnight before he stepped down

The 160,000-strong police force next came under scrutiny. Seven hundred of its members have been dismissed, 160 of them for disciplinary faults and misappropriating public funds. This is a pitifully small figure in the eyes of a Nigerian public utterly fed up with the demands, often backed up by threats of police officers

As consolation, however, all Nigeria had a good laugh over the misadventure of three police officers in Benin

City in southern Nigeria. The motorist they tried to shake down for 500 nairas (almost a month's salary for them) proved to be less vulnerable than he appeared. He turned out to be their regional superior

The "clean hands" campaign took a decisive turn when early this month questions were raised about the way five of the 30 provisional administrators were conducting their business. These men took over from civil governors when Abacha dissolved all the country's elected assemblies

The scandal was all the harder to hush up as the military administrators had frequently treated their civilian predecessors harshly. Scores of members of parliament, for example, were flung into prison shortly before Christmas to force them to pay back loans which they had legally obtained

For General Abacha, accusing officers (they are answerable before their peers) is a perilous exercise. So when he took power, he laid down a clear rule: there would be no question of scrutinising General Babangida's highly controversial administration. Abacha was his friend and right-hand man for over eight years

How can this be reconciled with the new regime's search for credibility? If the administrators can be accused, then why not the top men in the Babangida regime, asks the magazine *Tell*.

The new regime won approval when it announced a tightly centralised austerity budget for 1994, though not from the banks and champions of deregulation. But the move was applauded by the man in the street, because it strengthens the naira. "We worked out this budget for Nigeria, not for the IMF," noted public works minister Lateef Jakande

Everybody, including Nigeria's foreign partners, would like to believe that General Abacha is a patriot whose eyes have been opened by the crisis and that his government will follow through its self-imposed financial disciplines

Tell has thrown down a challenge to Abacha. If Babangida was a new-style Robin Hood who robbed the poor to feed the rich, it says, Abacha has a unique opportunity for turning into a genuine Robin Hood who robs the rich, beginning with himself, to feed the millions of hungry people in Nigeria's streets

focus on **Nigeria**

Sowetan 22/2/94

AGOS — Nigerians are talking seriously about the possible breakup of their country. A nightmare prediction by a former military ruler envisages “many Bosnias” in Africa’s most populous state.

The traditional ethnic fault lines of this West African country put together in 1914 by Britain are more apparent now than at any other time.

The military government grudgingly won over radicals when it promised a constitutional conference to chart the future.

Now it is certain that the conference, when it is eventually held, will be a battleground where the continued existence of Nigeria as one nation will be hotly contested.

“People are talking openly about breaking up into different countries and that is worrying,” says one former senator.

“Many Bosnias will be created in many parts of Nigeria if the country breaks up,” says former military ruler retired General Olusegun Obasanjo.

Nigeria was plunged into civil war at the end of 1967 after the Ibos of the Eastern Region declared an independent state called Biafra. By the time they surrendered in January 1970, an estimated 500 000 to 2 million civilians had been killed, mainly by starvation. Military dead were put at 100 000.

At the root of the latest tough talk is last year’s annulment of the June 12 presidential election which Muslim tycoon Moshood Abiola, a Yoruba from southwestern Nigeria, said he won.

Abiola was the first southerner poised to take power in a country where the leaders have almost always been northerners.

The annulment by the then military president General Ibrahim Babangida, a northerner, was seen as a move to prevent the south from taking control. It led to massive protests in Yorubaland.

This view was reinforced when military ruler General Sani Abacha, another northerner, seized power when the civilian installed by Babangida to restore democracy resigned.

Abacha countered that he took over to save Nigeria from disintegrating. He promised the conference would decide the tenure of his government and how Nigerians want to be ruled.

Even though his government is insisting that Nigeria’s continued existence as one nation is not negotiable, many people are calling for the exact opposite.

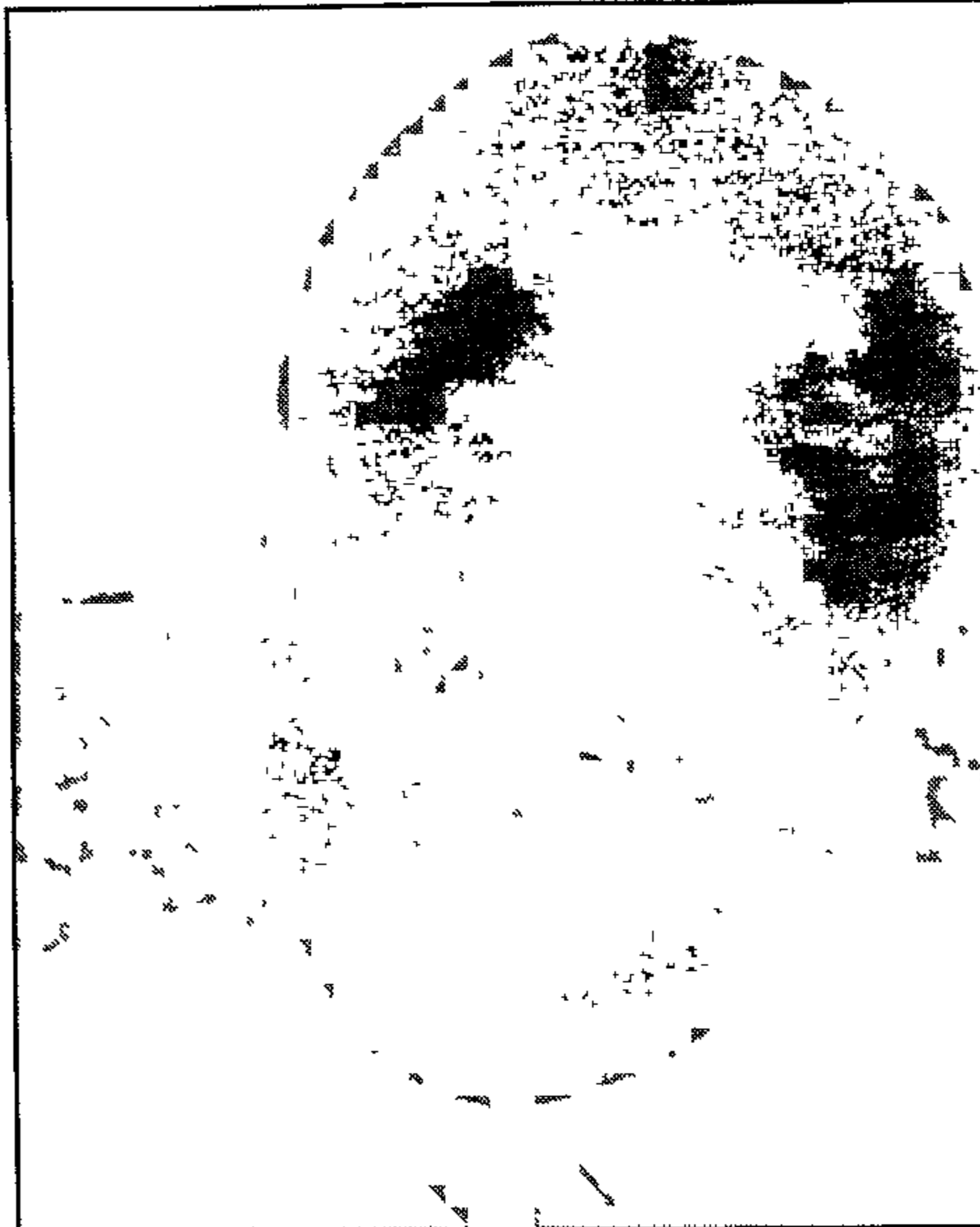
“The annulment of the June 12 elections sealed the fate of Nigeria as we know it at present,” wrote the Lagos-based *African Guardian* weekly magazine recently, adding that “though Nigeria may not break up, it can never be the same again.”

Distrust among the nation’s 250 ethnic groups appears pervasive and is fuelling the view by some to go their own way.

Among the most vocal are leaders of small tribes like the Ogoni. Their area produces Nigeria’s oil but they complain they are not getting a fair share of the income.

“The Ogoni is symbolic of most minorities

The annulment of last year’s June 12 presidential elections ... sealed the fate of Nigeria. Distrust among the nation’s 250 ethnic groups appears pervasive and threatens to produce another Bosnian tragedy:



General Ibrahim Babangida

plight and thinking in the country,” Obasanjo told a public lecture.

Abacha has set up a 19-member commission to organise the conference. It has already received hundreds of letters, some containing advice the general would not want to hear.

Former Senator David Iornem suggested conference delegates should all be elected and they in turn should elect an interim prime minister to form a cabinet to take over from Abacha.

“The military should be courageous and patriotic enough to step aside for the National Conference to succeed them,” he said.

Some pressure groups want the conference to agree on splitting Nigeria into between six to eight zones with the presidency rotating so that the south would have a chance.

Political analysts say even some northerners are beginning to feel uneasy about their long monopoly of power. Their region may be more populous but is educationally behind the south.

“A southerner can, and probably ought to be president,” said an editorial in *Citizen* maga-

zine, a northern publication.

After ruling Nigeria for most of its 33 years of independence, the military — and Abacha in particular — are coming under increasing suspicion about their true intentions.

Obasanjo, the only military man to have handed over power voluntarily to civilians in 1979, urged Abacha in a lecture to quit because of his links with Babangida’s eight year-rule which left Nigeria in a political and economic mess.

“The present government is challenged by overpowering issues of morality and ethics it simply cannot wish away,” he said.

Abiola has dismissed the conference as a ruse to prolong military rule but political sources say they fear his supporters could hijack the proceedings and simply declare him president.

That would revive all over again the chaos Babangida caused when he annulled the June election.

“This conference will be a battleground because whichever group controls it will more or less be taking power,” one political source said — *Sapa-Reuter*.

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Even some (Nigerian) northerners are beginning to feel uneasy about their long monopoly of power

Convulsion threatens Nigeria

UWM 10-16/94

(226)

Michèle Marringues in Lagos

GENERAL Sani Abacha's six-month-old government is currently facing an offensive spearheaded by the vigorous National Democratic Coalition (Nadeco). The group had given it until May 31 to step down in favour of Moshood Abiola, the political leader believed to have won the June 1993 presidential election. It was declared null and void by General Abacha.

Nadeco has now called on those who entered Abacha's government last November to resign if they do not want to be regarded as "enemies of the people". Thus fighting rhetoric has not so far impressed the government, which has issued a stiff warning to anyone tempted to defy the authorities.

But any arrests would embarrass the government, for Nadeco's 29 founding members include veterans of the Civil Rights Movement and, in particular, highly respected public figures like Michael Ayasin, a Yoruba, regarded as heir of the great nationalist leader Obafemi Awolowo. Awolowo was once Nigerian vice-

president under a military government and was a leading figure in the Middle Belt Forum, which represents central Nigeria's Christians most opposed to the northerners' "hegemony".

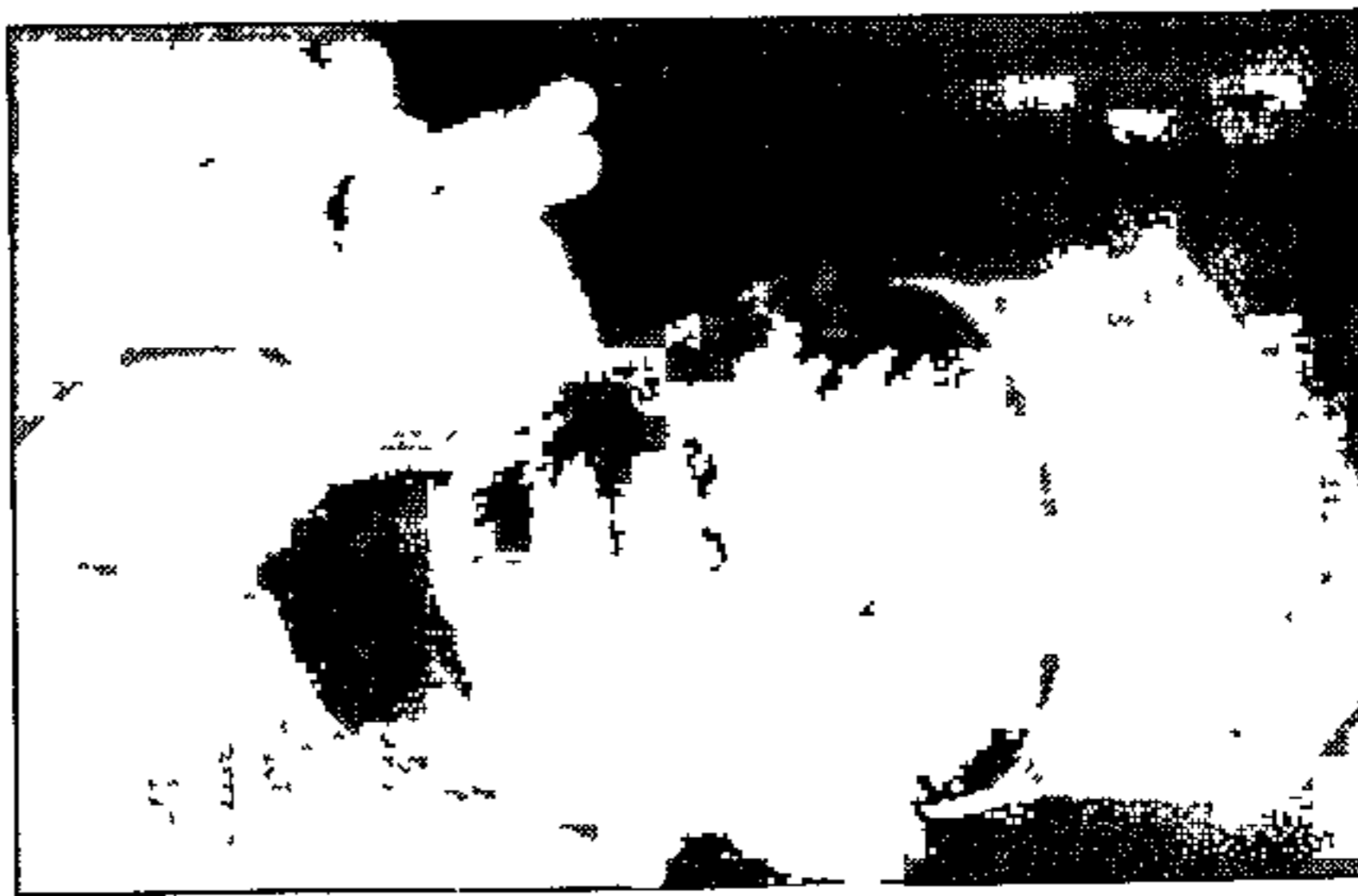
Pointing out that the army is "fundamentally an authoritarian institution" incapable of generating a true democracy, the coalition has launched a campaign to boycott the "national conference" set to open June 27 in Abuja. For months the opposition has been criticising the very principle of a conference supposed to discuss all the problems affecting the nation without its conclusions being in any way binding on the government. Nigeria's political community, however, appears to have decided to take part.

The election by universal suffrage of 269 delegates representing the regions (the government reserving the right to nominate 100 more) went off without any major hitches on May 23 and 28, though the turnout was low, particularly in the South. Leading members of the Yoruba community have refused to take part in compliance with Nadeco's instruc-

tions, thus depriving the conference of a substantial representation of the South-west. Though still bedevilled by factional disputes and receptive to government overtures, the powerful Yoruba community has not forgiven the military for cheating one of its own, the multimillionaire Abiola, of his election victory.

Written off as politically dead until just a few weeks ago, Abiola has again become the man of the moment. Abacha, he says aggressively, should "never have risen higher than the rank of lieutenant-general". He is only waiting for the go-ahead from Nadeco before forming his first government "on the broadest bases" and preparing a real national conference.

Such an arrangement may well find favour with a business community favouring an interventionist economic programme that has almost stifled industry at the same time as Nigeria is beginning to suffer from the restrictions Washington has imposed. But one big question remains — what would be the army's response should Abiola and his allies decide to



Nigeria's main political rivals: General Sani Abacha (left) and Moshood Abiola, assumed to have been the winner of last year's annulled presidential election

take the irrevocable step? Abacha has taken precautions, deploying infantry battalions at strategic points in place of armoured units, the standard instruments of military putsches in Nigeria.

The fear is that, as has often happened in the agitated history of this

country, there may be a race between young officers bent on radical measures and a generation more inclined to come to an arrangement. Perhaps the copycats in Rwanda, and South Africa's quiet miracle will inspire the men in Khaki to opt for a more beneficial course — *Le Monde*

Pressure on military govt rises

Nigeria braces for mass action

POLICE put Abiola on wanted list after the election winner proclaims himself civilian president

Lagos — Nigeria braced for the first day of planned pro-democracy protests today after Moshood Abiola, winner of last year's annulled election, proclaimed himself president in defiance of the military regime

The Campaign for Democracy (CD), the pressure group behind the protests, said Abiola's action had raised the tempo of the campaign to force General Sani Abacha's government to quit

"The one-week mass action must be unsparring and total," the CD said in a statement yesterday, urging Nigerians to join street protests, neighbourhood rallies and other acts of civil disobedience

CD, an alliance of human rights, students and womens' groups, led the protests last year which helped to oust former military president Ibrahim Babangida after he annulled the June 1993 presidential election won by businessman Abiola.

Police have beefed up security in major cities, especially Lagos, after repeatedly warning that political troublemakers would be dealt with decisively

The latest words of caution came from Abacha yesterday before he left Nigeria for Tunisia to attend an Organisation of African Unity summit



Wanted man . . . Moshood Abiola casts his vote in last year's election. PICTURE AFP

(226)

"We have had enough and we have seen enough," he said after a month-long build-up of pressure from opposition groups to oust his government

"Choosing the path of confrontation and subversion at this time of our national history will not be tolerated. Such acts will be sternly punished"

Abacha reaffirmed his administration's commitment to return Nigeria to civilian rule according to its own programme, including

a constitutional conference starting on June 27

On Saturday, the police declared Abiola a wanted man and offered a reward for information about his whereabouts

Abiola proclaiming himself president before a crowd at a disused sports stadium in Lagos on Saturday is the biggest challenge to federal authority since 1966, when Emeka Ojukwu declared the secession of the Republic of Biafra which led to a civil war in which more than a million people were killed

In his speech, Abiola said "From this moment onwards there is a new government of national unity led by me I order the National Assembly to reconvene and state governors to take up their posts"

He called on Abacha and his ministers to resign and said they would be retired with the full benefits due them

There was no initial mass response to the declaration, with many Nigerians unaware it had been made

But among those to have come out in support of Abiola's presidency is the Senior Staff Consultative Association of Nigeria (SSCAN), formed by unions of senior grade workers

"This unique step of the declaration and swearing in of Abiola is a giant stride towards the termination of the Abacha regime and military rule," it said

SSCAN reaffirmed in a statement that its members would go on strike this week as part of the pro-democracy protest. — Sapa-Reuter

Mass action into second day

Nigeria police out in force to halt protest

Star 14/6/94

Lagos — Democracy campaigners urged supporters to turn out in force today to force Nigeria's military rulers to hand power to thwarted presidential hopeful Moshood Abiola

Troops and armed police patrolled Nigerian cities ready for a second day in a planned week of protest

Police, who put a price on Abiola's head after he proclaimed himself president at the weekend, pledged to maintain order

Abiola was adjudged to have won last year's election, which the military government of the day annulled

The Campaign for Democracy (CD) pressure group, which is demanding that military ruler General Sani Abacha step down, called yesterday for more people to join its protest

"The struggle must be intensified," it said.

The first-day protests were largely confined to the southwestern region, home area of wealthy businessman Abiola, and hit businesses

"There's absolute calm and we intend to maintain order. There will be no compromise," said Nuhu Aliyu, the police chief in charge of stopping the protest

Protesters clashed with riot police in Ketu, north of Lagos, where 10 people were arrested and many others injured

In Akure, about 200 km from Lagos, protesters built bonfires in different parts of the city

Many banks and offices in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial

**DEMOCRACY
campaigners urge
citizens to intensify
demonstrations to
oust military rulers**

(226)

hub, were shut and traffic was lighter than normal

There were long queues at bus stops as people waited in vain for transport

Only minibuses plied the streets. Buses stayed off, partly due to a shortage of diesel

Armed police, many in riot gear, guarded strategic points and patrolled areas where demonstrators and police clashed during pro-democracy protests last year

About 600 protesters marched along Western Avenue linking mainland and island Lagos

Police, who say they have no concrete evidence that Abiola proclaimed himself president, looked on

Abacha's government last week told Nigerians to ignore calls from its opponents to protest and warned that it would deal firmly with political trouble-makers

CD, an alliance of human rights groups, student and women organisations, led protests last year that helped oust former military president Ibrahim Babangida

Abacha, a senior member of Babangida's government, took power in November during the crisis — Sapa-Reuter

'President' Abiola flown to Nigerian capital after being arrested for treason

LAGOS — Moshóod Abiola, the millionaire businessman who defied Nigeria's military rulers by proclaiming himself president, was arrested today after addressing a rally in Lagos and flown to the inland capital Abuja.

"A few people witnessed him being put into a military aircraft and they confirmed he was flown to Abuja,"

said Mr Abiola's aide, Fred Eno

Residents in Abuja said Mr Abiola was being held at the state security headquarters. They said two armoured cars were in front of the building and the area was cordoned off.

Joint army and police patrols are guarding approach roads to the city

and searching visitors, they said

State radio said military ruler General Sam Abacha was on a tour of military establishments to discuss the political situation with the forces

In a telephone call to Reuters while being held in Lagos, Mr Abiola denied treason charges brought against him by the military authorities

AP 226 2316194

"I have not committed any treason. It is those who sent the police to arrest me who should be arrested," Mr Abiola said over his mobile telephone from a police station

Mr Abiola, widely believed to have won last year's annulled presidential election, said he was arrested at his Lagos home

"About 600 armed police came They searched my house," he said

He said he left with the police and his wife after officers showed him an arrest warrant saying he was being detained for treason

The police declared Abiola wanted after he declared himself president on June 11 — Reuter

Moshood Abiola won the Nigeria presidential election a year ago. But he doesn't seem to have too much hope of ever entering his mansion, reports James Jukwey from Lagos

Star 23/6/94

Nigeria Situation worse than ever

(22b)



Abiola . . . winner of last year's election.

Prospects of a quick solution to the political crisis in Nigeria have dimmed after millionaire businessman Moshood Abiola defied the military authorities and declared himself president, analysts say

Abiola, widely acknowledged as the winner of last year's annulled presidential election, is still in hiding from police since making the announcement at a secretly staged ceremony in Lagos on the first anniversary of the June 12 election

No foreign power has so far recognised his presidency, but political analysts say he must be party to any deal that aims to solve the crisis and bring lasting peace to Nigeria
"There can't be a solution

without involving Abiola in any dialogue," said one former state governor "After all, he won an election which the military annulled"

Many, however, doubt that one year after the cancelled vote Abiola can expect to become president without a hard fight

"Indeed, so much water has passed under the bridge that Chief Moshood Abiola would find it extremely difficult to rule this country without further negotiations," wrote political commentator Ude Eze in the Daily Times newspaper

The present administration has made it clear that the vote, cancelled by former military president Ibrahim Babangida, cannot be restored without causing more chaos in Nigeria

General Sani Abacha, who seized power in November in the aftermath of chaos precipitated by the annulment, believes instead that his planned constitutional conference starting on Monday remains the best way of restoring democracy

Abacha has been meeting prominent Nigerians from across the country in Abuja, the inland capital, to promote dialogue as the only way out of the crisis but has left the opposition in no doubt that he would not step down for Abiola as they are demanding

While talking to a cross-section of people, the government has so far rebuffed the opposition National Democratic Coalition, which backs Abiola's quest

for the presidency NADCCO says it is willing to talk with the government but the administration says the group is not registered

The stand-off is compounded by the detention of dozens of opposition members over their call for Abacha to quit for Abiola

Abiola's proclamation followed weeks of tension over whether he would make good his avowed intention to declare his own government and risk a confrontation with the military

When it finally came, there were no journalists present to record what is the biggest challenge to the federal authority since 1966 when Emeka Ojukwu declared the secession of Biafra in south-eastern Nigeria which

led to a civil war in which more than 1 million people died

A week of protests arranged by pro-democracy groups to support him failed to make much impact and only minor protests were staged in his home region, the Yoruba-speaking south-west

Commentators said Nigerians face such hard economic times that people want to be left alone to get on with their lives But they said despite the calm prevailing in most parts of Nigeria, the south-west was still volatile and there could be riots there if Abiola was arrested

He is due to make his first public appearance since his June 11 proclamation some time this week

rest him if they see him.

Abacha is pressing ahead with his pet project despite scepticism from opposition groups that the conference is designed to prolong military rule

While the government appears to be controlling the conference with the nomination of nearly a third of the participants and the appointment of its presiding officers, more people now seem to be speaking up in favour of the conference due to start on Monday

"We must accept the reality of the constitutional conference and channel all national grievances to it, including June 12, for deliberations and firm resolution," said former senator Ebenezer Ikeyima — Reuter



Babangida . . . cancelled the election result.

People chant for their leader's release

Abiola's arrest rattles Nigeria

Star 24/6/94

Lagos — Hundreds of people marched through central Lagos yesterday evening demanding the immediate release of detained opposition leader Moshood Abiola, who defied Nigeria's military rulers by proclaiming himself president

Earlier, pro-democracy groups threatened strikes and street protests if police, interrogating the millionaire businessman after arresting him earlier in the day, did not release him within 24 hours

"(Military ruler General San) Abacha must go, release our president now," the marchers chanted.

Abiola, undeclared winner of last year's annulled presidential election, enjoys considerable support in Lagos

Police detained Abiola at his Lagos home but have not said where they are holding him "He is undergoing interrogation," police deputy inspector general Nuhu Aliyu said

Pro-democracy groups threatened street protests

"Any attempt by the regime to ignore this ultimatum will be met with the resistance of Nigerian people in the streets," the Campaign for Democracy (CD) said of the 24-hour deadline

The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights said "The CDHR calls on all Nigerians to rise up through street

WINNER of last year's annulled presidential election is detained after challenging the military government by addressing a rally

protests, civil disobedience, strikes, etc "

The CD, a coalition of dozens of activist groups, last year led protests that forced former military president Ibrahim Babangida to quit after he annulled the election

Protests organised against Abacha, who seized power in November, have largely failed

The CD said Abiola's arrest was provocative and urged Nigerians to rise up once and for all against military rule

The US and Britain, Nigeria's former colonial ruler, condemned the arrest

Washington said in a statement issued by its embassy in Lagos that Abiola's detention raised serious questions about the military government's commitment to restore democracy

Abiola was arrested after addressing a rally in Lagos — his first public appearance since he challenged the government by declaring himself president on June 11. Police had issued a

warrant for his arrest

Abiola told Reuters in a telephone interview shortly after he was picked up that he had been arrested on treason charges

"I have not committed any treason. It is those who sent the police to arrest me who should be arrested," he said on his mobile telephone from a police station

"The entire activities of Chief MKO Abiola as from June 12 1993 to date are under full investigation," a police statement said

Earlier, an Abiola aide said some people had seen him being put on a military aircraft and flown to the inland capital of Abuja. Later information suggested Abiola was still being held at the Alagbon police station in Lagos

State radio said Abacha, on a tour of military bases, had urged the armed forces to shun "self-proclaimed democrats" whom he said were seeking to sow discontent in the armed forces

The National Democratic Coalition, leading the campaign to end military rule, said Abiola's arrest would only worsen the political crisis

Abiola's close aide Fred Eno said "Our prime concern now is his health. We are trying to get his own doctor to see him as well as his lawyers" — Reuter

Nigerian govt defies courts

(22b)
CT 5/7/94
LAGOS — Nigeria's military government yesterday disobeyed for the second time in a week a judge's order to produce detained politician Mr Moshood Abiola

State prosecutor Mr A A Ayoade told the federal high court he did not know the whereabouts of Mr Abiola, widely believed to have won last June's annulled presidential election

Mr Abiola has been detained since June 23 after he proclaimed himself president

The judge ordered Justice Minister and attorney-general Mr Olu Onagoruwa to appear before him on Thursday to explain why Mr Abiola was not brought to court — Sapa-Reuter

Crisis in Nigeria ⁽²²⁶⁾ deepens

APU 7/7/94

LAGOS — Nigeria's political crisis has deepened after the military government charged opposition leader Moshood Abiola with treason and powerful oil unions vowed to stage more strikes in pursuit of democracy

Mr Abiola, the businessman widely believed to have won last year's annulled presidential election, appeared yesterday before a court in the inland capital Abuja.

The 57-year-old philanthropist, backed by an alliance of pro-democracy groups, politicians and retired generals, proclaimed himself president last month in defiance of Nigeria's military rulers

Mr Abiola, who faces life imprisonment if convicted of treason, pleaded not guilty. He also complained to the judge of maltreatment

The judge set July 14 as the date for a ruling on his lawyer's request for bail. The authorities have not disclosed where he is being detained

Mr Abiola's arrest on June 23 heightened tensions in Africa's most populous nation. The junior oil workers' union Nupeng began a strike on Monday to press for his release and reinstatement as president

Military ruler Sani Abacha, who seized power in November during the crisis triggered by the annulment of last year's vote, says his administration is fully committed to restoring democracy

He has asked Nigerians to back his political programme, beginning with a constitutional conference to chart a new path to democracy — Sapa-Reuter.

Nigeria is an ethnic powderkeg which could explode at any moment into a bloody partisan conflict on a scale that analysts say would dwarf the war and slaughter in Rwanda, Bosnia and Somalia, writes James Jukwey in Lagos

Star 1/8/94

On the edge of an abyss

(226)

images of war and slaughter in Rwanda, Bosnia and Somalia to show these can happen here

Information Minister Jerry Gana, at a news conference in Lagos on Wednesday, started off by saying the events in those countries were "so painfully fresh, we cannot but work tirelessly to promote the peace process in our nation"

Gana, challenged by a reporter on whether this was just scare tactics by the government, countered

"Let nobody deceive himself that it can't happen here. A very simple mistake can trigger anything"

In 1966, Nigeria faced a similar crisis. A pogrom in the north against Ibos led to the east, their home region, seceding to form the Republic of Biafra.

Biafra was crushed in a 30-month civil war during which fighting and famine killed more than a million people before Ni-

gera was reunited. "This has happened here before and we don't want it to happen again," Gana said

Nigerian political analysts say the potential for a repeat of the 1966 killings was high although many said the lessons of the civil war could encourage restraint in several quarters

Lagos, Nigeria's commercial hub and one of the biggest cities in Africa, has a population of 6 million, several times more than Rwanda

"There are northerners, easterners, people from different ethnic groups in Lagos and they know where each group is concentrated," said one senior former political office holder

"In the event of trouble the Yorubas know where to get Ibos, the Ibos know where to get Hausas and so on, which is very dangerous," he added

The analysts said if one group started killing another in any

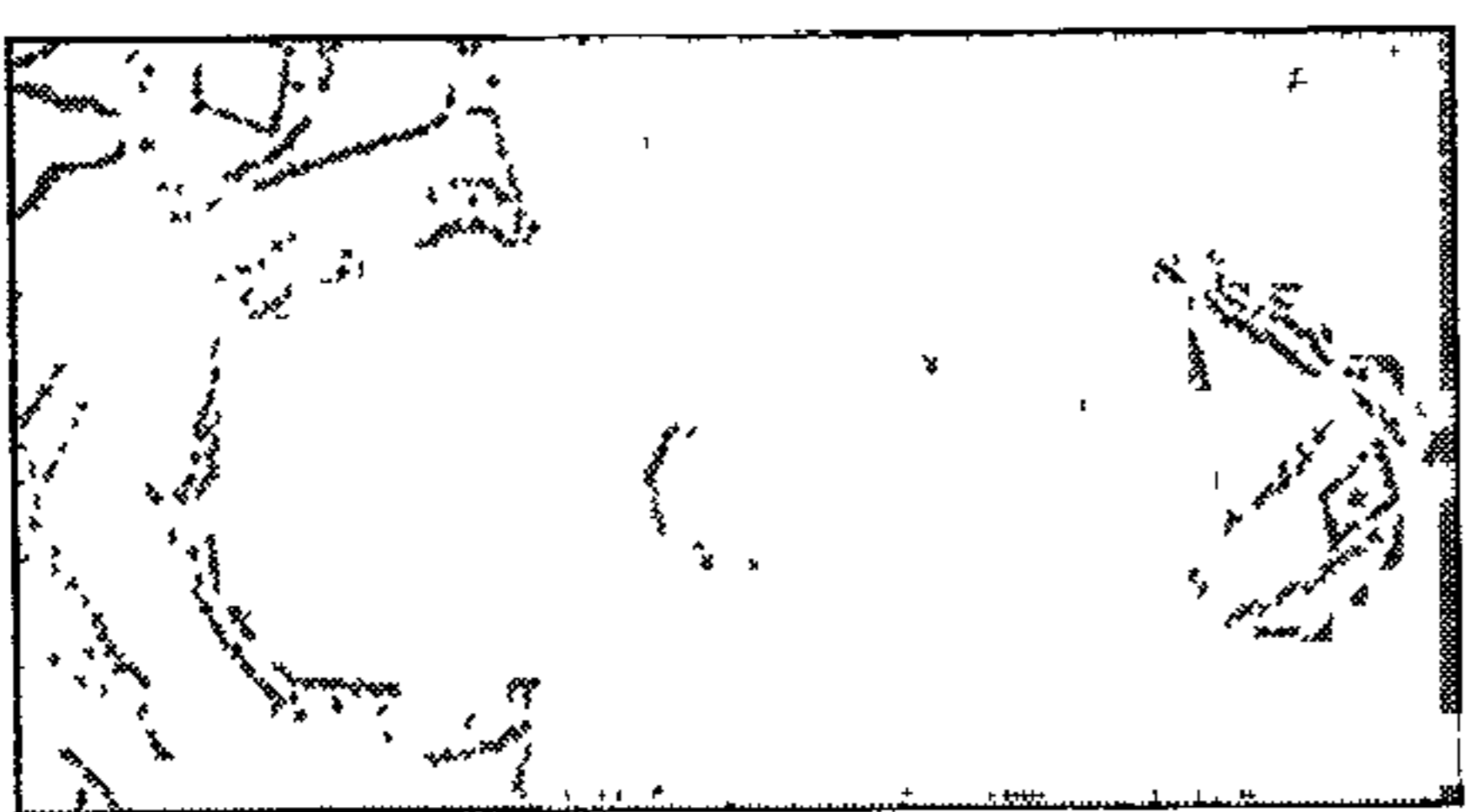
part of Nigeria, retaliation would be immediate and after that the government would have difficulty regaining control

Abiola, who won votes from all over the country in the annulled election, has expressed concern about the ethnic problem in a message sent through his family from his cell

"I feel concerned over the continued tribalisation of the struggle to actualise my mandate, one of his wives quoted him as saying when family members visited him

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali two weeks ago, the Campaign for Democracy pressure group said Nigeria faced a threat of "ethnic holocaust"

"We see the situation degenerating into civil strife with the potential of assuming an ethnic dimension with severe consequences for the country," it said — Reuter



Moshood Abiola ... concerned about violence.

Multi-ethnic Nigeria, bloodied by a harrowing civil war in the 1960s, could plunge into ethnic strife on a scale worse than Rwanda if its year-long power tussle is not resolved, the government and diplomats say

Prolonged unrest in this nation of nearly 90 million people, Africa's most populous, over the detention of opposition leader and presidential claimant Moshood Abiola could easily degenerate into ethnic war, they add

"There is a major problem here and one nasty incident will spark a fire no one can put out," said one Western diplomat who has been monitoring the crisis

"Rwanda or Somalia is a child's play compared with what can happen here"

At its root is the competition for power which the south looked likely to win through the ballot box for the first time last

year in a country that has mostly been ruled by northerners

Businessman Abiola, one of Africa's richest men, was well on the way to winning last June's presidential election when former military president General Ibrahim Babangida annulled the vote, widely declared free and fair, without explanation

Babangida, a northerner, was forced out by riots which swept mostly southern Nigeria but rather than install Abiola he put in place an interim government to conduct another vote

Northerner General Sani Abacha, defence minister and senior member of the interim government, seized power in November promising to end anarchy unleashed by the annulment

Political sources say Abacha and Abiola had a pact for the general to stay as head of state for three months and then announce the election result and install Abiola

Instead Abacha dismantled all political structures instituted during the seven years of Babangida's transition programme and set about planning a new programme for returning the country to civilian rule

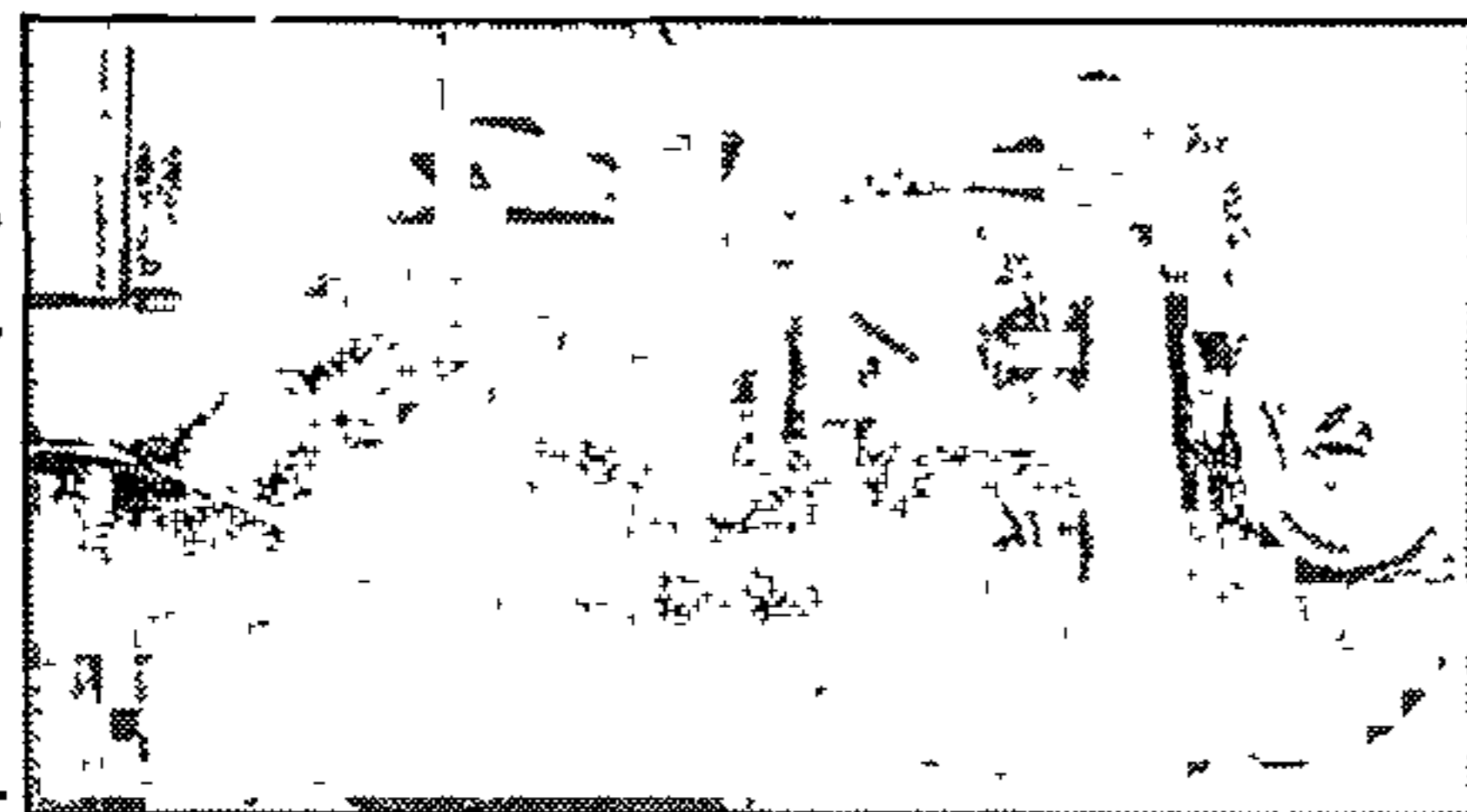
On the anniversary of the election, Abiola, backed by politicians, retired military officers and pro-democracy activists, proclaimed himself president

He was arrested and charged with treason, triggering a wave of riots and strikes that have paralysed Nigeria

"The strikes are causing severe hardship but there is worse that can happen if this crisis is not resolved," one senior Nigerian official told Reuters

Intelligence reports suggested western Nigeria felt terribly cheated that Abiola was being denied power he had won fairly and would not allow the matter to die, the official said

State media has drummed up



Sani Abacha ... reneged on agreement.

Lagos paralysed as all-out strike begins

ARG 3/8/94 22.6
□ Government offices deserted as crisis grows

LAGOS. — Nigeria's biggest city, Lagos, was at a standstill today, the first day of a general strike called to press the military government to free opposition leader Moshood Abiola

Many government offices in the city, including the federal secretariat where most officials work, were deserted.

"Workers have not come in today, maybe because of the strike," said a security man at the secretariat.

Mr Abiola, undeclared winner of last year's annulled presidential vote, was due to appear in court in the capital Abuja today on charges of treason for proclaiming himself president

The general strike, called by the umbrella Nigeria Labour Congress, adds to pressure on

the government brought by oil workers who are now in the fifth week of a strike

It was not immediately clear if the strike was being observed in the north, where some local chapters of the NLC have dissociated themselves from the action as politically motivated

In Lagos, youths stopped vehicles from moving about.

Banks and many other businesses have long closed in Nigeria because of a fuel shortage caused by the oil strike, and there is bound to be further misery if the general strike lasts for long

Yesterday General Sanjaba, the military ruler, presided over a meeting of the Armed Forces Consultative Assembly, the ruling junta, to discuss the growing political and economic crisis. No statement was issued after the talks

The oil strike was begun by Nupeng, the blue-collar oil-workers' union, on July 4 and it was later joined by white-collar workers from the sister union, Pengassan. The production of Shell, which extracts half the country's oil, has fallen by one third

Nupeng president Wariebe Agamene warned those who intended to carry on working "If they don't stop their treacherous activities, the next option will involve bodybags. We are prepared to deal with these people violently."

A Shell spokesman said local workers but not expatriates had been intimidated so far

The economy is being suffocated by the strike and more and more investors and traders are being frightened off by the possibility of a catastrophic political explosion — Sapa-Reuter-The Independent

Debate over Angolan 'mercenaries'

LEGAL action was being considered against Executive Outcomes, a Pretoria-based company which hires former defence force soldiers out to the Angolan government, Department of Foreign Affairs acting director-general Rusty Evans said today.

Although the Angolan government insists the 500 Executive Outcomes employees are utilised as guards and instructors, Unita alleges they are in Angola as mercenaries

Addressing the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Dr Evans said the matter had

been referred to the Department of Justice.

"There is prima facie evidence that that particular operation is transgressing South African law and that steps must be taken against them," he said

Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad told the committee the government had intervened to save the lives of four South Africans employed by Executive Outcomes who had been captured by Unita, which had threatened to execute the men.

Although it was not clear whether the execution had

gone ahead, there had been no news and it was presumed they were still alive.

Mr Pahad said the government opposed mercenaries being recruited from South Africa

"We are trying to ensure that South Africans do not get involved as mercenaries"

Mr Pahad said South Africa was approaching the Angolan question within the framework of the United Nations peace initiative. However, an invitation had been extended to Unita leader Jonas Savimbi to visit South Africa. — Sapa

Pressure on Nigeria to defuse oil strike

ARG 11/8/94

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□ Unions doubt fresh talks will resolve dispute

LAGOS. — Nigeria's military government is to resume talks with striking oil unions today, but prospects of a breakthrough in the dispute over the detention of presidential claimant Mo-shood Abiola appear slim

Leaders of the Nupeng and Pengassan unions, whose five-week strike has crippled the vital oil sector, are scheduled to meet a team led by labour minister Samuel Ogbemudia

Talks broke down last month when the government failed to release Chief Abiola, widely believed to have won last year's annulled presidential election

Chief Abiola is due to appear in court in the capital Abuja again on Tuesday on treason charges

Officials of the unions said

yesterday they doubted the talks in Lagos would resolve the dispute

The government is under pressure to end the strike which has hit local fuel supplies badly and bitten deep into crude oil production and exports, the main source of hard currency earnings

Nupeng said yesterday that any government attempt to ban the union would trigger a violent response

"There are now dangerous signals that their next line of action against the Nigerian labour movement is to use the unholy fiat to proscribe Nupeng any time from now," the union said in a statement

"There will be violent reactions from all sectors of the oil industry. The leadership of Nupeng will go underground and operate in a more deadly manner

"By then there will be nobody to talk or dialogue with"

Pengassan also said it would fight a ban

Spokesman Arthur Onoviran said "If they proscribe to the oil unions, a devastating stage of our action will be unfolded"

The Nigeria Labour Congress, the union federation that suspended a brief general strike last week, said it expected the government to honour an agreement with it to drop all charges against Chief Abiola when his trial resumes on Tuesday

It said its leaders would meet next Thursday and added the congress might resume the general strike if Chief Abiola was not freed

Chief Abiola rejected the conditions of bail offered to him last Friday — Sapa-Reuter

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Nigeria: Union leader arrested

LAGOS — Nigeria's military authorities have arrested Mr Frank Ovie Kokori, the leader of a trade union involved in the country's seven-week oil strike

The arrest was the latest in a military clamp-down on pro-democracy supporters in which at least 25 leaders have been detained in the past 48 hours

The opposition want the military to hand over power to jailed leader Mr Moshood Abiola, widely believed to have won an annulled presidential election in June 1993 — Sapa-AFP

CT 22/8/94

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Nigerian regime names new army, navy chiefs

LAGOS — Military ruler Sam Abacha, under pressure to return Nigeria to civilian rule, has named new army and navy chiefs in the first change to his 10-month government

But the country seemed far from returning to normality in spite of a crackdown against the leaders of Nigeria's striking oil unions

The military government ordered the oil workers, who have been on strike for more than six weeks to demand the release of presidential claimant Moshood Abiola, to return to work immediately

Oil industry officials said some oil workers had turned

up for work but added it was too soon to know if the strike was over (226)

Mr Abiola, widely believed to have won last year's annulled election, is on trial for treason for proclaiming himself president in defiance of General Abacha

A statement issued in the inland capital Abuja yesterday said General Abacha had named Brigadier-General Alwalu Kazir as chief of army staff and Commodore Mike Akhigbe chief of naval staff. It said the appointments took place with immediate effect

General Abacha's government, which has been under

pressure to release Mr Abiola and cede power to him, last week launched tough action against the unions, sacking their leaders and appointing administrators to run their affairs

ARC 23/8/94
The sacked leaders, who have vowed to press on with their stoppage, were unavailable yesterday to say how the strike was going

Five known opponents of the government, including Frank Kokori, the sacked secretary-general of the militant oil union Nupeng, were detained at the weekend

Opposition sources said they

could face charges of economic sabotage in Abuja

Labour Minister Samuel Ogbemudia warned the sacked union chiefs yesterday to "desist from their planned threats of violence or face the wrath of the law"

Nigeria's Forcados oil terminal, operated by Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, was closed at the weekend because of "tampering", a company spokesman said

It was not clear if this incident was linked to the unions
— Sapa-Reuter

Police disperse Lagos protest

David Pallister (226)

HUNDREDS of people scattered in panic in the centre of Lagos this week as police fired guns in the air and used tear gas to disperse protesters calling for the resignation of the Nigerian military junta.

The demonstration coincided with emergency meetings of the leaders of the two oil workers unions whose members have been on strike for a month.

The strikers are trying to force the release from prison of Chief Moshood Abiola — the undeclared winner of last year's presidential election.

A six-hour meeting on Monday between union leaders and government negotiators, including oil minister Don Etebet, failed to reach any agreement.

The strike has been joined by other public sector employees, and among other things it has severely disrupted domestic fuel supplies and paralysed industry and transport.

WM 29/7-4/8/94

Trade sanctions stay, US drugs chief tells Nigeria

LAGOS.—Nigeria will have to match words with deeds in the fight against narcotics before the United States lifts economic sanctions, President Bill Clinton's top drugs adviser has said.

Nigeria is the only African country so far to have been "decertified" by the US. The penalty is imposed when Washington is dissatisfied with a government's efforts in the war against drugs.

"Denial of certification cre-

ates difficulties in US-Nigeria relations at all levels," Lee Brown, director of Mr Clinton's office of national drug control policy, told a news conference yesterday in Lagos.

Nigeria, which does not produce heroin or cocaine but has become a major transit centre, was decertified last April. This blocks US aid and means the US votes against Nigerian interests at multilateral aid institutions like the World Bank.

After talks with Nigerian

ministers and the number two in the military government, Oladipo Diya, Dr Brown gave no indication that the sanctions would be lifted when they are reviewed at the end of this year.

"Our decision will be made on deeds and not words," Dr Brown said.

He said he would leave today "optimistic" and said he was encouraged by his discussions. But he declined to spell out the grounds for his optimism.

His office's annual report on Nigeria confirmed the country's drug barons and money-laundering syndicates are major players in world narcotics traffic. They move Asian heroin and Latin American cocaine to the US, Europe and Africa.

Thousands of Nigerian drugs couriers are in prisons around the world. One was executed in Singapore last week. But the drug barons are virtually never caught, according to Dr Brown's office.

The Nigerian government did not investigate any senior official for involvement in drug trafficking, despite indications of high-level participation in narcotics trafficking, says the annual report.

Since its publication, Nigeria has appointed an army general to try to clean up the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency. A spokesman said yesterday that 329 of the agency's 2,000 staff had been laid off and 17 dismissed in the shake-up.—Reuter.

(22b) Art 30 | 8 | 94

(226)
Nigerians

APR 7/9/94
face clamp

LAGOS. — Nigeria's military rulers, seizing their chance after the collapse of an oil workers' strike designed to force them from power, have initiated tough measures to stamp out pro-democracy unrest.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) said several decrees had been published, including one allowing the state to detain anyone considered a security risk for three months without trial.

Previously, such detentions — ordered only by Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant-General Oladipo Diya, the government's number two, and inspector-general of police Ibrahim Coomasie — could be for a maximum of six weeks.

Copies of the decrees, including one banning three independent newspaper groups with a total of 15 publications for six months — which is being challenged in court — were not available to the public at the government printing press yesterday — Sapa-Reuter.

Nigeria bans the press (226)

LAGOS — Nigeria's military government yesterday ordered the closure of three independent press groups, banning the printing and sale of publications by the Guardian, Concord and Punch groups, the state radio announced

Nigerian minister disowns decrees

LAGOS. — Nigeria's minister of justice has disowned military government decrees "which sweep away our liberties" and has threatened to resign.

The new laws, which became public knowledge on Tuesday, give military rulers wide powers of arrest and bar any challenge to their actions through

ARG 8/9/94

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the courts. Justice Minister and Attorney-General Olu Onagoruwa, a democracy campaigner until he was recruited into the government, told reporters yesterday he had nothing to do with the new decrees.

He said laws were supposed to be made by the Provisional Ruling Council, of which he is a

member, and drafted by the Ministry of Justice.

"To the best of my knowledge all the decrees being talked about never passed through these procedures. In fact the Federal Ministry of Justice has not seen a copy of these laws," he said.

He said it was possible he would resign — Reuter.

Nigeria drawing closer to ghastly Rwanda scenario

Star 10/10/94

A former general and Chief of the Defence Staff is an unlikely leader of the campaign to get the troops out of Nigerian politics, but Lieutenant-General Alan Akinrade, who was trained at Sandhurst and Camberley, is the most senior military figure to take a stand against military rule in Nigeria and is now a leading spokesman for the democracy movement

His stand has forced him into exile. After being detained and suffering considerable harassment, Akinrade (54) fled to Britain 10 days ago to continue the struggle to remove General Sani Abacha from power and secure the recognition of Chief Moshood Abiola as president

"Abacha has no arguments, all he can use is brutal force," said Akinrade. "He is not a problem solver, he can't make any proposals which people can work on. The only way is to have democracy in any ragged shape or form and make something of it"

Winner

Nigeria is in its worst crisis. The economy is in a steep downward spiral. The oil workers' strike is over but it cost the country tens of millions. A recent 400 percent increase in petrol prices imposed, then reduced, by the government will push many more below the poverty line. Abacha, who seized power last November, imprisons critics and has even removed the passport of Wole Soyinka, Nigeria's Nobel Prize winning writer.

Abiola, the man widely regarded as the winner of last year's presidential election, is in prison and, according to some, he is seriously ill.

His trial for treason has been postponed indefinitely. As his health and predicament have worsened his courage and political importance have grown. More influential Nigerians now support his presidency.

Abacha has strengthened his grip and crushed the oil workers, who were striking in favour of democracy.

There is a sense that things will get worse. Nigerians ask if their country will soon look like Rwanda.

"The defeat of the oil strike is a Pyrrhic victory," said Akinrade. "It can't last. A level

A LEVEL of misery is building up and one could be witnessing the beginnings of an explosion, Richard Dowden was told

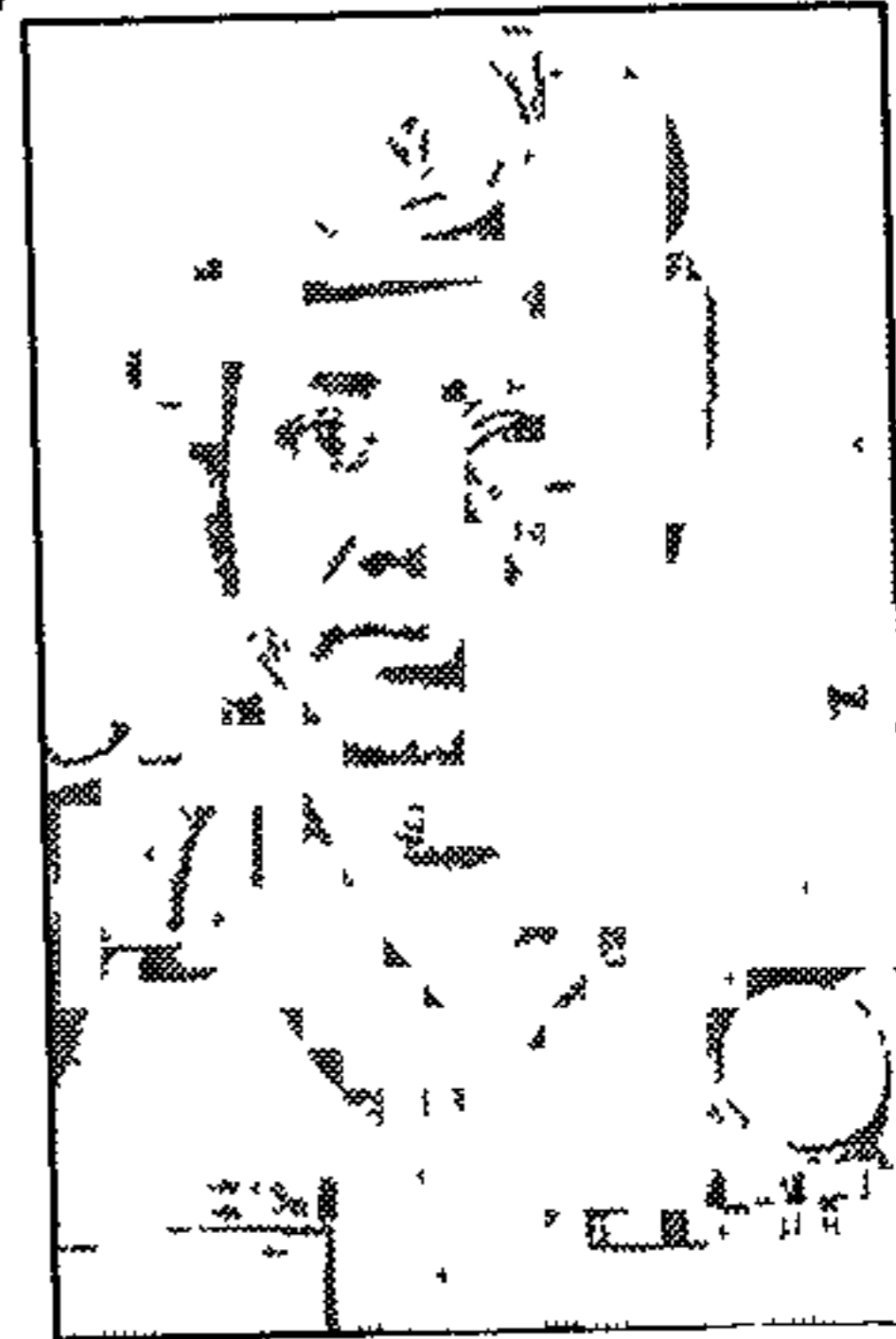
of misery is beginning to build up and we could be witnessing the beginnings of an explosion. There is a very great danger of Nigeria balkanising. It will be very, very messy and if it breaks up I don't know how many pieces Nigeria would become. There are a great many disputed areas."

The National Democratic Alliance (Nadeco) was founded in April as an umbrella organisation for Nigeria's many democratic movements. Akinrade was a founder member. (226)

He and many other members are Yoruba people like Abiola, but they point to prominent non-Yorubas who did not vote for Abiola in the election but are taking a stand for democracy with Nadeco.

Although he served briefly in General Ibrahim Babangida's military government, Akinrade says he has always opposed military intervention in politics.

"There is an idea that the best way for the black man to be governed is to have a man issuing decrees every morning," he said. "But we are the same as everyone else. We need freedom and accountable government through democracy, and the military men need to be told there is a limit to



General Abacha 'can only use brute force'

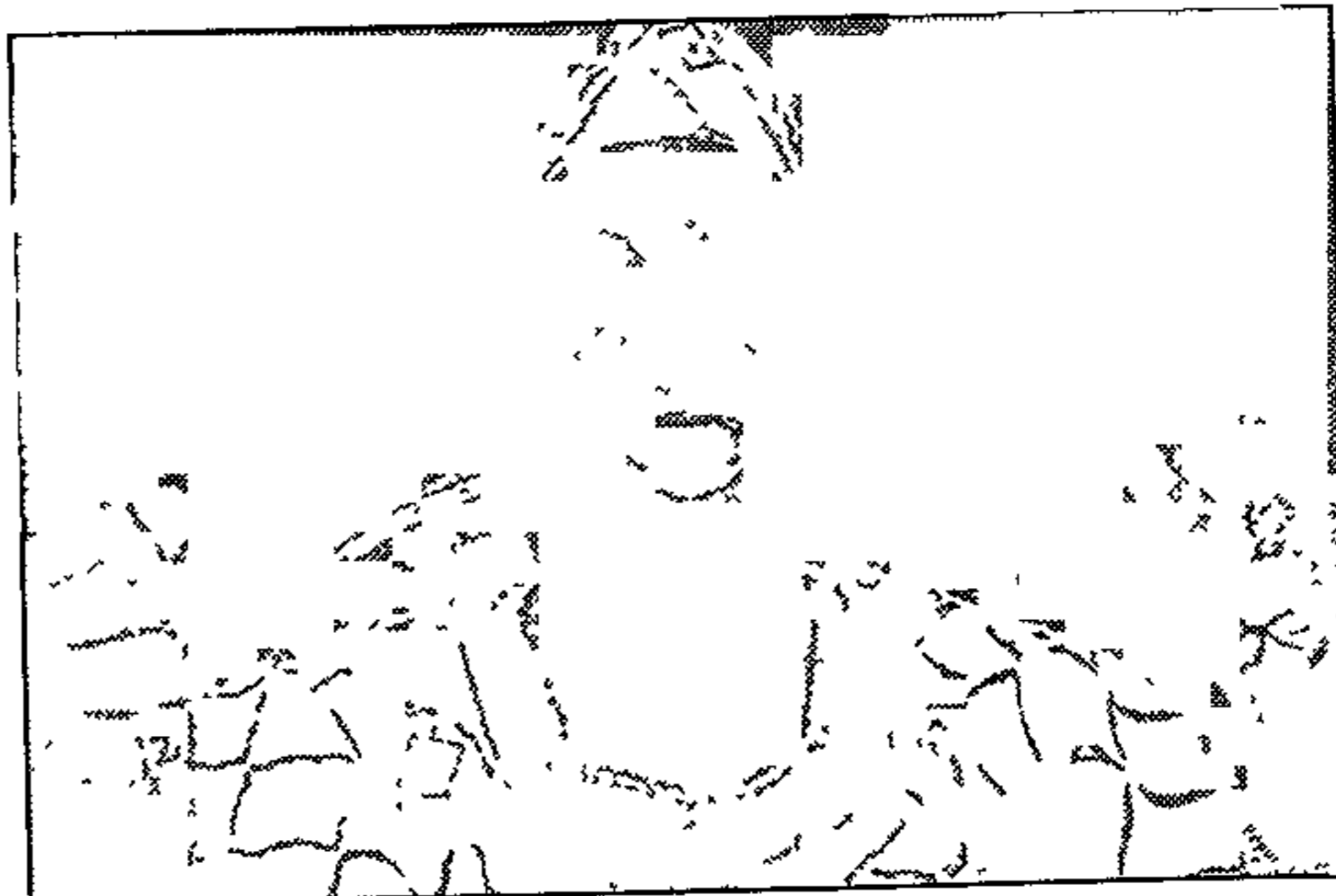
their power

"You can't hold Nigeria down with soldiers"

His outspokenness led to his arrest by the secret police on August 19. With him was Anthony Enahoro, one of Nigeria's most revered politicians, now more than 70 years old. He is still detained.

Akinrade was released but rearrested and detained two days later at his home, which was ransacked by the security men.

After that, he decided to leave by a route he prefers to keep secret. One of his first acts on arriving in Britain was to join a Nadeco delegation to ask the Foreign Office to impose a boycott of Nigerian oil. It ruled against without discussion. — The Independent News Service



Chief Abiola . winner of last year's presidential election is in prison and, according to some, seriously ill.

focus on ~~Nigeria~~

Sowetan 3110194

AGOS — Oil has brought only poverty, degradation and now bitter feuding to the communities whose land is drilled for the black gold that sustains Nigeria.

As dozens of pressure groups spring up around the swamps of the River Niger to demand a fairer share of oil revenues from Nigeria's military-controlled federal government, ethnic clashes are multiplying

"What is going on in the riverine areas is unbelievable," said a Western diplomat monitoring the region

"In Ogoni there are federal troops permanently stationed and many people have been killed in tribal wars and in clashes with soldiers"

Biggest producer

Ogoni, 600 km southeast of Lagos, is one of the main oil-producing areas of this OPEC member state, Africa's biggest producer

It is also an area where foreign reporters attempting to visit have been turned back for the past year of intense political unrest in this West African county

Like most other Nigerian oil-producing regions, it has no electricity, hospitals or schools even though crude oil pumped from these areas provides more than 90 percent of Nigeria's foreign income

Residents lament that while oil has brought wealth for some Nigerians, it has brought them pain, poverty and now deaths

"We are annoyed Oil has brought us a curse," said Enola Edom, secretary of the Oloibiri Council of Chiefs, in *The News* magazine interview

Oloibiri is where Nigeria first struck oil in 1956

The federal government in 1992 set up the Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Council which was supposed to funnel some oil money into roads, schools and other facilities in the producing areas, but the council is dogged by charges of misappropriation

Ecological damage

One of Nigeria's leading playwrights, Ken Saro-Wiwa, has been trying to focus world attention on another of the region's woes by telling international conferences about ecological damage caused by drilling for oil with nothing put back

But Saro-Wiwa has been detained without charge since May after four Ogoni leaders were slaughtered in an attack the Rivers State military government blamed on the youth wing of his Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People

MOSOP, of which Saro-Wiwa is president, demes involvement and says its leaders are being persecuted because they oppose oil wealth being squandered in other parts of Nigeria

As if the political problems that have plagued Nigeria were not horrendous enough, *Reuters'* **James Jukwey** finds that this oil-rich state's biggest source of income is also fuelling chaos:



Villages neighbouring the Ogoni area have told journalists about havoc in their communities caused by Ogoni intruders

"On April 3, Easter Sunday, armed Ogoni youths numbering over 3 000 besieged Okoloma and carried out thoughtless destruction of lives and property," said Ismail Egiri, chairman of the Oyibo local government area with headquarters in Okoloma

Egiri said at least 20 people were killed in that clash

"Since then there has not been peace in the area. In fact, since that incident, there have been about seven attacks like that and it has not ceased at all," Egiri said

Troops are stationed in the area. The Ogonis deny they started the clashes and say the allegations are trumped up to distract from their crusade for an Ogoni nation

No oil has been produced from Ogoni land since June last year when youths drove away staff of Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria from its flow stations in the area

The problem of the oil-producing areas is gaining prominence in a nation now in turmoil over the annulment last year of an election that saw a southerner emerging as president where political power has been dominated by northerners

Moshood Abiola, a wealthy southwestern businessman and a Yoruba, one of Nigeria's three major ethnic groups, is widely deemed to have won the annulled poll but is under detention and is on trial for treason for proclaiming himself president

226

Most of the oil-producing areas, whose inhabitants are members of minority tribes which consider themselves disadvantaged, have thrown their weight behind Abiola

"If a Yoruba man with extensive political and economic clout cannot get it, how can a minority man hope to get it?" asked *The News* magazine in an edition focusing on the minorities issue

The nation's 200,000 oil workers, in unions led by people from the oil-producing areas, staged a two-month strike in support of Abiola, which crumbled only after military ruler General Sani Abacha dismissed their leaders

Politically aware

Although the strike has ended, it made local communities more politically aware.

"What the strike did was to ginger the people to fight for their rights," Deebn Nwiado, aide to Saro-Wiwa, told *Reuters*

A group calling itself the Southern Minorities Alliance for Justice in Nigeria recently told oil firms to stop production in the region, saying their safety can no longer be guaranteed

"Oil companies should stop production to enable the different nationalities in Nigeria to put their house in order," it said in a letter to oil firms and government agencies

This prompted Abacha to summon traditional chiefs from the areas to Abuja where he told them to protect oil installations from attack by disgruntled locals

"If such individuals within the community are not identified and checked, the havoc they will cause will be too great," he said

‘If a Yoruba man with extensive political and economic clout cannot get it, how can a minority man hope to get it?’

Nigeria spits defiance in the world's face

WM 25/11-1/2/94 (226)

Author **Wole Soyinka** writes about the regime that forced him into exile in Paris

It seems to me that there should be little left to reveal about the nature of any regime which, although a signatory to United Nations conventions, nevertheless proceeds to seize a document over which it has no authority.

While the seizure of this document was indeed a manifestation of the lawlessness that has characterised the Abacha regime since inception, it was also a high-level policy decision intended to place the international community on notice that, both in its ongoing repression of the Nigerian populace, and its elaborate plans to perpetuate itself at any cost whatever, it would brook no interference.

The Abacha regime has gone far beyond any Nigerian regime since independence in the area of crimes against humanity. These crimes, specially against the minority peo-

ples of Ogoni, have been reported to the UN Minorities Commission, and the accounts have been backed by videotapes of what amounts to an ongoing genocide.

The Nigerian Medical Association has sent a report on the treatment of political prisoners to the UN. Prominent among these prisoners is, of course, the president-elect of Nigeria, Chief Moshood Abiola, who has been diagnosed by a team that included government doctors and Abacha's own personal physician, as requiring urgent medical attention.

Not even the decisions of the Nigerian courts, which granted Abiola bail and awarded him substantial damages for unlawful arrest, have moved the Abacha regime to display the slightest glimmer of humanity and consent to his release.

So rampant has become the regime's acts of defiance of court orders that the chief justice of Nigeria, not known for any radical posture or anti-government judicial decisions, was compelled to protest at the law-

less conduct of the regime and warn it of its responsibility for the anarchy that threatens to engulf the nation. Before Mr Justice Bello's uncharacteristic outburst, a judge of the High Court, Mr Justice Mamman Kolo, had effectively thrown in the sponge, bewailing a situation where the courts could no longer protect the Nigerian citizen since the judges themselves lacked protection against the arbitrary, even violent conduct of the government and its agents.

The families of detainees are, needless to say, denied access to the many victims. Even in the case of Moshood Abiola who, being on trial, constitutes an exception, these visiting rights, by lawyers and relations, are subject to the sadistic games of his captors, and the capricious orders of one Ismaila Gwarzo, the boss of the State Security, known in our circle as Alhaji Gestapo.

Another prominent prisoner, whose situation arouses emotions of national shame in most Nigerians, is Chief Tony Enahoro. This icon of the Nigerian independence struggle, now 71

years old, has been imprisoned for no other crime than for being the chairman of the National Democratic Coalition. For nearly two months Enahoro was held incommunicado. Only when he was virtually at the point of death was he rushed to hospital where his wife was then grudgingly permitted to visit him.

How many more cases need one cite? In an article published in the Nigerian media, I summed up the policy of the Abacha regime towards its hostages as one of Murder by Installation. I use the word "hostages" with intent. Over and over again, I have stressed this accurate reading of the reality what goes by the name "government" in Nigeria operates simply as a terrorist organisation whose stock-in-trade is hostage-taking.

Treated with condescension and contempt by the productive world, the Abacha regime has resorted to the simple-minded ploy of extorting implicit recognition from presidents, heads of states, trade unions, ambassadors, legislatures etc. who are

obliged to plead or bargain for the release of his hostages. I have confidential knowledge of President Nelson Mandela's personal intervention on behalf of Abiola and I have seen a copy of Abacha's petulant response.

It was through similar "friendly" channels that we learnt of plans to turn me into the next high-profile hostage. A former ambassador, one of the fawners and courtiers around the decadent court of Abacha, assured Gwarzo and his henchmen that "the heavens would not fall" at my detention any more than they have done since the Burmese military dictatorship placed Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Laureate under house arrest. "Unlike his fellow laureate, he is not even a president-elect," he assured his receptive audience, "so what's all the fuss about?"

A few days later, the Nigerian Union of Journalists warned that I must leave at once and not even bother to touch home or office. There was not much discussion. We had long agreed that the opposition had conceded Abacha's regime far too many hostages. We moved into the laid-out contingency plans for just such a moment.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Volume 12 Number 4

NIGERIA - GENERAL

1995

JAN. — NOV.

Multinationals leaving Nigeria

LAGOS — While Nigerian government officials are busy trying to sell the virtues of the 1995 budget to foreign investors, some unconvinced multinationals are moving ahead with plans to pull out of the country, and the rest are wondering when the newly deregulated foreign exchange system will be allowed to work.

The scrapping of some of the limits on foreign majority ownership and the repeal of the Exchange Control Act have had no effect on plans by German pharmaceutical group Hoechst to sell its 40% stake in Hoechst Nigeria to an offshore holding company controlled by Ernest Shonekan, who was briefly head of state in 1993 and is now an informal adviser on the economy to Gen Sani Abacha's regime.

Like many manufacturers in Nigeria who exported informally to the neighbouring Francophone African countries, Hoechst lost about 30% of its sales early last year when the revaluation of the Nigerian currency and the devaluation of the CFA franc eroded competitiveness.

This follows other divestments by multinationals in pharmaceuticals in the past three years, including Wellcome and ICI. Glaxo has retained its stake in a Nigerian affiliate but changed the name to Evans Medical.

Foreign partnership in Nigeria's car assembly sector is also under strain. In recent years, the country's three foreign motor car assemblers have survived mainly on orders from government agencies, including the army.

Last month Volkswagen Nigeria closed its plant near Lagos, which assembled Santana cars and which had been almost at a standstill for months.

The lack of foreign exchange to import com-

pletely knocked-down kits and the mass of cheaper imported cars meant that Volkswagen could not compete. The remaining two car vehicle assemblers, Peugeot Automobile Nigeria in Kaduna and Annamco, the Mercedes Benz bus plant in Enugu, are suffering from the same problems and operating at low levels compared with capacity.

Government regulation of fuel prices and erratic supply from state-owned depots and refineries have also undermined multinationals' profits in the downstream oil sector.

Texaco's 60% stake in Texaco Nigeria, which produces and markets petroleum products, has been for sale since 1993. SA's Engen, formerly part of the Gencor mining group, is close to acquiring Texaco's 60% share in Texaco Nigeria, Lagos stockbrokers say.

The 1995 budget has scrapped the law restricting foreign ownership in almost all sectors of the Nigerian economy except the most important: the oil and gas exploration and production joint ventures in which the parastatal Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) owns 58% and international oil companies the rest.

These joint ventures account for more than 90% of export earnings and government revenue. The government's failure to pay its share of operating costs last year led to arrears of \$1.1bn to its minority partners Shell, Mobil, Chevron and the other oil companies that are also the operators.

The government has rejected the oil companies' proposal to dilute the NNPC's equity in the joint ventures.

Until they are assured of payment, the oil companies have scaled down investment and

warned that, at present levels, Nigeria will be unable to maintain its production capacity, much less increase it as planned.

Last year Nigeria's production dropped below its Opec quota (2,000,000 barrels a day, including condensate) and is currently losing 85,000 barrels a day as a result of an explosion at a Mobil platform on January 19.

The oil companies want a realistic exchange rate before using dollars to pay for local costs. "Last year," one of the companies' executives says, "we were forced to change dollars at 22 naira (the market rate is around 80 naira). Until we know what is happening we shall continue to borrow locally in naira wherever possible."

The oil industry should be the main source of foreign exchange to the rest of the private sector but under this year's guidelines the oil companies can only sell their dollars to the Central Bank of Nigeria, which will buy them at autonomous rates and sell them on the inter-bank market.

BD 22/2/95
But the bank has not offered to buy nor indicated its intended rate and an oil company has asked it for clarification.

The government's exchange rate policy remains confused. While insisting recently that convertibility of the naira was the ultimate aim, central bank governor Paul Ogwuma promised to restore and defend the international value of the naira through a combination of demand management, supply initiatives and supportive complementary action.

Unless it allows the oil companies' dollars into the system, the bank has little scope for intervention with foreign exchange reserves estimated at about \$400m, less than a month's imports. — Financial Times.

Activists call for rights in Nigeria

BY PETER FABRICIUS
WASHINGTON BUREAU

Black American civil rights leaders who led the US sanctions campaign against South Africa's former government are now for the first time turning their energies against a black African government by launching a campaign to restore democracy in Nigeria.

The concerted attack on the military government of General Sani Abacha is being led by Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, the organisation which spearheaded demonstrations against South Africa during the '80s and early '90s.

The campaign will start slowly with newspaper adverts condemning the Nigerian military government, and possibly protests at Nigeria's Washington embassy, but could end with the "global economic and political isolation" of Nigeria, according to a letter which Robinson wrote to Abacha and which was quoted in the Washington Post yesterday.

Arrested

Robinson, who was often arrested with other civil rights leaders during the demonstrations at the South African embassy here, vowed "to oppose the Nigerian government with as much tenacity as we opposed the South African Government".

Robinson said that although there had been selective criticism of some African nations such as Ethiopia and Angola in the past, there had never been a full-scale effort by American blacks against a black-run African government such as the one launched now.

The Washington Post also quoted veteran civil rights leader, the Reverend Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, as saying that "it would be inconsistent for us to express concern about repression and tyranny by the white dictators in South Africa and ignore the same thing happening elsewhere in black Africa."

Nigerians take strain as currency plunges

(226) WMM(BM) 31/3-6/4/95

Toye Olori in Lagos

FOR Nigerian bankers, the devaluation of the naira was necessary and inevitable, but entrepreneurs are worried about the plunging Nigerian currency, which has also put a strain on consumers' pockets.

In February, the government introduced a two-tiered exchange rate, with the naira remaining at 22 to one United States' dollar for official transactions and varying in value on the "autonomous foreign exchange market" under which all other business falls. The naira is now 82 to the US dollar on the autonomous market and prices of basic commodities have risen in tandem.

Shopkeepers say they have to sell existing goods at higher prices so as to have enough money to replenish their stock at the new rate.

Adekunle Olumide, director general of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industries, warns that the new rate will increase production costs, which will affect overall price levels, thus fuelling inflation. Before the devaluation, the government put Nigeria's inflation rate at 70 percent. Independent economists estimated it at more than 600 percent.

Olumide proposes that, to ease the pressure on the naira, the Nigerian government "should sell at a lower value of between 50 and 60 naira per dollar and make adequate forex (foreign exchange)

available for sale"

Nigeria's military junta placed restrictions on trading in foreign exchange in December 1993, banning all but the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) from buying and selling hard currency. The 1995 budget allows people who need hard currency to obtain it from sources other than the CBN, but at the parallel rate.

The Manufacturers' Association of Nigeria (MAN) argues that the new exchange rate can in no way be a correct reflection of the true value of the naira.

A statement signed by MAN's director-general, Uzor Okeke, said that "without a reasonable injection of forex into the market, the exchange rate of the naira will not be truly determined." It claimed that a government decision to make manufacturers pay custom duties at the autonomous rate would lead to the death of local industries.

While industrialists panic over the effects of the devaluation, bankers have welcomed it as a good development. "It is the best way of achieving a realistic and stable exchange rate for the naira," says Erastus Akingbola, managing director of Nigerian International Merchant Bank.

"It will help in weaning manufacturers off the CBN dollar, reducing the excessive pressure on the official source of forex." Akingbola said that if the CBN rate were placed on a par with the autonomous rate, the latter would be forced down. *IPS*

Nigeria gets rap on knuckles

WM 31/3-6/4/95

226

America's influential pro-Africa lobby group, TransAfrica, has come out strongly against Nigeria, comments **William Raspberry**

THE American ambassador to Nigeria, paying an unusual personal call on the head of TransAfrica recently, came quickly to the reason for his visit. He would be grateful, he said, if the United States-based pro-Africa lobbying organisation would help Nigeria in its efforts at recertification by the State Department.

And he was just as quickly disappointed. Not only would TransAfrica not help Nigeria reclaim the status to put it in line for a wide range of American help, TransAfrica's executive director, Randall Robinson, told him. But Robinson and other black leaders were just at the point of announcing an all-out campaign in exactly the opposite direction.

This unusual (though not quite unprecedented) response from black American leaders to a black African government is based, says Robinson, on Nigeria's refusal to take serious strides toward democracy. "The people in charge have brought the country to ruin," he said in an interview. "They have muzzled their press, dissolved the labour unions, disbanded the legislature and created an absolute dictatorship."

"The military has been in charge for 24 of the 34 years of Nigeria's independence, though they keep promising, as now, to return to their barracks."

"Wole Soyinka, Nigeria's Nobel laureate writer, is in exile at the Kennedy School. General Obasanjo, the former military head of state who stepped down in favour of civilian rule, was arrested as he got off a plane in Lagos. His offence? He had been encouraging Africans to allow press freedom, an independent judiciary and multiparty elections."

Robinson and more than 50 activists, trade unionists, ministers and politicians have vowed to press the issue "with aggressive integrity" — as they did with South Africa and Haiti — until things change. Last month they released a letter to the current head of state, General Sani Abacha, expressing their disappointment with his regime and demanding that he move toward democratisation.

Not long ago, such a posture would have been inconceivable. It was always easy to rally American blacks to oppose white exploiters of black Africans. But Africa's black leaders frequently got a free ride. The first major sign that that was changing came four

years ago, when many of these same black leaders called for US sanctions against Kenya's Daniel arap Moi.

Still, the announcement of an all-out campaign against Nigeria's military rulers is something special.

"It has to be something special," says Robinson. "Nigeria should be a bellwether state. One in four sub-Saharan Africans is a Nigerian. What the kleptocrats in Nigeria are doing damages globally the reputation of Africa in the world — and thus at a time when much of the rest of Africa is moving toward democracy. We have to respond, and we have to respond as forcefully as we did when we were opposing apartheid in South Africa with aggressive integrity."

But why Nigeria? Probably half of the African states are as far away from democracy as Nigeria is. Mobutu's Zaire has achieved world-class infamy for his exploitation of his people and his prodigious squandering of billions of dollars in foreign aid.

Robinson acknowledges that Zaire is a "time bomb in the middle of black Africa" and that Mobutu's rule is "old, inefficient and corrupt." But he also lists some reasons for patience: Zaire's special ties to the CIA, its critical role as host to refugees from Rwanda and Burundi and the fact that "a major upheaval in Zaire would send reverberations in a most destabilising way through the heart of Africa — and also send a flood of refugees into South Africa."

And besides all that, he says, the top leaders of Zaire have given solid assurances that they are on a track to open elections, under US and United Nations supervision. "Nigeria's leaders, on the other hand, have willfully resisted democracy," Robinson says.

"They've got natural resources, a great wealth of talent and an income stream from their 'sweet' crude oil. And you can't attribute any of the country's political problems to the Cold War machinations of the great powers. Nigeria's corruption has to be borne almost wholly by greed-driven generals."

Robinson says he and his colleagues aren't out to demonise Nigeria. Nigeria, he says, has been quite helpful in places like Uganda and Botswana and Zimbabwe. But the greed of the military is obscuring all that.

"If we are to be true to what we stand for," Robinson told me, "we



Living under a burden: Nigerians have lived under military rule for 24 of their 34 years of independence

PHOTOGRAPH MICHAEL SIMMONS

simply have to apply the same yardstick to Nigeria that we have applied elsewhere in the world. This is not about race and geography, it is about

doing the right thing, and we intend to see it through."

Now that's "aggressive integrity" — *Washington Post*

Archbishop Tutu has created a breathing space for Nigeria. But the military is still to have its say, writes Eniwoke Ibagere of The Star's Foreign Service

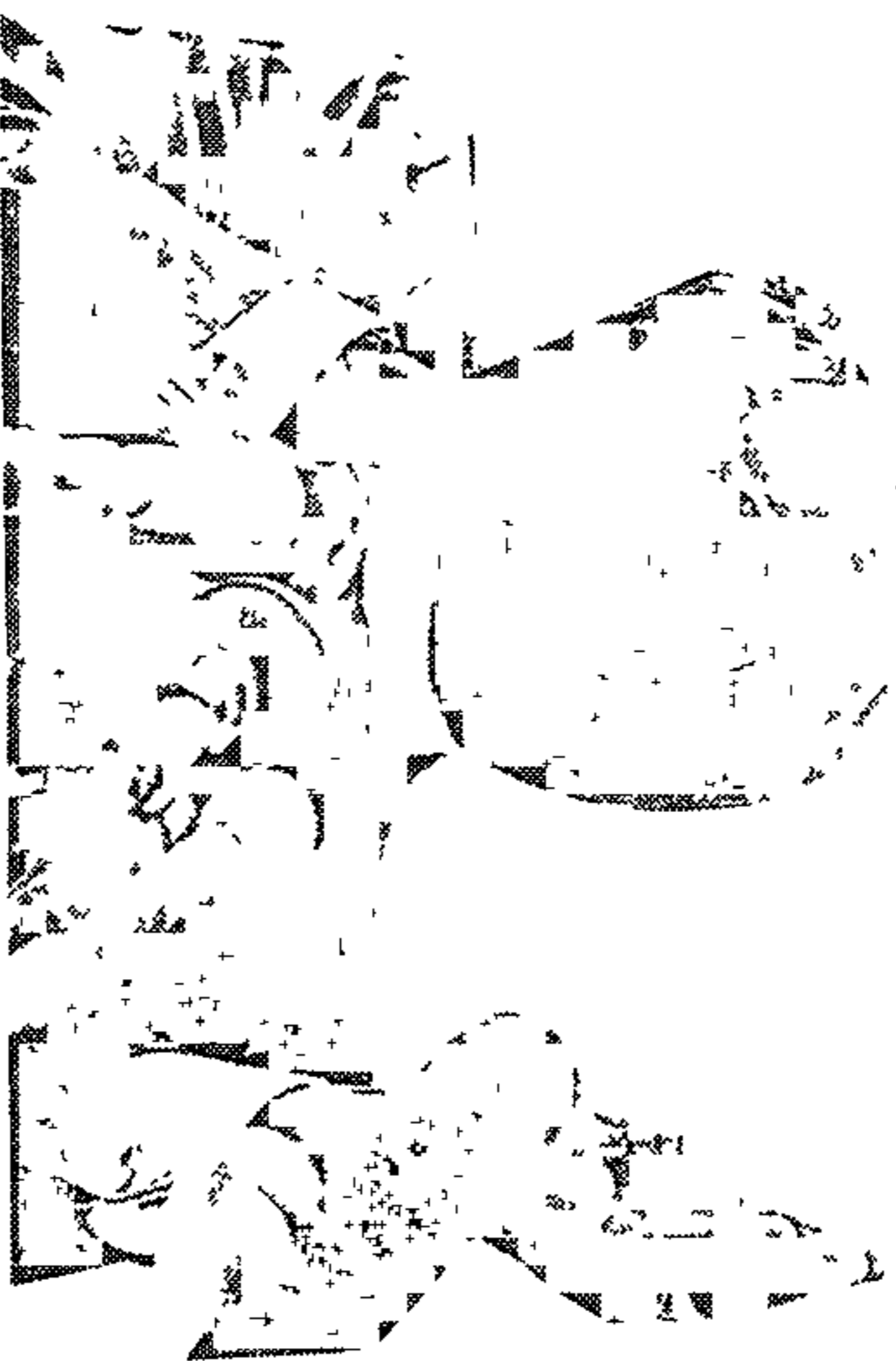
How Tutu cooled a cauldron

In the language of the Yoruba ethnic group in Nigeria, the word "tutu" means "to make cold". But the intervention by Archbishop Desmond Tutu as an emissary of President Mandela last week, which secured from the jailed Moshood Abiola an agreement that he be conditionally released, was greeted warmly in the oil-rich nation.

"Archbishop Tutu came in time to make cold the boiling cauldron of problems in Nigeria," quipped a cartoon in a daily newspaper here.

But while the work of the good Tutu has been accepted here with something of a sigh of relief, it remains difficult to predict how the Nigerian military government of General Sanu Abacha will respond to Abiola's new willingness for old conditions.

Last September, after a month in detention following his arrest on charges of treason for proclaiming himself the rightful winner of the June 1993 presidential elections, Abacha's government offered to release him on condition that his passport be with-



Tutu . . . "came in time to make cold the boiling cauldron of problems in Nigeria".

held, that he not engage in any travel outside the country and that he not discuss politics or ally himself with his political friends. Abiola flatly refused those conditions and has been in detention ever since.

Tutu recognised this conundrum which Abiola has now created for himself when he said, "It's difficult to assess gov-

ernment's position. They will be cagey in returning to the conditional release, having been spurned by Abiola last year."

Tutu's trip to the capital Abuja last week to hold discussions with Abacha and the detained Abiola was an attempt inspired by Mandela to resolve the political crisis in Africa's most populous nation.

Reflecting the mood of a sickly man who has been detained for almost a year, Tutu said after his visit to the jail "Abiola is desperate to be released under any conditions. He is willing to be under house arrest as long as he is with his family and gets adequate medical care from his personal physician."

The Nobel Peace prize laureate said he had conveyed Abiola's wishes to Abacha through Foreign Minister Tom Ikimi.

But political watchers are looking at this new development with cautious optimism. A few think government might want to use last year's rejection of the conditional release offer as an excuse to continue the detention of Abiola, who, to support his claims, is indeed the man widely held to have won the 1993 elections which were annulled by the military strongmen.

It is widely believed that Abiola's latest request reflects primarily the state of desperation he is in having experienced the dehumanising conditions of detention for so many months.



Abiola . . . reportedly willing to accept a conditional release from detention.

On state radio, Tutu said he met Abiola in a state contrary to one of comfort, as many have been led to believe.

"Abiola has been living in quite unsatisfactory conditions and has lost about 40kg as a result," said Tutu.

"He is under lock and key for 24-hours a day in a room. He has been drinking tepid water, has

no hot water for his bath and complained of constant back pain, following a bruise he received while struggling with security men over newspapers."

The only ray of hope here that government will bend a little to the option Abiola now craves is that both Mandela and Tutu are respected figures in Nigeria. Much like former US president

Jimmy Carter, who recently secured the change from detention to house arrest of former Nigerian president and now alleged coup plotter Olusegun Obasanjo, Mandela and Tutu command great respect in government circles too.

"I have some faith in government listening to Mandela and Tutu. But it's just that Abacha is an intransigent fellow, who is also unpredictable," said Beko Ransome-Kuti, spokesman for the pro-democracy group Campaign for Democracy.

He added, "Abacha could include in the terms certain conditions that would conflict with the personality of Abiola, making him turn down the offer again."

And very few people believe an Abiola release, regardless of the conditions, will be the key to brokering peace in the country's lingering political crisis. "I don't know, but it'd be a starting point for something good," said Tutu. The onus for a real return to democracy still lies squarely with government and that remains the great imponderable.

Shell to cut back in Nigeria

CT(BR) 12/4/95 (226)

FROM AP-DJ

Lagos — The oil industry, Nigeria's biggest export earner, faces a potential downturn because the government is not paying its debts

Western oil giants such as Shell and Mobil produce the bulk of Nigeria's oil, but with unpaid bills to the industry totalling \$764 million and rising, the majors are responding by cutting back their operations

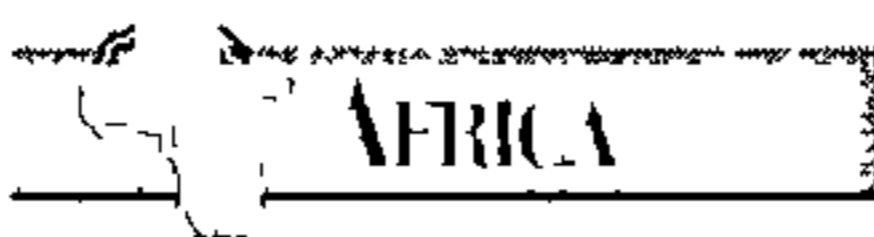
Shell, which accounts for more than half of the 1.89 million barrels of crude pumped in Nigeria each day, is owed about \$320 mil-

lion, with \$54 million of that debt piling up in the first quarter of this year alone

Shell says it plans to cut about a third of the jobs held by its Nigerian work force of 5 000

These troubles could harm the national economy, which depends on oil for 80 percent of Nigeria's export earnings, as well as local economies where jobs are closely linked to exploration and production work

The unpaid bills in Nigeria came to \$600 million at the end of last year and rose by another \$164 million during the first quarter of this year



New Malawian charter slated

CT 19/5/95
BLANTYRE: Malawian opposition leaders and human rights activists have attacked the new constitution, which came into force yesterday.

President Bakili Muluzi, celebrating a year in power as Malawi's first democratically elected leader, assented this week to the country's new constitution, after it was legislated by parliament recently.

Mr Kamlepo Kalua, leader of the opposition Malawi Democratic Party, said yesterday the new constitution was manipulated to serve the interests of those in power.

The leader of the opposition Christian Democratic Party, Mr Eston Kakhoma, said the constitution "left a lot to be desired", saying it disregarded key resolutions passed at the February constitutional conference.

Tunisia 'must up investment'

TUNIS: Tunisia's Central Bank governor said yesterday the Tunis Bourse must open up to foreign buying to increase investment in the North African country.

"The bourse must integrate itself more in the international financial markets to attract foreign investment," Mr Mohamed Beji Hamda told a university seminar on external financial resources.

Foreign investment and repatriation of income and capital are free in Tunisia, but foreign investors at the Tunis Bourse need to obtain authorisation from the central bank.

Mr Hamda said Tunisia wanted to attract medium- and long-term capital and discourage short-term investors who could have a destabilising effect.

Money urged for steel project

CT 19/5/95 (226)
LAGOS: Officials in charge of Nigeria's much-delayed Ajaokuta steel project have urged the military government to provide funds for the completion of the plant which has already cost \$4 billion (about R14,46bn).

Mr Musa Wakawa, managing director of Ajaokuta Steel Company, was quoted as saying if the funds were provided, his company could activate the wire rod and light sector mills and start production next month.

He said revenue thus generated could be used to put two other mills on stream by the end of the year and the entire plant could be operational by the end of 1996 — 17 years after construction started.

Leakey pledges to form party despite criticism

NAIROBI — Kenyan scientist Richard Leakey will continue with plans to form a new opposition party despite government criticism, the Daily Nation newspaper reported yesterday.

Leakey, from Kenya's small but influential white community, dismissed the attacks by officials led by President Daniel arap Moi. "I am an honest man and therefore replying to those who have soiled my name regarding the new party would be stooping too low."

Leakey's announcement on May 7 that he was allying himself with young opposition leaders shook Kenya's political establishment. Most prominent in the group is opposition MP Paul Muite.

Muite was charged in court on Wednesday with two Norwegian journalists and three others for illegally photographing police stations, visiting police stations without authorisation, obstructing a police officer and resisting arrest. The six were released on bail but face 14 years in prison if found guilty.

Moi has attacked Leakey as a white man trying to reintroduce colonialism 32 years after independence from Britain. The opposition has also criticised Leakey.

The opposition has been plagued by scandal since losing to Moi and his Kenyan African National Union three-and-a-half years ago in the first multiparty polls for 25 years. Western donors have cut aid or threatened to, because of alleged human rights abuses, corruption and backsliding on economic reforms. — Sapa-Reuter.

Nigerian banks still policy target

ABUJA — Nigeria's finance minister Anthony Ani said this week his government had no intention of going back on plans to take a controlling stake in the country's four largest independent banks, despite international pressure.

Ani alleged that "directors, shareholders and managers" had been siphoning off funds from a number of smaller and now distressed Nigerian banks, something that could not be allowed to happen to those four banks.

In an interview with AP-Dow Jones, Ani insisted that government plans were a one-time event. He said they did not amount to nationalisation and in no way diminished government's commitment to privatise other state enterprises.

Ani said. "We are determined to continue with the privatisation policy. We are not going back."

According to recent reports, the World Bank, the US and France had put pressure on the Nigerian government to reverse its decision to take a controlling stake in the banks — United Bank for Africa (UBA), Afriland, Union Bank and First Bank —

because of the damaging effect it was likely to have on frail international investment sentiment towards Nigeria.

Ani argued that the four banks were originally privatised by presidential decree in a move separate from government's privatisation programme, which was relaunched by the finance minister in the 1995 budget.

Ani said not only did the banks have international reputations and domestic depositors to protect, but government planned to transfer much of its banking business to them. He said government was concerned that the banks might fall into the hands of investors intent on siphoning off bank funds for personal gain.

Ani said the Nigerian government was planning only to acquire "golden shares" in the four banks as a prelude to a transition period in which banking supervision would be tightened. The government would be undecided as to how it would acquire stakes in the banks but it would not involve expropriation.

Analysts believed the government's plans were likely to run into most trouble over UBA because the bank was controlled by a Nigerian consortium and foreign banks held stakes in it. Banque Nationale de Paris had a 30% stake, and an international grouping which included Bankers Trust of the US held 10%. — AP-DJ.

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(22b)

PM 26/5/95

Nigeria's big four wait with (22b) bD 5/6/95 bated breath

LAGOS — Contradictory government policies continue to make life unusually difficult for Nigeria's big independent banks, which make up one of the better performing sectors of the West African country's ailing economy.

Nigeria's four biggest commercial banks, which have the lion's share of the banking business, face renationalisation by Nigeria's military-controlled government.

"Whether or not government proceeds with the takeover of the banks is the most critical test of its commitment to free enterprise, deregulation and liberalisation," says Konjun Ajayi, a prominent commercial lawyer.

Although the banks were privatised by presidential decree in 1993 — having been 60% state-owned until then — government now plans to take at least a 10% stake in and management control of the listed companies.

The four banks are United Bank for Africa (UBA), First Bank of Nigeria, Afribank — in which government already has a sizeable shareholding — and Union Bank of Nigeria, which have combined total assets of around 170-billion naira (\$2.1bn).

Finance Minister Anthony Ani insists the government will go ahead with the plans despite protests by the World Bank and US, UK and French governments which argue the move will damage Nigeria's international economic relations.

US, UK, French and Italian banks are shareholders in three of the companies, while the three European countries are the largest holders of Nigeria's \$30bn debt.

The timing of government's move is curious, as it follows the announcement in the 1995 budget in January of the scrapping of foreign exchange controls and Nigeria's fixed exchange rate system, some of the most important regulatory constraints on the banking system.

Through the reintroduction of an autonomous foreign market, companies are no longer obliged to buy foreign exchange from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) at a fixed rate of 22 naira to the dollar.

"If nothing else, this saves an awful amount of time and inconvenience because we no longer have to fight to extract foreign exchange from the central bank," says Jonathan Long, managing director at Morgan Grenfell affiliate First City Merchant Bank.

But the budget failed to tackle another complaint: negative real interest rates which stem from the fixed lending rates banks are allowed to charge.

Government caps bank lending rates by tying the maximum rate banks are allowed to charge to the central bank's discount rate. That puts the maximum lending rate at 21% and the minimum at 13.5%.

Business sources believe yearly inflation is running close to 100% in contrast with latest official figures which put it at about 55%.

Banking sources admit that imaginative fee structures enable them to exact effective interest of around 60%, but add that the fixed interest rate regime distorts the operation of the money market.

The government's excuse for renationalisation is that it wishes to prevent the parlous state of the rest of the country's banking sector spreading to the main banks.

Central bank statistics show that at the end of 1994 27% of the banking system's total deposits represented non-performing loans and advances. The level was as high as 60% at the 47 distressed banks of the 116 then listed.

"Government, having seen what has happened to the 47 banks, cannot wait and see these four banks, which are crucial to the Nigerian economy, go under," says Ani.

Banking sources believe there are more than 47 banks in dire straits, the result of the inconsistent regulatory environment and poor banking supervision, marked by government reluctance to let troubled banks go under.

However, there is little evidence that UBA, First Bank or Union Bank are close to distress. "The problems in the banking sector at large are serious, but the industry is not near collapse," says one Western diplomat.

France's Banque Nationale de Paris has a 30% stake in UBA in which a grouping made up of New York-based Bankers Trust and two Italian banks have another 10% interest. The UK's Standard Chartered has a 9.9% holding in First Bank, while Union Bank is a former affiliate of Barclays Bank.

Banking and diplomatic sources say the origin of the nationalisation plans has another source, namely the recent management takeover of UBA by a minority shareholder consortium led by prominent Nigerian businessman Hakim Belo Osagi.

There is little clarity on how government plans to effect the takeovers. Foreign shareholders are keen to dispose of their stakes but would probably prefer to sell to a reputable private shareholder than the government, banking sources say. Local shareholders are thought to have pre-emptive rights over foreign-held shares.

The consensus is that government is likely to order a private placement of the banks' unissued stock to the finance ministry, giving government a retroactive "golden share" in the companies — AP-DJ

WILL LAGOS LISTEN?: International pressure for a return to normality continues. Western nations have frozen investment until democracy prevails and continue to urge a political programme to return Nigeria to civilian rule, combined with sweeping economic reform



Two years after the doomed elections, Nigeria still lurches from crisis to crisis

On Monday, Nigeria marks the second anniversary of presidential polls annulled by the military, reports **ENIWOKE IBAGERE** of Argus Foreign Service

Lagos — On June 12 two years ago, presidential elections in Nigeria were annulled, plunging Africa's most populous nation into a political and economic abyss.

Triple-digit inflation has been fuelled by the fall in the value of Nigeria's naira currency. Mass unemployment is the result of firms folding or trimming staff through large-scale retrenchment.

With government intolerance of a free press, some media houses remain shut. And there has been a dramatic rise in armed banditry.

Millions of Nigerians have been plunged into poverty by the economic consequences of the political instability. Strikes and riots challenging the military rule of General Sanni Abacha followed in the wake of the election annul-

(226) SPAN 10/6/95
ment by the previous military government from which Abacha took over. Strike threats continue.

The wealthy Muslim businessman, Moshood Abiola, widely believed to have won the cancelled elections, has been in jail for nearly a year for proclaiming himself president. Anyone demanding that Abiola be freed to take up his mandate or demanding a return to civilian rule is subject to arrest.

About 500 politicians, trade unionists, journalists and military officers are currently in detention.

Bomb blast

There was a wave of arrests of activists recently, some of them on suspicion of planning to commemorate June 12.

Others are believed to have been behind a recent bomb explosion in the city of Ilorin, in which three people died.

International pressure for a return to normalcy continues. Western nations have frozen investment until democracy prevails, and continue to urge a political

programme to return the country to civilian rule combined with sweeping economic reforms.

However, Abacha has been unbending and has ignored the mounting international pressure for the release of detainees, a pressure that is now focusing on the anniversary date.

Traditional rulers and top politicians from the Yoruba-speaking south-west, Abiola's domain, have decided to send a delegation to Abacha in an attempt to establish a dialogue. This is scheduled for June 12.

The National Democracy Coalition is also pressing for releases and the installation of Abiola as president. Another of its projects for the anniversary is a symposium on democracy.

A group of musicians recently launched an album that has been getting much airplay. Entitled *The Way Forward*, its title song tells of "uniting to solve our problems." Seems obvious when you listen to the tune, but the tune is all Nigerians have at the moment.

Chaos on two fronts

(226)
PM 16/6/95

Two years almost to the day since Nigeria's military government annulled the presidential elections won by Chief Moshood Abiola, the country's twin economic and political crises are coming to a head. Abiola, the first southerner to win a Nigerian presidential election, declared himself president a year ago, only to be thrown in detention — where he still languishes.

Internal pressures seem unlikely to displace the current military strongman, General Sani Abacha, who took over from the previous military dictator, General Ibrahim Babangida, when the latter stood down late in 1993. Abacha's first move was to abandon the country's stalled economic reform programme, replacing it with bureaucratic controls, pegging the Naira exchange rate at N22 to the US dollar and imposing a 21% ceiling on bank lending rates. Foreign currency was allocated by a committee of ministers and officials.

The Abacha budget early in 1994 proved the disaster that was extensively forecast at the time. Nigeria's foreign debt situation continued to deteriorate as arrears built up, reaching an estimated US\$8bn in mid-1995 and taking the external debt to \$37bn. In the foreign exchange market, a yawning gap opened between the official rate of N22 and that in the free market, which, late last year, topped N100 to the dollar.

Domestically, the State-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corp (NNPC) was unable to meet its so-called "cash calls" to its joint venture partners in the oil industry. Cash calls are the semi-State's contribution to the development expenses of the jointly owned oil wells. As the NNPC's arrears rose to more than \$800m, so the oil multinationals warned that the country's oil production, which provides 95% of export earnings and 70% of State revenue, was increasingly at risk.

By December it was obvious even to the stubborn military that their economic strategy had failed. Abacha appointed a new Finance Minister, Chief Anthony Ani, an accountant, and instructed him to reopen talks with the IMF and World Bank in an

effort to secure a debt relief package.

In January, Ani's first budget included a policy U-turn on the foreign exchange rate and a promise to fund the arrears owed to the oil majors. Nigeria reverted to the two-tier foreign exchange system it had operated in the early Nineties, retaining the N22 official rate for federal government expenditures, such as debt-servicing, but allowing the market to set a rate of N80 to the dollar for all other transactions.

For foreigners, potentially the most far-reaching reform was the abolition of the indigenisation decree (which required foreign firms to have at least 40%, and often 60%, Nigerian ownership of their subsidiaries in the country) and the removal of the 1962 Exchange Control Act.

The modest reforms and the pledge to balance the budget — after four years in which the budget deficit averaged more than 10% of GDP — were welcomed by the Bank and the IMF, which sent missions to the capital, Abuja, last month to reopen a dialogue.

Privately, Bank officials warn that the reforms fail to go far enough for Bank and IMF lending to resume. Not only has Ani maintained the 21% interest rate ceiling in a country where inflation last year was close to 70%, so that real rates are massively negative, but he backed away from privatisation — promising instead that the State would lease assets to private-sector operators.

The military's reluctance to reform was underlined by the government's subsequent decision to take back control of four commercial banks privatised in 1993. Ani is upset at the way in which control of one of the banks — the United Bank for Africa — has been taken over by a group of Nigerian shareholders and managers. The new management dismissed a number of senior managers and embarked on rational financial policies that spelled an end to the political favours and patronage available when the State controlled the banks.

The World Bank has warned that if Abuja does take back control of the banks, it will

send the wrong signals to potential foreign investors, wiping out the benefits of the relaxation of exchange controls and the dropping of the indigenisation programme.

Despite this, Ani is confident that he can get a medium-term deal with the Bank and the IMF that would secure a debt rescheduling agreement with the Paris Club of official creditors. Ani cites the budget surplus achieved in the first four months of 1995 — largely by pruning spending ruthlessly — as evidence that, at long last, Nigeria is tackling reform seriously.

Few in business are convinced, and even if the Nigerians can put together a coherent economic reform package, which is far from certain, the political dimension looms ever-larger. Some Western governments — notably the US — are thought likely to vote against lending to Nigeria by the IMF and the Bank until there is a return to civilian rule. Abacha's constitutional conference, dominated by his own nominees, failed to come up with a timetable for a return to civilian rule, but did recommend the seemingly impractical solution of a presidency that would rotate between the Muslim north, the Yoruba south and the Ibo east. How this would be achieved is unclear.

It seems foreign pressure will be needed to get the soldiers back to their barracks, though there is no enthusiasm for sanctions of any kind on the part of the West, pre-occupied as it is with Bosnia, the Middle East and trade wars with Japan.

A potential flashpoint will be the November Commonwealth Summit in New Zealand, at which the "old Commonwealth" — the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India and Pakistan — hope some African governments will move either to exclude military dictatorships like Nigeria, or use the occasion to extract a timetable for the return to civilian government.

With one exception — President Nelson Mandela — few African leaders command the prestige and moral authority to lay it on the line to General Abacha. SA could find itself playing a crucial role at the New Zealand summit.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES UNBANNED

Nigeria promises general elections

ET 28/6/98 (22b)

ABUJA: A timetable for democratic elections in Nigeria will be announced in October, the country's military leader announced yesterday.

MILITARY ruler General Sani Abacha yesterday lifted the ban on political activities in Nigeria and promised to announce in October a timetable for handing over power to an elected government

"As a true testimony of our commitment to handing over, I hereby lift the ban on political activities," Gen Abacha said after receiving the report of a constitutional conference at an elaborate ceremony in the capital, Abuja

Gen Abacha said the governing Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) would complete deliberations and approve the draft constitution within the next three months

"This will be followed by the announcement of the political

transition timetable for handing over power to a democratically elected government in my October 1 1995 anniversary speech," he said.

October 1 will mark the 35th anniversary of Nigeria's independence from Britain, years marred by political instability and dominated by military rule

Provocative

Gen Abacha appealed to politicians to show a sense of maturity and tolerance in their conduct following the lifting of the ban that was imposed when he seized power in 1993

"Despite the lifting of the ban on political activities, politicians

are advised to guard against reckless and provocative utterances, political rallies and campaigns until the release of a comprehensive political timetable by the National Electoral Commission," he said

The leaders said his administration would establish an electoral commission to review the voters' register and supervise the formation and registration of political parties

Gen Abacha seized power during the mayhem triggered by the annulment of the 1993 presidential election, which was widely believed to have been won by businessman Mr Moshood Abiola, who is now in detention for proclaiming himself president

The general said his administration set up the constitutional conference a year ago so that Nigerians could sort out their differences and come up with solutions to the country's problems — Reuter

(226) CT (PR) 5/7/95

IMF sets conditions for Nigeria: The IMF has told Nigeria it must first establish a record of implementing economic policies before it can get a deal on its home-grown, medium-term economic adjustment programme. Anthony Ani, the Nigerian finance minister, said yesterday that the IMF's approval of Nigeria's economic programme was crucial to securing World Bank loans which could help reschedule \$30 billion of debt owed to official creditors.

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23

Nigeria tries to clear its name

By Toye Olori in Lagos

NIGERIA may receive a pat on the back for its efforts to check drug trafficking by its citizens. But that may be all it gets.

A team of United States lawyers representing Nigeria in the US had argued here at the weekend that the West African nation was complying with all Washington's demands on matters of drug enforcement.

They were suggesting the US president may now be able to certify that Nigeria had fulfilled conditions set by Washington for the reinstatement of humanitarian aid.

The US cited the drug trade in 1993 and 1994 when it "decertified" Nigeria for failing to fulfill the conditions. The administration imposed economic sanctions and cut humanitarian assistance.

But while Washington has sig-
nalled its approval of Nigeria's anti-narcotics efforts — including the drug enforcement decree announced here recently and the sealing off of suspected money laundering sites — the country is likely to remain an outcast.

The Bill Clinton administration, pressed to take even tougher action against the regime of General Sani Abacha for human rights and other abuses, is only grudgingly acknowledging the drug enforcement efforts. "We give credit where credit is due," one senior US administration official said in Washington.

In its renewed drug fight, Nigeria's National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) this month handed down a decree which empowers the agency to raid car sales showrooms and other suspected money laundering venues.

Under the new law — the Money Laundering Decree 3 of 1995 — the police can also raid social functions and demand to know the source of a person's funds. The NDLEA may also tap telephone lines and investigate large deposits in bank accounts, a development that has caused panic among investors.

WM 7-13/7/95

(226)

"No matter the efforts made by offenders to conceal the proceeds of the trade, the agency will go to all lengths to unveil their secrets," NDLEA boss, Major General Musa Barnayi has warned.

"There will be no exemption or sacred cow in the implementation of the provisions of this new decree and we will not care whose ox is gored as this is one of the banes of the nation's battered economy today," Barnayi said.

NDLEA agents sealed off several vehicle sales depots in this former capital during a recent raid.

Now, the gates of 12 prominent showrooms remain locked as armed soldiers stand guard.

"The raid was informed by the numerous complaints by Nigerians that the booming car business was an arm of a complex drug business," the NDLEA said in a statement.

"These allegations were helped by the flashy lifestyle of the car dealers, many of whom ride in cars worth several millions of naira."

The agency believes that drug barons hide their money by shipping expensive cars to Nigeria to be sold by car dealers.

But dealers argue that most garages or showrooms only help certain Nigerians who want to sell imported cars. These individuals pay for the showroom space and they pay a commission for every car sold by the dealers.

The NDLEA says it will vacate the premises of a dealer only on presentation of three key documents an

import duty report, a clean report of finding issued by pre-shipment inspectors, and copies of the letters of credit from the transaction.

The measures launched at the beginning of the year have yielded some success.

The agency recently seized just over 4 000kg of hard drugs valued at more than one-million dollars on the black market.

Police have also arrested more than 200 suspects since the beginning of the year, with some 75 persons already convicted for drug offences, compared with 67 last year.

"Until the drug menace is completely eradicated or reduced to a tolerable level, the agency will not relax in any of its measures to arrest the situation," says Barnayi.

Nigerians move to halt secret trial

CT 14/7/95

(22b)

LAGOS: A human rights group launched a public campaign yesterday to stop a secret trial of alleged coup plotters, saying more than 117 people had been executed over coup charges since 1976.

"Enough of this human waste," the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO) said in an advertisement

A Lagos court was due yesterday to begin hearing the CLO's request for an injunction to restrain the military government from carrying out the sentences of the tribunal which is trying people accused of plotting a coup.

Some of the officers have allegedly been sentenced to death and former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo to 25 years' imprisonment.

The trial of more than two dozen servicemen and civilians, including General Obasanjo, has been criticised by human rights

groups and governments around the world.

The CLO says the tribunal is unconstitutional and violates "all known legal canons of fairness".

Nigerian authorities say the trial is in accordance with the law

The government has also come under pressure from left-wing politicians, including former members of the military government.

Detained

The group, including former civilian state governors and ministers, has called for the release of presidential claimant Mr Moshood Abiola and other detainees.

The group said this was needed to resolve the crisis caused by the annulment of the 1993 presidential poll which Mr Abiola was widely believed to have won —
Reuter

Nigeria's junta stays silent about secret trials

Fears that former rulers have been sentenced

(226) Afd 13/12/95

LAGOS. — The international isolation of Nigeria's military rulers under General Sani Abacha has been thrown into stark relief by a barrage of criticism from abroad about the secret trial of civilians and soldiers who allegedly tried to topple the regime last March.

Protests have come from Australia, Britain, Canada, the European Union, Germany, Japan, Russia and the United States.

In separate statements, they have taken the military authorities to task for denying the alleged coupmakers their basic human rights by arraigning them before a special military tribunal sitting in camera and without the possibility of appeal.

"The problem is that the Nigerian government is unwilling to meet a basic international standard of free and fair trials," said US State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns last week.

The Nigerian junta has said and done nothing in response so far. In the view of diplomats and press commentators, that betrays the dilemma facing the military rulers, either they back off and risk losing face, or they brazen it out and perhaps see the confrontation mount and result in international sanctions.

Their critics are particularly concerned that two of the suspects apparently on trial are one-time head of state Olusegun Obasanjo and the No 2 in his 1976-1979 military administration, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua

For weeks the authorities have refused to give the slightest indication of their whereabouts, fuelling speculation that the two retired generals have already been sentenced.

General Obasanjo won immense respect in Africa and elsewhere when he became the first African military leader to organise democratic elections and handed over voluntarily to an elected civilian president, Shehu Shagari, in October 1979.

The reported secret trial of General Obasanjo was "totally unacceptable", said Baroness Chalker, Britain's Overseas Development Minister. She told the BBC that without clear progress on democratic civilian rule, it was difficult to see how Nigeria could take its place at the next Commonwealth heads of government

meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, later this year.

A Commonwealth human rights team headed by former Canadian external affairs minister Flora MacDonald is in Nigeria this week hoping to be able to see the generals and other political detainees, as well as meeting General Abacha.

The failed putsch of last March was the 10th known attempt to oust the leadership of Nigeria. Now, for the first time in the country's history, this latest trial has aroused great emotion locally and abroad because a person as prominent as General Obasanjo is involved. A political factor has been introduced, to the great embarrassment of the military rulers. The trial opened in Lagos on June 5. The authorities said it



Nigerian military ruler Sani Abacha

would end on June 30 and the verdicts would be submitted to the provisional council, the junta's supreme body, for ratification.

Before the tribunal went into closed session, 23 civilian and military accused were shown to the press, but General Obasanjo and General Yar'Adua were not among them.

Nearly two weeks after the supposed deadline, the military rulers are maintaining total silence about the outcome of the trial, about exactly how many people were tried, and what has happened to General Obasanjo.

The opposition says the junta has used the coup plot to round up a score of opponents and journalists and judge them as part of a major settling of political scores. — Sapa—AFP.



Commonwealth secretary-general Emeka Anyaoku at a news conference yesterday in Pretoria, where he said Nigeria had indicated it would be announcing a programme for a return to democracy. Picture NICKY DE BLOIS

Nigeria raises hopes of returning to democracy

Adrian Hadland

PRETORIA — Nigeria's military government, embroiled in new allegations of human rights abuses, had indicated it would be announcing a programme for returning the country to democracy, according to Commonwealth secretary-general chief Emeka Anyaoku

Anyaoku, who is attending round table discussions in Pretoria this week on the development of constitutions, told a news conference he had met Nigerian head of state Gen Sani Abacha on several occasions over the last year.

Abacha had indicated a programme for transforming the country into a democracy would be unveiled in October

This would be barely weeks before Nigeria faces severe criticism for its human rights record at a Commonwealth Heads of Government summit scheduled for Auckland, New Zealand in November.

The Commonwealth secretariat had received numerous complaints from member countries concerning developments in Nigeria, Anyaoku said

Deep concern had been expressed over reports of the arrests of pro-democracy campaigners, the continuing closure of newspapers, the suspension of habeas corpus and the secret trial of military and civilian personnel.

Nigeria's former military ruler Olusegun Obasanjo, who handed over power in 1979 to a democratically-elected government, was reportedly sentenced to life imprisonment last week for his part in a coup attempt.

At the Harare Heads of Government summit in 1991, members of the Commonwealth — including Nigeria — had unanimously committed themselves to the practice of democracy and respect for human rights

"There is therefore, throughout the rest of the Com-

monwealth, disapproval of the existence of military regimes in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia," Anyaoku said.

Concerns regarding events in Nigeria had been passed on to the Commonwealth secretariat from all regions of the organisation.

This meant it was "inevitable" that Nigeria would receive particular attention at the Auckland summit in November.

"Countries throughout the Commonwealth are anxious that developments in Nigeria should be arrested before they plunge the country into a worse crisis"

He had not received confirmation of the recent conviction of Obasanjo and 10 others to life imprisonment, nor of the 14 death sentences handed down in secret trials to members of the military.

He declined to suggest any specific measures to be taken against Nigeria by the Commonwealth, saying the summit would decide this in November.

"It would be in the interest of Nigeria to continue good collaboration with other countries, particularly members of the Commonwealth"

BO 19/7/95

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Nigerian Press urges clemency for 'plotters'

LAGOS — Nigerian newspapers have joined a chorus of Western governments urging army rulers to commute sentences imposed by a military tribunal on alleged coup plotters including former head of state Olusegun Obasanjo

The newspapers warned that ignoring international and local appeals for clemency could push the troubled West African nation off the edge

"We must as a people situate the whole coup story in the global context of a nation on the edge," This Day independent daily said in an editorial

"The news of the conviction and sentence of 40 soldiers and civilians for the coup plot comes amid many agitating problems, all of which are spin-offs of the political imbroglio that has haunted the nation for the past two years," it said

Nigerians are tired of blood-letting Let the carnage stop," wrote the independent A M-News in an editorial

The authorities have not made public the nature of the sentences, the culmination of an investigation and trial shrouded in secrecy since the government said it uncovered a plot to topple it in a coup on March 1

Independent newspapers say former head of state Mr Obasanjo, a retired general, and 10 others were given life jail terms and his then deputy and retired Major-General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua and 13 others were handed death sentences

Nigeria has been in crisis since a former military ruler annulled the 1993 presidential election that was meant to end a decade of military rule The undeclared winner, Moshood Abiola, has been in detention since June 1994 on treason charges for proclaiming himself president

Since defence headquarters announced on Friday that 40 people had been sentenced in Nigeria's latest coup trial,

there has been a flood of local and international appeals for clemency

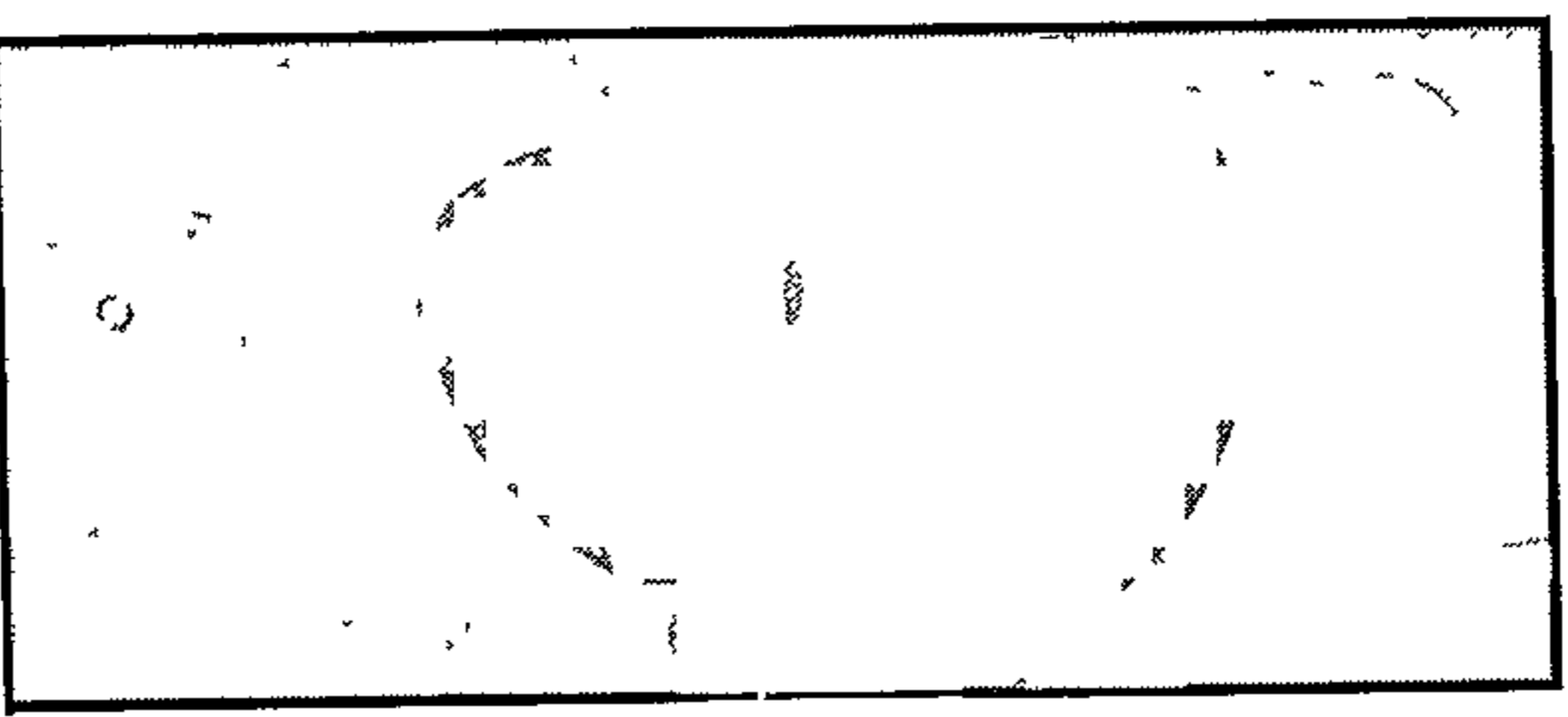
The sentences are subject to confirmation by the governing Provisional Ruling Council (PRC), chaired by military ruler General Sani Abacha

The powerful Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, which represents Nigeria's huge Muslim community, urged the PRC to commute death sentences and lighten long jail terms

The trial and lack of democracy in Nigeria has made Nigeria a focus of international attention — Reuter

ALL 20/7/95

(226)



Olusegun Obasanjo .. under mounting pressure.

The staggering human cost of Nigeria's oil

(226)

WMM 21-27/7/95

Rose Umoren in Washington

WILL just take some detachments of soldiers; they will stay at four corners of the town. They have automatic rifles that sound as death ... We shall surround the town at night ... The machine gun with 500 rounds will open up and then we are throwing grenades and they are making eekpuwaa...and they know I am around. What do you think the people are going to do? We have already put roadblocks on the main road, we do not want anybody to start running ... so the option we have made was that we should drive all these people into the bush with nothing except the pants and the wrapper they are using that night." This is not a Bosnian Serb soldier speaking.

This is Lieutenant Colonel Paul Okuntimo of the Nigerian army boasting on American network television about his Internal Security Task Force's 12-month reign of terror in

Ogoniland, a small community in eastern Nigeria which lives on top of about 50 percent of Nigeria's oil reserves.

In such nightly sieges as Okuntimo described, women are routinely raped, executions routinely carried out, as are lootings and arbitrary arrests and extortions. These have been documented in reports by various human rights organisations, the latest of which has just been released by Human Rights Watch/Africa.

The travails of the 200 000 or so Ogoni began five years ago when they demanded redress for the environmental nightmare Shell Oil has made of their land. They also asked the central government to negotiate the spending of the revenue the oil from their land has been generating since the 1950s.

Oil from this and other parts of the Niger Delta provide Nigeria with 80 percent of its total revenue. But the Ogoni hardly see any of this. About the only roads, health facilities and electricity in Ogoniland are those used by Shell.

What the Ogoni have instead is acid rain, waters so polluted that all life forms are dead, lands which should be stepped on in heavy boots to prevent acid corrosion of the feet, house roofs peeled off by the acid rain. Their traditional occupations of fishing and farming are gone. Their children rarely go to school because the schools are far away in cities.

Most of the oil revenues are spent by the three majority ethnic groups, the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo, who have found rare unity in the threat they perceive in the Ogoni agitation which has in the last 18 months been emulated by other delta communities.

As the largest oil company in Nigeria, Anglo-Dutch Shell Petroleum Co has arguably been the strongest player in Africa's most populous country since it first struck oil there in 1956. When the Ogoni began obstructing its operations in 1990, Shell called in

the Rivers State government and demanded that it send for the mobile police — called by Nigerians "kill and go" — to restore order.

This hardened the Ogonis' resolve. But by late 1992 the federal government had taken charge. Soldiers were put permanently in charge of Ogoniland to ensure that Shell operated.

The government also began a dialogue with Ogoni leaders and set up the Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission. But this has not addressed the two fundamental problems, however, according to the report.

One, the government asked nothing of Shell in environmental repairs and safeguards. Two, the government decided to increase oil areas' share of revenue to three percent from about half that, but otherwise skirted the question of compensation.

Shell has not been able to drill oil in Ogoniland since August 1993. But the Ogoni have lived in a military fortress built by a task force set up by Sani

Abacha since last year. The task force is made up of members of the navy, air force, mobile police and the defunct national guard. It was most vicious in 1994, but Ogoniland remains cordoned off from the rest of the country.

The Abacha regime is pursuing a three-pronged policy. First, the task force is making Ogoniland uninhabitable. A soldier thus describes an operation in 1994: "We were shooting as we drove in. Women were screaming and crying. The young men ran. We shot at them. We went into the bush and saw some corpses. I was firing randomly. I shot three people that day. I aimed at them when they ran and shot them down."

The second prong aims to decapitate the Ogoni leadership. The Ogoni leader Ken Saro Wiwa, was sentenced to life imprisonment this week.

Third, the government may be deliberately promoting violent quarrels between the Ogoni and their delta cousins. — IPS-ALA/Miscanet

mad & Guardian July 21 to 27 1995 (226)

to death

WIM 21-27/7/95

violence and a terminal revulsion against the idea of Nigeria, which could lead to the violent break-up of the state

Nigeria offers a special challenge to the Commonwealth, because it is the organisation best suited to deal with the issue. It includes the range of nations, with the exception of America, essential to a coalition for the restoration of normal political life in Nigeria. Nigeria is therefore going to be the dominant issue at the November Commonwealth Summit in Auckland

There is a serious chance that the Nigerian government will be suspended from the Commonwealth. Indeed, the Nigerian opposition believes that if the Auckland meeting passes off without such action, that would be a damaging failure

The device of making a distinction between government and people is one that would allow the Commonwealth to impose a measure of isolation on the Nigerian regime without adding to the difficulties of Nigerian citizens. Among other things it would let Chief Emeka Anyaoku, the Nigerian who is the Commonwealth Secretary General, continue in his post. Such a move would add to the few limited sanctions already operating and form a basis for further action. In particular, it could lead to consideration of genuinely serious economic sanctions on the sale of Nigerian oil, urged by the opposition and endorsed by TransAfrica, the African-American pressure group led by Randall Robinson that fought Clinton administration into moving against the Haitian junta

Opinion in Commonwealth countries is moving against the Nigerian regime in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Britain there is general support for the idea of Commonwealth action. In India, where there is a natural interest in raising the warning flag against any reversion to military rule in Pakistan or Bangladesh, the picture is the same. Zimbabwe, where President Robert Mugabe takes a proprietorial interest in the Harare declaration on democratisation, has been especially forthright. South African reactions were blunted for a time because of the help the Nigerian government is believed to have given the ANC during the election campaign. But after the failure earlier this year of Archbishop Desmond Tutu's mission to gain the release, or at least the improved treat-

Looting Nigeria

Nigeria is in the grip of a selfish, greedy regime that is more frightening for its people — and for the rest of the world — than any previous rule, comments

Martin Woollacott

THE state of Nigeria, one of the greatest of imperial constructions, was put together in the 1890s. What the adventurer George Goldie and the administrator Frederick Lugard created was a bizarre structure combining diverse peoples and politics, but also offering a prototype for African federation and the foundations for a great African power. The danger of the 1990s is that Nigeria could come to an end before reaching its hundredth birthday

Nigeria is a test of the utmost importance for the new South Africa, for Britain and the Commonwealth, and for the United States and its black pressure groups. What it tests is the ability and the will of relatively powerful democratic nations to bring about change in countries which are in an advanced state of political deterioration.

The disease of military rule from which Nigeria suffers, like the Ebola virus, can appear at any time, and not only in Africa. Each episode further weakens the social infrastructure and makes more possible a descent into ethnic violence and the collapse of the state itself, as in Liberia, Somalia, and Sierra Leone. Such a collapse in Nigeria would be a world catastrophe

The military rule in Nigeria, imposed in 1993 by General Sani Abacha, is unlike that of previous army governments, whose members had some regard for the country's true interests. This regime represents, in the words of a leading member of the opposition, Beko Ransome-Kuti, "a rule far more brutal, far more cynical and far more vicious than anything we have experienced before"

Military rule everywhere has been stripped of the pretensions which some used to accept, that it could repair the foolishness of dangerously squabbling politicians, take quick decisions, restore order, combat corruption. What is now seen as a nonsense. What remains in Nigeria is pure predation, the seizure of national assets by those who control the means of violence and

the ruthless suppression of any who oppose that process. Nigeria is perhaps the worst example in the world today of a state being looted to death.

The reports of Chris McGreal in *The Guardian* are among those which have dealt with men like Ken Saro-Wira, leader of the opposition to the activities of Shell in Ogoniland, who was sentenced to life imprisonment this week.

Newspaper reports and family members also claimed this week that General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, deputy to former president Olusegun Obasanjo, and 13 other military members were sentenced to death after allegedly plotting a coup against Abacha

It was also rumoured that Obasanjo, who gave up his three-year military rule to civilian government in 1979, and 10 other civilians and members of the military, were sentenced to life imprisonment. There was no official response to these reports

Few believe that there was a real coup, but rather that the regime is pre-emptively disposing of those who it believes could pose a threat.

The international standing of General Olusegun Obasanjo has added an extra edge to the protests made by Britain, the United States and other countries up till now, although Obasanjo is no favourite of the Nigerian opposition inside the country. Moshood Abiola, the man who won the 1993 presidential elections, but was cheated of his victory and has been in prison since attempting to assert his claim on the post last year, is another figure about whom many in the opposition have mixed feelings

But to Ransome-Kuti, a doctor who is executive director of the Campaign for Democracy, an umbrella opposition group, the fate of individuals is less important than the fate of a whole country falling, he says, into "the dark ages". Most schools are closed most of the time, the university system has broken down, crime is rampant, economic activity faltering, little is genuinely functioning in Nigeria. He fears anarchy,



Nigeria's General Sani Abacha. Cruel, corrupt, callous and completely in control

Nigeria's newest strongman lashes back from his fortified palace at a world becoming more hostile

Star 22/7/95

(226)

Lagos — From his fortified presidential palace in the lifeless capital of Abuja, Nigeria's latest strongman, General Sani Abacha, must view the world as an increasingly hostile place

It condemned the announcement that a secret military tribunal had convicted 40 civilians and soldiers, among them a former (1976-79) president, Olusegun Obasanjo, of plotting to overthrow the government and that at least 14 were to be shot. Abacha's answer has been to condemn the world.

The hurt to Nigeria's self-image as the champion of Africa has been painful. Senior Nigerian officials are no longer welcome in Britain or the United States, which this week cancelled the visa of the general's information minister, Walter Ofonagoro.

Britain's Minister for Overseas Development, Lynda Chalker, has suggested that Nigeria would receive an icy reception at the Commonwealth summit in November.

This week the general hit back. The petroleum resources minister, Dan Etete, called in executives of Shell and British Petroleum, saying that contin-



LYNDA CHALKER Icy reception promised



GENERAL OBASANJO Held in prison

ued British criticism of the regime could affect their business interests.

Threatening international oil companies could be a perilous course. The revenues from Nigeria's 1.9-million barrels a day keep the money flowing into government coffers. With oil output falling in recent months, fresh injections of finance from the multinationals will be needed to meet the government's goal of raising production to 2.5-million barrels a day.

Surrounded by a cabal of

hawkish advisers, Abacha — a short man given to wearing dark sunglasses at all hours — has alienated wide sections of opinion. But he still has backing from powerful conservatives in the Muslim north, who could not stomach the victory of Moshood Abiola, a (millionaire) Muslim but a Yoruba from the south, in the swiftly annulled June 1993 presidential election. Even so, the tribunal also declared Sambo Dasuki, son of the Sultan of Sokoto, a wanted man, indicating that the spiritual lead-

er of the country's Muslim majority was in trouble too.

But Abacha's critics are far from united. Obasanjo may be the object of the international fuss — and did indeed in his day hand over to civilian rule — but he is distinctly unpopular among the Yoruba people of his home region in the south-west.

Abacha's government is the latest in a line of military cliques which, through pilfering and mismanagement, have undermined the once robust Nigerian economy. Today, the country owes \$37-billion in foreign debt. A recent government-appointed commission said \$12-billion in oil revenues that had been placed in "dedicated" (read "secret") bank accounts had been stolen and frittered away.

Manufacturers are working at about a third of capacity. Nigeria has many well-educated people. But its talented professionals are going abroad and its university system is on the verge of collapse. An international reputation for drug-running and fraud does not help. Overall, income per person is now about the level of Haiti's. — The Economist

DALE LAUTENBACH
The Argus Foreign Service

JOHANNESBURG — The Nigerian government is "sensitive" to the need to treat with clemency a number of its citizens sentenced to death for involvement in an alleged coup plot

This was the assessment of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki on the way back from his Nigeria mission late yesterday

"We are certain the Nigerian government is sensitive to the concerns we raised — and that many other people have raised with regard to clemency," Mr Mbeki told The Argus Foreign Service during his return flight from Abuja, the Nigerian capital

Mr Mbeki held talks with Nigerian military ruler General Sani Abacha for more than three hours on Friday night during which the general assured him there would be no immediate dramatic action in respect of the alleged coup plotters

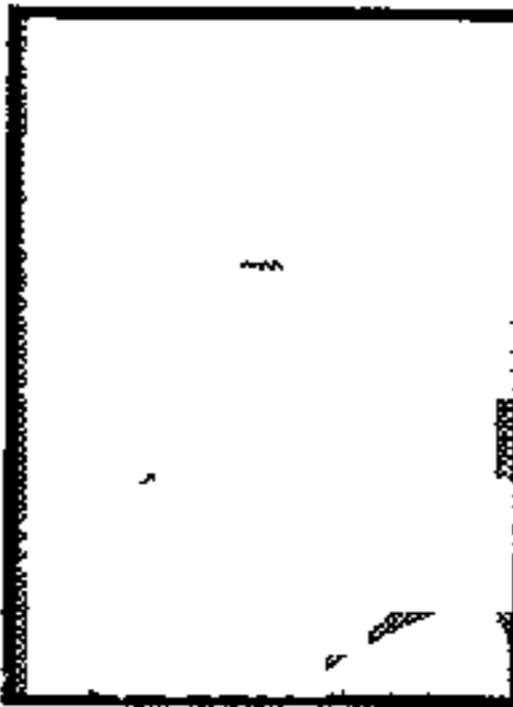
No official announcements have been made, but it has been widely reported that of the 51 accused who were tried by a secret military tribunal, 14 have been sentenced to death and former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo to life imprisonment

General Abacha told Mr Mbeki the cases were on appeal to the Defence Council, which probably would hear them early this week after which they would go to the mil-

itary Provisional Ruling Council

A number of sources in government circles in Abuja said they did not believe the alleged plotters would be executed

However, Mr Mbeki's mission, which was intended both to reinforce President Mandela's earlier call for clemency and to engage in the broader process of the transition to democracy in Nigeria, was thrown briefly into an alarm-



Thabo Mbeki

ing quandary on Saturday
Mr Mbeki received news early on Saturday there had been executions, which would have flown directly in the face of the South African goodwill he was trying to demonstrate in support of the transition to civilian rule

It was confirmed a little later there indeed had been executions of 43 armed robbers, but not political dissidents

Mr Mbeki said South Africa had not undertaken the diplomatic mission to convince Nigeria to abolish the death penalty and he urged that the purpose of his trip not be lost sight of

"The Nigerian crisis on which South Africa had to act was a first real step, — a substantive one — in building a partnership between these two countries," he said

Mbeki positive on outcome of Nigerian mercy mission

PRC 24/7/95

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Oil embargo will be fatal

(226) Stan 25/7/95

Lagos - If the West slaps an oil embargo on Nigeria to punish it for its human rights record, it should be prepared for more such scenes as the mass execution of 43 armed robbers, economic and political analysts said

"There would be reduction in purchasing power which would translate into absolute poverty," said economist Kayode Familoni. "There would be a cumulative movement away from equilibrium. Law and order would be compromised."

Some analysts said Nigeria could even be headed down the same road to economic ruin as Iraq if the West, particularly the United States, which buys half of Nigeria's oil exports, imposed an oil embargo.

"Our plight will be worse than Iraq's because we are bad managers," said political scientist Tunde Babawale.

On Saturday, 43 convicted armed robbers were shot on a Lagos prison execution ground. The government said the first

NIGERIAN analysts warn conditions will get worse should there be action over human rights abuses

public execution in more than a decade was dictated by the need to crack down on the upsurge of crime, itself stemming from the depressed economy.

Western countries, including the United States, had already expressed outrage at a secret trial which convicted former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo and 39 others of plotting to overthrow the military-run government of General Sani Abacha.

The analysts warned that if the United States and Nigeria's other Western critics acted on veiled threats to impose economic sanctions, the results could be catastrophic for the economy.

Nigeria's nearly 90-million

people, the biggest population in Africa, already face dire times from an economy squeezed by crippling foreign debts, corruption and mismanagement.

Unemployment is high, the country owes more than \$30-billion to foreign creditors, inflation is in double digits and industry is operating at below 30% of installed capacity because of lack of foreign exchange to import raw materials.

The spokesman for military ruler Abacha agreed in an interview published on Sunday that Nigeria could not withstand the kind of sanctions the United States was threatening.

"Certainly not and it is most unfortunate," David Attah said, adding "It will only aggravate the Nigerian situation, for instance, the people we are trying to protect and defend will be the final point of impact."

Anxiety is rife in business circles that token sanctions imposed on Nigeria two years ago when an election to restore

democracy was annulled could be tightened to a ban on its oil by the US if sentences for a coup plot trial are not tempered. Nigeria's oil exports account for more than 90% of foreign exchange receipts.

"Nigeria has a monocultural economy," said Lanre Alabi, business editor of the Vanguard newspaper. "The US threat of an oil blockade should not be taken lightly."

Many Nigerians abroad are actively campaigning for sanctions against their government, which seized power after a previous military regime annulled a presidential election that apparently was won by businessman Moshood Abiola, who is now in prison.

The African American lobby group TransAfrica has mounted a strong campaign in Washington to convince President Bill Clinton to impose an oil embargo and diplomats in Nigeria believe this would happen if the convicted coup plotters were executed - Reuter

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela's decision to dispatch Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad to Nigeria to save the lives of political dissidents reflects the seriousness Pretoria attaches to the deteriorating situation in Nigeria and to the role the world expects of it in the international response to the political crisis.

The Mbeki/Pahad trip followed Mandela's message of concern to Nigerian junta leader Gen Sani Abacha after initial reports of the secret military tribunal sentences that were handed down. Described as a "mercy mission", it marks the opening of a crucial SA-Nigerian dialogue, the outcome of which could determine future actions by the international community regarding the situation in Nigeria.

Realistically, SA alone may not carry sufficient clout with the Nigerian military.

However, given Nigeria's political deterioration and the threat this poses for adding significantly to the theatres of instability in Africa and the pressures on SA to fill the continent's leadership vacuum, Pretoria has little choice but to adopt a more visible and forward posture in relating to the Nigerian crisis.

The worst case scenario emanating from the current situation — and one that must be avoided at all cost — is a violent disintegration of the Nigerian megastate, threatening chaos on a scale overshadowing the tragedies in Somalia, Liberia and Rwanda and destabilising West Africa further.

It may well be that Nigeria, as a three-nations conglomerate dominated by a northern-based military Muslim oligarchy, is ultimately unviable as constituted currently.

However, it is crucial for Nigeria and the surrounding Economic Community of West African States that Nigeria's fate is settled by a peaceful political process as opposed to a Liberia or Somalia-style upheaval. These possibilities, of necessity, will require that Pretoria approach the situation in Nigeria in concert with others. But it will also mean taking on the decisive leadership role which it now appears Pretoria is willing to assume.

Thus far, the international outcry over the actions of the Abacha regime have fallen on deaf ears and is not likely to have any serious effect in the absence of a concerted and sustained strategy of pressure

SA on right track in offering to restore Nigerian democracy

CHRIS LANDSBERG and FRANCIS KORNEGAY

PH 26/9/95 (226)

on the Nigerian capital of Abuja. In fact, in a display of economic nationalist bravado that could backfire, the Nigerian junta has gone so far as to warn Shell and BP that their interests in Nigeria could be in jeopardy if Britain continues to put pressure on it over its treatment of the alleged coup plotters.

Therefore, in evaluating the Mbeki/Pahad opening gambit by Pretoria, the critical question is whether this initiative is linked to a wider international strategy of sustained pressure against Abuya in case the dialogue with Pretoria fails to yield the internationally desired results.

It is reported that the deputy president carried a personal letter from Mandela which, in addition to appealing to him to spare the lives of those sentenced to death, also offered SA assistance in moves to restore democracy.

In a follow-up, Pretoria might contemplate several related options in concert with other international actors. SA could play a leading role in developing a coordinated Commonwealth strategy in preparation for the November Commonwealth summit in New Zealand which could see Nigeria's suspension from that body.

The generals in Abuja see themselves holding the initiative with events unfolding on their terms thus far. How can they be disabused of this notion? For starters, the Pretoria/Abuja dialogue should, at a minimum, produce the release of all Nigerian political dissidents, including Chief Moshood Abiola — winner of the aborted 1992/93 presidential election — Gen Olusegun



ABACHA

Obasanjo and those sentenced to death recently. Their release should take place before the Commonwealth summit.

As a buildup to a Commonwealth strategy, Pretoria could use the upcoming Southern African Development Conference (SADC) summit meeting in Cape Town as a platform for conveying southern Africa's concern about developments in Nigeria, coupled with a set of steps the junta might take to defuse its growing international isolation.

After the SADC meeting, an SADC foreign ministers' delegation should visit Nigeria to confer with Nigerian leaders inside and outside of government to build on the dialogue between SA and Nigeria. This should be coupled with consultation

with other Economic Community of West African States governments.

Pretoria could take a page from the Commonwealth's Eminent Persons Group (EPG) strategy directed at SA (of which Obasanjo was co-leader) by proposing a similar initiative targeting Nigeria. However, this option could be expanded to include non-Commonwealth "eminent persons" like Americans Howard Wolpe and the Rev Jesse Jackson, Congressional Black Caucus chairman Donald Payne and former US ambassadors to the UN, Andrew Young and Don McHenry.

Further, borrowing from the UN strategy on Namibia, a Commonwealth-led EPG should operate as a contact group on Nigeria with a mandate for mobilising sustained international pressure on Abuya diplomatically, politically and economically. The contact group would manage these pressures pegged to a set of conditions that the Abacha regime would have to satisfy to remove itself from international pariah status.

Should the Nigerian military begin reversing course before the Commonwealth summit, a contact group initiative would still have value as a monitoring mechanism to ensure that Abuya follows through on a professed commitment to return Nigeria to civilian rule.

If the current dialogue proves fruitless, Pretoria should consider downgrading, but not severing, diplomatic relations with Nigeria so as to maintain channels of communication within the context of a Commonwealth strategy.

This should be coupled with making economic co-operation with

Nigeria in such crucial sectors as energy, for example, conditional on the military reversing its repressive course and committing itself to a transition to civilian rule.

Such a bilateral strategy should be pursued in tandem and coordinated with other SADC governments and a prospective Commonwealth-led multilateral strategy which Pretoria would assume a leading role in formulating.

The Commonwealth EPG option could, among other things, focus on lobbying for the US, Britain and other major powers to exert economic pressure on Nigeria — these are the countries that have the muscle, especially in terms of Nigeria's oil exports. Nigeria becomes a litmus test of the Western commitment to the expansion of democracy, human rights and development in Africa given Nigeria's prominent role in the affairs of the continent.

A democratic, civilian ruled Nigeria — or a Commonwealth of Nigeria states — joining Pretoria in a partnership of progressive leadership in Africa is part of the pre-condition for a more general African recovery. Hence, the West must be challenged to take a stand on Nigeria. And this should include pressure on multinationals doing business in Nigeria. Here, co-ordination with non-governmental Africa lobbies in Western countries, such as TransAfrica in the US, will become useful should pressure have to be increased to the sanctions level.

In the final analysis, a concerted politico-diplomatic offensive on Nigeria centred in the Commonwealth should not be aimed at dictating the content of a transition to civilian rule in Nigeria. Only Nigerians can and should do that.

What should be aimed for is a set of criteria that supports the building of a democratic climate for such a transition — irrespective of its political and constitutional content — which will set the conditions for an easing of the pressure on the Abacha regime.

This, after all, is the process that helped bring about the transition to democracy in SA.

SA can do no less than return the favour in solidarity with Nigeria's embattled democrats.

Francis Kornegay is director of the African-American Institute in Johannesburg; Chris Landsberg is senior policy analyst at the Centre for Policy Studies.

LETTERS

SA's moral duty to act on Nigeria

ALLISTER SPARKS

NO DOUBT it seemed wise at the time for South Africa to adopt a low-profile approach in urging Nigeria's military junta to show clemency to the large number of political opponents it has either sentenced to death or jailed. One must move delicately when trying to persuade a tyrant not to commit mass slaughter.

But the public execution of 43 people within six hours of Thabo Mbeki delivering President Mandela's personal letter of appeal to General Sani Abacha last Friday changes that perspective. Whether the victims included political prisoners or not, it was an outrageous act both in its flagrancy and grotesqueness which suggests that General Sani Abacha is a man beyond diplomatic niceties. His Military Council is due to meet this week. Unless he emerges from that with a more positive response to President Mandela's appeal, then more decisive action should be taken to end his brutal dictatorship before it precipitates the worst of all Africa's human tragedies. And President Mandela is the man to initiate that action.

There are many reasons why this is so. The first is intensely personal. Among those sentenced to life imprisonment by a secret tribunal 11 days ago is a special friend of South Africa's, General Olusegun Obasanjo. And among those sentenced to death is Obasanjo's right-hand man, General Shehu Musa Yaradua.

We South Africans owe the retound and general General Obasanjo a singular debt of gratitude. He played a seminal role in setting this country on the road to democracy when he came here as co-chairman of the Com-

monwealth Eminent Persons Group in 1985 and 1986.

Not only did the general plunge into Alexandria township when it was in the throes of civil war with the security forces, but he twice visited Nelson Mandela in Pollsmoor Prison and, with the rest of the EPG, established in shuttle diplomacy between Pretoria and Lusaka that there were grounds for negotiation between the ANC and the National Party government.

That helped initiate the secret talks in prison between Mandela and the Government, which ultimately paved the way for our political settlement. Mandela himself described Obasanjo and the EPG's visit as "the turning point" in his long quest for freedom.

Chilling moment

Now it is Obasanjo who is the political prisoner, and Mandela who is free and in a position to reciprocate.

I spoke on the telephone to Obasanjo's home north of Lagos the other day. An aide told me men had come to the house on July 13, seized the general and taken him away. No members of his family had been able to visit him, although a doctor had seen him and reported he was in good health and good spirits. Then the aide added nervously: "Please don't ask me to say anything more, this is an open line." It was a chilling moment that brought home to me how the tables have turned.

Nigeria is a huge and complex country, with 270 ethnic linguistic groups and two major religions, Christianity and Islam. And it is on the verge of falling apart, with dire



OVERRULED: Babangida immediately annulled the first democratic elections

consequences for the entire continent.

For 30 of the 34 years since independence the Hausa-Fulani of the North have dominated Nigeria's national politics because of a slight demographic majority. But two years ago, as the military regime yielded to pressure from pro-democracy groups, a general election was held - and a wealthy Yoruba from the Southwest, Chief Moshood Abiola, cut across the country's ethnic, regional and religious divisions for the first time, winning 60% of the vote in what was hailed not only as a triumph for democracy but a declaration of nationhood by a people sick of divisive politics.

But it was not to be. The military ruler, General Ibrahim Babangida, annulled the election, and a year later his Defence Minister, General Abacha, seized power, threw Abiola and his aides in jail, clamped down



PRISONER: Obasanjo put SA on the road to democracy and now needs our help

on the Press, and installed himself as an absolute dictator.

There has been political turmoil in Nigeria ever since, and the economy has plunged to its lowest point in years. Analysts warn that Abacha's heavy-handed behaviour could unhinge Nigeria's multiple divisions and precipitate a catastrophic civil war.

With its huge population of more than 100-million, that would cause refugee flows of mind-boggling proportions, overwhelming the entire West African region and rippling across the continent - even to our own South African borders.

It is a disaster waiting to happen, and it cries out for preventive diplomacy. Nelson Mandela is the man with the moral authority to initiate that diplomacy, and the Commonwealth Conference in New Zealand in November is the place to do it.

(226) CT27/2/95

Moral conscience

President Mandela should propose that the Commonwealth issue an ultimatum to Abacha, that unless he releases Abiola, Obasanjo and all other political prisoners and takes steps to return Nigeria to democracy within a specified time, comprehensive sanctions will be imposed against Nigeria. The sanctions should include suspension of Commonwealth membership, an embargo on Nigeria's oil exports that provide 80% of government revenues and a freezing of foreign assets, including the private assets of all members of the Abacha regime.

At the same time, another Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group should be appointed to negotiate a return to democracy with the Abacha junta. Faced with such a clamp on the national economy and their own personal interests, they will soon be willing to talk.

I believe it is both our moral responsibility and our duty to initiate such action through the Commonwealth. It is our duty because we are now the regional superpower on this continent and as such it falls to us to help stabilise it and do what we can to prevent any more great human disasters.

And we have a moral responsibility because we are ourselves the beneficiaries of international intervention that helped bring democracy to our country. Few people in history have laid greater claim to the moral conscience of the international community to set aside domestic interests and come to the aid of a struggle against oppression than those who now rule this land. Let it not be said that new South Africans are hypocrites.

Grim mystery of 40 Lagos 'plotters'

AR 29/7/95

(226)

■ While Press reports reflect the worst fears, Nigerian officials have not divulged the fate of the pro-democracy activists being held on conspiracy charges.

LAGOS. — Human-rights activists in Nigeria have accused the military government of cracking down on opponents before announcing the fate of 40 people convicted of plotting a coup d'état

The fate of the 40 convicted "plotters", including former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo, will be decided by the governing Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) when it meets to review sentences of a military tribunal that tried them in secret

The authorities have not made public who got what sentences, but Press reports said General Obasanjo was given a life-long jail term and his then deputy, Major-General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, and 13 others were sentenced to death

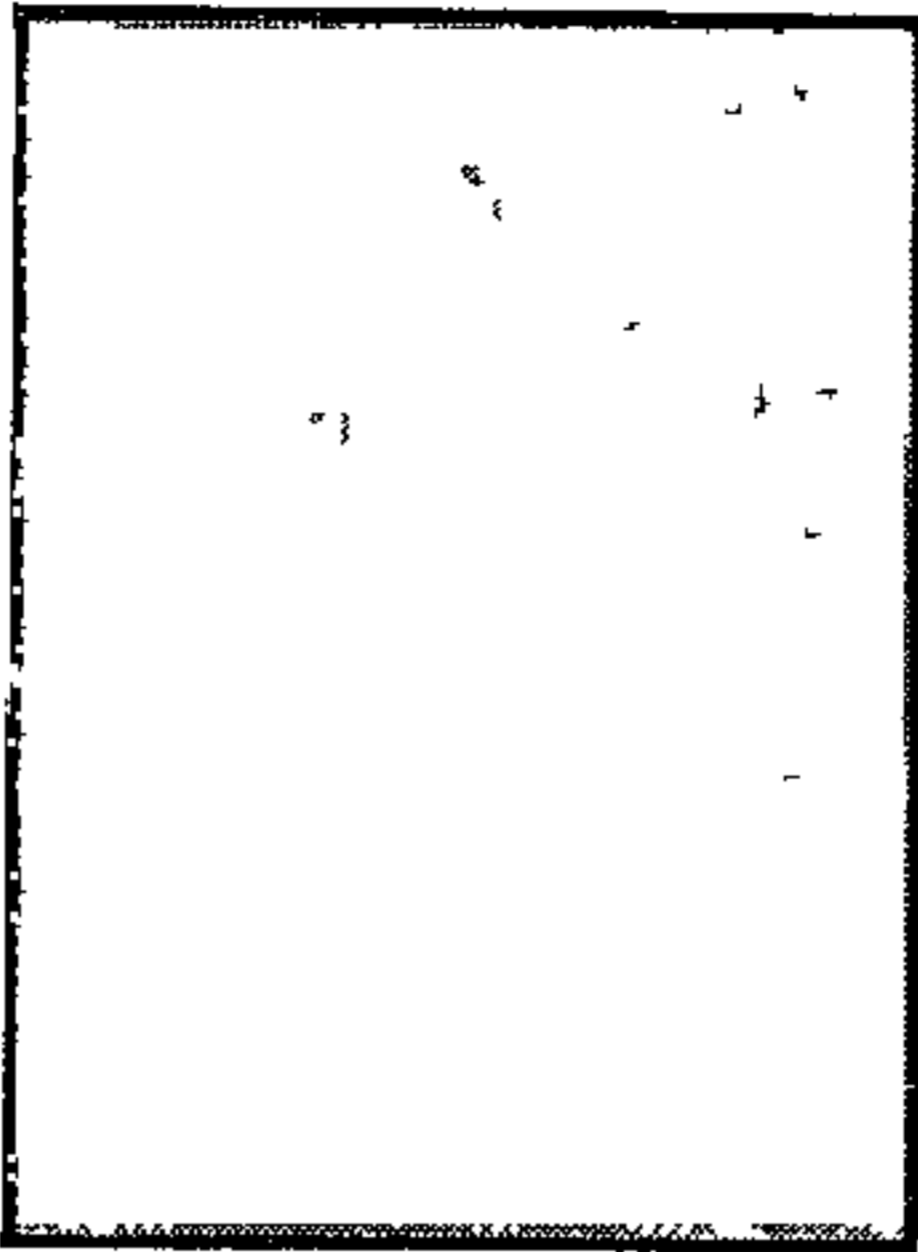
Western governments have also put pressure on military ruler General Sani Abacha not to carry out any death sentences meted out in the trial and to restore democracy in Africa's most populous nation

"They want to clamp people behind bars before they tell the world what they will do with Obasanjo and the other so-called coup plotters," said Babatunde Olugboji, an official of the Constitutional Rights Project

This week security agents arrested Beko Ransome-Kuti, leader of the Campaign for Democracy pressure group, his associates said No reason was given for the arrest

On Wednesday police arrested Tunji Abayomi, another rights activist and General Obasanjo's lawyer, after he said publicly that General Obasanjo was innocent and nothing short of absolute freedom for him was acceptable

Last week Chima Ubani, general secretary of the Democratic Alternative, another op-



General Sani Abacha

position group, was also arrested

"I expect that in the next couple of days there will be more arrests," Mr Oluboji said

Human-rights groups have denounced the coup allegations as a hoax and vowed to reverse the tribunal's sentences

The government insisted that the trial was within Nigerian law

General Abacha called off a visit to Ghana for a summit of West African leaders, raising the possibility that the PRC, which he chairs, might meet soon to consider the verdicts

Recent comments by some officials suggested the military rulers might yield to the flood of appeals for clemency.

But analysts said it was difficult to say what would happen in a country where every coup trial since 1976 has resulted in executions Nigeria has been in turmoil since the army annulled an election in 1993 that would have restored democratic rule Western nations subsequently imposed token sanctions

Moshood Abiola, who won the 1993 poll, is in detention and his senior wife is also seeking clemency for the coup convicts — Reuter

SA's stake in Nigeria

WHILE THE WIND OF DEMOCRATIC change is blowing over Africa, the ghastly prospect of the Nigerian mega-state imploding is becoming a real one. The ruthless actions of Abuja's military oligarchy only serves to make this scenario a plausible one.

The decision of Nigeria's latest generalissimo, General Sani Abacha, to further silence his opponents with impunity — sanctioning a life sentence on former military leader General Olusegun Obasanjo, and convicting 51 other military and civilian suspects — was to be expected.

South Africa properly expressed concern and protest over these ruthless actions. Its leadership role in fashioning an international response to the Nigerian political crisis should therefore not be inhibited by fear of misconception that Pretoria is doing the bidding of the West.

This mythical belief could only serve to overshadow what should be seen as a primary Pan-African interest in helping Nigeria make a peaceful transition from harsh military to civilian rule.

More importantly, it could serve to avert a destabilising implosion that will affect with devastation a West African region already unsettled by crises in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Gambia.

As an African power, Pretoria has a paramount interest in African stability and economic recovery that benefits the prosperity and development of the entire continent.

Whether Pretoria likes it or not, it is now viewed as the *de facto* leader of Africa, irrespective of whether it chooses such a role. Burdens of the magnitude of Nigeria cannot be easily sidestepped.

South Africa is riding a crest of international moral legitimacy and is now required to adopt a decisive posture against human rights abuses and aggressive political repression.

How South Africa navigates its response to the Nigerian quagmire goes to the heart of the international identity and credibility it seeks to project in years to come, it also challenges South Africa's purported commitment to human rights.

But, it should be stressed, South and southern Africa cannot exclusively assume the burdens of the entire continent. Promoting peaceful change in Nigeria and other African states is about cultivating partnerships for filling Africa's leadership vacuum, the burden of which should not fall entirely on Pretoria.

A politically stable and economically recov-

Sowetan 1/8/95
Francis Kornegay Jnr and Chris Landsberg

present their thoughts on the current dangers facing Nigeria, in the wake of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki's recent visit to that country (226)



Exiled writer Wole Soyinka ... must be allowed to return to Nigeria.

ering Nigeria in the west, a similarly situated Kenya in the east, along with a carefully managed transition to a post-Mobutu dispensation in Zaire, are vitally in Pretoria's interest irrespective of the West's agenda.

Deputy President Mr Thabo Mbeki places it all in perspective. "We need a more equal relationship between Africa and the Western world in a sense that the Western countries must accept the capacity of African countries to set an African agenda."

Mbeki is even more on the spot when he asserts "The Western countries must hold themselves in readiness to assist in the implementation of that Africa agenda and not exploit the economic weaknesses of the continent to set the agenda themselves." This is the context in which Mbeki places his mission to Abuja.

However, it should be warned that South Africa should not attempt to act as the moral custodian of Africa. The notion that South Africa has a special moral authority to lead an African and global human rights crusade may not only lead to a counter-productive self-righteousness in South Africa's foreign policy.

It may actually miss the point of South Africa

as an important example-setter to Africa and the rest of the world that of its negotiated transition and developing a political culture of tolerance, consultation, dialogue and conflict resolution.

These are home-grown attributes which South Africa has already put to useful effect in Lesotho, Mozambique and Angola.

The stakes in Nigeria are quite high. Observers of Nigerian politics stress the dominance of the mega-state by the northern Hausa-Fulani Muslim oligarchy — the so-called "Kano Mafia" — through the northern-dominated military as the key to the intractability of a political stalemate that denies power-sharing to groups based in the Yoruba-dominated south-west and the Ibo-dominated south-east.

Demographic and military northern dominance has thus far precluded southerners, whether Yoruba or Ibo, from a significant share of political power in Nigeria except for the short-lived military coup by General Ironsi (Ibo) in 1966.

The 1993 electoral challenge of Yoruba Muslim Chief Moshood Abiola made sufficient inroads into the Hausa-Fulani power base to trigger former General Ibrahim Babangida's annulment of the election on the pretext of electoral fraud, thus setting in train the current crisis.

There is little faith that the Abacha regime is going to relinquish power to civilian rule. In fact, only days after Mbeki's safari, Abacha ordered the arrest of another opposition leader, Mr Beko Ransome-Kute.

Given this grim scenario, the momentum is likely to mount for sustained international pressure directed at the Abacha regime in a protracted campaign of isolation, much as the international anti-apartheid campaign helped to wear down apartheid.

South Africa will be under increasing pressure to play a leading role in the campaign. Otherwise, Pretoria will risk being seen as an accomplice in Nigeria's military oppression.

Now that South Africa has entered the Nigerian equation in the wake of the Mbeki mission the hard men in Abuja are under pressure.

(Kornegay is director of the African-American Institute, and Landsberg is a researcher at the Centre for Policy Studies.)

Nigeria abuses human rights

(226) 8/8/95 *Sowle Pan*

By Derek Ingram

A BLEAK picture of the deteriorating situation in Nigeria will be painted by a Commonwealth human rights team when it puts together its report after an extensive tour of the country

A first account of what the team found has been given by former Canadian External Affairs Minister Ms Flora MacDonald

The team found the breakdown of civil society under General Sani Abacha's military government is much worse than it had expected. It felt that those in charge have no concern and no understanding of what is going on and no contact with the people

Means of defence

The judicial system has all but collapsed. Civilians arbitrarily jailed are often held for three to six months and then tried by military courts without any means of defence. Others are tortured and some have disappeared

MacDonald talked to women who had been tortured and had even had their arms cut off

In some places, children are being taken off the streets and locked up in centres for 24 hours a day. Parents do not know where the children are. Unclaimed children are sent to larger institutions

Civilian courts receive no financial support. The situation is so bad that defendants and lawyers have to buy sheets of papers for judges and court officials. Only a few cases get heard and the backlog is huge

Prison food is scarce and frantic relatives try to get supplies in to starving loved ones. People are dying in the jails, but there are no records of what happened to them

Yet officials told the inquiry team that Nigeria has some of the most humane prisons in the world

Tried in secret

Forty military officers tried in secret and given sentences ranging from execution to life imprisonment include 58-year-old General Olusegun Obasanjo, who ruled Nigeria from 1976 to 1979 and then handed over to civilian rule

Major-General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, a 52-year-old northerner highly respected throughout the country and former vice-president to Obasanjo, was sentenced to death. His execution could set off dangerous public reaction

The officers are accused of plotting to overthrow Abacha, but there is no proof that such an attempt was ever made. Almost all are administrative officers who do not command troops

The Commonwealth team found medical and education services running down and roads increasingly

bad shape. Outside the oil industry, only 20 percent of the country's economic capacity is being utilised and unemployment is high

They found the people in a state of despair because they see no way of improving their lives and there is no means for them to express their concern. Although a ban on political activities has been lifted, demonstrations are not allowed and the Press is largely muzzled

The Commonwealth team spoke to ministers, judges, school teachers, social workers and a host of others

Remarks made to them included "Nigeria is cruising headlong down the precipice. Act now to prevent another Rwanda. Nigeria has perhaps two years to escape disaster"

Besides MacDonald, the other members of the team — which was set up by the non-governmental Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative — were Judge Enock Dumbutshena and Dr Neville Linton of Trinidad and Tobago

Their report will be sent to Commonwealth Heads of Government to enable them to formulate a Commonwealth policy on Nigeria in advance of the summit meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, in November

Against the regime

United States and Commonwealth pressure against the regime in Nigeria is growing. President Bill Clinton has sent a personal emissary to Nigeria several times, but the regime turns a deaf ear

The weakened Nigerian economy is more than ever dependent on its oil revenue, so threats of sanctions were followed by a warning to Britain by the Oil Minister that BP and Shell interests would be at risk if the US and Britain continued to criticise the military trials

In an apparent climb-down a few days later, the Foreign Minister gave assurances that all international investments would be protected — an indication that outside pressure may be having an effect

When the CHRI's advisory commission met in New Delhi, India, last December, it advocated sanctions, a sport boycott and other measures similar to those taken against apartheid South Africa

Abacha has talked about a return to civilian rule next January and has promised a statement on constitutional change on October 1

This is thought to be timed to allay the concerns of Commonwealth leaders before they meet and to head off action against Nigeria

The general feeling is that in taking any action, the Commonwealth should distinguish between the regime and the people — *Gemini News*

Abacha lambasts Nigeria's critics

WM 28/7-3/8/95

(226)

Chris McGreal in Nairobi

NIGERIA'S military government accused Britain and the United States this week of undermining the regime by engaging in what it describes as "hostile activities", including harbouring dissidents intent on overthrowing the regime.

The foreign minister, Tom Ikm, also slammed the "hypocrisy" of Washington and London for pressuring the Nigerian military to surrender power when both countries co-operate with other dictatorships.

It accused them of humiliating Nigerians seeking visas. The US state department recently cancelled the Nigerian Information minister's visa to the US.

The protests come amid growing international criticism over the secret trial and sentencing of Nigeria's former head-of-state, Oluasegun Obasanjo, and about 40 others for allegedly plotting to overthrow the dictatorship. President Nelson Mandela, the UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and the former US president, Jimmy Carter, have joined the appeals for clemency after reports that 14 men have been sentenced to death. Ikm accused both US and British

governments of providing exiled dissidents, such as the Nobel prize winner, Wole Soyinka, with shelter and travel documents while they organise an international campaign against General Sani Abacha's regime.

Earlier this week, Nigeria threatened to make two partly British-owned oil companies, Shell and BP, pay for Britain's hostility, including its threat to bar Nigeria from the Commonwealth summit.

While Nigeria's military rulers strike back at international criticism, there are indications that the condemnation is taking its toll. Nigeria has tried to lessen the hostility with mild concessions such as lifting a ban on some political activity. Last week, it lifted a ban on Nigeria's most respected newspaper, the *Guardian*.

Some Nigerian human rights workers suspect that Abacha will try to alleviate foreign pressure by sparing the coup plotters.

Abacha has been under increasing pressure since he seized power shortly after the annulment of the 1993 presidential elections, but this year his regime has suffered a series of snubs.

Western governments displayed their distrust by rejecting Nigeria's candidate for president of the African



Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha: No signs of saluting democracy

Development Bank. Nigeria's football-crazy population was devastated when Fifa pulled the Junior World Cup finals from Nigeria at the last minute. So was the government, which spent millions of dollars preparing for the game.

But the blow felt hardest in Nigeria was the decision of the US lobbyist TransAfrica to challenge Abacha. The group, which made its name campaigning against apartheid, has demanded a US oil embargo until democracy is restored. Although a boycott is unlikely, the prospect shook the regime, which relies on petroleum revenues for 90 percent of its foreign exchange.

The regime was also stung by

TransAfrica's accusation that Nigeria is responsible for 80 percent of the heroin smuggled into the US, undermining Abacha's efforts to take Nigeria off Washington's list of countries considered safe havens for drug traffickers.

The regime accused TransAfrica of taking bribes to campaign against Abacha and placed adverts in the American press denouncing the organisation. Last month, Nigeria blocked TransAfrica from receiving a Unicef award at the UN general assembly.

TransAfrica's director, Randall Robinson, says it is all evidence of Abacha's increasing isolation. — *The Guardian*

WORLD

Nigeria in fix over presidency

NIGERIA — A proposed rotating presidency between northern and southern Nigeria, proposed in a draft text prepared by delegates at a constitutional conference, has the military regime of Gen Sani Abacha in a dilemma

The government must arrive at a decision that satisfies the interests of Nigerians from both regions while preserving the unity of the country.

The constitutional conference last October agreed to insert the rotation principle into the constitution. However, there have been moves by political figures and members of the now dissolved conference to dump the decision. Most of those who have opposed a rotational presidency are from the Muslim-dominated north, including former civilian head of state Alhaji Shehu Shagari. Supporters of the idea are mainly southerners, most of them

BT 6/9/95 (226)
Christians and animists

While most southerners believe alternating the presidency would ensure power-sharing, justice and a sense of belonging, several northern figures have warned that such a clause could strip the north of the political clout it has enjoyed since 1960.

In Nigeria, it is generally held that the ethnic group that produces the president wields the political power and determines how national resources are shared.

The federal military government five weeks ago launched a public debate on the draft constitution. However, the chairman of the constitutional conference, Adolphus Karibi-Whyte, denounced the debate as illegal.

Abacha said he would announce the political transition programme on October 1 — Sapa-AFP

Opposition to Nigerian sanctions

(226) WM 15-21/9/95

Julian Samboma in London

TWO London-based Nigerian commentators have come out against increasing calls by pro-democracy campaigners urging the international community to use comprehensive sanctions to try to bring down Nigeria's military-backed regime

Kayode Soyinka — publisher of *Africa Today*, a bi-monthly political journal launched this year in London — and Cameron Duodu, an author and veteran journalist, argue that such measures may backfire since the regime is likely to harden its stance, rather than bow to pressure from the international community

Their view is that the best way to achieve political change in the country is through internal pressure and quiet diplomacy by foreign governments

Ever since General Sam Abacha seized the reins of political power in a coup two years ago, his regime has been under sustained international and local criticism for its appalling human rights record and its steadfast stalling of moves to institute democratic reform

But Soyinka and Duodu are wary of stepping up foreign involvement

"I will tell you one thing and that is that sanctions are not the answer to the current political crisis in the country," says Soyinka "This is a Nigerian problem which should be solved in the family and I believe that internal pressure on the government will do the trick"

Duodu too argues that behind-the-scenes diplomacy by Western governments could be more effective than sanctions threats or trade embargoes "Abacha cannot afford

to look as if he is bowing to outside interference if he is to keep his own military constituency.

Soyinka was a one-time London correspondent of the outspoken Nigerian magazine *Newswatch* whose founding editor, Dele Giwa, was killed in the mid-1980s by a parcel bomb allegedly sent by military intelligence agents For his part, Duodu has been an uncompromising defender of democratic rights in Africa throughout his long literary career.

Neither Soyinka nor Duodu are supportive of the Abacha regime.

Soyinka's "realistic" reading of the political situation in Nigeria leads him to the conclusion that a major part of the problem is that the civilian political class continues to collaborate with successive military regimes

Abacha by himself is not the problem," Soyinka says "He is also a victim of these civilian politicians who make a lot of democratic noises then turn around and become collaborators propping up whatever military despot can serve their ends

"I am realistic enough to see that the civilians should share the blame — in fact they pose a bigger problem than the military. If civilians refused every time to serve in military governments, how long do you think they would last? Not very long, believe me."

The publisher argues that the democratic movement will only triumph over the oppressive military regime when they give up their "fetish" about international sanctions and concentrate instead on getting Abacha's civilian collaborators to ditch him — *IPS*

Minority ethnic groups call for balkanisation

Nigeria's favouring of north is ominous

Star 20/9/95 (22b)

Abidjan - The glue holding Nigeria's rival ethnic groups together in a federation of 31 states is coming unstuck

The last time the country fell apart, one million people died in the 1967-70 civil war

Now, after two years of political instability stirred by the military's refusal to quit power and hand over to the winner of the 1993 presidential election, Moshood Abiola, a Yoruba multi-millionaire from the south-west the integrity of the nation is again in doubt

Calls for the break-up of the country into a north and south that existed before a 1914 amalgamation under the British are increasingly heard

Some of the minority ethnic groups, tired of the domination of the big three - Hausa, Yoruba and Igbos - want the balkanisation to go further.

The loudest noise, however, is being heard over a recent string of federal appointments to key state-owned agencies which favours the north, the home region of military leader General Sani Abacha and his coterie of senior officers and advisers

In the past month alone, the heads of six parastatals, including Nigeria Airways, the Federal Mortgage Bank and the People's Bank have been changed. Their replacements have for the most part been northerners

Critics also say that in the diplomatic service, plum postings are reserved for northerners, primarily from Kano and Borno, Abacha's home regions - and Bauchi, the origins of Aminu Saleh, the powerful secretary to the government

In this kind of atmosphere, the

appointment of a task force to enact a census on federal civil servants is viewed as ominous by some in the south.

The form the civil servants are asked to complete asks for their state of origin and, according to the circular, "failure to complete the form automatically renders an officer a ghost worker and he shall be treated as such"

The government says that the need for the task force is self evident

The civil service is a bloated mess ripe for reform. It is also well known that the employment roll includes a spectral army of ghost workers

Ademoye Olorunfoba, a sociologist, believes that the idea of restructuring is to create jobs for the unemployed and by using reasons of age, low productivity, physical fitness or length of service to prune savagely.

There is a precedent for this. In 1975, then military leader Murtala Mohammed purged more than 15 000 government officials in an anti-"deadwood" campaign.

Indeed, the third floor office of the task force's Lagos secretariat is a beehive of activity, although one officer complained to IPS that "the manner in which the task force carries out this assignment is undesirable"

Regardless of the methods, the official believes the exercise will create room for fresh employment in a country where at least nine million are jobless

Retirements are already imminent in the diplomatic service, Foreign Minister Tom Ikimi has warned.

"We are now rationalising the

embassies and looking at the situation at the headquarters," he said at the weekend.

"We believe the time has come for us to re-appraise our missions abroad as to the persons that are there and whether they are responding to our nation's foreign policy interests," Ikimi added

One political commentator, however, who spoke on condition of anonymity from the middle-belt city of Jos insisted that behind the reforms is a deliberate policy of favouring the north in anticipation of Abacha's eventual retirement and re-run of presidential elections

Himself a former senior government official, he believes it is a "reflection of the ability of the hard-core north to be his brother's keeper"

Political analyst Obiora Ikemefuna, from the south-east of the country, agrees: "The Igbos (in the majority in the east) have not noticed that the northerners have a game plan

"Eastern opinion leaders haven't noticed and they believe that they are joining forces to fight age-old political rivals the Yorubas," Ikemefuna, an Igbo, says

The failure of Abacha's military predecessor, Gen Ibrahim Babangida, to recognise the 1993 election result was seen in the south as a deliberate attempt by the northern-led army to maintain the region's traditional grip on political power

The south, the academic and business heartland of the country, has had long-standing control of the civil service

The reforms, however, if not handled sensitively, could be the flame that lights the touchpaper to Nigeria's disintegration - Sapa-IPS

Nigeria in bid to win foreign investment (226)

Bisi Williams

LAGOS — Nigeria rolled out two decrees last month to attract foreign investment, but the chances of success appear minimal.

The measures, promised in January by head of state Sani Abacha, are the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission Decree and the Miscellaneous Provisions Decree. They replace respectively the repressive Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1972, which barred foreign investment in the tertiary sector and restricted investment in other sectors of the economy to a 60% equity stake; and the Exchange Control Act of 1962 which outlawed the transfer of foreign currency and gold out of the country without permission.

Under the Investment Promotion Commission Decree, non-Nigerians are now free to invest and take part in the operation of any enterprise and it empowers foreign enterprises to buy shares of any Nigerian enterprise in any convertible foreign currency provided the purchase is completed through the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

The decree also removes the powers of any state government to nationalise any enterprises. The federal government can no longer acquire any enterprise except in the national interest or for public purposes.

However, according to the decree, foreign investors cannot have 100% ownership of enterprises in the petroleum sector.

And they are barred from the production of arms, ammunition, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The Miscellaneous Provisions Decree provides that foreign currency purchased from the Autonomous For-

BD 20/9/95

ign Exchange Market may be repatriated from Nigeria, and shall not be subject to any further approval, and no person entering Nigeria will be required to declare any foreign currency amounting to less than \$5 000.

It is doubtful whether the new decrees will work the magic. For one thing, some provisions of the foreign exchange decree contradict a decree promulgated early this year to check money laundering. The money laundering decree prescribes that a bank should seek information from any customer on the source of his funds if the value of a transaction is up to 500 000 naira (\$6 250) in the case of an individual or 2-million naira (\$25 000) for a corporate entity.

Aside from this confusion, the consensus in diplomatic circles is that Nigeria has no suitable investment climate yet. Nigeria ranks among the world's three most high-risk investment countries because of its political instability and unstable economic policies. Rafi Peer, until recently First Secretary (Economics) of the SA high commission, said in June that to remove that label there was the need for the continuation of the current trend towards liberalising economic policies, developing long-term political stability through a system of government more acceptable internationally; and developing investment packages, including long-term guarantees on taxation.

Freddy Scott, British representative on the West Africa Committee, a body which oversees interests of foreign investors in West Africa, said the country "must do something to improve in the area of communications, power, roads and water to attract foreign investors".

Abacha extends military rule to '98

Nigerian govt in exile considered

Star 2/10/95

(226)

Lagos - Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha's decision to prolong military rule for three more years has prompted some exiles to consider forming a government in exile

Abacha announced in Lagos Sunday the military would rule until 1998

He softened the decision by commuting to life in prison the planned executions of 13 men accused of plotting a coup in March. He also promised to review other sentences

Top exile

Air Commodore Dan Suleiman, a top exile leader, accused General Abacha of using the suspects "as human shields" to ease criticism of Nigeria by the United States and other countries

"As far as we're concerned, this has been no concession at all," Suleiman told Associated Press. "These people should not even be in prison. There was nothing like a coup d'etat that Abacha keeps claiming, nothing at all."

About 300 coalition members from the United States and Canada met in Washington on Saturday, the eve of Nigerian Independence Day.

Hours before Abacha's television appearance in Lagos yesterday, the exile gathering ended with the national anthem, a 10-point statement and toasts to "Rebirth of a

New Nigeria"

The statement ordered preparations for a Nigerian national meeting in London by the end of 1995, inviting both exiles and civilian leaders at home

Speakers said the London conference might launch a democratic government in exile if the military failed to surren-



General Sani Abacha ... clemency for accused plotters.

PICTURE AFP

der power by the start of 1996, as Abacha promised after his takeover in a 1993 coup

"We have not come out yet for this, because we were hoping Abacha might have some kind of programme to make us reconsider, such as a national round table aimed at peaceful transition," Suleiman said

Formation of an exile government depends on whether Abacha continues "refusing to talk peace with people in opposition," as well as the attitude of the international community, Suleiman said

The best thing Abacha could have done, he said, would have been inviting the presumed winner of the nullified 1993 election, publisher Moshood Abiola, to form a government that Nigerians can identify with. Abiola, who is reported to be in poor health, is in prison charged with treason

The statement also asked immediate release of alleged coup plotters, other political prisoners and human rights activists and complete restoration of media freedom. The US State Department said it was studying details of Abacha's announcement and might comment today.

Pressed

The Clinton administration has pressed for transition to civilian rule. President Clinton has personally telephoned Abacha urging against executions

Suleiman and other exile leaders planned talks with State Department officials and Congress members this week

Sanctions requested by the exiles included freezing of Nigerian government assets and officials' bank accounts overseas, a total arms embargo and exclusion of Nigeria from a coming Commonwealth summit in New Zealand that may consider recommendation for an embargo against Nigerian exports - Sapa-AP

Nigerian leader tightens the screws

(22b) Sowetan 5/10/95

By Howard W French

General Abacha attempts to appease his international critics — in vain

LAGOS, NIGERIA — IN a bid to defuse Nigeria's increasing political tensions, the country's leader, General Sani Abacha, said this week that he would commute the death sentences looming for as many as 40 opponents of his military government and that he would hand over power to an elected government in three years.

Making repeated references to foreign friends, whose forbearance he solicited openly, Abacha seemed to have carefully tailored his announcement to break the deepening international isolation of Africa's most populous country.

Since democratic elections were annulled two years ago and the apparent winner was imprisoned, the Nigerian leader has been increasingly accused of human rights abuses and of denying the country the opportunity for democracy.

Abacha, disappointing those who had expected greater leniency toward his civilian rivals, made it clear that the harsh treatment of the man widely assumed to have won the elections in June 1993, Chief Moshood KO Abiola, would continue.

Speaking in a characteristically steely manner in an address broadcast on Nigeria's 35th anniversary of independence last Sunday, Abacha called Abiola's attempt to claim the presidency an act of treason.

Pardoning Abiola now, he said, "would be wrong and a poor precedent for the democratic system for which we are laying a foundation."

In his only major concession to critics and opponents, Abacha lifted a ban that he had imposed on three of Nigeria's newspapers and pledged to institute a system whereby power would rotate among the country's various regions for a period of 50 years so as to lessen the impression among southern ethnic groups that northern Muslims have a lock on power in the country.

Nigeria has been ruled by the military and by northerners for most of the time it has been independent from



General Sani Abacha ... announced that Nigeria's military regime will hand over power in three years to a democratically elected president.

Britain

Even with these gestures, and a promise to lift a ban on party politics in the near future, reactions from critics made it clear within hours of the general's speech that the measures he had taken had done little to reduce either international or domestic opposition to the military leadership.

"I don't think the outside world will see this as much of a compromise," said a Western diplomat. "I don't think Nigerians will see it that way. This won't get him off the hook."

British diplomats in London expressed disappointment that Abacha had chosen to remain in office for another three years.

Abiola's wife, Kudirat, scathingly dismissed as nonsense the general's recent assertions, repeated in the speech on Sunday, that Nigeria was making progress under his leadership.

"This man has been moving Nigeria at a great speed — backwards," she said. "The only thing that he has to say to make Nigerians happy is to release Abiola and instal him as the legitimate leader." Far from fulfilling her suggestion, Abacha said for the first time on Sunday that her husband's very election was illegal.

He said people should not keep

"pretending that matters which have long since been taken over by events should be exhumed and given fresh life"

Abacha, who once was close to Abiola and for a time even seemed to support his claim on the presidency, seized power after General Ibrahim Babangida, his predecessor and mentor, annulled the elections.

Since then Abacha has waged a private crusade against both real and perceived military and civilian opponents who have been tried in secret, jailed or dismissed from official jobs in large numbers.

Consequently, Nigeria has become the object of increasingly broad international pressure aimed at freeing a swelling number of political prisoners and forcing a return to democratic rule.

In the United States, which is by far the largest customer for Nigeria's principal export, the low-sulphur petroleum that is ideal for gasoline production, the pressure has been led by an African-American political lobby, TransAfrica. It has staged demonstrations and proposed stronger sanctions against the country. There are limited embargoes on arms sales on the part of some countries, including the US.

"Commutation of the death penalty is only a response to international pressure," said TransAfrica president Mr Randall Robinson. "Without that pressure, nothing like this would have been done." He added "It seems to me there are two new pressure points that could be applied. One is the option of seizure of the assets that the generals have been diverting. Then, of course, there is the option of an oil embargo which would be immediately devastating because they only have two months of reserves to finance imports."

Criticisms like those have recently been joined by signs of sharply increasing impatience with Abacha's leadership, both among African countries and by Britain, — *New York Times News Service*

No hope of release for Nigeria's Abiola

Chief Moshood Abiola, imprisoned by Nigeria's military regime since he declared himself president after the 1993 election, stands little chance of release. He is a judicial not a political prisoner says the country's military ruler. **Inigo Gilmore** reports

(226) MGT 13-19/10/95

A POLICE car parked near 3-7 Moshood Abiola Crescent monitors the comings and goings at the Lagos address. Nigeria's best known opposition figure may be under lock-and-key hundreds of kilometres away, but the military regime keeps a watchful eye on family and friends.

The high-walled mansion with its innumerable bedrooms, two empty swimming pools and a dining room fit for a king, has a ghostly feel. Chief Moshood Abiola's face beams out from life-size photographs in the airy corridors and prominently displayed freedom awards indicate his international stature.

For his three official wives — there are said to be more — and the gaggle of children and friends in residence, life has been turned upside down.

Elegantly attired, Kudirat, 44, became the chief's senior wife three years ago. These days, the mother-of-six lives like a prisoner: visiting friends and supporters are seized and threatened by police, she never ventures out after dark for fear of assassination and, three months ago, the household's 10 telephone lines were cut off.

The businesswoman has emerged as the voice of her silenced multi-millionaire husband. He has been under house arrest at a secret location in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, since he was charged with treason for declaring himself president after the 1993 election — which he was widely believed to have won — was annulled by the military.

She has battled in vain for him to gain access to television, radio and newspapers, protested against his maltreatment and highlighted his deteriorating health. On her last visit, almost a year ago, he cracked his spine during a tussle with his guards. The family doctor reported this year

that Abiola was finding it difficult to walk and see.

Last week's long-heralded Independence Day speech by General Sani Abacha, Nigeria's military ruler, was a bitter blow to hopes for his release. Abacha set out a detailed plan for a return to civilian rule, but said Abiola was not a political prisoner and his case was "judicial" — this from the same man who has already said publicly that Abiola is guilty.

Kudirat, pointing out that the government has refused to abide by three court rulings granting Abiola freedom, has urged the international community to impose heavy economic sanctions, including an oil embargo, on the Abacha regime.

"This regime is devilish. I sometimes wonder how they can do such things to their own brothers and sisters?" she asks.

It is a question many want answered. Since Abacha seized power in a bloodless coup nearly two years ago, his administration has crushed trade unions, battered journalists and human rights activists and cowed critics. More than 300 human rights and pro-democracy activists have been detained, driven underground or forced into exile.

In a July crackdown, Dr Beko Ransome-Kuti, the respected chairman of human rights group Campaign for Democracy, was detained with several journalists for "casting doubt" on the secret trial of 40 alleged coup plotters — who were last week reprieved but are likely to remain in jail — and has reportedly been subjected to electric shocks.

Another leading dissident, Ken Saro-Wiwa, 53, began a hunger strike last month to protest against the conditions of his detention. The writer is being held at a secret location



Chief Moshood Abiola. Under house arrest at a secret location in Abuja

In Lagos, a handful of lawyers, journalists and others risk their lives by continuing to speak out against the regime, but they appear to enjoy little public support. The government has broken the back of the opposition, and mass protests that engulfed the country last year have faded into the dim and distant past.

News of the transition programme — with the proposal that power will be rotated between six regions — barely registered among the greater populace. There is deep disillusionment with

politics, civilian or military; the economy is looking increasingly tattered, corruption increasingly rife and public services in disarray. The country owes \$37-billion to foreign creditors, and this year's economic performance is expected to be the worst in more than a decade. In Nigeria, "sprays" — pasting banknotes on sweaty foreheads at parties — "dashing" (bribery) and "419s" (fraud, named after a section in the penal code), are a way of life.

Strange as it may seem for Africa's most oil-rich country — the fourth

biggest producer in OPEC — there are petrol queues in Abuja and other towns. Mismanagement and greasing the palm have crippled refineries.

In Lagos eight million people endure the daily drudgery of "go-slows" on traffic-strangled roads. Garbage is piled up on streets. Many schools are closed as teachers have gone on strike. Graduates cannot find work, food prices have escalated and many struggle to feed their families.

What, many ask, happened to the Nigeria that not long ago was the richest country on the continent after South Africa?

The government sets up committees to examine problems, but changes are rarely forthcoming and the thousands who take to the streets "in support" of its policies are merely stage-managed "rent-a-crowds". Outsiders are berated for failing to understand the complexities of running a country with nearly 100-million people, 250 ethnic groups and 110 000 towns.

Criticism that the proposed transition period is too long is unlikely to rattle a regime prepared to run the risk of heavy economic sanctions or suspension from the Commonwealth. There seems to be no concerted move from either the United States or Europe to impose sanctions on Nigeria's oil — 90 percent of its exports — and the regime knows it only too well.

"What we need," said Information Minister Walter Ofonagoro, is sympathy, not pressure."

Back in Lagos I pondered his plea while two police officers angrily denounced me as a spy, a subversive and anti-Nigerian. I had been stopped at a night-time checkpoint — unashamedly used by police to extort money to supplement their meagre R25 per month salaries — and my protestation that their government had invited me to Nigeria fell on deaf ears. And they want sympathy?

● The life sentence imposed on retired general Olusegun Obasanjo, the former ruler, on charges of plotting a coup, has been cut to 15 years, reports *Reuter*.

Shell drills for oil in two areas in Nigeria

By ENIWOKE IBAGERE

Lagos — Shell Nigeria said last week it had started drilling for oil in two new areas in Nigeria — in deep waters offshore and in the semi-arid Gongola Basin in the northern area of Bauchi

"We have started drilling Nigeria's first well in truly deep water off the coast," Olufemi Lalude, the general manager of Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCO) told a news conference

"We are also looking for oil and gas in the Bauchi area, again in a new geological province," he said

Lalude said the deep offshore oil drilling began in late September in more than 1 000m of water 150km from the oil town of Warri

"The well, Bonga-1, is the first of several deep water wells planned by our com-

pany in its deep water contract areas, which cover more than 4 000km²," he said

SNEPCO had committed about \$30 million to the project, which involves drilling about 3 500m from the seabed to reach the oil

Lalude said a rig owned and operated by Sedco-Forex, capable of drilling at deep sea levels, was being used for the project

He said Shell aimed to be the first to find oil in Nigerian deep water and in the Bauchi area "But all we have to date is seismic data which are being processed and analysed Until we drill, we do not know if oil exists in the two areas" Shell was the first company to find oil in Nigeria in 1956

Lalude said five companies — Shell, Esso, Agip, Elf Aquitaine and state-run Nigeria National Petroleum Company — own the deep offshore

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project under Production Sharing Contracts (PSC)

The PSC scheme was introduced to attract private capital into the industry

Under the scheme, the company is given acreage for oil exploration and it funds the exploration and production The company is, however, compensated by the allocation of a percentage of oil produced to offset its outlay

According to Lalude, the offshore project would test a new geological area completely different from other areas "It is a new exploration area in Nigeria which, if successful, will be significant in increasing the country's oil reserves"

Nigeria aims to raise crude oil reserves to 25 billion barrels and production capacity to 2.5 million barrels per day (bpd) by 1998, from the current 20 billion barrels and 2.0 million bpd, respectively — Reuter

Mandela uses 'quiet persuasion' on Nigeria

(226) Star 2/11/95
South Africa prefers to use "quiet persuasion" to influence Nigeria over its policies on human rights, a spokesman for President Nelson Mandela said yesterday

"Up to now that has been the attitude of the president," said Parks Mankahlana

He was reacting to a Commonwealth warning to Nigeria that it risked retaliation over the death sentences passed on Ogoni leader Ken Saro-Wiwa and other activists when Commonwealth leaders meet in New Zealand from November 10 to 13

Saro-Wiwa and three other leaders of his Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples were sentenced to death on Tuesday by a special military-appointed court for the murder in May last year of four moderate Ogoniland leaders.

The sentences were condemned internationally, with calls for sanctions against Nigeria.

South Africa has led attempts by African states to persuade Nigeria's military government to quicken moves towards democracy and to reconsider sentences handed down in a secret coup trial.

Earlier this year, Mandela dispatched his deputy, Thabo Mbeki, to Lagos to plead for clemency for

40 alleged coup plotters who were sentenced to death

South African foreign ministry officials said the Nigerian question was being dealt with at the highest level

"South Africa is dealing with the matter at a very high political level. Its policy has been discreet bilateral pressure," said a foreign ministry official.

The official said it was too early to say whether South Africa would abide by actions decided on at the Commonwealth summit.

"There are a lot of various groups in the Commonwealth. It is too early to say whether South Africa would take a particular stance and will abide by the Commonwealth decision," the official said

Mandela earlier this month dismissed criticism by Nigerian Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka that he was not doing enough to pressure Nigeria's military leaders to introduce democracy

"We are not going to act like other countries who really have not got the responsibilities we have. What we are concerned with is not publicity, but to solve problems. As long as we have hands-on attention to the problem, that is quite sufficient," Mandela said - Reuters

Star 3/11/95
**'Nigeria's
action a
disgrace'**

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Cape Town - Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu called yesterday for international pressure against Nigeria for sentencing political opponents to death.

A Nigerian military-appointed court last week condemned eight Ogoni tribesmen, including political activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, for the murder of four other Ogoni minority leaders during a rally last year. The death sentences have not yet been carried out.

Saro-Wiwa's supporters say government agents killed the four men to discredit him and his Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, which has campaigned against the Nigerian petroleum industry for allegedly polluting the country.

"I can't find words strong enough to condemn what I believe is a totally unjust action," Tutu said.

"It is a disgrace and scandalous for Africa that we can have a country as great as Nigeria potentially behave in this kind of way."

Tutu, who won the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize for anti-apartheid activities, appealed for strong action against Nigeria by President Nelson Mandela and other Commonwealth heads of state who are due to meet in New Zealand next week.

He also criticised Nigerian military leader Gen Sani Abacha's declared intention to remain in power for another three years to oversee preparations for democratic elections. - Sapa-AP

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Commonwealth wrestles with Nigeria

By ROBERT FOX: London

NIGERIA'S appalling human rights record, in particular the death sentence passed on Tuesday on the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, will be one of the main topics of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in New Zealand this week.

Saro-Wiwa, 54, one of Nigeria's most celebrated novelists and playwrights, and three other co-defendants were condemned to death for alleged involvement in the murder of four chiefs of the Ogoni tribe in May last year.

Saro-Wiwa is the founder and leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), an indigenous group in the oil-rich River State in south-east Nigeria.

The MOSOP has protested that Ogoni land is being destroyed by the oil industry, and has de-

manded a share of the oil revenues.

The trials and sentences have raised a storm of international protest from governments, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Mrs Anita Roddick of the Body Shop chain, who is leading a campaign against the destruction of the environment in the Niger Delta. She has urged Shell, a prime contractor in the region, to protest against the Saro-Wiwa verdict.

The Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Chief Emeke Eneanya, condemned the sentence in the strongest terms this week and demanded that it be quashed. The Foreign Office condemned the trial itself, which was carried out by a military tribunal.

The trial was roundly denounced by members of the opposition in Nigeria. Defence counsel, Gani Fawehinmi ac-

cusped Judge Ibrahim Auta, who presided over the special tribunal in Port Harcourt, of conducting an "illegal" and "unconstitutional" trial at the express orders of the military regime. He said this "parody of justice" and "inquisition" had been aimed at silencing the Ogoni Peoples' Protest Movement, headed by the defendants.

Sources in the Commonwealth Secretariat say that the Ogoni peoples case will feature prominently in the discussions at the Commonwealth Conference due to open in Auckland on November 10. There is anger at what is seen as Nigeria's deliberate flouting of principles for human and political rights laid down at the Harare Commonwealth Conference in 1991.

"We will have to discuss what to do about military regimes who refuse to obey the rule," said one official. In the case of

Nigeria, the options range from verbal condemnation, to sanctions or even expulsion, the source said.

At the Foreign Office, however, officials were more cautious. "Nigeria is an old friend in the Commonwealth," one said, "the very informality of the conference will help serious discussion of this — particularly when the leaders go into retreat for private talks."

President Nelson Mandela is expected to hold informal talks with Nigerian military ruler General Sani Abacha during the course of the conference. Mr Mandela's spokesman Parks Mankahlana said this week that the president believed that "quiet persuasion" would yield better results than coercion.

Amnesty International has designated Saro-Wiwa and his co-defendant Dr Barnem Kibbel "prisoners of conscience imprisoned for the non-violent

expression of their views."

"The verdict on Ken Saro-Wiwa is an outrage and should be immediately condemned by the United States as a travesty of justice," said Curt Goering, of Amnesty in the US.

"The harsh sentences show contempt for basic human rights," said the Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen this week. "The secret legal process indicates a lack of respect for people's rights to fair treatment by the law."

Sara-Wiwa was arrested on May 22 1994 after demonstrations by MOSOP against the conduct of oil companies in their region. Four Ogoni chiefs died during the ensuing riots.

Sara-Wiwa has claimed that the behaviour of the oil companies has turned nearly every one of the 500 000 Ogonis in River State into a militant. The Ogonis are one of 20 main ethnic groups comprising the five mil-

lion people in the Niger Delta, and one of some 250 tribal groups throughout Nigeria.

Some Commonwealth officials fear that General Abacha could play the same tactics as he did over 40 alleged coup plotters, among them the former head of state General Ousegun Obasanjo, also condemned to death by military tribunal after proceedings which caused an outcry among international legal experts.

One official said he thought General Abacha might commute the sentences on the condemned Ogoni leaders — to deflect criticism from his recently announced delay in implementing a return to civilian rule in Nigeria.

In the latest plan announced on October 5, the general did not envisage elections and a new civilian government for another three years, at least. — ©The Telegraph, London



FACING DEATH... a 1993 photograph of Ken Saro-Wiwa

Picture: AP

Nigerian rulers resist pressure

Sowetan 6/11/95 (22b)

By Derek Ingram

Commonwealth unhappy with timetable for handover to civilians

The Nigerian military regime is digging in its heels against pressure from the Commonwealth for a speedy return to civilian rule

The announcement by the military ruler General Sani Abacha that he will hand over power in October 1998 heralds an angry showdown at the Commonwealth summit, being held in Auckland, New Zealand, on November 10 to 13

The timescale for civilian rule is considered far too long and, in any case, there is no confidence that Abacha means to keep his word

Harsh sentences

Nor is anyone satisfied with the commuting of death and other harsh sentences on 40 people accused of plotting a coup. The 40, who include former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo, remain in prison, as does Chief Moshood Abiola, who is widely regarded to have won the aborted presidential election in 1993

Abacha says he is going to Auckland, but it is not believed that he will turn up. The Nigerians plan to send a big delegation. It will get a frosty reception

Commonwealth leaders are expected to call for measures to be taken against the regime, accusing Nigeria of abusing human rights and consistently ignoring the Harare Declaration of 1991, which commits member countries to democratic government

The Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku, who is himself Nigerian, will say in his eve-of-summit report to the leaders that governments will have to decide what course of action to take to persuade Nigeria to shed military rule and adopt proper human rights

Shocking example

Commonwealth leaders have received copies of the strongly critical report of a mission sent to Nigeria by the non-government Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI). The report, entitled *Nigeria - Stolen By Generals*, details widespread abuses

One shocking example describes what takes place in child detention centres. These have euphemistically

been termed welfare centres

Meagre incomes and lack of work is forcing families to sell children as young as four or five into service or simply to turn them out to the streets to fend for themselves. Police sweep them up and take them to a welfare centre - in reality to prison

Once inside, the boys are herded into one cell, the girls into another, and there they remain for 24 hours a day. They are let out only to be lined up in front of the cells for a meal, usually provided by an expatriate non-governmental organisation

The children sleep on thin mattresses on a cement floor. The lavatory is a bucket in the corner. The children eventually end up in

election, a presidential candidate wishing to win will have to be seen as a figure for national unity

The report calls on the leaders in Auckland to press for an immediate return to democratic order and the freeing of political prisoners. If the regime does not respond, trade and financial sanctions should be applied

Military prison

Among those held in a military prison serving a life sentence is one of the members of the Commonwealth Human Rights Advisory Commission, Dr Beko Ransome-Kuti. He is also chairman of the Campaign for Democracy

The CHRI report says no military government should be entitled to send a delegation to future Commonwealth summits. This suggestion is directed at Sierra Leone and Gambia as well as Nigeria

No such regimes should be allowed to take part in Commonwealth ministerial meetings, it says

But the report stops short of suggesting that Nigeria should be expelled from the Commonwealth. Instead, its suggestions add up to a form of suspension from the main Commonwealth activities. The aim is to put pressure on the regime, but not to penalise the Nigerian people

The regime says it will tough out the international pressure. When asked about the poor reception the Nigerians would get in Auckland, Minister of Information Dr Walter Ofonogoro told *The Times* of London: "Who cares?"

Many schools are closed. Hospital patients must often pay for bed space and buy their own drugs as well as needles, syringes and suture threads

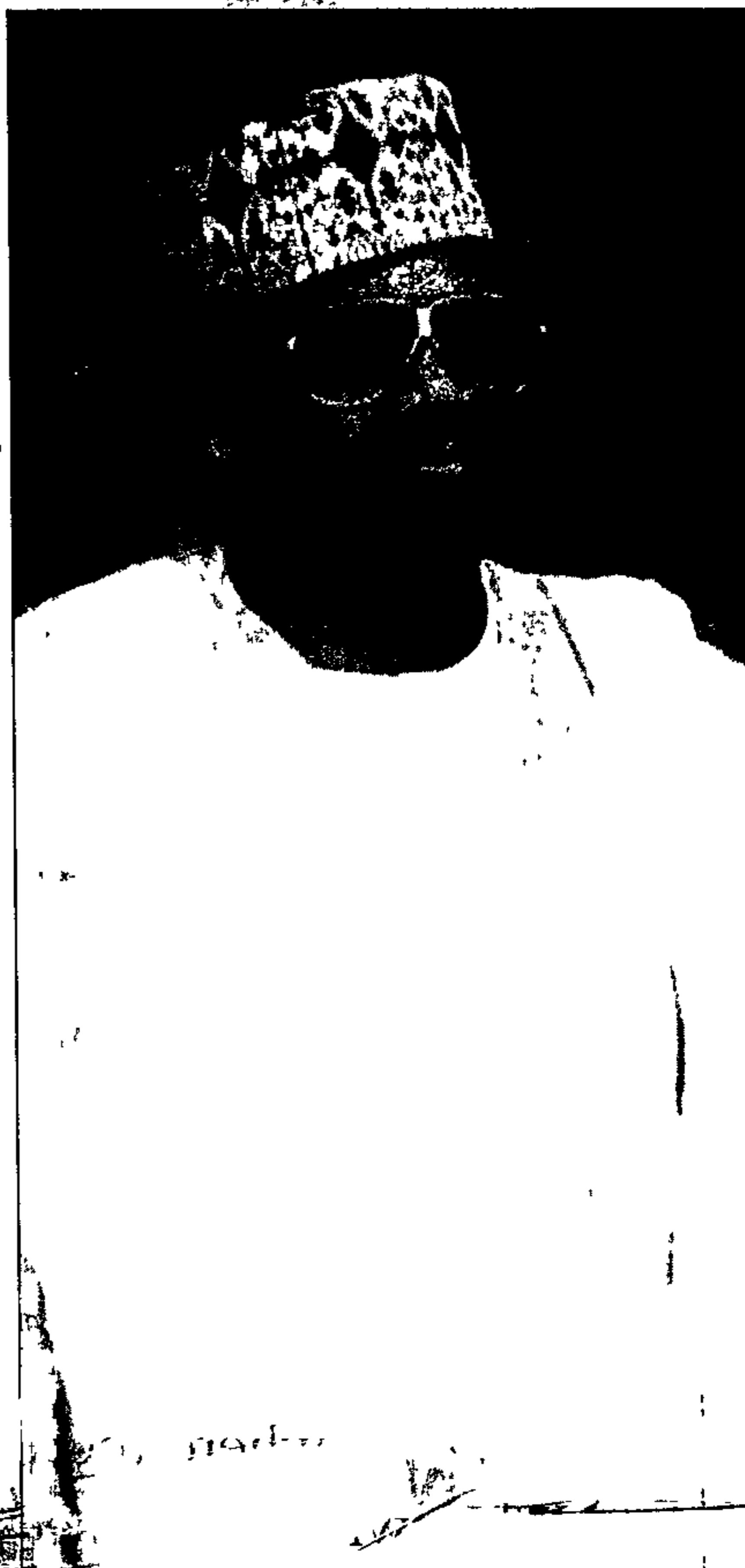
orphanages or other institutions

The CHRI team, which consisted of Canadian former Foreign Minister Flora MacDonald, former Chief Justice of Zimbabwe Enoch Dumbutshena and Trinidadian diplomat Neville Linton, reports on the breakdown of law and order in Nigeria, the undermining of the judiciary, and the deterioration of social services, education, health and environmental programmes

Many schools are closed. Hospital patients must often pay for bed space and buy their own drugs as well as needles, syringes and suture threads. The human rights team says widespread disaffection is infecting all sectors of society and a seething resentment is growing among ordinary people

Although some pro-democracy activists say any hope of ending military rule can come about only if Nigeria is divided into two countries, the CHRI report says forces favouring cohesion are still greater than the separatists and, in a free

Complicated situation. The late Abacha timetable for Nigeria is a complicated affair. It is a matter to be taken into account. Nigeria will be involved into six key offices, those of the deal and the matter. The report also mentions the plan and called for critics to show understanding. He repeated the Nigerian request for a permanent seat on the Security Council - *Gemini News*



General Sani Abacha... facing an angry showdown at the Commonwealth summit.

PUBLIC MEETING ON REVIEWING SOUTH AFRICA'S MINERAL AND MINING POLICY

The Steering Committee which manages the process of reviewing

Nigeria: SA is obligated to act

(226) CJ 7/11/95

ALLISTER SPARKS

NEXT week the Commonwealth heads of government will hold their summit meeting in Auckland, New Zealand. It is an occasion President Mandela must use to assert his authority on an issue where we are perilously close to a dereliction of moral duty.

I refer to Nigeria. Three months ago, as Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki flew to that country to try to intercede with its military ruler, General Sam Abacha, on behalf of a number of political opponents it had just sentenced to death or jail. This column argued that while it was appropriate to adopt a low profile when trying to save people's lives, such an approach could not continue indefinitely.

Greater claim

If Abacha showed no sign of responding, then South Africa would be under a moral obligation to toughen its stance. And the appropriate place to do that, I suggested, would be at the Commonwealth conference which is now

Why a moral obligation? Because few people in history have laid a greater claim to the moral conscience of the international community to set aside domestic interests and come to the aid of a struggle against oppression than those who now rule the new South Africa.

We must either practice what we preach, be prepared to do for others what we require be done for us, or expose ourselves to the charge of hypocrisy.

in Pollsmoor Prison, an event Mandela himself has described as the turning point which helped initiate his own secret talks with the Government, which in turn ultimately paved the way for our political settlement.

Now it is Obasanjo who is the political prisoner, and Mandela who is free and in a position to reciprocate.

There are also compelling political reasons to intervene more positively. The new South Africa has troubles enough of its own, to be sure, and the impulse to be totally self-absorbed is very great. But let us be clear that there is no way our new society can become an island of prosperity in a continent of deepening poverty and political despair. Our future is inextricably bound up with that of the rest of Africa.

Nigeria is a country of 120-million people, by far Africa's most populous. Political disintegration and economic collapse there, stemming from the tyranny and corruption of its military dictatorship, would precipitate a refugee flow that would flood across this continent and impact devastatingly on us all.

When Mbeki visited Nigeria in July, he was fobbed off with vague assurances Abacha talked of commuting the sentences of the political prisoners, and of starting a process of democratisation. There was talk of an important speech on October 1, the 35th anniversary of Nigeria's independence.

Well, October 1 has come and gone, and the speech was a gigantic damp squib. Chief Moshood Abiola, the civilian who was voted President in 1993 only to have his election annulled by General Ibrahim Babangida, who was then replaced by Abacha as mil-

tary ruler, is still in jail — inexplicably accused by Abacha of treason. His promised appeal is indefinitely delayed.

Obasanjo, who, like Abiola, was tried in secret with no charges or evidence ever disclosed, has indeed had his sentence reduced — from life to an equally appalling 15 years. With that he has been transferred to a hell-hole prison, Nigeria's worst, a place called Jos in the high central plateau which is prone to great extremes of heat and cold, and where he is being treated as a common criminal with no privileges.

They're trying to break his spirit, Obasanjo's special assistant Ayodele Aderinwale lamented when he visited this country the other day to appeal for Nelson Mandela to make a more meaningful intervention.

As for the return to democracy, Abacha announced a tortuous process that is supposed to lead to elections sometime in late 1998. That will make it 15 years that Nigeria's military rulers have dangled this promise before the world. How gullible can we be?

Is there any reason to believe that Abacha, by all accounts the least articulate, least intelligent and least credible of all the militarists who have ruled Nigeria for 26 of its 35 years, is likely to honour a pledge that his predecessors have violated so blatantly and so often?

South Africa's explanation for its low-key response is that it doesn't want to push the Nigerian Government into a corner. They are prickly people and pressure might make them worse. So rather try gentle persuasion. It's a familiar response in the world of diplomacy which the Reagan Administra-

tion used when it was urged to act against apartheid South Africa. They called it constructive engagement. Britain's Margaret Thatcher did the same. The ANC was singularly unimpressed, accusing both of a moral cop-out.

But at least when push came to shove at the Commonwealth conference in Kuala Lumpur in 1985, Mrs Thatcher proposed that the Eminent Persons Group should visit South Africa to assess the possibility of a negotiated solution before taking a final decision on sanctions.

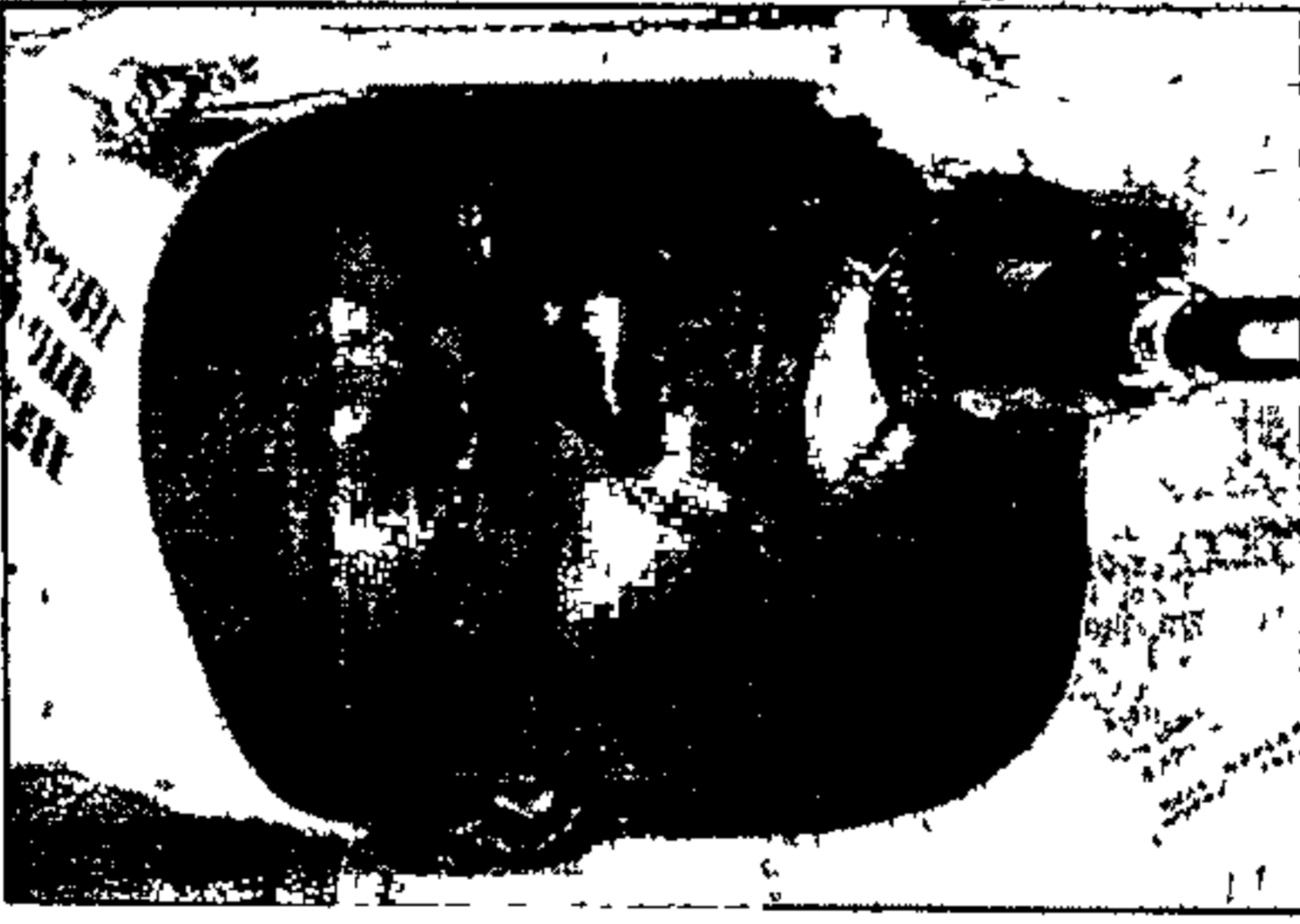
Surely the ANC can be as bold as Mrs Thatcher was on apartheid!

Make recommendations

When President Mandela gets to Auckland, he should take the initiative in suggesting that a new Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group, perhaps under the chairmanship of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, should visit Nigeria to assess the possibility of persuading the military regime to accept an accelerated democratisation process with an absolute commitment to hold internationally supervised elections within 12 months.

Should the findings be negative, then this new EPG should make recommendations on what further action the Commonwealth should take — perhaps the suspension of Nigeria's membership, or economic sanctions, or both.

At least that would be a face-saver in what is rapidly becoming a moral crisis for us. And it might even work, as the first EPG did.



GENERAL OBASANJO: He visited Nelson Mandela twice at Pollsmoor.

There is a more personal side to the moral obligation too. One of those sentenced to life imprisonment by the Abacha regime was General Othusegun Obasanjo, the former Nigerian President who was co-chairman of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group that came here in 1985-86 to initiate the first shuttle diplomacy between the old South African Government and the ANC.

Obasanjo twice visited Nelson Mandela

Iran discusses maintaining Nigeria's oil plants

BY JAMES JUKWEY

Lagos — Nigeria was negotiating with Iran on the possibility of the Gulf country helping to maintain Nigerian oil facilities, a Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation executive said yesterday

An Iranian delegation led by Seyid Hamane, the deputy minister of planning and research, has been in Nigeria since last week at the invitation of Kabir Chafe, Nigeria's junior oil minister

They have toured Nigeria's oil refineries, petrochemicals plants and inspected oil pipelines

"The Iranians have big oil refineries, petrochemical plants and pipelines which they maintain themselves and we are interested in

how they have done it," the official, who asked not to be identified, said

"We are having discussions with them in the area of co-operation in maintaining our refineries, pipelines and petrochemical plants" he said

Nigeria's oil facilities suffer sporadic shut downs because of bad management

In January, military ruler General Sani Abacha announced Nigeria would lease its oil plants to private operators for proper management. However, the decision is under reconsideration

Western firms which showed interest in leasing the refineries demanded total control which Nigerian officials said they feared could lead to job losses and higher

ET (AR) 8/11/95
pump prices for fuel products, a sensitive issue in the country

"We are looking for investors in the oil sectors and the Iranians are ready," the official said "They have experience in oil and most importantly self-determination which is what we need (from) and admire (about) them"

Nigeria and Iran are members of Opec and both have difficult relations with Western nations because of their domestic policies

Nigeria is under fire from the West for its lack of democracy and political detentions, accusations it denies. Nigeria has insisted it be left alone to solve its own problems

The Iranian team was having its final meetings with corporation executives yesterday and would

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depart for home later in the day, the official said

Reuter reports that the Port Harcourt oil refinery, Nigeria's biggest, had reopened after the problem with its power plant was rectified, a spokesman for the corporation said yesterday

"The refinery was back on stream on Monday," he said

The refinery was shut last Thursday when the boilers of the power plant that supplies it with electricity developed a fault

Closure of the 150 000 barrels a day Port Harcourt refinery, the most reliable of Nigeria's four oil refineries, sparked off fears of a fuel shortage in the country, but the corporation quickly denied this

Susan Russell

Nigerian dissident's trial 'not political'

THE attorney-general for Nigeria's Bauchi state yesterday warned delegates to the International Bar Association's conference in Sandton that the organisation was not a political forum, and defended his country's handling of the trial of dissident writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa

Saro-Wiwa was sentenced to death by a military tribunal amid international condemnation last week after he was found guilty of incitement to murder

Bauchi state attorney-general Hauwa Ibrahim voiced his objections at a conference ses-

sion on freedom of speech yesterday after a British delegate drew participants' attention to a report criticising the trial as unfair

Ibrahim and another Nigerian delegate immediately got to their feet to defend their government's handling of the trial Ibrahim said the Bar Association was a place for lawyers to meet and discuss issues of mutual interest, and "not a political forum"

Saro-Wiwa's trial, he said, had adhered to all the constitutional requirements Ibrahim also told delegates that the

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writer had been tried for a criminal rather than a political matter. He accused disgruntled Nigerians living in the UK of "spreading propaganda".

Ghana's Bar Association president Sam Okudzeto responded by pointing out that no one at the session had criticised the Nigerian government The British delegate had merely drawn attention to the report

"If we can't hear or even air our views, what then is the meaning of freedom of speech?"

Earlier Johannesburg attorney and DP Gauteng provincial leg-

(226)
islature member Peter Leon voiced his misgivings about the ANC's proposed amendments to the free speech provisions of the constitution.

The proposed amendment would limit freedom of expression contained in section 15 of the constitution to exclude so-called hate speech which incited hostility along gender, race or religious lines.

Leon questioned the need to specifically insulate hate speech in a constitution, and described the proposed limitation as "potentially very, very dangerous".

SA under pressure over Nigerian issue

Tim Cohen

CAPE TOWN — President Nelson Mandela left for New Zealand yesterday where he will participate in an intricate diplomatic wrangle at the Commonwealth heads of government meeting on the vexed question of Nigeria.

SA will be under pressure at the meeting, which begins today, to take a more vigorous stand on the recent events in Nigeria where military rulers have refused to accede to the results of a disputed presidential election.

Recently Nigeria again provoked international condemnation when nine minority rights activists, including prominent writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, were sentenced to death in a trial opponents said was politically motivated.

Some members of the 52-member Commonwealth club have suggested sanctions, while others have proposed the suspension of Nigeria and two other military dictatorships, Gambia and Sierra Leone, from the club.

Commonwealth secretary-general Chief Emeka Anyaoku, himself a Nigerian, has called for a tough stance on Nigeria, including "actions that go well beyond rhetoric".

SA will be under pressure to adopt a more robust stance, particularly from the First World members of the club, in contrast to its current position which has been a policy of "quiet persuasion".

Mandela's spokesman, Parks Mankahlana, confirmed that up until

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now this had been SA's position, adding "we are not able to say at the moment what SA's position will be".

"SA will do everything it can within the context of joint decision-making," he said. If the need arose, the president would find time for a one-on-one meeting with Nigerian military ruler Gen Sani Abacha.

Mankahlana said a discussion would take place at the conference on the question of "good governance" which was first raised at the Commonwealth's 1991 conference in Zimbabwe.

The Harare Declaration which committed members to the concept was endorsed by the club partly in an effort to encourage this in SA, which is ironically now called on to lead African countries in the application of similar diplomatic pressure against other African "offenders".

The position SA adopts will be influenced by its understanding of the complexities of the Nigerian situation, which SA officials see as essentially a dispute between elites.

They point out that SA has sent more delegations to Nigeria than any other country, including one by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in an effort to engage in "brotherly and persuasive discussion". Although they are aware of the irony of the argument in favour of "quiet diplomacy" which was vigorously opposed in the context of SA, SA officials do not see the Nigerian situation being solved by sanctions.

Buthelezi resignation 'rumours'

BD 9/11/95 (226)

Kevin O'Grady

THERE were a number of IFP leaders who believed that party president Mangosuthu Buthelezi should resign from central government and be reinstated as KwaZulu-Natal premier, Gauteng IFP deputy chairman Themba Khoza said yesterday.

Buthelezi would "follow the decision of the people who elected him" if the time came for the party leadership to vote on the issue, he said.

However, Khoza said reports that Buthelezi's resignation from the home affairs ministry was imminent were based on "rumours" and the replacement of KwaZulu-Natal premier Frank Mdlalose by the IFP president

had not been officially discussed.

Some IFP leaders felt "very strongly" that Buthelezi should spearhead the party's campaign if an early provincial election was called in KwaZulu-Natal. They believed he could woo a great number of voters.

He denied that calls for Buthelezi to replace Mdlalose were based on a belief that Mdlalose was not governing the province effectively.

"That is sour grapes from people who did not win the election in KwaZulu-Natal.

"Nobody is talking about replacing (Raymond) Mhlaba in the Eastern Cape or Ngoako (Ramatlhodi) in the Northern Province. Those regions are the worst in the country," Khoza said.

Mandela rejects calls for sanctions against Nigeria

AUCKLAND — Dialogue was preferable to sanctions as a way of persuading Nigeria's military leaders to spare nine minority rights activists sentenced to death, President Mandela said here today

"My own approach is to be in direct contact with them because I'm interested in solving the matter, and I will select the option which in my view will be the most effective in addressing the problem," he said.

"I don't think I can call for sanctions at this stage," Mr. Mandela told reporters on the eve of the Commonwealth summit.

Confirmation of the death sentences by Nigeria's military rulers has drawn international condemnation.

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe said earlier that Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth could become

an issue if the country failed to heed calls for clemency (226)

"We feel that we must try to keep in contact with Nigerian leaders to ensure the situation does not worsen," said Mr. Mandela

ARC 9/11/95
"I'm anxious to save lives, I'm anxious that the process of democracy should be speeded up. It's on that basis that I will look at the problem" — Reuter

Nigerian activists call on SA to denounce abuse

AUCKLAND: Nigerian activists said yesterday it is time South Africa publicly denounced military dictatorship, corruption and human rights abuse in their country.

A day before Nigeria's Provisional Ruling Council is due to uphold or commute the death sentence of activist and poet Ken Saro-Wiwa, his son Mr Ken Wiwa appealed to the Commonwealth summit and SA in particular to take a stand.

"If the Commonwealth doesn't say anything he will be executed."

Saro-Wiwa, a leader of the Ogoni people in Nigeria, was sentenced to

death with eight other Ogonis for allegedly instigating the murders of four Ogoni leaders in May 1994.

Nigerian Nobel literature laureate Mr Wole Soyinka also urged the Commonwealth meeting that began yesterday to impose comprehensive sanctions on Nigeria.

Mr Soyinka said SA was the key to putting pressure on the Nigerian junta led by General Sani Abacha to restore democracy and respect. "If Nelson Mandela were to say: 'I will not sit in the same room with Abacha or his emissaries,' the game is over," said Mr Soyinka — Sapa-AP

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Mandela sees Nigerian minister

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SAPA

AUCKLAND

9/11/95
President Nelson Mandela arrived in New Zealand for the Commonwealth summit on Monday. He met with Nigerian Foreign Minister Chetan Laloo.

Mandela is also expected to meet with other Commonwealth heads-of-state meeting, at which time he will stand against the nuclear test ban.

Mandela is also expected to meet with other Commonwealth heads-of-state meeting, at which time he will stand against the nuclear test ban.

... said Powell, who also ruled ... said Powell, who thanked them for ...

Major, Bolger urge Nigeria not to hang nine convicted dissidents

(226) Shaw 9/11/95

Auckland - British Prime Minister John Major and the Commonwealth's top official appealed to Nigeria's military rulers today to spare nine rights activists sentenced to hang for murder.

Nigeria's army rulers drew international condemnation for confirming the death sentences on the eve of a summit of the 52-nation Commonwealth in New Zealand. Major and New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger condemned the

verdicts as unjust.

"It seems to me . . . that this was a flawed judicial procedure. The sentences are not just," Major said.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger said it would be "quite appalling" if the sentences were carried out. "To flout the Commonwealth in that way would send all the wrong signals."

The nine activists from the Ogoni region were found guilty of murdering four moderate regional

chiefs after what human rights groups have denounced as a political show trial.

Ken Wiwa, son of condemned activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, said calls for clemency were not enough and urged Commonwealth governments to abandon their "softly-softly" approach.

"It's quite clear this was a challenge to the Commonwealth. Nigeria was saying: 'Well, we don't care, we're going to go ahead with this

and no one will stop us. (We) dare you to stop us," Wiwa told Reuters.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Eneka Anyaoku, a Nigerian, said he was dismayed by confirmation of the sentences.

Nigeria has been in turmoil since the annulment of elections in 1993, when General Sani Abacha seized power.

Abacha last month commuted sentences on 42 people over an abortive coup and outlined plans to

restore democracy in three years, but the international community wants faster action and an improvement in human rights.

Wiwa and exiled Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka called on the Commonwealth to expel Nigeria at the summit opening in Auckland tomorrow.

Soyinka said Abacha was playing a "sadistic game" and called for decisive international action. - Reuters

Leaders struggling to deal with Nigeria

AUCKLAND — Commonwealth leaders struggled yesterday to find some way, short of expulsion, to punish Nigeria for flouting the group's rules on good government by confirming death sentences on Ken Saro-Wiwa, president of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples, and eight others for the murder last year of four moderate Ogoni leaders.

The question of how to respond to errant military governments such as Nigeria's was set to dominate the agenda at the Commonwealth's biennial summit, which starts today.

Despite widespread outrage over the sentence, diplomats said there was a strong current against kicking Nigeria out of the Commonwealth.

Influential figures including SA's President Nelson Mandela, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger, the summit host, all spoke out yesterday against expelling Nigeria. Said Mandela "We feel that we

must try to keep in contact to ensure the situation does not worsen."

However, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu took a much harder line, saying Nigeria should be expelled and comprehensive sanctions applied.

"The Nigerian military government is either deliberately cooking a snoot at the Commonwealth heads or preparing the way for a cynical ploy in which it will reverse this decision to stave off pressure over other human rights violations."

His comments followed Mandela's statement that SA would stick to its policy of "gentle diplomacy" to push Nigeria towards democracy.

The Commonwealth Harare Declaration in 1991 laid out the group's main values, including democracy, human rights and honest government. Now the heads of state are being asked to consider means to ensure the words become reality — Sapa-AFP, Reuter

(226) See Page 12
BD 10/11/95

Growth needs rule of law — Mandela

Susan Russell
BD 10/11/95

DEVELOPING countries had a major responsibility to create an environment, through the rule of law, that was conducive to real development and prosperity,

President Nelson Mandela told an international group of lawyers in Sandton last night.

His address to the International Bar Association SA conference was read on his behalf by Justice Minister Dullah Omar. Mandela is attending the Commonwealth meeting in New Zealand.

Mandela said that at the same time, developing countries had to strike a balance between the needs of the business community and expectations of workers and the poor. SA wanted to be a country that was a good neighbour and equal partners with countries on this and other continents, securing its rightful place within the world's economic and political systems.

"To succeed in these goals, we have fortunately laid a solid foundation with the acceptance of the values and principles that guarantee the rule of law in our interim constitution," Mandela said. He said government's efforts to lead the coun-

Constitution

Continued from Page 1

Under the ANC proposal, he said, "all legislation which affects provincial competencies will have to go to the council of provinces which, in turn, will have the power to stop the passage of

of disagreement." Constitutional Assembly chairman Cyril Ramaphosa, referring to the behind-the-scenes meetings, said: "The issues set out as options are matters where parties are still involved in sparring matches." But "the beauty of the process after 18 months is that no one has started hitting the table." Ramaphosa predicted the final con-

try along a path of sustained growth, and at the same time to foster social upliftment and address crime and corruption were guided by the universally accepted norms constituting rule of law.

Last year's elections had given SA a unique opportunity to transfer itself into a just and democratic order that made the constitution, with its Bill of Rights, the highest law of the land, binding on all organs of state.

This brought to an end "an era in our history in which our people were subjected to the legal doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty."

'Step up pressure on Nigeria'

As leaders meet, Tutu urges expulsion from the Commonwealth

ARG 10/11/95

(226)

LINDSAY BARNES
Staff Reporter

ARCHBISHOP Desmond Tutu has called for Nigeria to be expelled from the Commonwealth

He also asked for "comprehensive economic, sporting and cultural sanctions" against the country's military rulers if they failed to meet a range of demands by the end of the year

In a statement made in Cape Town, he appealed to Commonwealth leaders gathered in New Zealand to formulate the demands

These included the release of Chief Moshood Abiola, Nigeria's democratically-elected leader, General Olusegun Obasanjo, a former Nigerian head of state, Ken Saro-Wiwa, the leader whose death sentence was confirmed this week, and those sentenced with them

He also asked for a commitment to negotiate a return to democratic rule in Nigeria

Archbishop Tutu condemned the decision to ratify the death sentence imposed on Mr Saro-Wiwa, chairman of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, as "deeply shocking"

"The Nigerian military government is either deliberately cocking a snook at the Commonwealth heads of government or preparing the way for a cynical ploy in which it will reverse this decision to stave off pressure over its numerous other human rights violations

"It has become increasingly clear to me since my discussions in April with General Sami Abacha, the leader of the military government, and Chief Moshood Abiola that much stronger international pressure against the government is needed in the interests of the Nigerian people"

Meanwhile, Earthlife Africa has called on Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo to pressure the Nigerian government to release the human rights activists sentenced to death

The organisation also called for a boycott of Shell products as it believed the company was funding "human rights and environmental abuses" in Nigeria

Mr Saro-Wiwa, who is the leader of a movement for the survival of the 500 000-strong Ogoni people who live in Ogoni, around the Niger Delta, and eight others have been sentenced to death for the alleged murder of four Ogoni leaders in May, 1994

Amnesty International had declared Mr Saro-Wiwa a person of conscience, a spokesman for Earthlife Africa said

The organisation expressed concern for Mr Nzo's "lukewarm call" for clemency for Mr Saro-Wiwa. It said the minister's reac-

tion was surprising in view of the "strong and unyielding support given to the South African struggle for freedom from apartheid by foreign governments and international organisations"

The spokesman also attacked Shell and other international oil companies for "underwriting the Nigerian regime" while the Abacha government committed "grave human rights abuses"

The fertile Niger Delta has allowed the Ogoni a good living as subsistence farmers and fishermen. This lifestyle is being threatened as today there are more than 100 oil wells in the area

According to a report from Earthlife Africa, the environmental effects of this concentration of wells has been severe. There is air pollution from burning gas flares, noise and acid rain

Between 70 and 80 percent of Nigeria's income was from the oil

industry and it was particularly Shell's "abuses" which Mr Saro-Wiwa was fighting against, the spokesman said

"For oil companies such as Shell to claim to support human rights in South Africa but fund human rights and environmental abuses in Nigeria is pure hypocrisy," he said

Brian Anderson, managing director of Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, said the company did not accept its oil activities had caused devastation in Ogoni or anywhere in the Niger Delta

At present there was no oil production in Ogoni as the company had withdrawn its staff in January 1993, he added

"We will only return when we are assured of the co-operation and support of all the Ogoni communities themselves, and we can economically repair or replace the damaged facilities," he said

Mandela not for sanctions

(226) Sowetan 10/11/95

AUCKLAND – President Nelson Mandela yesterday rejected calls for economic sanctions to be imposed on Nigeria and said he was anxious to keep talking to the country's military leadership "to save lives"

He arrived here yesterday to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting which opens today

Nigeria is a member but its leader, General Sani Abacha, is not expected to attend. On Wednesday his provisional ruling council confirmed death sentences passed last week on nine activists, including writer Ken Saro-Wiwa. Discussion at the meeting is expected to be dominated by the issue

Mandela, speaking at a Press conference after meeting New Zealand prime minister Jim Bolger, said he was in touch with Abacha

"We must try and keep in contact to ensure that the situation is not allowed to worsen," he said. "We want to try and persuade the Nigerians to respond to international pressure and I would like to continue that"

"The solution is a process, it is not something that can be reached overnight," Mandela said. "I am confident that to be in touch with the Nigerian leaders and to persuade them not to continue as events are developing I think is the correct approach"

"It is not easy to have deadlines but I am anxious to save lives, I am anxious that the process of democracy should be speeded up. I am discussing with the Nigerians, it is not as if I am sitting down idly doing nothing about it," he said – Sapa-AFP

● See pages 12 and 21.

Govt called in on Wits crisis

Sowetan

By Ruth Bhengu 10/11/95

SEVERAL groups at the University of the Witwatersrand have appealed to the Government to intervene in resolving the crisis involving deputy vice-chancellor Professor Malegapuru Makgoba

During a media conference at the university yesterday the groups, representing academic and administrative staff, unions and students called on the Ministry of Education to set up an independent commission of inquiry into the Makgoba controversy

The group, including the Transformation Front, South African Students Congress, the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, the Wits Black Staff Forum and the Students Representative Council also demanded that a panel of national and international experts scrutinise the credentials, packages and staffing and promotion procedures of senior appointments at the university

The group was reacting to yesterday's announcement by the executive council that it will set up an international tribunal to investigate allegations against Makgoba. They also condemned the "abuse of university resources by the small group of academics who investigated Professor Makgoba"

"The central question for the Front is the legitimate capacity and status of the accusers," a statement by the Transformation Front said

"Professor (Robert) Charlton's rectitude and professionalism has been brought into question in that he has acknowledged the validity of a group that is not officially constituted

"They do not have any constituency. This unprofessional behaviour from Professor Charlton has grave political and ethical implications as he has seldom given the same weight to legitimate demands by properly constituted and representative university formations," the Front said

At another media briefing the Academic Staff Association expressed concern about the deepening crisis



We all have our problems, says Nigerian minister ^(22b)

Star 10/11/95

Auckland - Nigeria, isolated at the Commonwealth summit for condemning minority-rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa to death, said today it was misunderstood.

"I know that we are misunderstood," Foreign Minister Tom Ikimi told reporters at a reception.

"Which state does not have problems?"

"I could go through the Commonwealth in alphabetical order," he said.

The Commonwealth's response is likely to dominate the group's four-day conference, which started today.

The sentences against Saro-Wiwa, a prominent writer, and eight associates from the Ogoni region of Nigeria have been denounced by human rights activists and Commonwealth leaders alike.

At the summit opening ceremony, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien told fellow leaders of the Commonwealth that they had a duty to speak out against flagrant violations of democratic principles and basic tenets of justice.

Ikimi said everyone was hailing South Africa, which had rejoined the Commonwealth after the abolition of apartheid.

"But look at what we have done for them," he said in reference to the battles Nigeria had fought with others against apartheid in South Africa.

Ikimi, who is leading the Nigerian delegation in the absence of General Sani Abacha, spoke as the heads of government were in the process of drafting an urgent appeal for clemency, expected to be released later today.

Barbados Prime Minister Owe Arthur called the timing of the death sentences "a provocation".

But few leaders appeared to back a suggestion made yesterday by Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, to suspend Nigeria from the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth statement is expected to favour persuasion rather than punishment.

"If they go too hard at the start we may lose Nigeria," Tanzania's President Ali Hassan Mwinyi told reporters - Reuters.

'We won't stand aside' - Mandela

(226) (226)

Commonwealth may decide to send eminent persons group

Star 10/11/95 JOHN SELKIRK / AP

Auckland - A day after Nigeria upheld the death sentence of a prominent human-rights activist, President Nelson Mandela today told the Commonwealth summit here that the world could not tolerate oppression and tyranny

South Africans "will not stand aside when any people anywhere in the world become victim to systematic racism, oppression and tyranny," Mandela said

Although he did not name Nigeria in today's speech, Mandela yesterday said of that country "If, of course, persuasion does not succeed, then there will be time enough to consider other options"

The Commonwealth leaders are considering a united appeal for clemency to spare the life of prominent Nigerian playwright and political activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other men, and they may threaten Nigeria with sanctions

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Chief Emeka Anvaoku of Nigeria, said he expected the group to come up with "a concrete action programme, not just rhetorical assertions"

New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger said the world leaders were also considering a united call for clemency

Saro-Wiwa (54) has campaigned on behalf of the 500 000 Ogoni people who live in Nigeria's oil-rich south, who say their land and water are being destroyed by oil-industry pollution. Oil accounts for about 80% of Nigeria's export income, and critics of the industry are often silenced

Saro-Wiwa was found guilty on October 31 of participating in the killings of four men during a political rally in May 1994 where he was to speak.



Formality ... Maori Elder Hugh Kawharu performs a "Hongi", a traditional Maori greeting which involves pressing noses together, with President Nelson Mandela at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Auckland earlier today.

Nigeria has not said when Saro-Wiwa and the eight other members of the minority Ogoni group will be executed

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe said yesterday that the verdict was "shocking to everybody" He said the exclusion or temporary suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth would be discussed

Britain condemned the death

sentences and the Foreign Office said Nigeria's representative in London would be summoned on Thursday

"It was a bad trial, a bad judgment, an unjust sentence," British Prime Minister John Major said

Washington denounced the death sentences and said Nigeria must make a "swift and credible" move towards democracy

The heads of state today dis-

cussed sending an eminent persons group to Nigeria

Sources close to Mandela said the president and Mugabe were likely to be in the delegation.

Commonwealth officials sought today to settle on appropriate language to use to condemn French nuclear testing, after a succession of countries spoke out angrily on the first day of their summit, a Commonwealth spokesman said.

Throw Nigeria out if it won't behave - Tutu

Cape Town - Archbishop Desmond Tutu urged the Commonwealth yesterday to expel Nigeria if condemned opposition leader Ken Saro-Wiwa is not freed by the end of the year

Tutu said in a statement the world needed to increase the pressure on Nigeria's military rulers

"I therefore call for Nigeria to

be expelled from the Commonwealth, and for that body to lead the way in imposing comprehensive economic, sporting and cultural sanctions on the military regime if it does not reverse its current policies by the end of the year

"I appeal to the Commonwealth leaders to formulate an ultimatum, which would include,

at the minimum, the release of Chief Moshood Abiola, General Olusegun Obasanjo and Mr Saro-Wiwa, and a commitment to negotiate with them and other Nigerian leaders a return to democratic rule."

Tutu intervened in April to save the lives of Nigerian opposition leaders then under sentence of

death

He accused Abacha of "cocking a snoot at the Commonwealth heads of government"

"It has become increasingly clear to me that much stronger international pressure against the government is needed in the interests of the Nigerian people," he said. - Reuters.

We all have our problems, says Nigerian minister

(22b)

Star 10/11/95

AP

Accra, Ghana - Nigeria, isolated at the Commonwealth summit for condemning minority-rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa to death, said today it was misunderstood.

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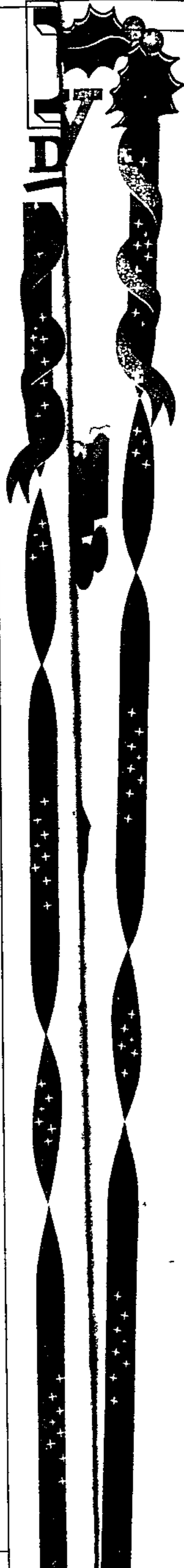
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Hangings shock Commonwealth

EXPULSION, NIGERIA, SAYS MANDELA

ARG 11/11/95 (226)

■ KEN SARO-WIWA



■ President Mandela has joined in the world's chorus of condemnation after Nigeria ignored international opinion and executed nine dissidents.

Political Staff

AUCKLAND. — President Mandela, shocked by the news that Nigeria had defied international pressure and executed nine dissidents, is calling for the renegade nation to be expelled from the Commonwealth.

Presidential spokesman Joel Ntshenzhe said Mr Mandela had been shocked by yesterday's executions and would recommend to fellow Commonwealth heads of government that Nigeria be excluded from the association until it made moves towards democracy.

Mr Mandela will make this recommendation at this weekend's retreat of Commonwealth leaders at Queenstown in the south of New Zealand

The News Agency of Nigeria reported that nine men, including human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, were executed about 11 30 am and taken for burial inside the Port Harcourt cemetery

Mr Saro-Wiwa's wife, Hauwa, said "It is all over"

Mr Saro-Wiwa, 54, was convicted on October 31 over the deaths of four men during a May 1994 political rally He always claimed he was framed by the military regime of General Sani Abacha

On Wednesday, Nigeria's Provisional Ruling Council upheld the death sentences on Mr Saro-Wiwa and eight other members of the Ogoni ethnic group.

LATEST

A Nigerian representative to the United Nations said last night that condemnation of Lagos's execution of nine activists constituted gross interference in its domestic affairs

Ken Wiwa, son of Mr Saro-Wiwa, has accused Commonwealth heads of government of being too lenient towards Nigeria in regard to human rights abuses — which are enshrined in the 1991 Harare declaration, due to be the focus of the leaders' weekend talks Mr Wiwa is in Auckland to lobby Commonwealth leaders

The Nigerian delegation of 26 members — which is without General Abacha — was in a meeting at the time of going to Press

After hearing of the executions, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu repeated his call for stringent sanctions against Nigeria and for the country to be expelled from the Commonwealth

"This Nigerian military dictatorship should know that the world does care about such gross violations and the first (action against them) should be that they be kicked out of the Commonwealth

"Then, the Commonwealth should call on the international community to apply stringent economic, diplomatic and sporting sanctions against this regime," said Archbishop Tutu

"That (sanctions) is, what brought apartheid down and I have no doubt at all that they (Nigeria) would not last very long"

Archbishop Tutu, winner of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize, said he could not believe the Nigerian military government would defy world opinion

He said Nigeria had humiliated Mr Mandela. Earlier this year, Mr Mandela sent Deputy President Thabo Mbeki to Lagos to plead for clemency for 40 alleged coup plotters sentenced to death "They have humiliated him He has tried at

"I am devastated I did not believe General (Sani) Abacha and his crowd could be so callous and so utterly unresponsive to appeals that they would have carried out what, for me, is a diabolical act."

■ To page 3

P.T.O

From page 1

(226)

Expel Nigeria, says Mandela

ARG 11/11/95

least since April to be sensitive to their position, not to humiliate them they have done nothing, but, in fact, spat in his face each time and this (the executions) is the worst.

"It is a comprehensive slap in his face and I am very upset on behalf of my president"

In London, the Foreign Office said Nigeria violated its commitment under international law to provide fair trial and the right of appeal and should be "in no doubt of the depth of feeling on the part of the international community".

"We are very shocked Very, very shocked. It was entirely a surprise," said Michael van Walt van Praag, general secretary of the Unrepresented Nations and People's Organisation.

Mr Saro-Wiwa was, until recently, the vice chairman of UNPO, a Hague-based group which speaks out for small ethnic groups, including the Ogoni, who have no voice in forums such as the United Nations.

The United States, during an angry exchange in the United Nations Security Council, said it was considering council action in response to the executions.

A Commonwealth spokesman said the executions were awful and provocative

"It's an unfortunate, awful, provocative act just unacceptable," said spokesman Michael Fathers.

A Commonwealth source said Nigeria's suspension from the grouping of Britain and its former colonies was a possibility "After suspension, you've got to think of sanctions. If the Commonwealth isn't seen to act, it will lose its credibility," said the source Sapa-Reuter-AP-AFP

World tightens screws on Nigeria, but avoids oil embargo

London - The international community tightened the screws on Nigeria yesterday for its hanging of nine human rights activists, but oil sanctions were not an immediate option against its military rulers.

The Commonwealth suspended Nigeria, saying it faced expulsion from the 52-nation body within two years unless it reformed and opened the oil-rich state up to democracy.

The United States and the European Union withdrew their ambassadors from Lagos, and South Africa recalled its High Commissioner Pope John Paul joined a growing chorus of international anger after last Friday's hangings.

British Prime Minister John Major imposed a total ban on arms sales to Nigeria and urged others to follow suit. The European Union said it had suspended development aid to Nigeria, and that it would recommend that countries impose "further restrictive measures."

But Major, like the Clinton administration in Washington, adopted a cautious stance on oil sanctions, saying an embargo could harm the people and not the military leaders.

Thus angered Nigerian human rights activists, who argued that the oil industry was controlled by a tiny clique in power. The son of executed activist Ken Saro-Wiwa cited his father in calling for oil sanctions.

Ken Wiwa, back in London after the Commonwealth summit in New Zealand, also attacked the group's leaders for taking the route of quiet diplomacy, saying it had failed to save his father.

In Auckland, human rights activist Innocent Chukwuma said the oil industry was Nigeria's economic lifeblood. "The proceeds are going into private accounts. It doesn't even get to the people."

He and other activists say an oil embargo would pressure Nigeria's military rulers into respecting human rights and restoring democracy, aborted when they annulled the 1993 election.

South Africa's High Commissioner to Lagos arrived in Johannesburg yesterday after his recall by President Mandela, saying he had been saddened by the executions.

"The situation in Nigeria is a bit sad. Nobody expected the Nigerians to go to the lengths they have gone. We really feel bad," High Commissioner George Nene told reporters.

The Ogoni people were divided in support for the slain activists, he said. "But even those who are opposed, did not expect such a gruesome decision," he said. - Reuters.

Nigerian hangman's ghastly blunders

Star 11/11/95 (226)

The struggle continues, were writer's last words after four abortive attempts to execute him, say Lagos press reports

It took five attempts to hang Nigerian playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa, newspapers reported yesterday in Lagos. And his last words before he died blindfolded on Friday morning are reported to have been: "Lord take my soul, but the struggle continues."

Several Lagos newspapers reported yesterday that Saro-Wiwa was the first of the nine condemned Ogoni activists to be hanged at south-eastern Port Harcourt. Daily AM News said the hangman made four attempts before finally killing Saro-Wiwa on the fifth try.

At one point, the newspaper said, Saro-Wiwa asked his executioners: "Why are you people treating me like this? What type of country is this?"

There had been no executions in Port Harcourt since Nigeria's independence from Britain in 1960 and the prison did not have the equipment for hangings. Executioners were flown there from the northern Muslim city of Sokoto on Thursday.

Saro-Wiwa (54) was convicted on October 31 by a tribunal in Port Har-

Commonwealth new era Page 4

court for ordering the shootings of four political rivals at a 1994 political rally. In comments published posthumously in New York yesterday, he said: "I do not fear being executed. I expect it. The men we are dealing with are mindless, Stone Age dictators addicted to blood."

In the same article in Newsweek magazine - a written response to questions smuggled out of his prison cell in May - Saro-Wiwa went on to say Nigeria's rulers "have been responsible for the African nightmare, afraid as they are of ideas and men of ideas. They are daylight robbers who kill for money."

"The charges are all trumped up. I had long ago decided not to dignify the tribunal by my presence, challenging the government to go ahead and do its worst," Saro-Wiwa wrote

"My younger colleagues did not quite understand this, but I think they are now beginning to see that my stand was the best thing to do. The prosecution case would not hold water even before the corrupt normal courts of Nigeria, hence the tribunal is being used to get what the government wants."

Saro-Wiwa had insisted since his arrest that he was framed because of his opposition to military ruler Gen Sani Abacha and the oil industry, which he said was ruining Ogoni-land. Oil accounts for about 80% of Nigeria's foreign income.

The military ruling council upheld the death sentences on Wednesday, provoking an international outcry, the recall of at least eight ambassadors from Nigeria and the country's suspension from the Commonwealth on Saturday.

According to the Lagos newspapers, soldiers went to the home of the Port Harcourt prison warden at about 3am on Friday and ordered him to work. At about 5am Saro-

Wiwa and his eight compatriots were roused from their cells at the

army camp where they had been held since their convictions. They were told they were being taken to the Port Harcourt prison as there was reason to suspect the army camp might be attacked by Ogoni youths.

At the prison, the nine men were herded into one room and shackles placed on their wrists and ankles. They were then led out one after the other, beginning with Saro-Wiwa, to be executed. Their bodies were taken under armed guard to the public cemetery at around 3.15pm.

Thousands of troops and anti-riot police have been sent to the Niger Delta region of south-eastern Nigeria. The Port Harcourt cemetery has been surrounded by soldiers and tanks, and relatives have not been allowed to visit the graves. - Sapa-AP



Sent packing ... Nigerian Foreign Minister Chief Tomi Ikimi on his departure from New Zealand yesterday after the Commonwealth heads of government suspended his country from the organisation. Nigeria's military rulers have been given two years to return the country to democracy or be expelled from the Commonwealth.

World tightens screws on Nigeria, but avoids oil embargo

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The Ogoni people were divided in support for the slain activists, he said. "But even those who are opposed, did not expect such a gruesome decision," he said. - Reuters.

Demands from S...

BY JOVIAL RAMPHOSA Political Reporter

The ANC and other political groups have called for the expulsion of Nigerian high commissioner to South Africa and will consider other measures to expel the government from Nigeria.

ANC secretary-general Ramaphosa said the execution of Saro-Wiwa reflects a callous disregard for the norms of justice and the weight of world opinion.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and other political organisations have called for an immediate end to the persecution of Nigerians who wish to enter South Africa, also for sanctions against the ruling West African state.

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Outrage as Nigeria hangs nine activists

(22b)
Star 11/11/95

Mandela opted for quiet diplomacy and it didn't work. We hope Mandela now sees that the Nigerian military regime does not appreciate his language," Edigeji said.

Saro-Wiwa, a writer, and his colleagues were sentenced by a tribunal last week after being tried for the murder in 1994 of four pro-government Ogoni tribal chiefs.

He had led a campaign for self-determination for the Ogoni and to protect the environment in their homeland, which has been exploited by foreign oil companies.

But even Shell International, the oil company against which Saro-Wiwa led his environmental cause, had pleaded for his clemency.

A Nigerian opposition group had warned early yesterday that Nigeria's military government was on the verge of carrying out the executions.



HANGED: Ken Saro-Wiwa

ed Imme Edigeji, a friend of Saro-Wiwa and representative of the Democratic Alternative - a pro-democracy movement based in Lagos - said Mandela should take responsibility for the deaths.

"(Mandela) had the opportunity to save the lives of the nine human rights activists but he opted to fold his arms while they were being slain.

"We are disturbed that our appeal to Mandela to take decisive steps against the military regime had fallen on deaf ears

London - Nigerian military officials hanged Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority rights activists at Port Harcourt prison in south-eastern Nigeria at about 11.30am yesterday - while members of the Commonwealth Heads of Government were debating whether to send a delegation to plead for clemency.

Security and prison officials told the News Agency of Nigeria the executions were carried out after priests prayed for the condemned men. Their corpses were buried four hours later.

The hangings were immediately condemned around the world, with South Africa's Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu expressing "absolute horror and deep shock".

He called for Nigeria to be expelled from the Commonwealth and sanctions to be applied on the country.

There was also criticism of South African President Nelson Mandela for not acting more decisively in the crisis. A shock-

Activists hanged

The Ogoni Community Association said a witness had seen Saro-Wiwa and others being moved in chains to Port Harcourt's main prison in apparent preparation for hanging.

"They had chains round their ankles," association spokesman Cliff Etridge said. "Troops have continued to build up in Ogoniland prior to any possible riots."

Earlier, there were reports the military dictator-ship had sent executioners to carry out the sentence in Port Harcourt, but were turned away because their paperwork was not in order.

Saro-Wiwa (54) was convicted of the murder of four men during a May 1994 political rally but says he was framed. He is one of dozens of activists jailed by the regime of military leader Gen Sani Abacha.

Saro-Wiwa has campaigned on behalf of the 500,000 Ogoni people who live in Nigeria's oil-rich south and say their land and water are being destroyed by oil industry pollution. Saro-Wiwa is the author of plays, novels and children's books.

The situation in Nigeria was high on the agenda at the opening day of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in New Zealand yesterday.

Observers were stunned that the junta would uphold the sentences just as the summit got under way in Auckland. - Staff Reporter-Sapa-Agence-France Presse-Reuters

Star 11/11/95 (22b)

Axe of Nigeria feels wrath of Mandela

ST 12/11/95 (226)

By RAY HARTLEY in AUCKLAND

COMMONWEALTH leaders led by a furious President Nelson Mandela yesterday suspended Nigeria from the organisation and threatened it with expulsion following the military dictatorship's execution of nine opposition leaders.

The dramatic announcement was made by New Zealand Prime Minister James Bolger following a day of talks by the leaders of the 49 member states at an exclusive retreat in Queenstown, New Zealand.

Nigeria's Foreign Minister, Tomi Ikimi, was told to leave the summit yesterday.

In its first public reaction to international condemnation of the hangings, Nigeria's military government said the Commonwealth's decision to suspend its membership was unfair.

An angry Mr Mandela argued for the immediate expulsion of Nigeria, but settled for the lesser sanction after meeting the leaders of the Frontline States.

Mr Mandela, who had resisted calls for punitive measures, including sanctions, against Nigeria at the Commonwealth heads of government meeting and had argued in favour of continued talks with its military rulers, was said to be enraged when informed that poet and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others had been executed.

It was the second time that Nigerian dictator General Sani Abacha had responded with contempt to Mr Mandela's quiet diplomacy. In July, General Abacha scheduled the execution of 43 criminals on the same day that Deputy President Thabo Mbeki arrived in Lagos to plead for clemency for political dissidents sentenced to death for allegedly taking part in a coup bid.

Although news of the executions reached President Mandela in the early hours of Saturday morning (New Zealand time), he summoned Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo and staffers to an emergency meeting. He told them he wanted Nigeria expelled after it betrayed the faith he had placed in a negotiated solution to the crisis.

This was followed by talks with British Prime Minister John Major and Mr Bolger on the aircraft carrying them to the Queenstown resort.

On landing, Mr Mandela and the leaders of Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya held a special caucus meeting and put together the suspension proposal.

In a statement supported by all Commonwealth members but Gambia, the leaders said they would only readmit Nigeria once it conformed with the principles contained in the Commonwealth Harare Declaration, which sets out guidelines for democracy.

"They further decided that, if no demonstrable progress had been made towards the fulfilment of these conditions within a time frame to be stipulated, Nigeria would be expelled," Mr Bolger said.

Protesters sprayed graffiti outside the entrance of the Nigerian consulate in Rosebank, Johannesburg, yesterday, demanding the "murderers" leave the country.

Mr Mandela announced yesterday that South Africa was recalling its high commissioner in Nigeria, while the European Union's 15 member states decided to pull their envoys out of Lagos.

Nigerian police yesterday fired into the air to disperse a crowd protesting against the executions.

There were no immediate reports of injuries after the demonstration.

Five people, including four members of the opposition National Conscience movement, were arrested.

Dozens of friends and relatives of Mr Saro-Wiwa gathered at his home to condole with his widow, Hauwa.

Nigerian human rights activists have meanwhile criticised South Africa for

ST 12/11/95 Nigeria shown the door

From Page 1

"naively" opting for dialogue earlier this week, when it should have supported stronger measures.

Nigerian Human Rights Community leader Aolawale Fapohunda said that Commonwealth countries, led by South Africa, had erred by believing they could save the men's lives through dialogue. "Mr Mandela decided to play it softly, an approach which — by the way — failed in South Africa," he said.

Mr Mandela, however, defended his decision to advocate quiet diplomacy.

"My conscience is now clear, because I did everything to resolve this matter through persuasion and diplomacy. Now that that method has failed, it is absolutely necessary to take firm action," he said.

Mr Fapohunda retorted "Mr Mandela's statement is like administering medicine after death."

Mr Fapohunda said efforts by the slain leader's son, Ken Wiwa, to arrange to meet Mr Mandela to discuss the situation had come to nothing.

ROYAL TREATMENT . . . Surrounded by personal security guards, President Nelson Mandela walks up the red carpet on his arrival for the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Auckland, New Zealand, on Friday.
Picture: AP

In an article written before Ken Saro-Wiwa's death, novelist WILLIAM BOYD, author of *A Good Man in Africa*, pays tribute to a 'great man'

A MAN OF PREACH

condemned by a cynical tyranny

ST 12/11/95

(226)

A CHILLING "first" was added to my store of life experiences this week. A friend was sentenced to death.

The shock this news generated was compounded by the knowledge that he is innocent, a fact that everybody — except those who would wish him silenced — admits to be the truth.

The friend in question is the Nigerian writer and human-rights campaigner Ken Saro-Wiwa.

I met Ken in the 80s at a British council symposium in Cambridge.

In those days he was celebrated as a novelist, a publisher, a trenchant political journalist and the producer-writer of a popular soap opera. *Bas & Co*, aired on Nigerian television to audiences that frequently topped the 30 million mark.

On his visits to London from Nigeria, we would meet, and it soon became obvious that another cause was beginning to distract him from his successful, multifaceted career.

Ken is an Ogoni. The Ogamis are a small tribe of about 500 000 people whose homelands are in the fertile Niger Delta (there are more than 300 tribes in Nigeria).

The Ogonis' misfortune is that their homelands lie above a significant portion of Nigeria's oil reserves. Since the 60s, Ogoniland has been devastated by the industrial pollution caused by the extraction of oil.

What was once a placid, rural community of prosperous farmers and fishermen is now an ecological wasteland, smoke-shrouded by day and lit ghoulishly by gas flares at night.

Ken was instrumental in setting up the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and soon became its figurehead.

He gave up his writing career and devoted himself to lobbying for the Ogoni cause at home and

based on my own experience of living in Nigeria and my knowledge of the uncompromising ruthlessness of Nigerian politics. Ken's family was in England, his reputation as a leading African writer was established and growing, and he was not in the first flush of youth (he is in his mid-50s) nor in the best of health.

But there was never any question of him taking the easy way out. He went back to Nigeria and continued his protests in the face of a campaign against the Ogoni that had now moved into more sinister territory, involving agents provocateurs, rapes,

murders and the burning of villages, all carried out as part of a deliberate policy of state terrorism. There have been some 2 000 Ogoni deaths thus far.

In May last year, Ken was on his way to address a rally at an Ogoni town. He was turned back at a military roadblock and headed reluctantly for home. The rally went ahead, a riot ensued and four Ogoni elders were killed.

Ken was arrested and, with others, was accused of incitement to murder. The fact that he was in a car 32km away and heading in the opposite direction counted for nothing. After more than a year in prison he was tried before a tri-

bunal at which there is no right of appeal.

The "judicial process" has been internationally condemned as a sham. This was nothing more than a show trial orchestrated by General Abacha's regime and designed to procure the verdict required.

And, under those circumstances, Ken's supporters could hardly feel sanguine.

But the death sentence, although it was half-expected, still came as an awful shock. The brutality was apparent the price of the Ogoni struggle, and Ken's fate, have be-

come a focus for dissent in Nigeria and have concentrated the minds of those outside Nigeria as well.

Nigeria has become a pariah state in the eyes of the world, occupying a position in international esteem akin to that once held by Idi Amin's Uganda.

General Abacha's announcement of democratic general elections in 1994 was serious enough, but the

increasingly desperate and vicious measures he and his junta are employing to shore up their collapsing nation puts them beyond the civilised pale.

However, in the midst of

these wider issues, I keep thinking about what is happening to the man I know. He was described at the trial as looking "frail".

The few letters I've received from him in the last year give no indication that his convictions and passion have dimmed.

But his heart condition and the duress of prison life are clearly taking their toll.

I have described Ken Saro-Wiwa as an African Gandhi, and though he would, with typical modesty, reject the comparison, it remains valid. Ken is the bravest man I have

known. He was wholly aware of the forces arrayed against him and that the stakes were very high. He gave up a comfortable and successful life and vocation to engage in an explicitly non-violent struggle for a cause he deeply believed in. He has been shamefully and illegally threatened with the ultimate sanction.

The military regime that controls Nigeria must be left in no doubt of the serious international consequences if they try to execute this remarkable man — © *William Boyd, The Telegraph, London*



HANGED: Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa was convicted of incitement to murder after four Ogoni elders were killed during a riot at a rally in an Ogoni town. Saro-Wiwa was to address the rally but was turned back at a military roadblock. He was 32km away when the fateful riot broke out

Son had premonition

By RAY HARTLEY

KEN WIWA flew 23 000km to Auckland, New Zealand, from his London home to plead with the heads of Commonwealth governments to save his father from execution at the hands of Nigeria's military dictatorship.

In the early hours of Saturday morning he broke down in his hotel room as the BBC World Service brought news of the hanging of his father and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa.

Stunned colleagues in the Nigerian Human Rights Community organisation said that Mr Wiwa had had a "premonition" about the execution and had become deeply depressed on Friday evening.

Two days before, shortly after Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha confirmed the death sentences handed down by a military tribunal, Mr Wiwa and Nigerian author Wole Soyinka had met English and Australian

officials to plea for action. They called for economic sanctions and the expulsion of Nigeria from the Commonwealth.

Disappointed by the bland response they received, Mr Soyinka told journalists he suspected Commonwealth leaders were naively playing diplomatic games.

Mr Wiwa was more direct. "My father's life is being used as a bargaining chip," he said. He expected President Nelson Mandela to make a more positive contribution. "If Mandela condemns this process, I don't think they will have the moral authority to go ahead with this," he said.

But Mr Mandela was cautious, backing the diplomatic approach. At Friday morning's opening session, he shook hands with Nigerian Foreign Minister Tomi Ikimi.

The gesture was greeted with dismay by Mr Wiwa. "If the world had restricted itself to quiet diplomacy, I don't think Mr Mandela would be alive today, let alone be a president."

Shock and outrage!

World reels after Nigerian executions

(226)
CP/12/11/95

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela's "softly, softly" stance on Nigeria was abandoned yesterday as news broke of the execution of Nigerian minority rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others

Mandela led calls to terminate Nigeria's Commonwealth membership and was described as being very angry at military ruler General Sani Abacha's overt dismissal of clemency pleas from heads of state, especially after he pursued a quiet diplomacy policy to press the west African state towards democracy

According to SATV news late yesterday, Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth

However, he told New Zealand television that "I was correct in trying to persuade the Nigerian authorities to consider clemency"

oma and Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe at the scenic Millbrook resort on New Zealand's South Island, where the heads of state retreated for relaxation and informal talks on the second day of their two-yearly meeting

Their weekend was, however, dominated by the hangings, and they went straight into an emergency session

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who travelled to Nigeria early this year as an envoy of Mandela, was horrified at the executions, his spokesman John Allen said

Tutu called for economic, diplomatic and sporting sanctions against Nigeria

Africa next year

The Inkatha Freedom Party Youth Brigade condemned the executions and warned that "whoever rules with sword will die with sword"

Lawyers for Human Rights has expressed horror, but not surprise, at the execution of nine Nigerian opposition members on Friday

Media director Laura Poll-yat said on Saturday: "We were warned on Wednesday night already that the Nigerian government would go ahead with the executions."

Immediate dismissal of the Nigerian High Commissioner; Withdrawal of the South African High Commissioner in Nigeria;

Immediate implementation of mandatory sanctions against Nigeria;

Call to the people of Nigeria to intensify their struggle against this illegitimate gangster and

The release of all political prisoners

Nigerians and to send an envoy to Nigeria to register South Africa's disapproval of the executions

The PAC has sent a letter of protest to the Nigerian embassy in Pretoria

A Maori activist group burnt an effigy of Nigeria's military ruler Gen Sani Abacha

Proposals for a mission to Nigeria by an eminent persons group, made up of African heads of state, had been set aside for the moment, said Mandela's personal spokesman Joel Neishtenzel

Saro-Wiwa's son has spent the week lobbying Commonwealth leaders gathered in New Zealand to take action against Nigeria, including direct appeals to Mandela to use his moral authority in Africa to stop the executions

"Mr Mandela and other Commonwealth leaders will hopefully now realise the utter futility of dealing with a government that has not a scintilla of concern about how it is viewed in the global community," the group said

Due to technical reasons our leading editorial comment on Page 16 was written before the executions of the Nigerian activists. - Sapa

NO MORE SOFT TALK... President Mandela is now leading calls to have Nigeria banned from the Commonwealth.



Two-year deadline for Nigeria

(226) BO 13/11/95

AUCKLAND — Suspended from the Commonwealth on Saturday, Nigeria has been given two years to move to democracy or risk expulsion and possible trade sanctions

This was the decision of the Commonwealth heads of state meeting in New Zealand to give teeth to its 1991 Harare Declaration of its key political and economic principles, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting chairman and New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger said

He also announced the association would admit Mozambique to the organisation as a "unique and special case".

Bolger said Mozambique was a special case because it was surrounded by Commonwealth members and its application was supported by the other southern African countries

Commonwealth officials said further serious violations of the Harare principles could see Nigeria suspended sooner than the next heads of state

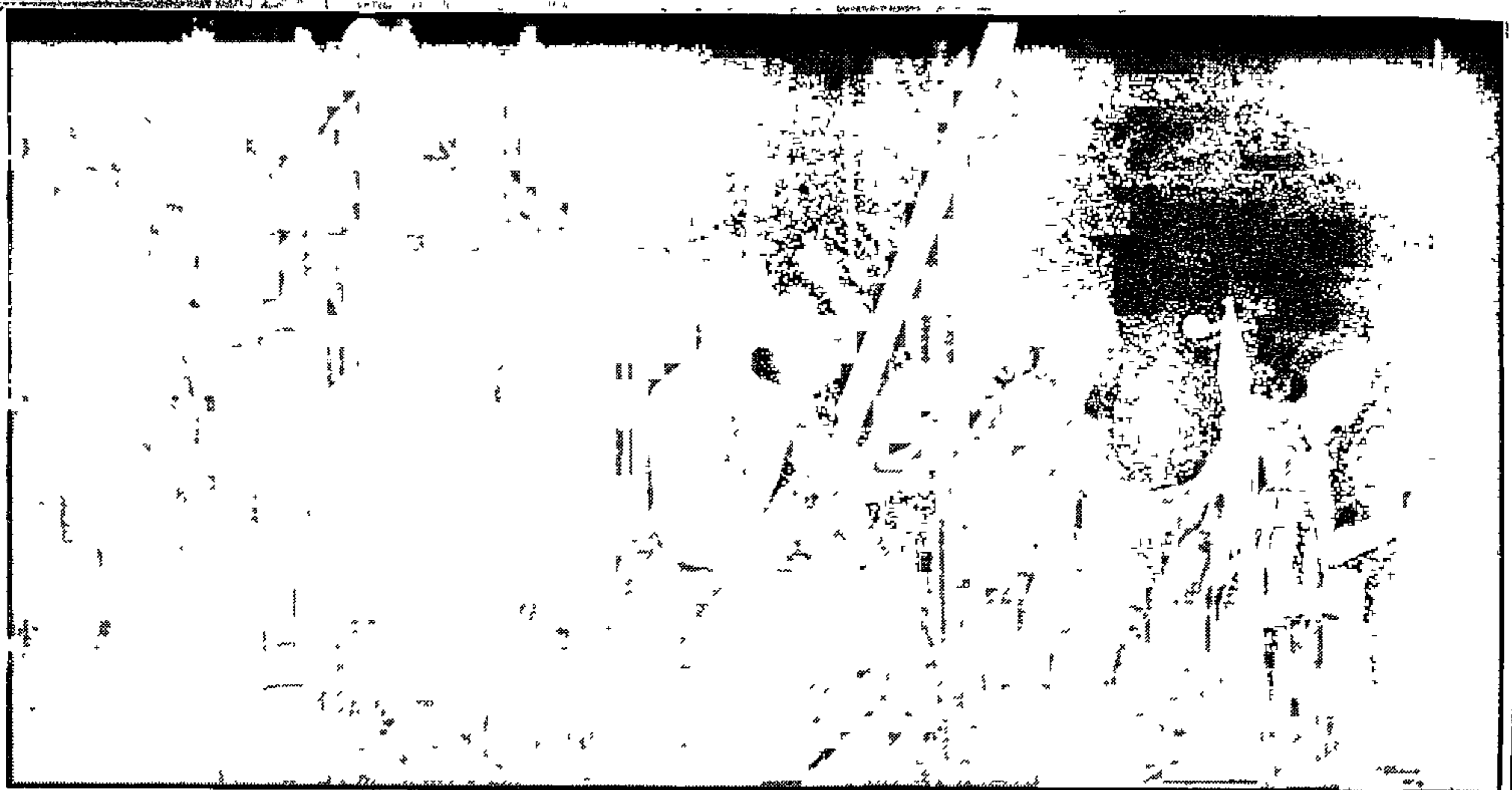
meeting in 1997.

Among measures decided on in response to violations of Harare principles were "consideration of appropriate further bilateral and multilateral measures" which included "trade restrictions ... to reinforce the need for change", said the Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme on the Harare Commonwealth Declaration

The heads of state spent the weekend at Millbrook resort on New Zealand's South Island for a private retreat where they expected to relax and hold informal talks

The weekend was, however, dominated by discussions on Nigeria, which on Friday executed nine human rights activists, including writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, despite calls for clemency.

Meanwhile Norwegian state-owned oil and gas company Statoil said that although it was "deeply concerned" about the situation, it would not pull out of Nigeria. — Sapa-AFP, Reuter.



CONCERT PIECE: President Mandela shares the stage with the Tangarua College Samoan culture group.

Mandela slated over his Nigerian 'silence'

ALAN ROBINSON
The Argus Foreign Service

LONDON — President Mandela's reluctance to lead the world's protest against the "corrupt" Nigerian regime before the execution of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa has drawn bitter criticism from South African-born British playwright Ronald Harwood

Harwood, one of the fiercest anti-apartheid campaigners during South Africa's pre-liberation years, slates the president for his silence in the days

before the hanging of Saro-Wiwa and eight other political campaigners

Harwood, currently international president of the writers' organisation PEN, says that for two years the outside world conducted secret negotiations with "the brutal thugs" who imprisoned Saro-Wiwa. But it was too late

"The man I am most bitterly disappointed with is Nelson Mandela," says Harwood in an angry by-lined article in the mass-selling Mail on Sunday

"He has forgotten that when he was sentenced to death it was international outrage which forced the white South African government to commute his sentence to life imprisonment

"In the Saro-Wiwa case, he has not led the protests and calls to action, but negotiated privately and in whispers with the Nigerian government

"He sent Archbishop Desmond Tutu to talk to the Nigerians, but his envoy's typically forthright advice against nego-

tations with such men was disregarded

"I remember when Mr Mandela said it did not matter if you were endangering yourself through protests, the protest was more important. He did not mention keeping silent in the face of injustice

"It seems he has not followed his own creed nor learnt the lessons of this century that you cannot negotiate with tyrants. If I know that, for God's sake, why doesn't he?" asked Harwood

ARG 13/11/95

I expect to die, says Nigerian activist in prison cell writings

(22b) ARG 13/11/95

NEW YORK — Executed Nigerian human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa has said in comments published posthumously that he expected to die at the hands of the "Stone-Age dictators addicted to blood" who run his country

"I do not fear being executed. I expect it. The men we are dealing with are mindless," the writer said in letters smuggled out of his prison cell in May

Nigeria's military rulers defied the world and hanged Mr Saro-Wiwa and eight other members of his Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples (Mosop) on Friday

"(Nigeria's rulers) have been responsible for the African nightmare, afraid as they are of ideas and men of ideas. They are daylight robbers who kill for money," wrote Mr Saro-Wiwa

The 54-year-old had led a campaign for self-determination for the 500 000 Ogoni minority and protection for the environment in their homeland, which has been exploited by foreign oil companies since 1954

The nine were sentenced to death by a tribunal for the murders in May 1994 of four pro-government Ogoni chiefs

"The charges are trumped up. I had long ago decided not to dignify the tribunal with my presence, challenging the government to go ahead and do its worst," he said

"My younger colleagues did not quite understand this, but I think they are now beginning to see that my stand was the best thing that could be done

"The prosecution case would not hold water even before the corrupt normal courts of Nigeria, hence the tribunal is being used to get what the government wants" — Reuter

Oil traders calm after nine activists die in Nigeria ⁽²²⁶⁾ ARG 13/11/95

□ *Sanctions on exports seen as 'highly unlikely'*

LONDON — Oil markets are not expected to feel much impact today from the furore surrounding Nigeria's execution of nine minority rights campaigners. A ban on the country's oil exports is highly unlikely, traders say.

Oil prices closed slightly lower on Friday as the market ignored news of the executions. Oil traders doubted the West would slap sanctions on Nigeria as it did on Baghdad after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990.

"At the end of the day, the oil supply will continue to flow

from Nigeria. It is too important for the United States or Europe to embargo," one London oil trader said.

Although international scorn intensified over the weekend when the Commonwealth suspended Nigeria and the US and the European Union withdrew ambassadors, an oil embargo apparently was not even under consideration by major importers.

British Prime Minister John Major said yesterday that oil sanctions would do more harm to the Nigerian people than

they would to the military government, and a White House official said Washington was not considering an oil embargo — although it may ban oil equipment sales.

Nigeria, one of the largest producers in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, is a major source of high-quality crude to markets in the US and Western Europe.

Most of its 1.7 million barrels a day of exports goes to the US, Spain, France, Germany and the Netherlands, where refiners welcome the light, sweet

grades, which have high yields of petrol and heating fuel.

The US alone bought 750 000 barrels a day of Nigerian crude last year, while Western Europe imported about 725 000 barrels.

Though Britain buys very little Nigerian oil, Anglo-Dutch oil giant Shell oversees the output of about half of Nigeria's oil, and is expected to sign by the end of the year a \$4 billion liquefied natural gas deal, although Mr Major said he would discuss it with Shell in the "next few days."

(226)

Shell's Nigerian deal questioned

ET(BR) 13/11/95

By JONATHAN THATCHER

London - The British government, furious with Nigeria over the hanging of nine human rights activists, wants to talk to oil giant Shell about its involvement in a \$3,6 billion Nigerian gas project

But The Observer newspaper said yesterday that Shell would sign the liquified natural gas deal this week despite international outrage over the hangings and the threat of trade sanctions

A Royal Dutch/Shell group spokesman said he was still trying to find out the fate of the project

"It is certain as to whether the British government will be in touch with Shell to discuss their plans for the next few days," Prime Minister John Major said in a BBC television interview

"But quite where they are with their plans, what obligations they have entered into and what the impact of any action would be is not something I yet know and I would like to reserve judgment on that," Major said

Shell also produces about half of Nigeria's oil, on which the country's tottering economy depends

In his interview, Major warned that oil sanctions on Nigeria could harm the people more than its military leaders, though he would press its allies to ban arms exports to the country — Reuter See inside

Writer hanged at fifth (226) attempt

CT 13/11/95

LAGOS: It took five attempts to hang Nigerian playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa before his body went limp, newspapers reported yesterday.

"Lord take my soul, but the struggle continues," were the anti-government activist's final words before he died, blindfolded and dangling from a rope, on Friday morning.

Meanwhile, South Africa's high commissioner in Lagos, Mr George Nene, arrived in Johannesburg last night. He had been recalled by President Nelson Mandela following Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth in response to the executions on Friday of Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists.

'Sad'

"The situation in Nigeria is a bit sad," Mr Nene said. "Nobody expected the Nigerians to go to the lengths they have gone. We really feel bad about what has happened."

Several Lagos newspapers reported yesterday that Saro-Wiwa was the first of the nine condemned Ogoni ethnic minority activists to be hanged in the southern oil port of Port Harcourt.

According to the daily, AM News, the hangmen made four attempts before succeeding in hanging Saro-Wiwa. At one point, according to the newspaper, Saro-Wiwa asked his executioners: "Why are you people treating me like this? Which type of country is this?" — Sapa-Reuter-AFP

● See Page 2

Nigeria angry at suspension

APR 13 11/95

□ 'Issue was over-dramatised'

(226)
AUCKLAND. — Nigeria said today its suspension from the Commonwealth threatened the whole existence of the 52-member body and was a "gross abuse" of the organisation's democratic principles

"The impact of this decision on Nigeria will be far-reaching. There is no question that the Commonwealth has taken a big gamble," Nigerian Foreign Minister Tom Ikimi told a news conference

He accused the Commonwealth, as it ended a summit in New Zealand, of violating its principles on human rights and good government, set out in the 1991 Harare Declaration

"This kind of gross abuse of the Harare Principles, in its enforcement, is bound to subvert the sovereignty of member states and thereby threaten the very existence of the Commonwealth," Mr Ikimi said

"I therefore urge that all members of the Commonwealth submit themselves to scrutiny in regard to adherence to the Harare Principles"

Commonwealth leaders suspended Nigeria on Saturday after the military government ignored its calls for clemency and executed nine minority rights activists found guilty of murder, including writer Ken Saro-Wiwa. Nigeria faces expulsion in two years if it does not reform

"Clearly the issue of Ken Saro-Wiwa was over-politicised and over-dramatised," said Mr Ikimi

"The four Ogoni prominent citizens who had been so ruthlessly murdered by Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa and his accomplices have not been treated as persons equally deserving of human rights but rather as mere statistics," Mr Ikimi said

Commonwealth leaders made their decision to suspend Nigeria based only on media reports that the nine executions had taken place and before they had official confirmation of the hangings, he said

Mr Ikimi said the Commonwealth, made up of Britain and its former colonies, had failed to grasp the complexity of political and economic challenges Nigeria faced.

He said the Commonwealth was turning the Harare Principles into "an unlimited mandate for interference in the internal affairs of states of Commonwealth countries"

The Commonwealth's action on Nigeria was aimed at restoring its credibility after accusations it acted weakly and too late in Mr Saro-Wiwa's case

Mr Ikimi said it was impractical for the Commonwealth to seek a two-year timetable for democracy in his country

He said any group monitoring moves towards democracy in Nigeria would have to be drawn from countries with no political prisoners, no frontline opposition leaders in jail, where press freedom was unfettered, and where basic human rights were respected in accordance with the Harare Principles — Reuter

Commonwealth taken into new era – Bolger

Star 13/11/95

World body agrees on forms of disciplinary

action against member states

who are guilty of human rights abuses (226) (2000)

MARTIN HUNTER/AP

THE INDEPENDENT
Auckland

The Commonwealth yesterday agreed to a package of measures which creates the framework for the expulsion of member states and for economic sanctions if they fail to meet basic democratic norms.

Agreement of some kind of human rights package was on the agenda even before the execution of the Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa on Friday. But officials admitted that his death had "galvanised" Commonwealth leaders, serving as a deadly reminder of the need to act.

The programme accepted at the resort of Millbrook in New Zealand is intended to give teeth to the Harare declaration of 1991 which emphasised the importance of human rights and democracy.

A series of Commonwealth responses could range from collective disapproval and bilateral *démarches* by member countries, to exclusion from high-level Commonwealth meetings, to suspension, sanctions and expulsion.

Eight foreign ministers will head a special group to assess infringements and recommend action.

On Saturday, Commonwealth leaders responded to the hanging of Saro-Wiwa and eight others by suspending Nigeria's membership. It is still unclear whether this will make Nigeria more malleable, or whether the country will simply decide to walk out of the Commonwealth entirely.



Together we stand ... Nigerian human rights lawyers Olawale Fapohunda (left) and Innocent Chukwuma outside the Aotea Centre in Auckland yesterday after a press conference welcoming the Commonwealth's decision to suspend Nigeria.

Nigeria has traditionally been one of the most important members of the organisation. Current Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku is a former Nigerian foreign minister.

Nigeria can be expelled in due course if more than 40 prisoners – including the apparent winner of the 1993 elections, Chief Moshood Abiola – are not released from jail.

Chief Anyaoku yesterday welcomed the actions taken by the Commonwealth against his country. "What happened this weekend was bound to happen because the

credibility of the Commonwealth was put in question," he said.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger, hosting the summit, said yesterday's agreement contained "far-reaching decisions" and "takes the Commonwealth into a new era".

The Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme now defines the responses when a country is "clearly in violation" of the Harare declaration.

Delegates described the Commonwealth move as "removing Nigeria completely as a force of influence" in politics.

ly blunders

Star 13/11/95

(226)

Demands for expulsion from S Africa of envoy

By JOVIAL RANTAO
Political Reporter

The ANC and other political parties have called for the expulsion of the Nigerian high commissioner from South Africa and will consider additional measures to expedite the achievement of democracy in Nigeria.

ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa said the Commonwealth should show that the military junta's "execution of Saro-Wiwa and others reflects a callous disregard for the norms of justice and the moral weight of world opinion."

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and other political organisations have called for an immediate end to issuing visas to Nigerians who wish to enter SA and also for sanctions against the oil-producing West African state.

There have also been calls to the

SA Football Association to withdraw an invitation to the Nigerian national soccer squad to participate in the Four Nations tournament later this month.

Officials were scheduled to hold an emergency meeting today to discuss the invitation but have indicated they were unlikely to bar Nigeria from the tournament.

Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Aziz Pahad, who is in constant contact with President Mandela and Foreign Affairs Minister Alfred Nzo in New Zealand, is expected to hold a media briefing today on the Government's policies concerning the Nigerian leaders.

The PAC has urged Mandela to suspend diplomatic relations with Nigeria.

The SA high commissioner has been recalled from his post.

► ...Page 2

Demands for envoy's expulsion (226)

► From Page 1

Star 11/11/95
Cosatu also called on the Government, the Organisation of African Unity, the International Labour Organisation and the UN to extend whatever action they take against Nigeria to Algeria and Sudan.

ANC Youth League president Lulu Johnson called on the Government to impose travel bans against Nigerians, and to cancel all planned soccer events involving the West Africans.

He said his organisation would convene a youth summit in SA to formulate a campaign against Nigeria's military government headed by Gen Sanu Abacha.

Inkatha Freedom Party Youth Brigade spokesman Evans Sosibo said Abacha was a "rotten potato among the African leaders".

Sosibo declared: "He is so cruel (and) ignorant, and deserves heavy punishment from all African countries."

WORLD

Nigeria lashes back over its suspension

(226) 14/11/95

AUCKLAND — The Commonwealth ended what was described as a "momentous" four-day summit yesterday to bitter denunciation from Nigeria over its suspension for executing nine political activists.

Commonwealth secretary-general Emeka Anyaoku said the 52-member association had come to New Zealand determined to do three main things — "move beyond rhetoric to action, put principles into practise and demonstrate a determination to live up to those principles".

New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger, who was the chairman, described the summit as "quite a momentous meeting", impelled by a mission to promote democracy, human rights and development.

The summit, leavened by a two-day informal meeting in the South Island resort of Queenstown, will be remembered for the unprecedented decision by the Commonwealth to set down a yardstick of democratic principles, in line with a 1991 declaration its mem-

bers made in Harare.

The first nation to be targeted was Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, which was suspended after its military junta defied appeals for clemency and hanged nine political activists.

If Nigeria fails to introduce democracy within two years, it will be expelled.

With the decision still reverberating two days later, Nigerian Foreign Minister Tomi Ikimi yesterday criticised the suspension as unfair and unjustified, saying it had "gravely and ominously altered" an organisation known for its flexible approach.

"The full implications of this development may not be known now but there is no question that the Commonwealth has taken a big gamble," Ikimi said.

"This kind of gross abuse of the Harare Principles in its enforcement is bound to subvert the sovereignty of member states and thereby threaten the very existence of the Commonwealth," he said.

He said in future the Commonwealth should not hesitate to suspend or expel other members who defaulted on the rules.

"Until this happens, what has been done in respect of my country would stand as selective, discriminatory and grossly unfair," he said.

Bolger said foreign ministers from SA, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Malaysia, Jamaica, Britain, Canada and New Zealand would make up a group to report on whether Nigeria was moving towards democracy.

In other decisions an overwhelmingly majority of the Commonwealth — Britain was the most visible exception — strongly criticised nuclear testing but did not name China or France, the only countries still carrying out nuclear blasts.

Britain's Prime Minister John Major dismissed the statement on Friday as "factually inaccurate, intellectually inconsistent and unbalanced".

Conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was of "the highest

importance for the international community as a major step towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime and efforts toward global nuclear disarmament with the ultimate goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons", the summit's final communiqué said.

Leaders agreed that the UN needed to be reformed and revitalised, the communiqué said.

They also called on the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank "to develop constructive proposals for addressing the multilateral debt problem in a comprehensive way, making full use of their available resources to finance a solution".

In what may be a case of the Commonwealth's enduring attractiveness, Mozambique became the first country to join the organisation which has no colonial or historic links to Britain.

The Commonwealth agreed to "warmly welcome" Mozambique as a "unique and special case", Bolger said on Sunday — Sapa-AFP



Nigerian Foreign Minister Chief Tomi Ikimi, right, reacts to a journalist after a news conference in Auckland, New Zealand. Picture AP

Anger lurks under surface in wake of Nigerian hangings

(226) 0014M/95
PORT HARCOURT — Outside the public cemetery in this Nigerian town, sealed off by police since Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogonis were buried there at the weekend, all seemed calm as people went to the nearby Anglican and Catholic churches yesterday.

In the large southeastern oil outlet, a few kilometres from Saro-Wiwa's Ogoni birthplace, there have been no demonstrations since Friday's hangings, nor other outward signs of mourning for the late author, an Ogoni rights leader.

The apparent normality is partly contrived. The Funray, Port Harcourt's only daily newspaper, has omitted any mention of the hangings and earlier refused to publish an open letter by local leaders to head of state Gen Sani Abacha appealing for a stay of execution, due to a news blackout on the issue by the state government.

Fear overrules the anger, which is expressed in private. "Some groups like the Hausas may be happy that they eliminated Saro-Wiwa," says a motor mechanic. "The people that are bitter are the southern minorities. We are asking why the world did not do anything until the man was killed. We don't dare to do anything ourselves because we do not have guns." The outward signs of normal life hide bitterness and despair among many who believe that Saro-Wiwa and the others were unjustly convicted of murder by a government-appointed tribunal because his campaign for better use of oil revenues, and control over the environment, challenged the military government and the oil industry which funds it.

Across the Niger Delta, where millions live in poverty amid Nigeria's main source of wealth, the fate of Saro-Wiwa is seen as a warning from a regime dominated by the Hausa-speaking north to minority tribes which demand autonomy.

The trial and execution are, however, also a setback for attempts by multinational oil companies in Nigeria to improve strained relations with communities which surround their oilfields.

Most of the vulnerable operations are run by Royal Dutch/Shell, which produces half of Nigeria's oil and unlike the other big producers, Chevron and Mobil of the US, operates mostly on land.

Shell had appealed to Abacha not to execute the Ogonis and last Friday expressed sadness at the hangings, which it said would harm the ultimate goal of reconciliation. The Anglo-Dutch oil company withdrew from Ogoniland in January 1993 after clashes with the community, which accused it of polluting the environment. Shell has made no plans to return to the area.

Grief for the four Ogoni politicians murdered last year has been forgotten amid the resentment since the trial. None of those hanged on Friday carried out the murders, said an Ogoni politician.

"The local people know who did these killings, but the police were not allowed to investigate. The state administrator just called in the army which picked up bystanders and arrested Saro-Wiwa."

Saro-Wiwa and the others were taken from the army camp, where they had been held for more than a year, to be hanged in the civilian prison, an old colonial building overlooking the Bundu waterside slum. Their corpses were put in the back of an open truck and taken to the public cemetery, where they were buried. A group of Ogonis who tried to get near were pursued and beaten up by police, according to nearby residents.

All weekend, an armoured car was stationed at the corner of Aggrey, near Saro-Wiwa's deserted office, and a paramilitary group guarded the cemetery entrance. Friends and relatives have not been allowed near the grave.

In Ogoniland, meanwhile, the army has stepped up operations to pre-empt any uprising. "The army has invaded, there must be two battalions (present) and most people are too frightened to go out," an Ogoni said — Financial Times

SA ousts Nigeria from four-nation soccer event

BD 14/11/95

(226)

SA SAID yesterday Nigeria would not be allowed to take part in a four-nation African soccer tournament this week.

The sports ministry said the decision was taken after a meeting with the SA Football Association, and followed the move by the Commonwealth to suspend Nigeria over Friday's executions of nine human rights activists.

The tournament in Mmabatho also involves Egypt and Zambia, and the association is seeking a late replacement for the soccer-mad country.

Nigeria's military regime has angrily rejected condemnation of its executions, countering diplomatic snubs with a recall of its envoys from key Western countries, and even from SA.

As the EU said it was considering a trade embargo against the country, national radio announced Nigeria was withdrawing its ambassadors from the 15 EU states, as well as from the US and Pretoria. However, **Stephané Bothma** reports Nigeria's high commissioner to SA, Marius Offo, has still

not returned to the country after being summoned to Lagos two weeks ago. A foreign affairs spokesman said no decision has yet been taken on Offo's status in SA. SA has recalled its ambassador to Nigeria.

Nigerian Foreign Minister **Ikim Tomi** said his country's suspension was unfair and could "threaten the very existence of the Commonwealth." The convictions of the activists were based on a legally constituted court ruling.

Meanwhile, the ANC has called an urgent meeting for today with its alliance partners and other organisations, including Business SA and Nafcoc, to discuss the situation in Nigeria and formulate a programme of action.

The meeting would also discuss ways of ensuring Nigeria complied with Commonwealth resolutions for urgent movement towards democracy.

— Sapa, Reuter, AP

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Comment: Page 16

Abacha could rekindle Commonwealth flames

SELDOM in international affairs has a gauntlet been thrown down so arrogantly by a challenger seemingly so vulnerable to retaliation. But there may have been method in the Nigerian regime's seemingly inexplicable decision to execute communally activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others on the very day the Commonwealth summit opened in Auckland, ignoring their appeals and leaving delegates stunned and outraged.

Gen Sami Abacha, as ruthless a military leader as Nigeria has produced, holds the fate of Nigeria in his hands, as much a hostage to his power as the men he hanged. If I can do this, his gesture seemed to say, in defiance of pleas from President Nelson Mandela, beware what I can do to Nigeria if you force my hand.

Whether events would have turned out differently had Abacha and his regime been treated less tolerantly by Britain and other key partners when he took power two years ago is impossible to say.

But the signals he received from London have been inconsistent. A ban on visas for military members of the regime has often been breached. Instead it should have been strengthened by including civilian

ministers who have been free to come and go, not to mention being invited to a foreign office reception to mark a Nigerian investment conference in London last month.

However, whatever shortcomings there may have been in British policy, Prime Minister John Major can have left Abacha in no doubt about his repugnance for a regime he accused of "judicial murder". Major and other Commonwealth leaders drew up for the first time the framework under which they can try to ensure member states meet the principles set out in Harare. If necessary they can introduce graduated forms of pressure beginning with suspension of errant states and ending in sanctions.

While Nigeria is vulnerable to an oil embargo, which if properly applied and policed could cripple it in months, it is not necessarily the best or safest way of returning the country to democracy.

Thirty-five years of mismanagement since independence in 1960 have taken a dreadful toll, and sanctions could induce a trauma Nigeria might not survive. Its civil institutions are so weakened by neglect and corruption that the country has lost the capacity to manage its own

MICHAEL HOLMAN in London

recovery, or be trusted with the receipts from the 1.4-million barrels of oil a day that are its main export. Without external assistance on



ABACHA

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an unprecedented nature and scale, the crisis in Africa's most populous nation will deepen with profound consequences.

So while sanctions should be kept as an option, there may be a role for the Commonwealth in finding an alternative. However, no policy will succeed and no external assistance is possible until the gravity of the crisis encourages Nigeria's civilian leaders to bury their differences and set aside personal ambitions.

Reconciling Nigeria's politicians and convincing them to pool their talents will be no easy task. The first step the Commonwealth can take is to offer to convene an externally located conference under a Commonwealth chairman, which brings civilians and soldiers together.

But more than politics has to be on the agenda if it is to win the support of politicians and soldiers alike. While keeping the sanctions stick in the background, a large carrot will be more effective. The most enticing carrot would be substantial and rapid relief on an external debt approaching \$40bn.

The Commonwealth should be in the forefront of efforts to convince creditors that a radical review is needed if Africa's second largest

economy is to recover.

In return for rapid, phased, but substantial debt relief, Nigeria must do more than implement an economic reform programme. It must allow on-the-spot monitoring of key ministers — oil, finance and central bank. And however distasteful the prospect, the army must be party to the process.

A demobilisation fund, drawing oil receipts which are currently diverted into army pockets, should be used to win the soldiers' support for Commonwealth-monitored elections. The army will co-operate only if there is a well funded programme with several objectives to help reduce the size of the army by retraining those who want to leave, improve living quarters; and, above all, provide golden handshakes to officers who want to leave and retirement gratuities for those who want to stay.

Its faults notwithstanding, the Commonwealth is well equipped to play the role of convener and honest broker. There is just one thing missing: the passion and the fervour that the Commonwealth brought to its campaign to end apartheid. Ken Saro-Wiwa's death should help rekindle it. —Financial Times.

SA and US in talks on Nigeria

PRETORIA — Top South African and United States officials are meeting in Pretoria today for talks on several African issues, including the situation in Nigeria.

A government spokesman said Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad would meet George Moose, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

A report from New York said the US had begun talks on a United Nations General Assembly resolution that would condemn human rights abuses in Nigeria and recommend a voluntary arms ban on the West African nation.

But an American official said US Ambassador Madeleine Albright believed it could prove difficult to adopt a resolution in the Security Council, where sanctions would be mandatory.

The resolution would condemn the exe-

cution of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists and call for a report on human rights in Nigeria.

● In Johannesburg, the Congress of South African Trade Unions said today that Western countries and media needed to speak out and take action against African countries which committed human rights atrocities.

Cosatu was referring to the failure of Commonwealth countries to take action against Nigeria before the executions

The Media Institute of Southern Africa said African governments should take a united stand to isolate the Nigerian regime

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"As the executions prove, the illegitimate Nigerian government has no qualms about wantonly abusing fundamental human rights," the institute said. — Sapa-
Reuter

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'Tyranny can no longer be tolerated'

APR 14/11/95
TYRONE SEALE
Political Staff

AUCKLAND. — Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth serves to prove that the world can no longer tolerate tyranny, says President Mandela. (226)

On the first stop on his three-day state visit of New Zealand, Mr Mandela spoke at the Anglican congregation of St Matthew-in-the-City where he paid tribute to the role New Zealand's anti-apartheid activists had played in pressuring the apartheid regime.

Regarding the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting which ended here yesterday, Mr Mandela said it had been momentous and most fruitful, having put high on the agenda the question of social and economic development.

He added that the summit had taken a principled stand and set out mechanisms to promote human rights, democracy and justice.

"We are convinced that we have sent the most effective signal in response to the sad and tragic events in Nigeria.

"We hope the reality has sunk in that, more than ever before, the world cannot countenance tyranny. Now is the time for all those who have the interest of this country (Nigeria) and the African continent at heart, to unite and ensure that democracy is attained in the shortest time possible.

"We hope this plea of the world community will be heeded, and that the tragic loss of life will not recur."

Nigerian oil embargo 'vital'

FROM THE INDEPENDENT OF LONDON

Nigeria — Until this weekend the vast majority of readers of this newspaper — and most of its journalists — had never heard of Ogonland

Yet this desperately poor corner of Nigeria has provided many of us with a good living for 30 years

Its oil has earned vast profits for Shell, the Anglo-Dutch oil giant, and the revenue has been spent by the Nigerian government and oligarchy in large measure on European goods. Nice for us, wonderful for the Nigerian elite — but a tragedy for the Ogoni

Their country has been severely polluted by oil leaks, while little or nothing has been spent on improving life for this minor member of Nigeria's fractious family of 250 tribes

Small wonder that their resentment should have given rise to Ken Saro-Wiwa's campaign on behalf of

the Ogoni and that this campaign — frustrated and suppressed by the military regime — should eventually have become militant, with violent results. It was always a sorry story. Now the Ogonis have a martyr, a poet hanged in irons after a show trial. And we failed to save him

Respectable governments hoped and believed that hush-hush diplomacy and pleas behind the scenes would work, that the Nigerian government would do us all a favour and quietly commute his sentence and eventually let him out, allowing him to move to London or New York

Then we could all get on with the business of arguing with General Sani Abacha and his cronies about a return to democracy, while continuing to trade with Nigeria

This strategy now lies in ruins. So, arguments have begun again about the efficacy of sanctions (in the case of Nigeria, these would

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have to be oil sanctions) and the role of morality in foreign policy. In the anti-camp are those who argue that we stand to lose much of our annual £600 million worth of trade with Nigeria, thereby jeopardising British jobs and livelihoods, that economic sanctions are never effective, that only the poorer Nigerians would suffer, and that international action might precipitate a Nigerian bloodbath

United

It is certainly true that unless the international community stands united over oil sanctions, Britain will simply be replaced by other trade partners and any embargo will fail. However, recent history records three effective examples of the use of economic sanctions in South Africa, Iraq and Serbia. So it can be done. It is true, as well, that poorer Nigerians will suffer but richer ones — influential with the

military regime — will suffer far more

However, the last argument is the most important. If the present military regime continues in power, then bloody chaos is inevitable. Under Abacha repression has got worse, the economy has slumped, crime and corruption have risen to levels that threaten all social cohesion, Nigeria is becoming a basket-case

The lessons of Rwanda and, indeed, the former Yugoslavia suggest that the greatest danger could come when elements in the present regime — incapable of reforming the mess they themselves have created — decide that fomenting tribal differences will help to save their own skins

That is why we must shake-off our timidity and take action. An oil embargo should start now. Whatever the appeasers say, the price of inaction is always heavy — and is always eventually paid



SHELL SHOCKED Revulsion against the execution of Nigerian human rights activist Ken Saro Wiwa and eight co-trialists on Friday has put the multinational Anglo Dutch Shell on the target list for a worldwide boycott. South Africa's Earthlife Africa, which joined the boycott fray with Greenpeace against Shell's planned dumping of a North Sea oil rig earlier this year, has called for a "comprehensive, international boycott of Shell products" until the multinational disinvested from the west African

Deaths: Shell comes under fire

PAUL LEWIS

HUMAN rights advocates and environmental organisations in the United States and Britain have angrily criticised the giant Shell Oil company following the hanging of Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight activists, saying the company damaged the executed men's reputation with Nigeria's military rulers and could have done more to secure their reprieve.

The activists, led by Saro-Wiwa and called the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni Peoples, had protested against environmental damage by Shell and other oil companies in the Ogoni region in the Niger Delta, as well as human rights abuses committed there by the Nigerian military against the Ogoni and other ethnic groups.

Shell suspended operations in the Ogoni region in 1993, but still produces about half of Nigeria's crude oil output of two million barrels per day.

Influence

"Shell is the bulwark of Nigeria's economy, producing almost half its oil," said Mr William Shulz, president of Amnesty International.

"It did not do all it could have done. It had influence which it did not exert."

Mr Gavin Grant of the Ogoni Community Association, a London-based organisation that supported Saro-Wiwa's campaign, said: "Shell

demonised Ken Saro-Wiwa in the eyes of the Nigerian military."

Human Rights Watch called on Shell and other oil companies to close down their operations in Nigeria.

Royal Dutch/Shell Group, the company's formal name, issued a statement from its London headquarters expressing "deep regret". It said that it had no immediate plans to scale down its operations in Nigeria.

Behind the anger with Shell lies a perception that the company was half-hearted in its efforts to secure pardons for the men after they were condemned to death at a trial widely seen as flawed on charges they had incited demonstrators to murder four pro-government chiefs.

On October 31, after Saro-Wiwa and the other defendants were found guilty, Shell acknowledged it was being pressed to use its influence with the Nigerian government to secure clemency for them, but said it would not do so. "It is not for a commercial organisation like Shell to interfere in the legal processes of a sovereign state such as Nigeria," it said.

The company also accused Saro-Wiwa of supporting violence, saying that although his organisation asserted that its campaign against the oil drillers was non-violent, "this is not our experience."

The company's grudging attitude brought protests from Saro-Wiwa's supporters in the West. On November 2 Shell issued another statement in which it dropped the accusation that Saro-Wiwa abetted violence and called it

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"understandable" that the families of those condemned to death should issue "emotional and moving appeals on their behalf".

But the company expressed no regret at the death sentences and again refused to intervene.

Only after the death sentences were confirmed did Shell issue a third statement last Wednesday, saying that Mr Cor Herkstroter, chairman of the committee of managing directors of the Royal Dutch Shell Group, had written to the Nigerian military ruler, General Sani Abacha "requesting clemency".

Warned

But it warned that pressing the Nigerian authorities to commute the sentences might prove counter-productive, saying "many of those who know Africa best, like Nelson Mandela, have advocated quiet diplomacy".

In this case, however, quiet diplomacy did not work.

□ *Koolum Kalyan, general manager, corporate affairs, Shell South Africa (Pty) Ltd. comments:*

Shell has on various occasions called on the government of Nigeria over the past months to provide medical and legal support to Ken Saro-Wiwa. We have also said that to interfere in the processes, either political or legal would be wrong. We believed that the best hope of saving Ken Saro-Wiwa's life was quiet diplomacy.

Nigeria hits out at C'wealth suspension

CT 14/11/95 (226)

LAGOS, Nigeria yesterday justified the hanging of minority rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others and criticised its suspension from the Commonwealth.

Mr Awalu Yadudu, special adviser on legal matters to military ruler General Sani Abacha, said the nine members of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples were found guilty of murder by a legally constituted court.

"Criminal conduct is not subject to international standards but the domestic laws and procedures of the country concerned," he told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in the capital Abuja.

The Commonwealth has sus-

pending Nigeria and many countries have recalled their ambassadors from Lagos in protest at the hangings.

The Commonwealth wants to see concrete evidence of a move to civil rule within two years otherwise Nigeria will be expelled.

There is now uncertainty about Nigeria's much-delayed \$4-billion (about R14,5bn) natural gas project that was about to take off 25 years after its conception.

Anglo-Dutch oil giant Shell, the leader of the project, which Nigeria considers its future economic mainstay, has said the final decision will be taken by the year-end.

— Reuter

Nigeria — the new pariah of Africa

(226) CI 14/11/95

NEIL LURSEN

WHEN South Africa amazed everybody by opting for non-racial democracy it raised an intriguing possibility that stability and development could be stimulated in the long-suffering African continent by a four-cornered industrial and political power structure led by South Africa in the south, Egypt in the north, Nigeria in the west and Kenya in the east.

Western planners who took heart from that grand vision saw the four countries, the most advanced in their neighbourhoods, as natural partners in the international effort to turn back creeping chaos on a continent threatened by the world's fastest-growing population rate coupled with one of the worst economic performances.

It made sense. Africa's most promising quarter had the best physical and human resources, relatively well-developed infrastructures (especially in the south), and the necessary strategic location to serve as the chief import and export ports for expanding trade in their sub-regions — trade that was vital in the battle against poverty and disease.

Better future

The removal of apartheid as Africa's dominating emotional and political problem made anything seem possible in Africa's new era.

Human energy need no longer be dissipated in the struggle against racism and

South Africa's peaceful transition would be the catalyst to a better future.

It all meshed neatly with the Clinton Administration's concept of preventative diplomacy, in which regional stability and flourishing economies are the best defence against potential man-made and natural crises, while providing conditions that lead to the growth of new markets for American businessmen.

The Americans were mightily pleased when President Mandela told the Organisation of African Unity conference in Tunis 18 months ago that Africans must take control of their own destiny and accept responsibility for their own problems.

Things were moving in the right direction — and South Africa since then has continued to demonstrate that it has the international leadership qualities to serve as the anchor in the south.

So far, however, the larger vision of a concerted leadership role by the African foursome remains just that — a vision. And it gets blurrier all the time, like a reverse image of a distant camel in the movie *Lawrence of Arabia* which gets no closer but finally disappears in a desert mirage.

One of the chief reasons for this sorry state of affairs is the tragedy that is unfolding in Nigeria, where the military dictatorship seems hellbent on usurping the position which South Africa occupied a few years ago — as the world's polecat regime.

In fact, from the Washington perspective, Nigeria's role reversal with South Africa is startling.

Instead of protest demonstrations outside the South African embassy, there are now protests outside the Nigerian embassy.

Instead of economic and diplomatic sanctions against South Africa, there are now punitive measures against Nigeria and threats of more to come.

TransAfrica, the influential Washington-based organisation which played a leading role in the anti-apartheid campaign under the leadership of Randall Robinson, now directs its anger at the government of Nigeria.

And just as the old South Africa hired public relations experts to try to repair some of the image damage caused by its race policies, the Nigerian regime has its spin doctors in the United States.

Their message is that the country's problems are deep and complex and that time, patience and sympathetic support are needed to achieve the kind of democracy which everyone wants to see in Nigeria.

Execution

It seems that some influential Americans, especially in the African-American community, might have been prepared yet again to exercise patience with a country which is certainly one of the most important on the African continent with the largest population and with vast natural resources and economic potential.

But most of the patience has disappeared since last week's unbelievably callous execution of playwright and Nobel

Peace Prize nominee Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other anti-government activists.

American officials are wondering what they can do next about a country which, apart from its trampling of human rights and democracy, has failed to act forcefully against narcotics traffickers who smuggle their poison into the United States on a regular basis.

Earlier this year, President Clinton sent former US diplomat Donald McHenry to Nigeria at least five times in a secret effort to persuade the Nigerian authorities to get serious about democracy so that relations between the two countries could improve.

The idea was that McHenry would avoid all publicity in order to spare any embarrassment for the Nigerians about how-towing to Washington's demands. But the effort failed. McHenry — well-known to South African officials from his role as US ambassador to the United Nations where he was a formidable foe of apartheid — could not budge the regime in Lagos.

The Americans are perplexed as they review their policy towards Nigeria, where American businessmen have invested \$14-billion, mostly in petroleum.

As Assistant Secretary of State George Moose told the US Congress recently, American interests in the country are many and diverse and they would not be served by Nigeria's becoming a pariah state. But what do you do, he might have asked, when the government seems intent on turning itself into a pariah in spite of all the warnings and pleadings of its friends?



EXECUTED: Playwright and Nobel Peace Prize nominee Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was hanged last week along with eight other anti-government activists

Nafcoc firm on rejection of Parsons

By BRUCE CAMERON

Warmbaths — The National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (Nafcoc) is still refusing to accept South African Chamber of Business (Sacob) director general, Raymond Parsons, as the convener of the business group at the National Economic and Labour Council (Nedlac)

But Parsons says he is occupying the position and carrying out his duties. He is also arranging to go abroad in his role as business convener at Nedlac.

In an interview with Business Report about the now months-long stand-off between Nafcoc and Business South Africa, Nafcoc president Joe Hlongwane said there were a number of reasons why Nafcoc could not — and would not — accept Parsons.

The main reason was: "He has not projected himself as one who is friendly to black economic empowerment. That is to put it mildly."

Hlongwane said he would be discussing the issue today with Dave Brink, the president of Business South Africa.

Both men are attending the high-level conference on the re-organisation of state assets being held over three days in this resort town.

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Unions get tough on privatisation

By BRUCE CAMERON

Warmbaths — The trade unions have fired off warning shots at a major conference on the re-organisation of state assets, demanding a greater say in the process and an immediate suspension of any further measures aimed at commercialising state-owned companies.

Stella Sigcau, the minister of public enterprises, said she would take the issue of continued commercialisation to cabinet to see whether the moratorium preventing the sale of state land should be extended to other issues.

Exceptions

However there were exceptions where, if action was not taken, the company could collapse. This was the case with job lay-offs at the Avontura holiday resorts. She said Avontura was in serious trouble and its efficiency had to be improved.

Leonard Gentle of the South African Commercial and Catering Worker's Union opened the attack, asking why there was so much emphasis on the need for return on investments and not on social factors, such as employment.

After wars the public services of

countries were used to provide jobs. South Africa had emerged from a war and greater emphasis should be placed on provision of jobs, he said.

Stephen Maphani of the National Union of Mineworkers demanded to know why, and who, had allowed state-owned companies to continue with re-organisation, which included job losses.

Other union members said they were being allowed little access to the process of drawing up re-organisation options.

Sipho Shabalala, the head of the office for public enterprises, said the state had to balance social needs with the need to show a return on capital. If no return was shown on capital, it would be difficult for the enterprises to raise finance on the capital markets while there would not be money to service debt.

He gave an assurance that unions would be fully involved in the process.

Earlier, the conference organisers apologised to the unions for their late invitations to participate in the conference. Other participants include captains of industry, politicians, and senior executives of state enterprises.

□ See Page 16

Price of Nigerian debt takes a dive

By JONATHAN THATCHER

London — Prices of Nigerian debt tumbled yesterday as investors worried that the international outcry over the execution of human rights activists on Friday would lead to economic sanctions against the country.

Analysts doubted the West would ban Nigerian oil exports but feared that a prickly military government might retaliate if it felt its economy was being threatened.

One way to do that would be to stop servicing its foreign debts.

The price of Nigerian Brady bonds — rescheduled foreign com-

mercial debt that is traded on the emerging debt market — slumped \$0,03 to a two-month low of just under \$0,44 in the dollar.

"It's over-reaction. I can't see Britain or the United States imposing sanctions. It would drive the country into further chaos," said Peter Worthington, emerging-markets economist at JP Morgan.

"The fact that this government can effectively thumb its nose at the international community means one cannot rule out something again happening," said Robin Hubbard, a senior economist at Chase Manhattan in London.

Nigeria has defaulted on much

of its debt but not the Brady bonds, which offer one of the few instruments for investors in the country.

One factor against a Nigerian default is that Nigerians themselves — some in positions of influence — hold the debt and are unlikely to want to default on themselves, analysts said.

The key will be whether the West, especially the United States, imposes sanctions against Nigerian oil exports.

Meanwhile, Malaysia said yesterday it was considering imposing trade sanctions against Nigeria. The Commonwealth suspended Nigeria at the weekend — Reuter.

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Nigeria from soccer cup

JOHANNESBURG South Africa said yesterday it had withdrawn an invitation to Nigeria to take part in a four-nation African soccer tournament next week.

The sports ministry said the decision was taken after a meeting with the South African Football Association and followed the move by the Commonwealth to suspend Nigeria over Friday's executions of nine human rights activists.

"We condemn the inhuman actions of the Nigerian government in the strongest terms," the ministry said, adding the decision was no reflection on the Nigerian team.

Nigeria is the leading drawcard in the November 18-26 annual Four Nations Cup, which also features the national soccer teams of Egypt, Zambia and the South African hosts.

Nigeria is receiving worldwide condemnation for the executions.

The ANC is holding an urgent meeting with its trade union and political allies today to discuss action against Nigeria's military rulers.

"We are to consider a programme of action to register our indignation at what has transpired," ANC spokesman Mr Ronnie Mamoepa said yesterday.

South Africa's charge d'affaires to Lagos returned on Sunday, two days after being recalled by President Nelson Mandela.

Government sources said no action would be considered against Nigeria until after senior cabinet members were briefed. Nigeria yesterday recalled its ambassadors from South Africa, the United States and the European Union for consultations. — Political Staff, Sapa-Reuter

● See Pages 2, 8 and 20

Britain and US recall envoys and impose arms embargoes

(226) Mar 14/11/95

United Nations - The United States yesterday began talks on a General Assembly resolution that would condemn human rights' abuses in Nigeria and recommend a voluntary arms ban on the West African nation

But a US official told reporters US ambassador Madeleine Albright and others were not certain whether any action was possible in the Security Council, where sanctions would

be mandatory

Council sources said a resolution in the 15-member body, which deals with international peace and security, would prove difficult, if not impossible, to adopt

The United States recalled its envoy to Nigeria and imposed an arms embargo to protest against Friday's execution of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority

rights and environmental activists from the oil-producing Ogoni area

Britain, the former colonial ruler, has also withdrawn its envoy from Lagos and imposed an arms embargo and the European Union is considering action.

The Commonwealth, which groups Britain and its former colonies, has suspended Nigeria's membership - Reuters

Nigeria tries to justify hangings: 'It was premeditated murder'

Lagos - Nigeria has tried to justify the hanging of minority rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others, and has criticised its suspension from the Commonwealth.

Awalu Yadiudu, special adviser on legal matters to military ruler Gen Sani Abacha, said the nine members of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni Peoples had been found

guilty of murder by a legally constituted court.

"Criminal conduct is not subject to international standards but the domestic laws and procedures of the country concerned," he said.

The Commonwealth has suspended Nigeria while many countries have recalled their ambassadors from Lagos in protest at the hang-

ings. The Commonwealth wants to see concrete evidence of a move to civil rule within two years, otherwise Nigeria will be expelled from the association.

The nine men were hanged for the murder last year of four pro-government Ogoni chiefs. Human rights activists said it was a political trial. Yadiudu said "Nigeria needs to

restate one fact that there was premeditated murder of some prominent citizens of Ogoniland."

Uncertainty has been thrown around Nigeria's much-delayed \$4-billion (about R14.5-billion) natural gas project which was about to take off 25 years after its conception.

Anglo-Dutch oil giant Shell, the technical leader of the joint-venture

Star 14/11/95

project involving Nigeria and other oil firms, said on Sunday the final decision on the project would be taken by the year-end.

That followed British Prime Minister John Major's disclosure that he would discuss with Shell its involvement in the project. Nigeria considers to be a mature economic mainstay - Reuters

Nigeria given the red card for Cup

Star 14/11/95 (226)
By BILLY COOPER

The South African Football Association has withdrawn its invitation to Nigeria to play in the annual Simba Four Nations Cup which kicks off in Mbatho on Saturday.

In a statement, Sifa's executive president Solomon "Stix" Morewa said the association condemned in the strongest possible terms the gross violation of human rights by the Nigerian military government.

This followed the execution of nine activists on Friday, including writer Ken Saro-Wiwa.

"As a form of protest, we decided to withdraw our invitation to Nigeria to play in the Four Nations Cup and they will not take part in the tournament.

"This action is the strongest possible statement we can make against the actions of the Nigerian military government."

The Sifa chief added that he was hoping to persuade either Mozambique or Zimbabwe to replace Nigeria in the week-long event.

However, Morewa said the decision to prevent Nigeria playing in the Four Nations Cup would not affect the country defending its Africa Nations Cup title in South Africa which starts in January.

"The Africa Nations Cup is run under the auspices of the continent's controlling body the Confederation of African Football (CAF) and, although Sifa are not under its jurisdiction over the Africa Nations Cup finals, therefore we cannot stop Nigeria coming here to defend their title."

The soccer ban came as the ANC prepared to take further action against Nigeria.

The ANC has called a meeting with its trade union and political allies today to discuss possible courses of action against Nigeria's military rulers.

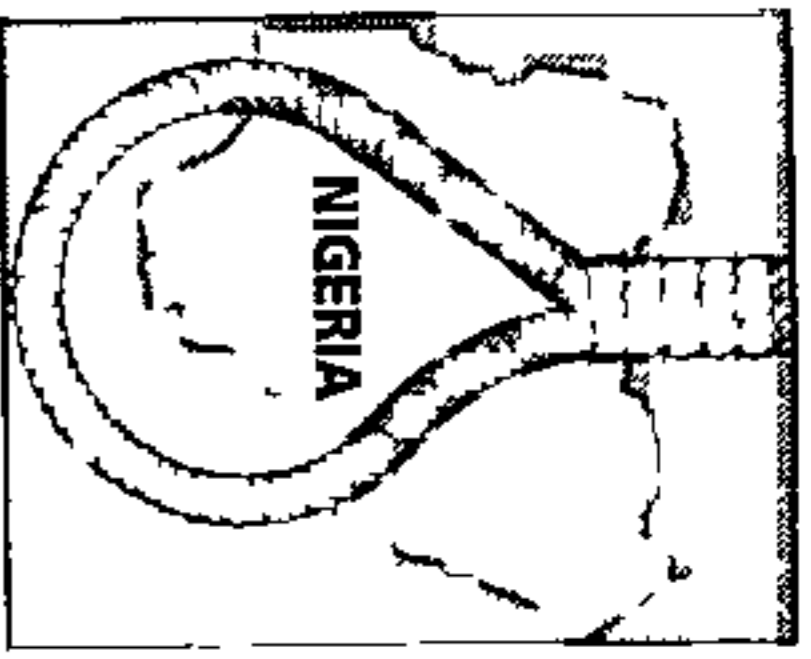
"We are to consider a programme of action to register our indignation," ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said.

Nigeria's Commonwealth membership has been suspended and it has been given a two-year deadline to reform or face expulsion.

Asked about reported remarks that the ANC would call for the government to expel Nigeria's chargé d'affaires, Mamoepa replied:

"If it's necessary for us to kick him out, we've got to give the meeting a chance to decide to come out with a programme of action."

► **Nigeria fights back**
Page 4



Saro-Wiwa death does Commonwealth a FAVOR

Now it can flex its muscles, mean it, and be taken seriously, writes Michael Binyon

(226) Star 14/11/95

The hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa has done more to galvanise the Commonwealth into a real enforcement of its proclaimed ideals than any pious declarations on good government and gentlemen's agreements to express criticism *sotto voce*

For the first time, the Commonwealth has agreed punitive measures to be enforced against rogue states. It has made explicit its abhorrence of all military regimes. It has drawn up a formal mechanism for suspending and even expelling nations that flaunt its values. And it has convinced even its more reluctant members, such as South Africa, that there are limits to quiet diplomacy.

The outcome will significantly change the atmosphere inside the Club, mostly for the better.

First, it will reassure public opinion in the older democracies, especially Britain, Canada and Australia, that justice is colour-blind, and that no concessions on essential human rights are being made to developing countries.

Secondly, the changes will instil new awe and respect into those countries that are near the thresholds of Commonwealth tolerance.

The Gambia, the only country not to support the suspension of Nigeria, knows that it, too, could suffer the same condemnation unless the opportunist junta outlines a realistic timetable for a swift return to democracy.

Put on guard as well is Sierra Leone, although the young Capt Strasser seems ready to stick to his announced timetable for new elections, and the armed rebellion by dissidents no better than gangsters has given his government some sympathetic outside support.

Warnings to President Moi of Kenya about the slide into authoritarianism and the suppression of basic freedoms will now carry more weight. For although the Commonwealth now leaves many Britons indifferent, continuing membership is still of immediate political importance, especially in Africa.

Like the Council of Europe for European nations, it is a yardstick of democratic respectability, and as donor nations, following the British example, become more insistent that recipients practise "good government", developing countries see Commonwealth membership as a validation of their democratic credentials.

This lesson is especially important for aspiring new members. Cameroon, which has just joined, has been warned that it still has some way to go in ensuring proper democratic guarantees for the anti-giaphone minority, and the new rules will give this added weight.

They will apply also to Mozambique, another potential member, and to Fiji if it ever decides to re-apply. And, thirdly, the adoption of the new code will make the position of the Commonwealth secretariat, and especially of Chief Emeka Anyaoku, less ambiguous.

No one knew, in the run-up to Auckland, how to convey an institutional warning of possible suspension to General Abacha, because such a mechanism did not exist.

Now Chief Anyaoku can simply point to the new rules in warning rogue states and junta leaders to clean up their governments.

By avoiding explicit talks of sanctions and further aid cuts, and by giving Nigeria time to speed up its proposed return to democracy, the Commonwealth has avoided the other danger lurking from the informal meeting of old

friends into a new finger-pointing court of human rights.

This would induce smug superiority among the white, developed nations and a resentment at being singled out by culpable, developing nations, especially in Africa.

Perhaps it was this very peer pressure, especially from fellow Africans such as Nelson Mandela whose moral authority was unassailable, that frightened Gen Abacha.

He knew he could not, again, fool the majority with more broken promises. He did not want to commit himself to anything that would comfort those fighting for democracy in Nigeria.

But in hanging Saro-Wiwa and the eight others he has only strengthened the Harare principles of pluralism and human rights.

He has given Saro-Wiwa an undisputed strong voice from the grave. — The Times News Service

'Tribunal was a sham that the world should see'

Star 14/11/95
(226)

By AKIN ALOFETEKUN
Independent Foreign Service

Nigeria's Provisional Ruling Council last Tuesday ratified the death sentences passed on human rights crusader Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists. Despite pleas from all over the world to spare them, they were hanged on Friday afternoon.

From the inception of the case, the tribunal that handled it had shown that it had a pre-determined judgment to deliver.

Shortly after the murder of four prominent Ogonis by a young mob, the governor of Rivers State, Lt-Col Dauda Komo went on air to tell the world that Saro-Wiwa and other leaders of Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (Mosop) were "behind this heinous crime". The video cassette in which the "accused" were judged by the governor even before the trial began, were not allowed to be shown in court.

When the tribunal began its business, the defence team, led by Chief Gani Fawehinmi, was not allowed to drive to Port Harcourt, venue of the trial. The security agents were later to explain that they acted on "orders from above".

Government officials in uniform slapped the members of the defence counsel and tore their gowns in full public view. Major Paul Okuntimo, head of security, constantly reminded them and the accused that they stood before a full military tribunal.

The trial judge became outraged at the publication of the evidence of two prosecution witnesses who, under cross-examination, admitted they were bribed \$370 (about R1 000) each and an immediate offer of employment, for testifying they were present when Saro-Wiwa gave orders to the rampaging youths.

Legal analysts who spoke out described the whole episode as nothing short of "judicial gangsterism".

But the Ogoni leaders were not tried because of the May 1994 mayhem unleashed by the Ogoni youths. No. The stage for their incarceration was set in 1993 when General Sanjivan Abacha started to plot his way into the political leadership of Nigeria.

In October that year, General Abacha, then defence minister and pillar upon which the lameduck interim national government of Chief Ernest Shonekan rested, invited Saro-Wiwa to Nigeria's seat of power, Abuja, first to commiserate with him on the inhuman treatment meted out to him during his two

months' detention without trial by former president Babangida and to wash his hands clean of "such uncivilised acts".

Ken Saro-Wiwa was all ears that day as he sat in the official quarters of the nation's ruler.

Abacha announced that a new federal government was in the offing in which Saro-Wiwa would be required to serve as minister or at the very least his nominee.

Ogonis have been in the forefront clamouring for Nigerian minority rights. Their lands have been ecologically devastated through years of exploration and exploitation of crude oil which is responsible for 93% of the nation's foreign earnings.

The now popular Ogoni Bill of Rights, issued in 1990, is clear on the people's cardinal demands for "control and use of a fair proportion of Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni development and the right to protect the Ogoni environment and ecology from further degradation".

This group, by Abacha's calculation, had become a pariah, a cancer that had to be destroyed. But like the military tactician he is, Mosop had to be courted before dealing it the fatal blow, hence the offer of ministerial appointment to its leader.

The refusal of Saro-Wiwa to take the offer bruised the general's ego. Saro-Wiwa all but made it clear to General Abacha that he was being made privy to a plan to remove a legitimate government other than by constitutional means.

Reactions to the death sentences have been swift and humane. Both US and Britain had warned Abuja against carrying out the sentences. Commonwealth Secretary-General, Nigerian Emeka N'yaoku had expressed hope that "the sentences will not be carried out". South African diplomats said they began "quiet persuasion of Nigeria" regarding the matter.

Africa's first Nobel Prize winner for literature, Professor Wole Soyinka, said "Britain should stop playing footsie with Abacha".

Ben Okri, Nigerian winner of the 1991 Booker Prize, lamented that "when you hear that writers have been sentenced to death by undemocratic tribunals, then you can be sure that the demons of war and angels of fragmentation have already begun their dreaded descent".

Wife of one of the convicts, Blessing Kpunlen said: "I challenge the tribunal to release all the proceedings for the whole world to see. This is not justice".

Warning of 'dire consequences'

SA will not lead boycott of Nigeria

(226)

BD 15/11/95

Stephané Bothma and Kevin O'Grady

PRETORIA — SA will not lead a campaign to impose sanctions against Nigeria, and has warned that an economic collapse of the country could have dire consequences for Africa

Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad said SA should not overestimate its capacity to influence the military government led by Gen Sani Abacha

President Nelson Mandela has condemned the recent execution of Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni tribe campaigners

Pahad denied SA had taken a soft stand on Nigeria because it supported the ANC in its anti-apartheid struggle. SA had taken one of the strongest steps available by recalling the country's Nigerian high commissioner.

With an annual trade of about R84m between the two countries, SA did not have the "economic clout" to influence Nigeria. SA would try to "exploit its diplomatic and political clout"

Pahad said major world powers with strong economic ties with Nigeria should lead the campaign to introduce economic punitive measures against that country, but "complete instability" could lead to a collapse of the country. An oil embargo against Nigeria would have a decisive effect on its economy.

Mungo Soggot reports Sacob's Ben van Rensburg said his organisation

could not back a sanctions call after opposing sanctions against SA. Sanctions hurt the poor the most and would also hit SA companies operating in Nigeria.

The SA foreign trade association said SA trade with Nigeria represented 1,5% of SA's total trade with Africa.

The Chemical Workers' Industrial Union called on Shell Nigeria to put more pressure on the Nigerian regime. Shell SA corporate affairs GM Koosum Kalyan said Shell did not import any crude from Nigeria. The Central Energy Fund, the state's oil procurer, said it did not either. However, it is understood Shell will not withdraw from a planned gas project in Nigeria.

Business, trade unions, sports bodies, lawyers and church groups yesterday threw their weight behind an ANC attempt to force a return of democracy to Nigeria. Ten groups, including Business SA and Cosatu, formed the SA-Nigerian Democracy Support Group yesterday. It will consider lobbying for a boycott of Nigerian oil, economic sanctions and a ban on the country's participation in next year's Olympic Games. ANC deputy secretary-general Cheryl Carolus said a march to Johannesburg's Nigerian consulate would be held on Friday. Nine wreaths would be laid in memory of the hanged activists.

Picture: Page 2
See Page 11

SA leaders betrayed Nigerians

WHAT kind of leader in his/her right mind would execute a prominent political activist when the world's attention is on his/her country?

Does that sound like someone amenable to reason, someone with whom one can do business? It doesn't seem that way at all to me — and yet Pretoria has persistently tried to engage ruthless Nigerian dictator, General Sani Abacha, in dialogue as if he were a rational man

Some of us never thought the day would come when we as a country, given the hideous past from which we have just emerged, would quietly acquiesce with an oppressive regime in the interest of "maintaining our influence and leverage" with the demigods who run such regimes.

We have an obligation to speak out harshly against any country whose leaders allow power to go into their heads and then trample with impunity on their fellow citizens, for a big component of our society knows probably better than any other country how it feels to be

oppressed

Our leaders have failed the people of Nigeria. Although their newly-found resolve to get tough with the Abacha military dictatorship is welcome, it is nevertheless too little too late

For, who knows, perhaps had our leaders been more outspoken, publicly, against the Abuja-based clowns running that country, author and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and his comrades would still be alive today

Until last Friday, President Nelson Mandela was sounding more and more like former United States President Ronald Reagan whenever he pronounced publicly, often in response to questions, on the Nigerian situation.

About three months ago I wrote that South Africa had to take firm action against human rights violations in Nigeria and Swaziland. Neither I nor the people of Nigeria asked for much all we requested was that Mandela, who is Africa's elder statesman and probably the most respected leader in the world today, should condemn unreservedly — and publicly — the Abacha regime's human rights violations



South Africa owes this to our African neighbours. There is a difference, as our leaders must surely appreciate now, between supporting the Nigerian people — who were among the most vociferous critics of apartheid South Africa — and supporting the illegitimate Abacha regime in that country.

Let us return now to the troubled Wits University, where a group of 13 senior white academics have produced a 257-page document cataloguing allegations against Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor William Makgoba. Makgoba's accusers, led by Professor Charles van Onselen who secretly obtained information about Makgoba under false pretences, have de-

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ned that their campaign has anything to do at all with the fact that he is black

They are "distressed", they say, that the matter is being seen in racial terms. Maybe they are right. After all, Iago would also probably have protested vigorously that his vendetta against Othello had anything at all to do with the fact that the latter was black, just as the prosecution in the O J Simpson murder trial maintained that race was not a factor in the case.

As I told Wits Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Charlton last Friday — he asked to see me after the publication of last week's column — neither I nor many of the black commentators who have expressed a view on this matter say it is right for any person (especially an academic), regardless of his/her colour, to take liberties with the truth in a CV

Clearly, in the event of the allegations against Makgoba being found to be true, action will be necessary. But there is no doubt at all in my mind that had Makgoba, whom Charlton admitted to hav-

ing praised in a letter to Education Minister Professor Sibusiso Bengu as a world-class academic, been "a good boy" and gone along with his white colleagues at Wits instead of being openly critical of the institution and those who run it, he would still be in the good books of his "liberal" white colleagues

It seems to me another matter that has to be investigated is the manner in which Van Onselen and Company obtained the information about Makgoba

In The Star yesterday, some Wits University School of Law academics — all white, needless to say — complained in two separate letters about the racialisation of the Makgoba affair, and one Paul Maree of Melville said I was "at it again, riding my racism hobby horse".

Frankly, I am sick and tired of people who have never been victims of racism in their lives crying "racism" whenever a black person has cause to point to the still rampant inequalities and white hypocrisy in our country. If, in the eyes of Maree and his ilk, that makes me a black racist, then I am proud to be one.

Mandela calls for embargo on Nigerian oil

(226) ARG 15/11/95

□ 'Commonwealth's moral pressure not enough'

TYRONE SEALE
Political Staff

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — President Mandela is leading a charge for an embargo on Nigerian oil sales by asking Britain and the United States to stop business with that country.

The United States and Britain account for 40 percent of the oil exports from Africa's oil-richest state.

During a meeting with New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger here today, Mr Bolger put Mr Mandela in touch with British Prime Minister John Major.

Mr Mandela said after the meeting he had chosen this route as Mr Bolger had chaired the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting at the weekend and "representations from him would carry greater weight".

Mr Mandela said various options had been discussed and no decision had been taken.

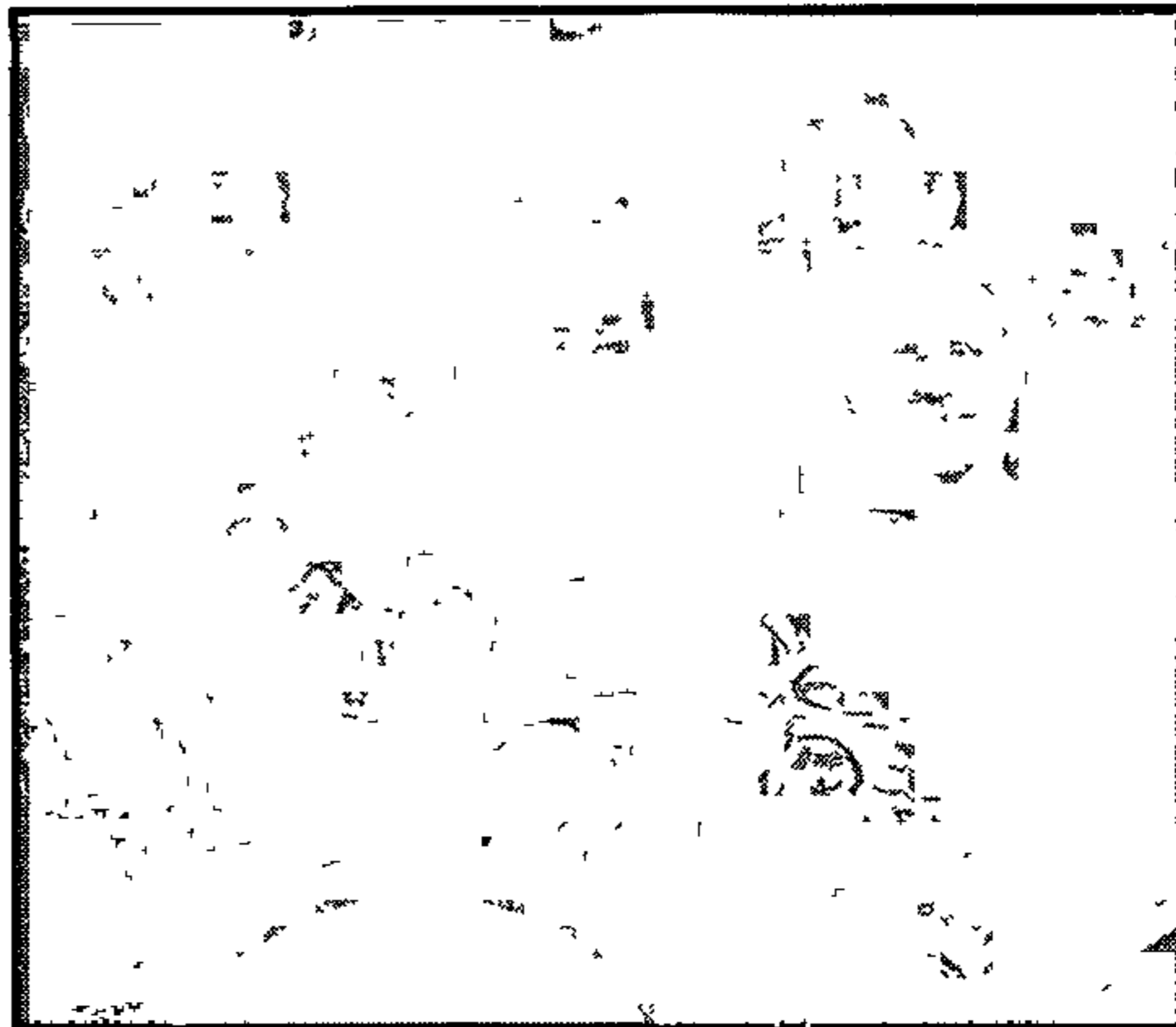
He said he and Mr Bolger had also tried to speak to President Bill Clinton but Mr Clinton had been attending to his own national budget.

Mr Mandela said he and Mr Bolger were concerned that the Commonwealth should not confine itself to moral pressure, as most Commonwealth countries did not have significant trade links with Nigeria.

Mr Bolger said Mr Major had told him during today's tele-conference that the European Union had already approved a package of punitive measures against Nigeria.

Mr Mandela said for sanctions to be successfully applied, this issue should be dealt with by the UN Security Council.

Justifying his efforts at quiet diplomacy with the Nigerian government, Mr Mandela said "It was absolutely correct for us in the African National Congress because we don't forget



FAREWELL TO FAVOURITE: President Mandela waves goodbye after receiving a rapturous welcome from 3 000 Maori in a visit to Turangawaewae Marae, the home meeting ground of Maori queen Dame Te Atairangikaahu.

the role Nigeria has played in South Africa."

However, the Nigerian execution of environmentalist and writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others had been a slap in the face of the Commonwealth.

He said there had to be visible evidence that Nigeria was moving towards democracy.

Nigeria had to set up a ruling structure totally independent of the military government that would be composed of civilians and include representatives of the military government, to oversee democratic change.

Mr Mandela said his last personal conversation with Nigerian leader General Abacha took place two months ago when the military ruler briefed him on political reforms that Nigeria hoped to implement within three years.

General Abacha had told him that as a result of discussions earlier in the year with Deputy

President Thabo Mbeki, he had decided to review the death sentences of 43 political prisoners, who are still imprisoned, and to start introducing democracy in the country.

Providing a glimpse into the diplomatic efforts that have gone into persuading General Abacha, at one stage Mr Major tried to phone General Abacha but he refused to take the call.

Mr Major then sent an envoy to Abuja who tried for three weeks to see General Abacha, who agreed to a meeting only as a result of pressure applied by Mr Major.

"For a country like Nigeria not to have the courtesy to pick up the phone on the British prime minister is (irresponsible)."

Mr Mandela said General Abacha had stuck to his views in spite of having the heads of government of Ghana, Zimbabwe and Namibia call on him, and in spite of President Clinton trying to contact him.

Unrepentant military rulers lead Nigeria to political ruin

Sources 15/11/95 (226)

By Beth Duff-Brown

A **BIDJAN** — Branded an international outcast for executing a prominent playwright, Nigeria is taking another twist in its downward spiral of scandals, scams, coups and ethnic wars

Many see even worse times ahead. "Apparently, they are inexorably set on a course of self-destruction," says Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

Mugabe joined other world leaders last weekend in condemning Nigeria's military junta after it hanged playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other political activists last Friday.

The continent's most populous nation, with a proud African history dating from 700 BC, has the distinction of being the first country suspended from the 52-member Commonwealth

Ever defiant, ruler General Sani Abacha on Monday recalled his ambassadors from the United States, some European countries and South Africa in retaliation for the withdrawal of their ambassadors last weekend.

"Our ambassadors have no business remaining in their respective countries of postings," snuffed Alhassan Kpaki, minister of state for foreign affairs.

While Nigeria would appear to have become an international pariah overnight, it has been in disarray since the 1967-70 Biafran war, an ethnic bloodbath that claimed 250 000 lives.

Since independence in 1960, there have been 10 Nigerian heads of state — seven of them military dictators who

came to power through coups. The country's population is 100 million, divided into many ethnic groups left by the British colonialists to live together as best they could in one state.

World-renowned bribes and pyramid schemes also recently led General Colin Powell, the former chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, to call Nigeria a nation of "scammers".

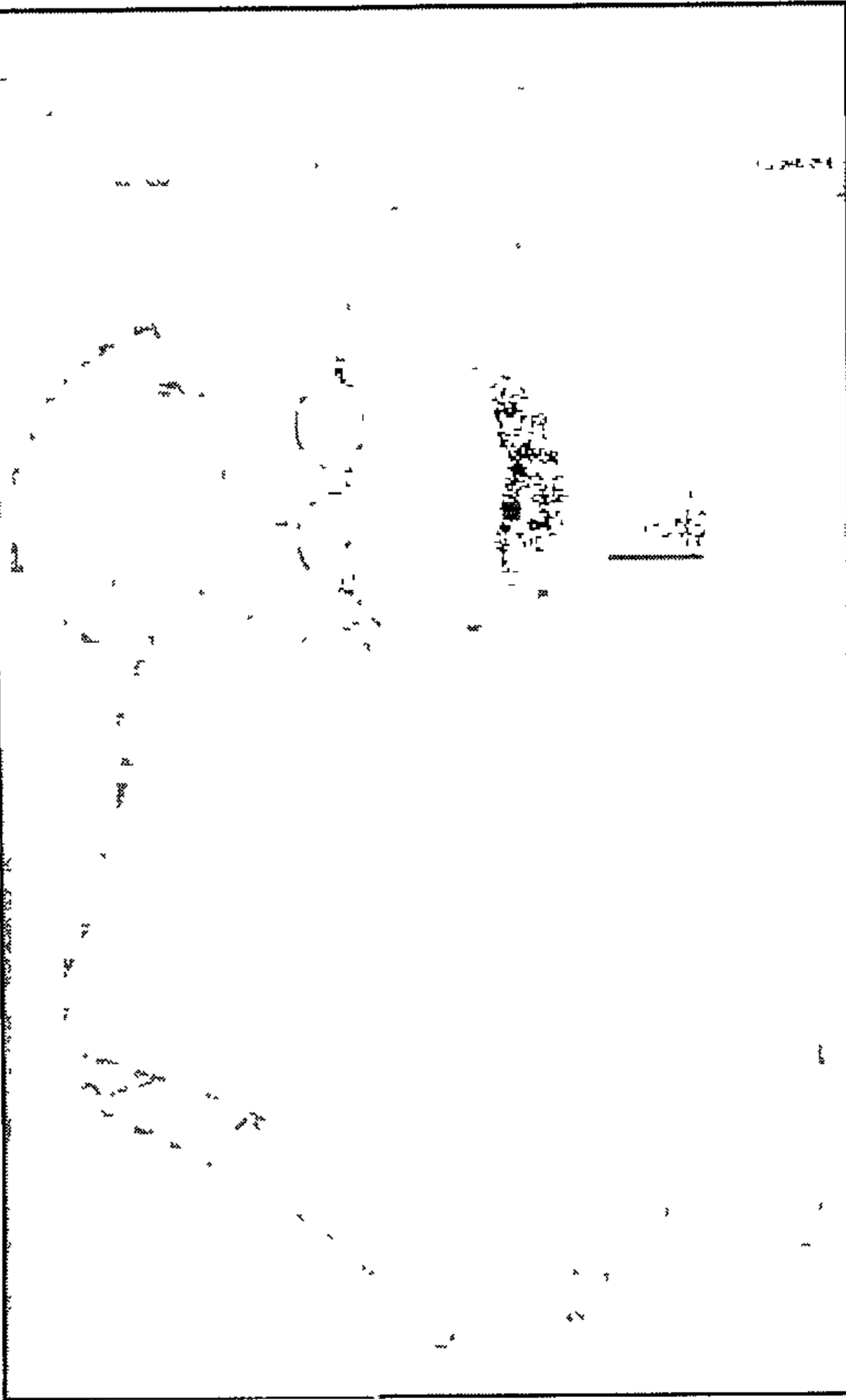
The national carrier Nigeria Airways has an abysmal safety record, suffering under poor government management. At least 75 passengers were feared dead on Monday when a Boeing 737 crashed on landing in the north.

The Central Bank earlier this year seized 17 banks that went broke. Many more are suffering due to corruption and a lack of foreign investment.

"After the last two decades of fantastic growth of corruption, people just feel you might as well get on the gravy train," said Larry Diamond, a Nigerian specialist and senior research fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institute.

The oil industry, which accounts for 80 to 90 percent of Nigeria's export income, has crumbled under pro-democracy movements such as the one led by Saro-Wiwa and his minority Ogonis, who say their oil-rich southern lands have been destroyed by the industry. Shell International's subsidiary in Nigeria was driven out of the Ogoni region in 1993, when activists sabotaged R105 million worth of equipment. It was producing 28 000 barrels of oil a day.

"Crime is on the rise in broad daylight. The school system is in collapse. The health system is in collapse. The



Before the storm ... Ken Wiwa, son of Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, meeting Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien at the Commonwealth meeting in New Zealand before his father was executed.

economy is in complete disarray," said Diamond.

Diamond believes Western pressure may cause pain to ordinary Nigerians, but could also prevent "another large-scale political catastrophe in Africa".

"The West is only doing what the people of Nigeria want done, which is not only the cessation of the worst human rights violence the country has ever experienced, but also the return of the country to civilian, constitutional

rule." After decades of corrupt and incompetent military rule, Nigeria was poised in 1993 to complete the transition to civilian rule begun by General Ibrahim Babangida.

Billionaire businessman Moshood Abiola was by all accounts fairly elected president in June 1993. Nigerians rejoiced, believing they might finally be on the road to democracy.

Then Babangida refused to accept the elections, provoking riots that sent

the country into chaos and clearing the way for his Number 2 man, Abacha, to seize power in a bloodless coup.

Abacha tossed Abiola in prison last year, making him the most famous among hundreds of political prisoners he has silenced.

Abacha had promised civilian rule by next January, but announced during an October 31 Independence Day speech that he would remain in power for at least three more years. —Sapa-AP

Nigeria defiant in face of world condemnation

(226) *Sowetan 15/11/90*

LAGOS - Nigeria's military leadership stood at a diplomatic crossroads on Sunday, forced to decide whether to defy or yield to mounting international pressure to improve its political and human rights record

Suspended from the Commonwealth and facing a British and United States arms embargo after the execution on Friday of nine leading anti-government activists, Nigeria's military regime can either risk further sanctions by ignoring calls for reform or return humbly to the international fold, diplomatic sources said here

Early indications are that the government intends to defend - in the face of worldwide indignation - the decision to execute the activists of the opposition Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, who included writer and environmentalist Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa

Presidential spokesman Mr David Attah offered the regime's first defence of the procedure which led to the execution of the nine, convicted last month by a secret tribunal of the murder of four Ogoni men at a political rally in May 1994

"The nine persons were not just

staked, they were charged and found guilty of committing mass murder," he said

Saro-Wiwa, who dedicated himself to the cause of the 500 000 Ogoni people who live in Nigeria's oil-rich south and whose land and water are being destroyed by oil industry pollution, insisted he had been framed for political reasons

The hangings triggered a flurry of outraged diplomatic reaction, with a series of European countries following the US lead by condemning the punishment meted out to Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues and recalling their ambassadors to Nigeria

Washington and London both announced arms embargoes against Africa's most populous nation, while the Commonwealth suspended Nigeria

and gave the military regime two years to improve its political and human rights record or face outright expulsion.

Attah hit out at the suspension of the West African grant from the 52-nation club, calling the decision a "conspiracy" against Nigeria

"The position that the Commonwealth has taken is unfortunate, it's unfair, it's premeditated and completely at variance with our drive to democracy," Attah said, adding that "any alienation of Nigeria will aggravate rather than help the situation in Nigeria"

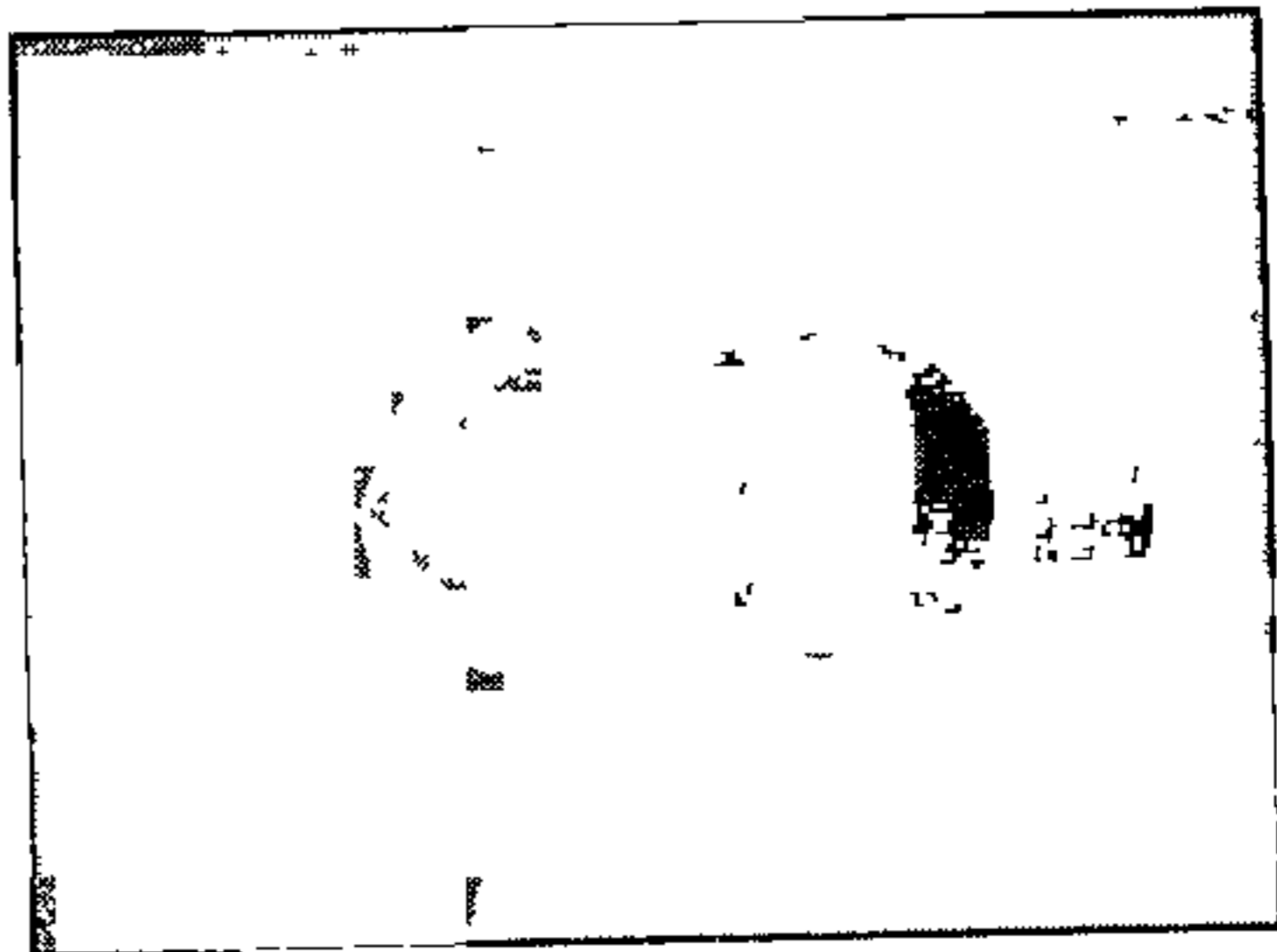
The Commonwealth suspension "means a lot", he said "It means we are unwanted and that whatever we do cannot change the way people feel about us at the moment"

Diplomatic sources said on Sunday that this initial government reaction could hint at further political crack-downs, which might mean further sanctions against General Sani Abacha's regime

Nigerian opposition movements have long sought the imposition of further sanctions, particularly against oil, which could cripple Nigeria

Nigeria is the fifth largest oil exporter in OPEC, producing around two million barrels a day which earns the country 90 percent of its hard currency reserves

But the last time such sanctions were broached in July, after a military tribunal sentenced 44 soldiers and civilians to death for involvement in an alleged coup bid, the Nigerian authorities reacted by summoning the British



Ken Wiwa ... sanctions will hurt the Nigerian people.

and US ambassadors to Abuja and nothing more was heard

And Mr Ken Wiwa, the son of the executed dissident, said in London on Sunday that he was opposed to such sanctions as they would hit primarily the Nigerian people and not the military leadership - *Sapa-AFP*

Pressure mounts on Abacha's junta

By Themba Molefe
Political Correspondent

LOCAL PRESSURE TO isolate General Sani Abacha's military dictatorship took a firmer turn with the launch of the ANC-led South African-Nigerian Democracy Support Group (SANDSG) yesterday. The Nigerian government has been condemned worldwide for hanging nine pro-democracy activists, including renowned author Ken Saro-Wiwa last Friday. In another development, the South African Council of Churches announced it would mobilise for full sanctions against Nigeria if it did not restore democracy within six months. Archbishop Desmond Tutu said the two-year deadline given to Nigeria by

Sowetan 15/11/95 (226)
the Commonwealth was too long. Nigeria's representative in the prestigious Miss World beauty pageant, Toyin Raji, may be withdrawn from Saturday's contest. Congress of South African Trade Unions general secretary Mr Sam Shilowa told journalists that Raji's withdrawal was a mere formality but they were still consulting with the organisers, the Nigerian democratic movement and other parties.

Nigeria's chances of participating in next year's Olympics are also in the balance.

The South African Football Association (Safa) has already barred Nigeria from the Four Nations tournament which kicks off on Saturday and indicated it would oppose defending cham-

pions Nigeria's taking part in the Africa Nations Cup finals in South Africa next January.

After a meeting at the ANC's Johannesburg headquarters SANDSG announced a "programme of action" which begins this Friday with a lunch-time mass protest march on the Nigerian Consulate in Rosebank.

The SANDSG comprises the ANC tripartite alliance, SACC, Business South Africa, Lawyers for Human Rights, National Association of Democratic Lawyers, Safa and South African Prisoners Organisation for Human Rights. The SACC's Dr Jonathan Masango said negotiations with the All-Africa Church Council were afoot on possible action after the six-month ultimatum.

Nation...

Mandela seeks oil bar

on Nigeria

ET 15/11/95 (22b)

WELLINGTON: South Africa is to step up pressure on Nigeria today with an appeal to Britain and the US to apply oil sanctions against the West African state following the failure of diplomacy to shift its military ruler, General Sani Abacha.

President Nelson Mandela is to telephone Prime Minister Mr John Major and President Bill Clinton to ask them to apply oil sanctions.

"We can see we are dealing with a very irresponsible fellow," Mr Mandela said, referring to Gen Abacha, who executed nine political activists on Friday.

"To a hardened man like Gen Abacha he will not be moved unless sanctions which can hurt Nigeria's economy are applied."

Mr Mandela said Gen Abacha's plan to restore democratic civilian rule over three years was not acceptable to South Africa. He called for an independent structure, comprising mainly civilians, to oversee democratic changes and plot Nigeria's return to democracy.

He defended South Africa's initial attempts to influence Gen Abacha with dialogue.

"In my view it was absolutely correct, especially for us in the ANC. We don't forget the role Nigeria played in our struggle."

● Shell will not back off investment in Nigeria, officials said yesterday, arguing that opponents to the regime shared responsibility for the executions. Mr Dick van den Broek, Shell's regional co-ordinator for Africa, said international threats had only hardened Nigeria's stance. — Sapa-Reuter, AFP

● See Page 5

people

ONE HOUR FIVE

We have failed Nigerian

South Africa must deal harshly with Abacha, writes Kaizer Nyatumba

(226) Stan 15/11/95



What kind of leader would execute a prominent political activist when the world's attention is on his/her country? What intelligent, commonsensical person would, almost PW Botha-like, cock a snook at a body like the Commonwealth at a time when the top leaders of that body are meeting to discuss, among other things, that person's country?

Does that sound like someone amenable to reason, someone with whom one can do business? It doesn't seem that way to me - and yet Pretoria has persistently tried to engage ruthless Nigerian dictator Gen Sam Abacha in dialogue as if he were a rational man.

Some of us never thought the day would come when we as a country would quietly acquiesce with an oppressive regime in the interest of "maintaining our influence and leverage" with the demigods who run such regimes.

Our leaders have failed the people of Nigeria. Although they newly found resolve to get tough with the Abacha military dictatorship is welcome, it is nevertheless too little too late. For, who knows, perhaps had our leaders been

more outspoken, publicly, against the Abuja-based clowns running that country author and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and his comrades would still be alive today.

Until last Friday, President Mandela was sounding more like former US president Ronald Reagan whenever he pronounced on the Nigerian situation. Readers will remember that Reagan shared Dr Chester Crocker's path of "constructive engagement" with our apartheid rulers. This was done in the hope that contact would give the Americans some leverage with the P W Botha government, which would be much more amenable to persuasion.

Three months ago I wrote that SA had to take firm action against human rights violations in Nigeria and Swaziland. I said Mandela, who is Africa's elder statesman and the most respected leader in the world today, should condemn unreservedly - and publicly - the Abacha regime's human rights violations.

SA owes this to our African neighbours. There is a difference between supporting the Nigerian people - who were among the most vociferous critics of apartheid South Africa -

and supporting the illegitimate Abacha regime in that country.

Let us return now to Wits University, where a group of 13 senior white academics have produced a 257-page document cataloguing allegations against Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor William Makgoba.

Makgoba's accusers, led by Professor Charles van Onselen who secretly obtained information about Makgoba under false pretences, have denied that their campaign has anything to do with the fact that he is black. They are "distressed", they say, that the matter is being seen in racial terms. Maybe they are right. After all, Iago would also have protested vigorously that his vendetta against Othello had anything to do with the fact that the latter was black, just as the prosecution in the OJ Simpson murder trial maintained that race was not a factor in the case.

As I told Wits Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Charlton last Friday - he asked to see me after the publication of last week's column - I am not saying it is right for any person (especially an academic), to take liberties with the truth in a CV. Clearly, in the event of the allegations against Makgoba being found to be true,

action will be necessary.

But there is no doubt at all in my mind that had Makgoba, whom Charlton admitted to having praised in a letter to Education Minister Sibusiso Bengu as a world-class academic, been "a good boy" and gone along with his white colleagues instead of being openly critical of the institution, he would still be in the good books of his "liberal" white colleagues.

It seems to me another matter that has to be investigated is the manner in which Van Onselen and company obtained the information about Makgoba. It seems unethical that any person of some integrity, let alone a supposedly respected academic, should obtain information under false pretences of conducting "a rather esoteric inquiry for a piece of social history". I am afraid Van Onselen's rejoinder, "What is the answer to the question in the letter? That is the only thing at issue", does not wash.

So much for "a piece of social history"! And just why would any self-respecting person stoop to the level of putting a colleague - for whatever reason - under surveillance, and going to the extent of phoning the Washington

Post to ask what Makgoba had to say about Wits during his visit to the US (Now that Nicholas Smith, is indeed remissive of police state methods) And for this the university's resources, as Charlton admitted to me, were used - and he sees nothing wrong with that, just as he will not condemn outright the dishonesty of his colleagues who obtained information under false pretences.

Some Wits University academics (including the above-named Smith) - all white, needless to say - have complained about the racialisation of the Makgoba affair, and one Paul Maree of Melville said I was "at it again, riding [my] racism hobby horse". Frankly, I am tired of people who have never been victims of racism in their lives crying "racism" whenever a black person has cause to point to still rampant inequalities and white hypocrisy in our country. If, in the eyes of Maree and his ilk, that makes me a black racist, then I am proud to be one.

And perhaps it is time those who believe themselves to have been "on the side of angels" during the apartheid era, as Charlton put it to me last Friday, were told, as Dr Ivy Masepe-Cassaburn did, that "white liberals are no longer God's gift to black South Africa"

Nigerians come out en masse to buy activist's books and mourn his death

Star 15/11/95
BY AKIN ALOFETEKUN

Star Foreign Service (226)

Abuja, Nigeria - Major bookstores in Lagos confirmed a tremendous upsurge in the purchase of the late Ken Saro-Wiwa's literary works.

Managers of bookshops said they had sold 90% of Saro-Wiwa's titles, such as *A Forest of Flowers* and *A Shipload of Rice*.

In Saro-Wiwa's Ogoni home region and city Port Harcourt the population came out mourning en masse, despite apprehensiveness about the swarming number of security police in the city.

Meanwhile the Catholic Bishops of Nigeria have condemned the hanging of Saro-Wiwa and fellow human rights activists.

During their one day conference in Enugu at the weekend the bishops called the hanging a "shocking, shameful, crude and barbaric" act.

"It was wrong to try people secretly in special tribunals and then

hang them overnight when there are supposed to be laws and courts in the land," the conference said.

The Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (Mosop) has reiterated its continued determination to pursue the case for the Ogoni people.

"We are prepared to defend our land from further abuse by Shell Petroleum and the Nigerian state," the organisation said.

Saro-Wiwa's chief defence counsel Chief Gani Fawehinmi called on Nigerians to "come out en masse to fight this military bandit (General Sani Abacha)".

A tearful Fawehinmi told a large rally, later dispersed by security police, how he withdrew from the case "when it became apparent they were out to hang Saro-Wiwa".

The withdrawal of envoys by a number of African and Western nations and the decision to suspend Nigeria from the Commonwealth has been hailed across Nigeria.



Down with Abacha . an angry crowd gathered outside the Nigerian consulate in Rosebank, Johannesburg yesterday to present a protest memorandum through locked gates to Nigerian diplomat Sande Umoran and acting consul-general Adamu Abbas

Mandela to press UK, US for Nigerian oil embargo

STAFF REPORTERS AND SABA

South Africa will step up pressure on Nigeria to return the country to democracy with a direct appeal by President Mandela to Britain and the United States to apply oil sanctions against the west African state after the failure of diplomacy to shift its military ruler Gen Saru Abacha

Mandela, who is in New Zealand on a state visit after the Commonwealth conference there last week, is expected to telephone British Prime Minister John Major and US President Bill Clinton and ask them to impose the sanctions

"I am not satisfied with the fact that they are not applying oil sanctions," Mandela told reporters last night in Wellington "We can see we are dealing with a very irresponsible fellow," he said, referring to Abacha, who defied international appeals and executed nine political activists last Friday

Oil is Nigeria's major foreign revenue earner and activists from the country lobbied the Commonwealth conference to impose oil sanctions claiming the revenue from it benefited the military junta

In Pretoria, Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad said South Africa

could not lead sanctions because trade with Nigeria was a mere "drop in the ocean" worth only R84-million annually, with R64-million of that made up by South African exports

But a potentially powerful SA coalition of sports, church, business, labour and political organisations formed in Johannesburg yesterday intends to develop a comprehensive plan to correct the deteriorating human rights situation in Nigeria

The ANC-led South African-

SABA 15/11/95 (226)

Nigerian Democratic Support Group (SANDSG) will unveil its plans on Friday after consultations with members, but has in the meantime called for the immediate release of all political prisoners in Nigeria, the speedy restoration of democracy and an end to all executions

Organisations in the group include the SA Communist Party, Cosatu, the National Olympic Committee of SA, the SA Football Association, Lawyers for Human Rights

and Business SA. The organisations indicated their strong support for full-scale oil sanctions

The SA Council of Churches, also in the group said yesterday "Our Government must impose oil, sports, cultural and diplomatic sanctions." Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, speaking on behalf of the SACC, said the two-year period given to Nigeria by the Commonwealth heads of state for the restoration of democracy was too long

Speaking in Durban, Nigerian activist Emma Edighegi said "All Nigerians want is to begin the transition to democracy and they are prepared to tolerate any measures from South Africa and the international community

ANC deputy secretary-general Cheryl Carolus said "We must send a very strong message to Nigeria"

The SANDSG has urged the public to attend a gathering at the Nigerian consulate on Friday to lay nine wreaths in memory of author Ken Saro-Wiwa and the eight other activists hanged with him

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe said today that Nigeria deserved punishment by the Commonwealth for hanging the nine "In a club, one must observe the

Zimbabwe in 4 Nations Cup

Zimbabwe will take the place of Nigeria in the Simba Four Nations Cup competition which kicks off in Mmabatho this weekend

SA Football executive president Solomon Morewa said Zimbabwe agreed to play and would bring their best team, including top striker Peter Ndlovhu and goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar

Zimbabwe's participation comes after SA withdrew their invitation to Nigeria on Monday

following a meeting between Sifa and the Ministry of Sport after nine activists were executed at the weekend

"We felt that Nigeria abused human rights and we pulled them out of the tournament because it was our way of showing our respect for human dignity," Morewa said

SA beat Zimbabwe 1-0 the last time they met - Sapa

▶ Team jumps at chance
Page 28



Cabinet backs Mandela's call for sanctions on Nigeria

Wyndham Hartley

CAPE TOWN — The Cabinet has thrown its full weight behind President Nelson Mandela's action against the Nigerian government after last week's execution of nine activists.

Cabinet secretary Jakes Gerwel said after yesterday's Cabinet meeting that the Nigerian situation was "reviewed". He reiterated government's condemnation of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists, and of the military regime's "callous disregard for the efforts by SA's and other governments to restore democracy in that country".

The Cabinet joined Mandela in calling for the restoration of democracy, and the release of Moshood Abiola and Gen Olusegun Obasanjo.

The Cabinet noted that SA was part of the Commonwealth committee formed to deal with developments in Nigeria and would, within that forum, "explore and initiate appropriate

(226) BDT 6/11/95
measures to increase pressure against the Abacha regime".

Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Aziz Pahad said there was no contradiction between Mandela's call for sanctions and the statement that SA had limited economic leverage against Nigeria, with trade of only R84m between the two nations.

Reuter reports SA has barred arms sales to Nigeria.

Water Affairs and Forestry Minister Kader Asmal, who chairs the national conventional arms control committee, said the embargo went into effect on November 2.

European Union ambassadors approved a total arms embargo on Nigeria yesterday but stopped short of threatening sanctions on oil exports.

Meanwhile, Shell and other Western oil companies signed an agreement with the Nigerian military government to invest in a \$3,5bn natural gas plant. Shell said on Tuesday it would not stop investing in the West African nation.

Oh Nigerian! Oh Africa!

CAMERON DUODU, author and former newspaper editor, writes from London on the execution of a friend and reflects on the role played by President Mandela.

(226) AR 4 16/11/95

BY his ruthless hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight fellow Ogoni campaigners, the Nigerian President, General Sani Abacha, has set a world record by transforming the Commonwealth from a "nudge, wink and fudge" organisation, into one that can act swiftly and unambiguously.

But in providing the Commonwealth with so much to unite around, Abacha has blown a veritable hurricane through so-called "African diplomacy".

And the chief victim of Abacha's tantrum, I am sad to say, is the reputation of the only African ruler to whom most of black Africans look for real leadership, President Nelson Mandela.

Of course, the tragedy of what happened is that Mr Mandela could not both be sweetly urging Abacha, in private, to show mercy, and breathing fire on him in public, to an inquisitive press.

Mandela opted for the private word in Abacha's ear.

And he has paid dearly for it. Why did he do that, when Archbishop Desmond Tutu, for one, had been telling him all along that Abacha's head like a stone, reminded

him of some of the apostles of apartheid?

I think the answer is that Mr Mandela could not bring himself to believe that any ruler would be so blind to his own self-interest; so un-patriotic, as to invite international odium upon his nation, in the manner Abacha eventually did.

"Now, my conscience is clear," Mr Mandela said, after the executions had taken place.

"I've done everything humanly possible to try and save human lives." But unfortunately, those mourning Ken Saro-Wiwa and his fellow martyrs will never stop believing that if Mr Mandela had declared, at the outset, in Auckland "I shall not sit in the same room as the representatives of a government that has confirmed death sentences passed by a kangaroo court", their loved ones might be alive today.

Certainly, after Mr Mandela's debacle, the back-slapping, "Hello, my brother" type of relationship between him and other African rulers, may have ended.

The utter tragedy of it all is that Ken Saro-Wiwa went horribly to the gallows for a crime he did not commit.

Not only was Saro-Wiwa not present at the scene of the murder of the four Ogoni elders, for which he was hanged, but he was actually under arrest at the time, being driven away from the scene.

In an ordinary court, this watertight alibi would have been material in making the court acquit him.

But the special tribunal which tried him had no interest in any such legal "niceties".

The tribunal was hand-picked by Abacha's military government.

The military junta was represented on the tribunal by a serving military officer.

And the military decree that set up the tribunal stipulated that its verdict should not be subject to appeal.

Who could have devised such a death-trap? Oh Nigeria, oh Africa! How much weeping are we obliged to do before we emerge from the stone age? I knew Ken Saro-Wiwa very well.

He was a humorous fellow, debonair and bourgeois to a fault. He sent his two sons to Eton, the expensive public school where many of Britain's Conservative rulers were educated.

Yet much as one might have despised some of these pretensions he was acting out a part that could appear to others to be a parody, but that that parody had been concocted out of his own imagination.

Only, he didn't care whether you laughed at it or not.

Martyrdom sits uneasily on his irreverent head.

But he was aware it might happen.

In his book, *Prisoners of Jeb's*, (published by Saros International Publishers, 44 Aragon Avenue, Ewell, Epsom, Surrey KT17 2QG, England) he wrote what has turned out to be his own eptaph "The director of Jeb's Prison asked 'Why has the Chief of Air Staff invited Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa?'

"I hear Mr Saro-Wiwa has been watching this Prison for a long time." The director sent for Pita Dumbrok Pita confirmed that indeed he knew Mr Saro-Wiwa, by ill-repute if nothing else.

"He is a mean, spiteful little wretch, and so small you wouldn't find him among a colony of soldier ants. He is learning to be a satirist."

"What does a satirist do?"

"He holds up a distorting mirror before people. Some people look into the mirror, see their reflection and get scared."

"Good Heavens!" moaned the director "I'm finished. The man is dangerous!"

"Very," agreed Pita Dumbrok. It was for being clever, and thus so "dangerous", that Ken Saro-Wiwa was murdered by Abacha and his gang.

For the struggle of the Ogoni, which Ken led, is the tip of an iceberg, an iceberg built on the ice that all Nigerians are equal and live in a land of equal rights.

Many people in the Niger Delta, where the oil that brings in 85 percent of Nigeria's revenue is obtained, have taken their cue from Saro-Wiwa and have begun to agitate for a greater share of that income.

By killing Saro-Wiwa, Abacha has sent them a message, namely, "If you want to control the oil produced on your land, you cannot do it by demonstrating or hurling stones at my men."

Indeed, I fear, a new vista has been opened in the struggle to achieve equality in Nigeria.

Call to ban Nigeria from World pageant

ARG 16/11/95

JOHANNESBURG — Miss Nigeria should be withdrawn from the Miss World pageant at Sun City, the North-West government said on Wednesday.

It was reacting to the execution of nine human rights activists in Nigeria, despite worldwide pleas for clemency

The nine were charged with murder, but human rights organisations have said they were executed because of their work for the rights of the minority Ogoni and for their opposition to Gen Sani Abacha's military regime.

In a letter to Miss World president Eric Morley, the North-West government called on the organisers to withdraw Miss Nigeria, Toyin Enitan Raji, in a show of solidarity with those opposed to the Nigerian government's actions

On Saturday, Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth. It was later banned from playing in a four-nations soccer tournament in South Africa this weekend

"The withdrawal of Miss Nigeria will not only benefit the standing and profile of the organisation and the Miss World pageant in general, but will also be in the interests of the contestants, the hosts and sponsors of the pageant," the North-West government said.

Miss World organisers have said they will withdraw Miss Nigeria only on the advice of the United Nations.



Miss Nigeria, Toyin Enitan Raji, at Sun City.

Nigeria warns UN against 'meddling'

NEW YORK. — Nigeria has warned United Nations members against interfering in the country's "internal affairs" and has defended its decision to hang nine dissidents last week

Nigeria's execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, a prominent human rights activist, and eight other dissidents has been strongly

criticized by Western countries.

The United States has been pushing for a UN resolution condemning the executions, and is exploring ways to isolate Nigeria internationally

"Nigeria requests members of the UN to resist any attempt to have a resolution passed,"

(226) APR 16/11/95
said a statement from the Nigerian mission

"If powerful members of the UN are allowed to get away with this blatant interference in the internal affairs of Nigeria, no country in the Third World can consider itself safe from similar actions" — Sapa-AP.

AL

Miss Nigeria will not be forced out

Rowe 16/11/95
(226)

By Themba Molefe
Political Correspondent

MISS NIGERIA Toyin Raji will not be pressured to withdraw from the Miss World Pageant despite growing calls for the isolation of her country

Speaking on behalf of the newly formed South Africa-Nigeria Democracy Support Group, Ms Cheryl Carolus said yesterday the onus was on Raji and the Nigerian democratic movement to decide on her participation

She said instead pressure should be put on the United States and Britain to impose an oil embargo against Nigeria

Meanwhile, the European Union's Council of Ministers will confirm on Monday the freezing of nearly

The onus is on the democratic movement to make a final decision

R700 million of development aid to Nigeria

Sources in Brussels told *Sapa-AFP* yesterday that the EU was set to impose an arms embargo on Nigeria as punishment for the execution of nine human rights activists but would stop short of oil sanctions

They said EU ambassadors meeting later yesterday would adopt proposals recommended by its Africa Committee which met on Tuesday

In South Africa, the country's leading sporting bodies, the South African Football Association, National

Olympic Committee and National Sports Congress have already begun to isolate Nigeria

Carolus said President Nelson Mandela, already under pressure to call for sanctions against General Sani Abacha's military regime, was yesterday meeting US President Bill Clinton and British prime minister John Major on the oil embargo question

"It is quite unfair to put the sanctions campaign on President Mandela. Other countries should take the lead and not be moral cowards on the issue," said Carolus

Shell in hot seat over Nigerian operations

ET(MR) 16/11/95 (226)

By YVETTE COOPER

London — Shell's public relations team must be tearing their hair out. Just when the Brent Spar had finally dropped out of the headlines, up comes Nigeria and Shell is in the firing line once more.

Earlier this year, Greenpeace brought Shell to its knees over the disposal of an oil storage buoy in the Atlantic. The execution of nine minority-rights activists in Nigeria last week provoked allegations that Shell, the biggest multinational in the country, had supported a brutal military regime.

These are trying times for multinational companies. They are expected to operate according to the highest environmental and ethical standards no matter where they are based. They are being called on to intervene and make judgments on the politics of the countries in which they work.

Last week, Anita Roddick wrote in a letter to the Financial Times that Shell should condemn the execution of the activist Ken Saro-Wiwa. She asked what power could stop it. "Shell can stop it," she wrote.

Shell could never be like the Body Shop. Oil and natural resource companies are not like traders. They cannot make and break contracts at the drop of an executioner's axe. Energy projects can take years to plan and years to complete. It can be decades before you get a return on your investment.

Short-term political demonstrations are simply not an option. But alongside the limits on their freedom to manoeuvre, oil companies also have greater power and greater responsibility. Their power peaks precisely when a government and an economy are in trouble — and the revenue from natural resources becomes the only remaining support for the regime. The oil revenues from operations by Shell, Elf, Agip and other oil multinationals are helping the Nigerian military government to survive.

Oil companies are often more deeply involved with dubious governments than other kinds of companies ever need to be. As their work involves extracting and exploiting a country's natural resources, they are inevitably drawn into joint ventures with the local government.

Shell works alongside Elf and Agip in joint ventures with the government-owned

Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

These international companies are inevitably affected by the Nigerian government's failure to implement proper environmental standards and by its inability to broker a compromise between oil interests and farmers who are disrupted by exploration.

In Nigeria, opposition to the government and opposition to Shell have become intertwined. Ken Saro-Wiwa called on Shell to pay \$10 billion compensation to the Ogoni people for alleged environmental damage to their homeland. Given that Shell's actions were central to Saro-Wiwa's protests, the company was bound to come under pressure to condemn his executioners.

The most important question which arises out of this crisis for Shell is how much should we expect multinationals to do in the cause of human rights?

Big companies have a responsibility to avoid being party to corrupt deals or violent and oppressive government action. Where a government is unable or unwilling to implement adequate environmental standards, it is wrong for a multinational to take advantage of the situation and blithely pollute the country. However, it is often difficult to know how effective businesses can be when they intervene in politics and human rights. Although outright sanctions and disinvestment were effective in South Africa's case, a few public condemnations from Shell about the Nigerian dictatorship might not make much difference to the military government's belligerent behaviour.

These ethical dilemmas may be taken out of Shell's hands. If international governments decide to impose an oil embargo, then Shell has no choice but to get out of Nigeria. Meanwhile, Shell and others will be weighing up how their losses in the outraged Western consumer markets balance against their continued profit in Nigeria.

In a global market, the way a company behaves in one market makes it vulnerable to consumer boycotts in another.

Over the next few months, it will become clear whether the latest outcry against Shell is little more than noise. It may be that consumers really have become an irresistible force — The Independent of London

□ See Forum

SA's policy on Nigeria a failure

ALLISTER SPARKS

SOUTH Africa's handling of the crisis of tyranny in Nigeria, which culminated last Friday in the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other civil rights activists even as President Mandela sought to protect the regime at the Commonwealth summit, is the worst policy failure of our new government since it took office 18 months ago.

What makes it so bad is that the major world powers were waiting for us to give a lead, deferring to our new status as the regional superpower in Africa, and to President Mandela's personal reputation as a figure of great moral authority.

Aggravating the failure still further is that so many people warned the government that its policy of quiet diplomacy was inappropriate and embarrassingly reminiscent of the Reagan administration's "constructive" policy on apartheid, which the ANC had roundly - and rightly - condemned as a moral cop-out.

Abacha regime

Almost every specialist on Nigeria warned that the policy was bound to fail, that the Mandela government was being naive in imagining that the uncompromisingly brutal regime of General Sani Abacha would heed its gentle persuasion. Even this column warned two weeks ago that South Africa was perilously close to a dereliction of moral duty.

All the evidence indicated that Abacha was deliberately thumbing his nose at Mandela.

Six hours before Deputy President Thabo Mbeki arrived in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, last July bearing a personal plea for clemency from Mandela, the Abacha regime publicly executed 43 people it claimed were common criminals.

On the day Mandela arrived in New Zealand for the Commonwealth summit and announced that he would not call for Nigeria's expulsion but would continue with

his policy of quiet diplomacy, Abacha confirmed a military tribunal's death sentence on Saro-Wiwa and the eight others.

The trial of Saro-Wiwa, a gentle and distinguished writer whose campaign on behalf of the small, oil-depleted Ogoni tribe was scrupulously non-violent, was itself a travesty. It was held in secret with no right of appeal, and it found Saro-Wiwa guilty even though, like the Sharpeville Six, he was nowhere near the scene of the deaths he was supposed to have caused.

Conscience

And then, even as the Commonwealth leaders debated the issue, the nine were hanged. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, it was like spitting in Mandela's face.

Mandela says now that his conscience is clear and there can be no doubting this. It was Abacha, not he, who sent these men to their deaths. At the same time it is important that Mandela should recognise the failure of the policy and the damage this has caused to our country.

The fact is that the people of Nigeria feel betrayed by South Africa - and by Mandela. Many other African democrats feel the same.

This is hugely damaging to the new South Africa. We cannot fritter away all the goodwill that has been directed towards us since our liberation last year.

Hangings

What can be done to recover the situation? I believe South Africa must now be seen to take the lead in rallying world opinion behind a much more forceful and comprehensive policy to bring change to Nigeria.

President Mandela made a good start by switching tack immediately news of the hangings reached him and spearheading the move to suspend Nigeria's member-

ship of the Commonwealth. But that is not enough. A series of follow-up actions are required.

□ First, President Mandela should call for an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council to consider the Nigerian crisis. At that meeting South Africa should call for an official condemnation of the Nigerian Military Council's annulment of the 1993 elections and of the secret trials, political imprisonments and executions that have followed.

□ We should prepare a Security Council resolution demanding, as a first step, the immediate release of all political prisoners and an end to all further executions.

□ This should be backed up by the imposition of an initial sanctions package, with diplomatic isolation, international travel restrictions and the freezing of foreign assets - including the private assets of all members of the Abacha regime. This is a junta as deeply corrupt as it is brutal, and seizing the millions they have embezzled and salted abroad is the one thing that may give them pause.

Oil exports

□ Beyond this, the resolution should set a deadline for a return to civilian rule through UN-supervised elections - substantially shorter than the two years called for by the Commonwealth - with the threat of an embargo on Nigeria's oil exports, which provide 80% of the government's revenues, should the Military Council fail to do this.

Since 90% of Nigeria's oil exports go to the United States, South Africa will have to do some energetic lobbying of the Clinton administration to ensure the success of such an embargo should it be applied.

□ Not least, South Africa should immediately call on Nigeria to withdraw its high commissioner and reduce relations between the two countries to the level of a single diplomatic representative through whom basic contact can be maintained. And it should call on other



ANGRY ANGLICAN: Archbishop Tutu speaks out on the Nigerian executions and calls for a boycott of that country's oil and expulsion of their diplomats

PICTURE AP

members of the Organisation of African Unity to express their disapproval of the Abacha tyranny by doing the same.

By taking the lead in mobilising international action in this way we will be able to recoup some of the damage done to our image and re-establish ourselves as the champions of democracy and human rights in Africa.

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CT16/11/95

UCT call to drop Shell name

ET 16/11/95

STUDENTS and staff members
from the Shell Environmental and
Geographical Science Building at

UCT have called for the removal of
the name Shell from the building

Some protested yesterday
against the company's involve-
ment with the Nigerian govern-
ment, which recently executed
nine activists (226)

SA ban on arms sales to Nigeria

(22b)

CT 16/11/95

PRETORIA: The cabinet yesterday unanimously endorsed President Nelson Mandela's call for sanctions against Nigeria and all South African arms sales to the West African country were banned.

"The government confirms its commitment to support all effective and efficient means towards the restoration of democracy in Nigeria, including the imposition of appropriate sanctions," cabinet

secretary Dr Jakes Gerwel said here after a cabinet meeting.

Dr Gerwel reiterated the Foreign Ministry's attitude that SA should not overestimate its influence in the region and would have to co-operate with other countries in addressing the problems of Nigeria's military rulers.

There had been no talk of any military interference, he added.

● Deputy Foreign Minister Mr

Aziz Pahad said yesterday there was no difference between himself and President Mandela on SA's approach to Nigeria.

Hours after Mr Pahad appeared to dismiss calls for sanctions Mr Mandela told reporters in New Zealand he was lobbying world leaders to impose them.

Mr Pahad said he did not mean SA opposed sanctions — Political Staff, Reuter

Nigeria's well-aimed shot in the foot

(226) CT(MR) 16/11/95

Even at the height of its brutal clumsiness, South Africa's apartheid government could not have matched the ability of the Nigerian military regime to shoot itself in the foot

The timing of last week's execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists from the minority Ogoni people will advance, by years, the campaign to put pressure on dictator Sani Abacha to restore democracy in Nigeria and show some regard for human rights

Ironically, the world campaign against apartheid — which was spearheaded by Nigeria's sad succession of civilian and military governments — has shown the way for the international community to isolate and exclude other wrongdoers

Within days of the executions, a sports boycott of sorts had been imposed on Nigeria. This form of protest took years of militant direct action and expensive lobbying to achieve against South Africa

Things have also clipped along on the political and democratic front. Nobody, least of all the Nigerians themselves, expected the Commonwealth to move so quickly to suspend them

Once again it becomes clear how tenuously the fortunes of a country rest on the timing — or mis-timing as the case may be — of events, and exactly who gets angry and disillusioned

In South Africa's case, I believe, the killing of Steve Biko turned the political wheel against the apartheid government

Until that happened in 1977, the three Western permanent members of the Security Council had persistently shielded South Africa from enforcement action

DIPLOMATIC VIEW



BY JEAN-JACQUES CORNISH

Nigeria's oil business is that government's soft underbelly

at the United Nations

In terms of its charter, the United Nations can only take steps like imposing mandatory sanctions when the behaviour of a country is judged to imperil peace in its immediate region

While the Western members loathed apartheid, they could not accept it posed a threat to peace. For this approach they were repeatedly reviled by the anti-apartheid lobby and by African and other countries led by Nigeria

The emotion generated by Biko's death forced the Western powers to stop playing word-games and live with limited sanctions — the mandatory arms embargo — being slapped on South Africa in November 1977

Biko's death lubricated a process that had taken more than a decade of concerted action at the world organisation

In Nigeria's case, the European Union is already talking about cutting off future arms sales. Since this is a matter that has balance of payments considerations, one could once safely have assumed there would be some distance

between statements of intention and concrete action. But Nigeria has shown an uncanny capacity to speed things up

The Commonwealth heads of government meeting that ended in Auckland this week will be remembered not for what happened in New Zealand, but for Abacha's demonstration of his brutality and disregard for international opinion

If he had hired a horror film director he could not have come up with a worse time to execute the activists. He showed a horrific contempt for his Commonwealth colleagues who had Nigeria's human rights record at the top of their agenda in Auckland

The executions also coincided with a United Nations Security Council meeting on Liberia — guaranteeing a powerful platform for international condemnation of the deed

Abacha might not have intended to provoke his Commonwealth counterparts. His critics say he is spectacularly out of touch with reality

Nevertheless, his action forced President Nelson Mandela to abandon his embarrassingly inadequate "quiet diplomacy" and go right on the offensive

Mandela led the move to get Nigeria suspended from the Commonwealth and recalled his high commissioner from Abouja

Human rights activists, however, say this largely symbolic action is nowhere near enough. The least they want is oil sanctions. That being the case, they have exhausted Mandela's clout in the matter

Their wrath is now directed against the Shell oil company which they say is propping up the military regime

It must be difficult for Shell, or anyone else doing business with Nigeria, to avoid such accusations. The country has had pretty ghastly military governments for 25 of the 35 years it has been independent

Oil is Nigeria's soft underbelly. Income from this mineral represents 80 percent of Nigeria's government revenue. The first country to feel the heat of boycott calls will be America, which buys 40 percent of Nigeria's oil exports.

In the normal course of things it would have taken time to generate the heat. The only organisation lobbying in America for human rights in Nigeria is TransAfrica, Randall Robinson's old anti-apartheid vanguard

Abacha's ability to deliver widespread detestation of his regime could swing things. His immediate response to the condemnation of the executions was to lambaste the critics for "meddling" in Nigeria's internal affairs — shades of Verwoerd, Vorster and Botha

The anti-apartheid lobby never achieved its goal of mandatory international sanctions against the apartheid government. The then president, P.W. Botha, did the job for them with his infamous Rubicon speech

At a stroke he showed the money men, who had withstood the slings and arrows of angry shareholders' meetings in the hopes of eventual reform, that they were wasting their time. So they started the damaging exodus themselves

In Nigeria, Abacha's determination, expressed some weeks ago, to hold onto power for at least three years more, may have sent a similar signal to investors hoping to ride out the storm

Shell enters new deal with Nigeria

(226)
CT 16/11/95

LAGOS: Shell and other Western oil companies signed an agreement yesterday with the Nigerian military government to invest in a \$3.5 billion (about R12.7bn) natural gas plant.

Shell said on Tuesday that it would not stop investing in the West African nation, despite international condemnation of the regime after the executions of poet Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other anti-government activists.

Nigerian courts had convicted the activists of four murders. The men had insisted they were innocent and framed to silence their criticism of the oil industry.

Shell has said the Nigerian Liquefied National Gas project would help the environment in the oil-rich south because it would tap dangerous and polluting gas flares. The natural gas would be liquefied and then exported to the United States and Europe.

The region is home to 500,000 minority Ogonis who say their land and water have been destroyed by the oil industry.

Shell has a 25% stake in the project and the Nigerian government has a 49% share. Elf Aquitaine SA of France and Italy's Agip SpA also have shares.

Shell claims the project will create 6,000 jobs during construction.

Royal Dutch Shell argued on Tuesday that opponents to Nigeria's military regime shared responsibility for the executions.

"As worldwide threats and

protests increased, the (Nigerian) government position appeared to harden," said a statement by Shell's regional co-ordinator for Africa, Mr Dick van den Broek.

"Did the protest become more important than the purpose?"

After the executions, the US, Canada, South Africa and several European nations withdrew their ambassadors in protest, and Nigeria became the first nation ever to be suspended by the 52-member Commonwealth.

Human rights and environmental groups led by Greenpeace have urged Shell to cut back its activities in Nigeria, including its part in the natural gas plant.

Sabotage

Shell pumps more than 250,000 barrels of oil a day in Nigeria, nearly 12% of Shell's international oil output.

Saro-Wiwa had targeted Shell as the principal foreign exploiter of Ogoni land, and Ogoni activists in the past had sabotaged up to \$30 million (about R109m) of Shell property. Shell pulled out of Ogoni land in 1993, partly as a result of the Ogoni campaign.

The multi-national oil company acknowledges some responsibility for environmental problems in the area, but said that rising population, deforestation and over-farming were also to blame.

— Sapa-AP

● See Page 4

SA heads for flack in Auckland over Nigerian 'appeasement'

(226) MFG 107 16/11/95

David Beresford

SOUTH AFRICA may have a bumpy ride at the Commonwealth conference opening in Auckland this weekend thanks to the growing perception that it has accepted the three-year programme for a return to democracy imposed by the Nigerian military junta.

The Nigerian issue is becoming a crucial test of South African foreign policy at a time when Pretoria is preparing a bid for the diplomatic "big time" — a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Nigerian author and civil rights activist Wole Soyinka flew to Auckland and resumed his attack on South Africa for its "quiet diplomacy" policy in dealing with the Abacha regime.

But in Pretoria, South Africa's Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Aziz Pahad defended the government's position, saying the stakes were too high to indulge in grandstanding.

"If Nigeria collapses, the African renaissance, which is being seen as possible, collapses," said Pahad in an interview with the *Mail & Guardian*. "It will affect the entire continent."

Pahad said South Africa had three objectives where Nigeria was concerned: to prevent executions of alleged coup plotters, to secure the release of Chief Abiola and to ensure

the democratic process succeeded. The first of these objectives had already been won. If the others could be achieved it would be "the greatest success" for Africa.

Pahad said one of the problems in dealing with the Nigerians had been the belief of the junta that South Africa was being used as an "agent" of the United States and Britain. "The Nigerians believed the major Western powers had mobilised us as their instrument to isolate Nigeria."

The South African government had been working to disabuse them of this notion. He said it was vital that South Africa establish its independence of the major powers if it was to contribute to the creation of a "new world order".

Pahad confirmed the government was inclined in favour of putting South Africa forward for permanent membership of the UN Security Council if proposals for reform of the world body went through. The issue had been canvassed with countries in the region.

He said a final decision would depend on the form of reorganisation. But as a former nuclear power, with its experience in negotiating peace and its own "miracle" of political development behind it, South Africa was well-qualified for the position. Nigeria and Egypt have already announced they will be candidates if Africa is offered a Security Council seat.

Shell's latest 'little atrocity' sums up Ogoni demonstrators' attitude to government collusion

(226) Star 16/11/95

Greenpeace and Human Rights Watch Africa both attest to a close working relationship between the Nigerian army and Shell executives which has resulted in massacres and environmental harm

By SAM KILEY
Lagos

An hour's walk from the dirt road, bare-foot to avoid army trackers, we came across what the Ogoni leaders were calling "Shell Oil's latest little atrocity"

A spuming arc of greenish yellow oil squirting into the sky from a cracked pipeline connection covered vegetation and abandoned houses in a film of brown goo, rendering the land barren, and gagging local farmers with the stench

"Sabotage," said a Shell spokesman in the Rivers State capital of Port Har-

court

"We cannot send people to repair the line because they fear they will be attacked by the locals"

No matter how popular Ken Saro-Wiwa, the executed environmentalist, might have been among his Ogoni tribesmen, it is difficult to imagine a couple of farmers deep in the bush trying to poison their land by shoving poles under a high-pressure oil pipeline and cracking its joints at his, or any one else's, request

Since 1990, when 80 people were killed and 495 houses set alight by the Nigerian Army after Ogoni demonstrators protesting at

Umeuchem were confronted with teargas and bullets, there has been evidence of close collusion between Shell and the Nigerian military regimes

Under General Ibrahim Babangida - and lately General Sani Abacha - this collaboration has taken the form of efforts to stifle Ogoni calls for autonomy and compensation for oil damage to their lands

"This is nothing more than neglect. Shell, and the military authorities, do not care one bit about how much damage the pipelines do, nor do we ever see any of the so-called 'compensation' we are supposed to re-

ceive," said Dr Owens Wiwa, the executed activist's brother who ran a clinic nearby until he went into hiding last week.

The oil spill from the cracked joint blew on for 40 days and nights until it was repaired. The repair, according to Dr Wiwa and his associates, is a rare occurrence

More common, according to Greenpeace, which published a report on environmental damage called Shell Shocked, and Human Rights Watch-Africa, is a close working relationship between the army and Shell executives. The army and "mobile police" who took part in the 1990 massacre

were called in at the request of JP Odofia, Shell Development Corporation's manager for eastern Nigeria

On another occasion in April 1993, when Willbros, an American contractor commissioned by Shell to bulldoze crops to make way for another pipeline through Ogoni farmland, several people were wounded when police opened fire on villagers trying to block the progress of the earth movers. A mother aged 25 was shot in the arm

"I dare not see a doctor because they would find the bullet wound. I dare not see Shell for compensation for the same reason

"Here it is better to risk a silent death than let the authorities know you exist," she said

After this incident a Willbros representative wrote to Shell's Odufia, saying that "fortunately there was a military presence to control the situation and to offer protection to the workers and equipment"

Shell has said that it wants to stay out of the Ogoni crisis and would favour closer links with community leaders. However, executives say what money they have contributed most often ends up in the pockets of the military - Times News Service

'Nigerian' scams take gullible investors for expensive rides

By ROBERT MILLER
Lagos

Beware a letter that contains the phrase "And be rest assured that this transaction is 100% risk free" When the missive is signed by Dr Kasim Coker and written on Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation-headed paper, then be assured that the transaction, should you fall for it, is 100% guaranteed to lose you money

It is one of many so-called "Nigerian" scams that have suckered hundreds of thousands of investors into parting with millions of dollars worldwide. An investi-

gating officer from the Metropolitan Police's company fraud squad says millions of these Nigerian letters have been sent to investors around the world - in 51 countries at last count

There are variations on the NNPC letter, with some coming from the Federal Ministry of Works or Aviation and others from a woman claiming to be a queen working at the Central Bank of Nigeria. There is also an emperor

One particularly persistent writer is Joseph Ranze, an engineer, who appears to work for any number of Nigerian state organisations

One current UK case in which people have been arrested and charged involves some 300 investors from around the world, including

Paul Tyler, the charity's financial director, said yesterday "We received a total of three faxes which were based on a Nigerian woman

You find dozens of fax and telephone lines all coming from one small office

the UK, Alaska, the US and Far East and alleged losses of millions of dollars

Charities, too, have succumbed. Britain's Christian Aid has also been targeted

dying and leaving us some money in her will

"There was even a testimony from her local priest to back it up. We were asked for our bank account details

which I would not give out. We have heard nothing since"

So endemic has the letter problem become that the Central Bank of Nigeria was forced to take out newspaper advertisements earlier this year warning people not to be conned. London's Metropolitan Police company fraud squad said on Monday that the scams show little sign of abating

One officer said "It has become something of a cottage industry

"When we have been over there and tracked down the different numbers you find dozens of tele-

phone and fax lines all coming from one small office. In terms of warning signs, one of the first is when the letter talks about dollars. The Nigerian Central Bank deals in its own currency, the naira, not dollars

As one fraud squad detective said "In effect, these letters always have the same theme and meaning. Dear Sir or Madam, I am a thief who has stolen a lot of money from the government and I would like your help to get it out of Nigeria. These monies do not exist and never have"

You have been warned - Times News Service

Cabinet backs call for democracy in Nigeria

Star 16/11/95 (226)

Government committed to supporting all effective means, including sanctions, to bring about change in Lagos regime

By **JOVIAL RANTAO**
Political Reporter

President Mandela returns tonight from a State visit to New Zealand and is expected to convene an urgent meeting of southern African leaders to discuss strategies that could resolve the Nigerian controversy, according to presidential spokesman Parks Mankahlana

"Mandela is due to arrive at Waterkloof Air Base at 8pm and will hold a media briefing, after which he will consult with his Government about the new initiatives. His first has been to call on British Prime Minister John Major and US President Bill Clinton to apply oil sanctions against Nigeria

"Yesterday, South Africa's multi-party Cabinet echoed Mandela's call for the urgent restoration of democracy in Nigeria, no more executions and the immediate release of all political prisoners, including opposition leader Moshood Abiola and General Olusegun Obasanjo

The Cabinet reiterated the Government's condemnation of the execution last Friday of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists, as well as the military regime's callous disregard of efforts by the South African and other African governments to lend assistance in the

restoration of democracy in the west African country

South Africa has already barred arms sales to Nigeria. Water Affairs and Forestry Minister Kader Asmal, speaking in his capacity as chairman of the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC), said yesterday the embargo had gone into effect on November 2

"This action is in line with the South African Government's commitment to the protection of fundamental human rights internationally," Asmal said

The NCACC was set up earlier this year to control arms exports following scandals that included the illegal sale of weapons to Yemen under false end-user certificates

Cabinet secretary Professor Jakes Gerwel told a media briefing in Pretoria that the Government was committed to supporting all effective and efficient means towards the restoration of democracy in Nigeria, including the imposition of appropriate sanctions

"South Africa is part of the Commonwealth Committee of Eight established by the Commonwealth and will, within that forum as well as within the Southern African Development Community, the Organisation of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations, explore and initiate appro-

prate measures to increase pressure against the Abacha regime for the speedy restoration of democracy in Nigeria," Gerwel said

Gerwel said the Cabinet had not discussed matters such as the future of South African-Nigerian diplomatic relations, whether General Sani Abacha should be overthrown and whether South Africa would support any programme to achieve that goal

He reiterated that South Africa's actions would be in accordance with the plans of the Commonwealth's Committee of Eight and the UN Security Council, which will meet soon.

Mankahlana pointed out that Mandela and the South African Government, who have been involved in the Nigerian problem for over 18 months, were not being credited for their actions.

"South Africa was not passive. As early as last year, the President took the lead. He sent Deputy President Thabo Mbeki. The President himself (went) to Nigeria to speak to Abacha," Mankahlana said

He said the South African Football Association and the Ministry of Sports had asked the Confederation of African Football to review Nigeria's participation in the Africa Nations Cup football scheduled for January

European Union approves total arms ban

Brussels - European Union ambassadors yesterday approved a total arms embargo to punish Nigeria's military regime for the execution of nine political activists

But the EU stopped short of threatening sanctions on oil exports, despite international outrage at the hangings Friday of playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other dissidents from the minority Ogoni group who say their land and water are being destroyed by oil industry pollution.

In Strasbourg, France, Saro-Wiwa's son Ken Wiwa demanded an international oil embargo.

"I'm merely hoping that my father hasn't died in vain," Wiwa said during a visit to the European parliament

Ambassadors from the 15 EU nations backed a list of sanctions, including a ban on sales of weapons, ammunition and military equipment, and tight visa restrictions on Nigerian government officials and their families

But the EU, a major trading partner with the west African nation, held back from threatening restrictions on trade or oil imports. Oil sales helped Nigeria to a \$2,38-billion (about R8,6-billion) trade deficit with the EU last year.

At the European Parliament yesterday, Wiwa blasted Royal Dutch Shell, which announced on Tuesday it would not cut back its activities in Nigeria, including its part in a planned \$3,8-billion natural gas plant - Sapa-AP

Nigeria timespan is too long, says Mandela

(226) 8017/11/95

Southern African Development Communities' response to the Nigeria issue would be based on the collective decision by all member countries. He would be in touch with the organisation and Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

Responding to criticism that he had not intervened in Nigeria to the fullest possible extent, Mandela said: "If we'd started with the hard line before the executions happened, people would say we were responsible for the executions."

Mandela was met on his arrival by the SA-Nigeria Democracy Support Group, which includes Business SA, SA Council of Churches, National Soccer League and the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance.

Mandela said the Commonwealth summit

had been a success with fruitful discussions on human resource development in all the member countries.

Sapa reports Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town Desmond Tutu said at a memorial service for the Nigerian victims yesterday that overseas bank accounts of Nigeria's military rulers should be frozen until they behaved like decent people.

During the service in St George's Cathedral, Cape Town, Tutu, other religious leaders and parliamentary Speaker Frene Ginwala lit nine candles for the dead Nigerians and a large peace candle for the African continent.

Tutu repeated his call for economic and cultural sanctions against Nigeria and said the most crucial of these was an oil embargo — Sapa

EU nations to impose an arms embargo on Nigeria

(226) BD 17/11/93

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BRUSSELS — European Union foreign ministers will on Monday impose an arms embargo on Nigeria for the execution of nine dissidents but reject calls for immediate oil sanctions that would put real pressure on the military regime, officials said yesterday.

The ban on arms sales will apply only to future contracts, not those already agreed.

The ministers will also endorse plans to refuse visas for members of the Nigerian junta and their families, following an agreement reached between the 15 member states on Wednesday.

In 1993, following the military coup in Nigeria, EU countries agreed to consider arms sales to Nigeria on a case-by-case basis with a presumption of denial.

The accord, however, had loopholes which allowed European countries including Britain, France, Germany and Italy to go on selling arms to the regime.

The arms embargo move follows a decision by the European Commission to suspend develop-

ment aid to Nigeria, but officials were sceptical about the prospect of either measure having much influence on the regime that hanged writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others last Friday.

A boycott of Nigerian oil, which accounts for more than 90% of the country's foreign revenue and could have a real effect, is opposed by all the big EU states.

Some countries have reservations about the potential effect of sanctions on the Nigerian people.

Sweden, which has been pushing hard for sanctions, is expected to raise the issue on Monday and diplomats did not rule out an agreement to examine the pros and cons of an oil sales ban.

Meanwhile, Nigeria appears to be casting about for scapegoats.

Already, the official Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) has started to point fingers at Britain and SA, holding them responsible for the opprobrium the military regime is facing.

In its major news bulletin on Tuesday the NTA quoted govern-

ment sources as saying SA's call for sanctions against Nigeria was intended to block the latter's chances of getting a seat on an expanded UN Security Council.

The report charged that SA made the move to boost its own bid for a place on the Security Council, when and if membership in the body is increased.

The television station also accused SA of viewing Nigeria as the obstacle standing in the way of its drive to become the voice of Africa in the international community.

The NTA said Nigeria believed President Nelson Mandela had been in touch with his US counterpart Bill Clinton to promote the sanctions campaign.

Since Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth last week, sporadic protest rallies — suspected of having been sponsored by the military government — have been staged in front of the British High Commission in Abuja, the nation's capital, and many other states of the federation. — Sapa-AFP.

Conceptual killing fields

ARG 17/11/98

(226)

HAS the world misunderstood Ken Saro-Wiwa's struggle? Dr RICHARD GRIGGS, a political geographer at the University of Cape Town, examines the question, and its important implications for Africa

BEFORE dying blindfolded and dangling from a rope, Ken Saro-Wiwa uttered his last words "Lord take my soul, but the struggle continues". Those who would now protest his death in the singular language of "human rights" and simply forget his struggle for group rights are blinded in the conceptual killing fields an arena of indoctrinated thinking in which one cannot conceptualise nation-killing (genocide, cide-to kill)

This leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People was an official of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation and a representative to the annual UN-sponsored conference to draft a set of group rights for the world's indigenous peoples. The "struggle" was against cultural genocide

Saro-Wiwa's cultural identity and that of the 500 000 people he represented was Ogoni, one of some 6 000 to 9 000 internationally unrecognised nations that are subjected daily to various forms of genocide engendered by "nation-building" processes (often a euphemism for state-building by nation-destroying)

From the Polar Nations of the North (Inuit) to the Tasmanians in the South there are thousands of nations across the time zones resisting cultural annihilation as states seek to build identities that conform to the artificial boundaries created by history and war

Many academics now refer collectively to such submerged nations as the Fourth World

The distinction between a state

which binds its citizens by legal and military means and a nation which is the product of cultural evolution in a region was not obscured until the period of the French Revolution

A *nation* meant a distinct people with a common history, territory, language and culture. In scientific terms it remains erroneous to equate states and nations but masses of people are indoctrinated otherwise

This process began with the French Revolution of 1789 when the Jacobins attempted to harness the power of nationalism as a means to gain a further centralisation of state powers. The state claims to be a nation. The Royal Guard was renamed the *National Guard* and the *Estates General* in Paris (where various nations and polities had sent representatives), was renamed the *National Constituent Assembly*

The French gave an old word, a tool of thought, a new meaning. The state became the nation and loyalty to the old nation became treason

France's claim was pre-Orwellian double-speak as the revolutionaries vowed to destroy the thirty-nine nations of France that then existed (some still exist-Brittany, Occitania, Provence). The Bureau of the Public Spirit, the largest propaganda machine of the time was launched to use plays, oaths, flags, statues, and other tools, including force, to Frenchify the conquered territories of "France"

Napoleon even sought to make all of Europe French. The legacy today

is nation-building, the ideological equivalent of gunpowder that spread with all the colonial conquests and entered Africa. It is a form of identity-engineering that continuously brings Africans into the conceptual killing fields states and nations cannot coexist (ideological underpinnings for great violence)

The Nigerian geopolitical situation with its 250 nations may be egregious but typical for Africa. Fifteen billion dollars a year are spent on military armaments by African states — not to defend their borders in state to state war but to maintain internal security as old nations and new states clash over resources, culture, and development plans

Power struggles between nationalist groups for either state control (e.g. Hutu versus Tutsi in Rwanda) or for territorial secession (e.g. Republic of Somaliland) have produced some of the world's longest and bloodiest wars (e.g. the secessionist struggle in Sudan which has been ongoing since 1955)

The inability of states to find a better construction for coexistence with nations other than "nation-building" ideology has created such instability that most of Africa's states are either part of a war zone or receive refugees from one (25 wars altogether and half the world's refugees), genocides occur regularly (e.g. Rwanda and Burundi)

In consequence famines are routine and poverty has been accentuated (e.g. many African states have

cut back on social welfare benefits to increase spending on arms). African dictatorships are just a common solution

All who collude within a system of states that allows no international rights for Fourth World nations must share responsibility for genocide. Just as Saro-Wiwa asked his executioners, "Which type of country is this," one may also ask "Which kind of world is this that is alarmed at nine hangings but is silent on genocide?"

Mass-executions and terrorising Fourth World nation peoples is an everyday occurrence but our inability to conceptualise the rights of such nations leads us to see these events as "domestic police affairs", "internal security matters" or "ethnic unrest"

Genocide is downplayed as the fate of "tribes" caught in a wheel of progress — inevitable, part of "democratisation," or "economic development". Resistance to "nation-building" programmes becomes "terrorism" and "separation"

Surely the oil pipelines that cross Ogoniland can be seen as Nigeria's economic lifeline. Ogoni resistance is then "treason" to be met with extrajudicial executions and hangings

The spirit of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his people say differently, troops and oil companies have breached cultural boundaries, destroyed Ogoni environments, and failed to negotiate anything for the Ogoni nation

It is important to speak out against injustice to individuals but even more so against the genocide

in which the particular killings were rooted. To respect that Ken Saro-Wiwa's death was about the right of nations might help bring an end to the conceptual killing fields.

Within 50 states are some 1 500 nations (250 in Nigeria alone) that can coexist peacefully if only we would acknowledge nation rights and negotiate territorial and cultural solutions. To do otherwise is to spawn wars, antagonism between cultures, and to generate more rootless, cultureless humans occupying monotonous landscapes

Interestingly, Saro-Wiwa was more frequently referred to in press reports by his state identity (Nigerian) than by his national one (Ogoni) because state-indoctrinated peoples are uncomfortable with the coequal and autonomous existence of nations within states

Within South Africa, the legacy of apartheid's identity-engineering has left an even stronger distaste for such discourse. Thus the group rights of nations, amidst Pavlovian responses to the horrors of apartheid and its conflation with racism, hardly registers a thought when it is much safer and easier to address and think about individual human rights

Change begins at home. When we learn to recognise and acknowledge who people say they are, respect and a real community of interest are forged. To merely protest the efferent to individual human rights is a simultaneous flapping of arms without serious self-reflection on what Saro-Wiwa referred to as "the struggle"

Shell boycott mooted

(226) # ARG 17/11/95

□ Earthlife Africa and Cosatu to discuss action

right to hold and air his views and the right to fair legal treatment and medical support.

Earthlife Africa questions this apparent neutrality of the company when its operations occupy a central role in the Nigerian economy. Oil production accounts for 90 percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange and about 80 percent of the government's total revenue.

Shell pumps about 250 000 barrels of oil a day in Nigeria, about 12 percent of the company's international output.

Shell operations in Nigeria are carried out through the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria in a joint venture agreement with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. The primary oil area is the Niger Delta where the Ogoni people, who Saro-Wiwa represented, live.

In terms of Nigerian politics, the Ogoni are a minority ethnic group. Although the area they occupy in the Niger Delta is densely populated, the fertility of the land there enabled the Ogoni to make a living from subsistence farming and fishing. This lifestyle was threatened when Shell found oil in the area in 1950.

While Shell has denied that its operations resulted in environmental degradation, Earthlife Africa quotes a 1995 Shell publication which admits that there are 3 000 sites affected by drilling operations, that 1,100 million cubic feet of gas flare every day, and that acid rain occurs one month every year.

immediate aim, the campaign should also highlight the role which Shell has played in human rights issues.

"This is not the first time Shell has been involved in human rights abuse. Shell fuelled the apartheid police force in Nigeria, following last week's execution of environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists by the Nigerian government.

The executions have drawn world condemnation of the military regime in the West African country and have also turned the spotlight on to what role multinational companies like Shell play in the lives of ordinary people.

Earthlife Africa has begun discussions with the Congress of Trade Unions (Cosatu) and its affiliates organised at Shell ahead with a R12 billion gas project in which it has 25 percent shares, and has no plans to cease its current oil operations.

And in a letter, entitled *Nigeria - verdict on Ken Saro-Wiwa and others*, sent to Shell staff in South Africa before the executions last week, the company asserts that Saro-Wiwa and his co-defendants were accused of a criminal offence.

"A commercial organisation like Shell cannot and should not interfere with the legal process of any sovereign state," the letter said. "Those who call upon us to do that might well be the first to criticise in any situation where that intervention did not suit their agenda. But what Shell has said, repeatedly, publicly and privately, is that he has the

ESTELLE RANDALL
Labour Reporter

Shell products is being mooted as a way to pressure the multinational to cut back its operations in Nigeria, following last week's execution of environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists by the Nigerian government.

The organisation points out that a recent boycott of Shell products in Europe persuaded the company to reverse its decision to dump the Brent Spar oil rig in the North Atlantic.

"A similar international boycott campaign could force Shell Nigeria to break its alliance with the Nigerian dictatorship," Earthlife argues. They suggest that, beyond this



IN MEMORY: Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu lights a candle during the service at St George's Cathedral as Dean of Cape Town Colin Jones looks on.

Protesters to march on Nigerian consulate

ESTELLE RANDALL
Labour Reporter

A DEMONSTRATION at the Nigerian consulate in Johannesburg, organised by the South African chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace, is planned for today

This was announced at a service in solidarity with the Nigerian struggle for democracy held at St George's Cathedral yesterday

Near the pulpit of the tranquil cathedral, nine red roses and nine flickering candles stood before a photograph of executed Nigerian activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, contrasting starkly with the events they symbolised and for which people had gathered at the special lunch-time service

At the service, Archbishop Desmond Tutu called for com-

prehensive economic, sports and diplomatic sanctions, including an oil embargo, against Nigeria. He said a freeze on the Nigerian government's foreign accounts should be effected immediately

Archbishop Tutu's calls for international pressure were matched yesterday by similar calls from five former Nobel Prize winners, including Mikhail Gorbachev

Friend and compatriot of Mr Saro-Wiwa, Dr Kole Omotosa, a professor of English at the University of the Western Cape, spoke about his friendship with the dead activist and how this had given him a new perspective on his country

He related how a visit to the Ogoni area in 1985 had opened his eyes to the discrimination the minority ethnic group had suffered

ARG 17/11/95 (226)

Nigeria: West's attitude phoney

(226) *Lawetan 17/11/95*

By Coudjoe Amankwaa

THE stance of United States President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister John Major on imposing sanctions on Nigeria's military junta has once again highlighted the West's double standards when it comes to Africa

To call for arms sanctions and other options, but exclude oil, is most hypocritical

It is clear the West is protecting

its interests and does not really have any clear intention of ensuring that General Sani Abacha relinquishes power to a democratically elected government

Oil was at the centre of the controversy that led author Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni people to be sentenced to death

The West's excuse is that if it imposes sanctions on oil, Nigerians will suffer. But the logic of its argument is in doubt, as oil revenues do

not help all Nigerians but go into the private accounts of Abacha's military junta

Besides, Nigerians themselves are fed-up with Abacha and are calling for oil sanctions. This is the only way Abacha will feel the pinch and respect the aspirations of Nigeria's masses

Oil accounts for about 85 percent of Nigeria's foreign income. The West should therefore stop beating about the bush

11/11/95

Sanctions circus focuses on Nigeria

THE BLEEDING HEARTS of Hampstead want to turn Nigeria into another pariah state like the old South Africa, says **SIMON JENKINS.**

HERE we go again. The Commonwealth has found someone new to hate. It used to ignore the misbehaviour of its members by crusading against South Africa, long after that country had resigned from the organisation. The South Africans spoilt the fun by holding a free election. Now the Commonwealth has discovered that there is a dictatorship in Lagos. Nigeria is thus the new dragon against which it charges into the forest and brandishes its rubber sword.

The Nigerian dictator, General Sani Abacha, is a lucky man. He is about to receive that foolproof survival pack for any world leader. It contains economic sanctions, disinvestment, cultural boycott, diplomatic exclusion and excommunication by Greenpeace and the Body Shop. (As a Christmas bonus the pack sometimes includes an American invasion and/or laser-guided, surgical missile strike against the capital, killing dozens of civilians but leaving the target untouched.)

Posturing

The longest-serving dictators in the world are the most-sanctioned. Their capitals are cleansed of middle-class foreigners, businessmen and aid workers. Their opponents are exiled to the London School of Economics or the Third World page of *The Guardian*. Their family and friends grow rich on sanctions-busting.

The first outcome of the airy posturing last week in Auckland was the precipitate hanging in Nigeria of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight colleagues. Nelson Mandela had the grace to admit that the posturing was perhaps a mistake. The next outcome is equally sure. The sanctions being proposed against General Abacha will consolidate him in power, as sanctions always do.

Abacha will join the lengthening list of regimes upheld by this useless form of moral indignation. Cuba's Castro, Libya's Gaddafi, Iraq's Saddam Hussein, Syria's Assad, Somalia's warlords and Iran's mullahs. Abacha's oligarchy will be strengthened by economic siege, as was South Africa's. His people will be impoverished, as sanctions hurt the poor of

Iraq, Iran and Serbia, but this will not topple him. He will blame foreigners, bribe his supporters and demand new sacrifices of his citizens. He will be less, not more, vulnerable.

Such analysis does not concern the sanctions lobbyists. They just want to feel good. Yesterday the tom-toms were beating out over the rooftops of Islington and echoing from the heights of Hampstead. The braves were being summoned from their tents. Blood was up among the armchair Africanists, underemployed for years, as they deluged Radio 4's *Call Nick Ross* with calls for immediate sanctions. Nor do they worry that Abacha is black. For their purposes, he is what the South African regime used to call an "honorary white", for he is clothed in the garb of Shell Oil. And Shell is not just white but an oil company and villain of world-class venality.

The hypocrisy of all this defies belief. I am sure that the execution of Mr Saro-Wiwa was a judicial outrage, though his elevation into a new Steve Biko seems excessive. Nigerian governments have not passed democratic muster for years. What is that to the Commonwealth? The electoral records of The Gambia, Zimbabwe, Singapore, Kenya, Mozambique and many other members hardly bear examination. I doubt if radical chic London would want to shake hands with Captain Valentine Strasser, military boss of Sierra Leone and loyal Commonwealth member, let alone invite him to a Friends of Democracy music-and-pasta party.

The Commonwealth has never been about democracy. It is a political theme park of Empire. Its salient principle was the right of former colonies to self-determination, a right most states took at face value. One person, one vote, one party, one time. The unspoken rule was that there was to be no interference in the affairs of member states, unless they were ruled by whites.

Had it not been for the execution of Mr Saro-Wiwa, the meeting in Auckland would have concentrated on the iniquity of the British Government in refusing to condemn the French over nuclear testing. Insulting Britain is a regular Commonwealth

There is not a shred of evidence that sanctions helped to end apartheid in South Africa.

Disinvesting foreign companies were sold cheap to local owners and in many cases less rigorous labour policies were imposed.

conference cabaret Britain accepted this with an indulgent smile, at least until Baroness Thatcher came along. The Foreign Office used to be in a funk lest she blow the whistle.

To be fair, the Commonwealth's recent concern over election-rigging in Kenya, over the racist constitution of Fiji and now over Nigerian human rights indicates a tentative coming of age. Yet it lurches backwards when it moves from concern to action. The proposal to impose oil sanctions on Nigeria is lunatic.

By all accounts, what Shell did to Ogoniland would not get through Gloucestershire planning committee. Much of the money it pays to the Nigerian authorities is corruptly sequestered and little trickles down to the poor. Shell is spending \$4.5-million (R16.4-million) on the Ogoni environment but that is all going to consultants.

But to accuse Shell of implication in the execution of Mr Saro-Wiwa is mindless. To expect it to leave Nigeria, or to abandon its proposed gas investment there, is the worst sort of feel-good interventionism.

The theory that depriving Nigeria of (a proportion of) its oil revenues will so devastate the ruling junta as to have them resign and declare a free election forthwith is worse than naive. It is economically, politically and historically illiterate. The effect would be to deprive thousands of Nigerians of jobs, or at best move the jobs to another multinational which, by definition, is likely to be less fastidious in its responsibilities.

Lobbyists

There is not a shred of evidence that sanctions helped to end apartheid in South Africa. Time and again I noticed foreign companies leaving under pressure from "ethical investment" lobbyists. Their factories were sold cheap to local owners and in many cases less rigorous labour practices were imposed. The cancelling of extractive contracts, for instance for coal and metals, threw out of work thousands of black migrant workers but inconvenienced few whites. Apartheid ended when its inter-

nal logic collapsed. Ostracism, import-substitution and a siege economy probably prolonged white rule. Shell is foolish to claim that it plays no part in the politics of the 100 countries in which it operates. Extractive industries are entwined in the politics of non-democratic states. What matters is how such political clout is best used. Shell argues that quiet diplomacy might have saved Mr Saro-Wiwa's life. Plainly the Auckland posturing did not. What is certain is that merely withdrawing the money, talent and experience of a multinational from a poor country under dictatorship does not undermine its leaders or spur its peoples to rise and demand democracy. In Iraq sanctions have increased the prices of almost all domestic produce, enriching middle-class producers and merchants. I am sure General Abacha could find a ready taker among his allies for Shell's abandoned wells, and plenty of black-market tankers to ship their oil.

Aggression

Economic sanctions are the most beguiling form of international aggression. By being non-military, they appeal to the pacifist who wants to be seen to "do something". Many Britons refused to buy French wine during the nuclear tests as if hurting a Socialist-voting Loire farmer was going to change the mind of the Gaullist President Chirac. This chauvinist lumping together of peasant and President in one politico-economic entity may seem medieval in its crudity. But intelligent people still do it, and claim to feel much better as a result.

The prefix "economic" is intended to give the sanction an aura of precision, as if it could be made to target only the ruler, not the ruled. Unlike war, which is directed at a regime's military might, economic sanctions are aimed at the livelihoods of whole regions and peoples. It stands to reason that they affect the poor before they affect the rich. These poor are supposed to rise up and overthrow their rulers. Given the thinness of this theoretical base, it is small wonder that in sanctioned countries they never do.

I cannot imagine a weapon that is less precise in its aim, more unfair in its choice of victim and more counter-productive than an economic sanction. Yet the Commonwealth is once again taking it down from the shelf, dusting it off and pointing it at one of its members. It won't work. — The Times, London
□ *Simon Jenkins is a former editor of The Times*

ET 17/11/95

(226)

Interference, says Abacha

CT 17/11/95 (22b)

LAGOS. Nigerian military ruler General Sani Abacha accused foreign powers of interference, in his first reaction to the international uproar over the hanging of nine minority rights activists, local newspapers reported yesterday.

At the same time, Nigerian security forces have arrested several members of a human rights group, an official of the group said.

General Abacha said the actions of the 52-nation Commonwealth in suspending Nigeria over the executions was "most unfortunate and uncalled for."

"In recent times the international community has made absolute and deliberate efforts to interfere in our national and internal affairs," he said — Reuter

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Miss Nigeria out after threats (226)

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CT 17/11/95
JOHANNESBURG Miss Nigeria was pulled out of the Miss World contest last night after sabotage threats

Miss World organiser Ms Julia Morley bowed to pressure after receiving telephone calls and faxes threatening to cause trouble at tomorrow night's pageant in protest at the execution by Nigeria's military regime of nine political activists a week ago.

"Young girls don't deserve to be political footballs, but the situation was such that I had to make a decision," said Morley.

Miss Nigeria, Toin Raji, 23, is a part-time English student who works in public relations

● In Strasbourg yesterday the European Parliament urged the European Union to impose an oil embargo on Nigeria to put pressure on its military rulers after last week's hangings

SANCTIONS CALL TO MAJOR

Stand on Nigeria was correct, says Mandela

CT 17/11/95 (22b)

PRETORIA: President Nelson Mandela confirmed here yesterday that he had asked British Prime Minister Mr John Major to introduce sanctions against Nigeria

President Nelson Mandela said yesterday that if he had taken a hard line with the Nigerian regime before it executed nine human rights activists, some would have blamed him for being reckless.

He told a press conference at Waterkloof Air Base on his return from the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in New Zealand that he was convinced his approach toward Nigeria had been the correct one.

"If people genuinely believed that what we were doing was wrong, they would have said so long ago — not as an afterthought," Mr Mandela said.

"It is quite possible that those very people, if we had started with

a hard line and there was an execution, would say we have been responsible for that."

Mr Mandela said the two-year grace period the Commonwealth had given Nigeria to restore democracy or face dismissal from the body, was a compromise.

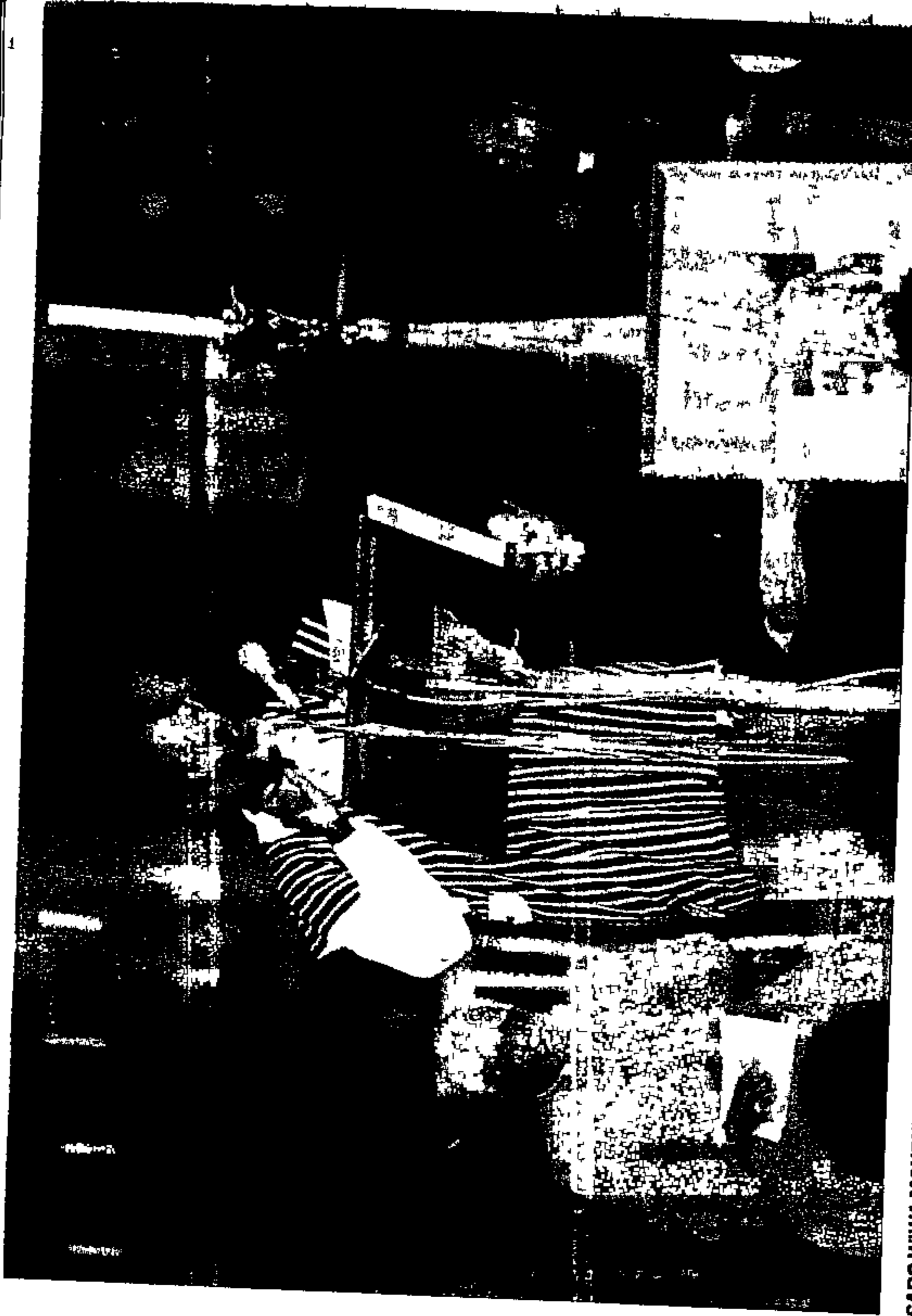
There had been divergent opinions on the issue. Some had felt no action should be taken against Nigeria.

"I would have insisted on a drastically shorter period."

He confirmed that he had telephoned British Prime Minister Mr John Major, urging him to introduce sanctions against Nigeria.

"He will go into the matter and come back to me."

In Cape Town yesterday the



SARO-WIWA MOURNED: Dr Kole Omotosa, star of a well-known cellular phone TV advertisement, addresses a lunchtime service yesterday in memory of his Nigerian friend, compatriot and fellow-writer Ken Saro-Wiwa. With him are (from left) Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Sheik Garniet Gabie of the Muslim Judicial Council and Father Peter John of the Roman Catholic Church.

PICTURE: SASHA KRALU

EU delegates ask for Nigerian oil trade ban

Star 17/11/95 (226)

The European Union parliament asks for stronger measures against Nigeria's military regime than those decided on so far by its foreign ministers

REUTERS

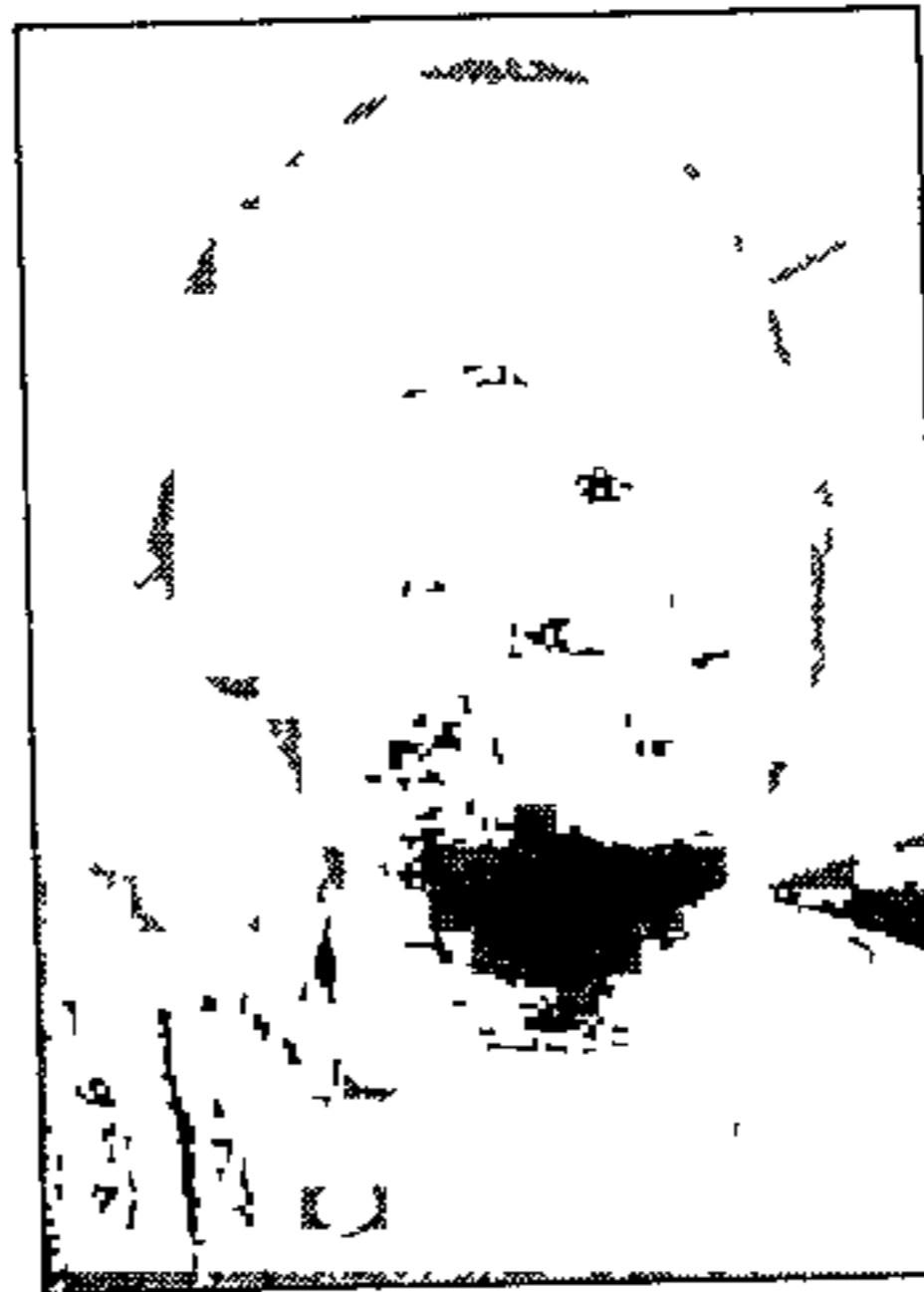
Strasbourg, France

The European parliament urged the European Union yesterday to impose an oil embargo on Nigeria to put pressure on its military rulers following last week's hangings of nine human rights activists

Seeking stronger measures than those envisaged by EU foreign ministers which are due to be approved next week, the bloc's only directly elected body called for a freeze on accounts of Nigeria's leaders in European banks, and a sports boycott

In a strongly worded but non-binding resolution that was adopted unanimously, the assembly firmly condemned Nigeria for the "brutal executions" of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority rights activists last Friday

The assembly said it had been informed that Nigeria is planning to execute another 17 "merely for defending the environment in their



Ken Saro-Wiwa ... executed.

country"

EU officials said on Wednesday the Union's foreign ministers would formally approve an arms embargo and other sanctions against Nigeria's military rulers on Monday. They are still holding back from an oil embargo

European affairs minister of current EU president Spain, Carlos Westendorp, told the European parliament that further measures might have to be considered depending on developments in Nigeria

"By means of these measures we hope that the hateful military regime of Nigeria will think again and while we cannot bring (Ken Saro-Wiwa) back to life, nor the other eight people executed with him, at least his sacrifice will not have been in vain," Westendorp said

European Transport Commissioner Neil Kinnock, endorsing the current steps on behalf of the EU executive, said at the same debate that the coming weeks and months will tell whether they are successful

"If they are not, it may be that the Union will have to consider stronger measures such as the freezing of assets of members of the regime or the imposition of an embargo on oil imports from Nigeria," Kinnock warned

Mandela defends Nigeria 'soft line'

(226) Nov 17/11/95

President Mandela said last night on his return from New Zealand that if he had taken a hard line against the Nigerian regime before it executed nine activists last week, some people would have accused him of being reckless.

He was speaking at Waterkloof Air Base on his return from the Commonwealth conference which suspended Nigeria's membership after Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others were executed during the heads of government meeting which was calling for clemency.

Mandela said he was convinced his soft approach toward Nigeria had been correct, adding: "If people genuinely believed that what we were doing was wrong, they would have said so long ago, not as an afterthought. It is quite possible that those very people (who criticise) if we had started with a hard line and there had been an execution, would say we were responsible for that."

Asked about opponents of the military regime accusing him of not doing enough, Mandela said none of them had criticised his approach before the executions.

He said intensifying the liberation struggle within the country as the ANC had done here must be an important factor that would enable the international community to apply pressure on the military junta.

Mandela said it was wrong to rely on the moral authority of any individual to influence a situation such as the one in Nigeria. Countries with significant trade links with Nigeria, such as Britain and the United States, should rather apply sanctions.

He confirmed he had asked British Prime Minister John Major to introduce sanctions against Nigeria.

-Sapa

23 more Nigerians for trial

— Saro-Wiwa's friend dies in jail

22b

ARC 18/11/95

LAGOS — A total of 23 more activists of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (Mosop), whose leader Ken Saro-Wiwa was executed a week ago, are due to go on trial early next year, a leader of the group said

The official, who asked not to be named, also confirmed yesterday that another member of the group, arrested with Saro-Wiwa last year, had died in detention three months ago

There was no official confirmation of the reports, but an independent Nigerian newspaper reported earlier that 21

Ogonis were to go on trial

It said they would appear before the same special court which sentenced Saro-Wiwa and eight other Mosop activists to death this month

The execution of the nine activists last Friday caused a worldwide furor, with the Commonwealth suspending Nigeria from its ranks and several major countries, including the US, the 15 European Union states and South Africa, withdrawing their ambassadors.

The Mosop official said the new trials were expected to take place in January and the

charges would be the same as those against Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues

The nine were convicted for the murder of four pro-government activists in the oil-rich Ogoni region of southeast Nigeria in May last year

The trial and executions took place in the oil city of Port Harcourt, capital of Rivers state, where the Ogoni people live

The executions were carried out after the military-backed regime confirmed the sentences

The supporters of the executed activists allege that the charges were trumped up for political reasons

Mosop has been fighting to prevent what they describe as a genocide of their people, caused by exploitation of the region's huge oil resources.

The Mosop official further alleged that the authorities had sprinkled chemicals on the graves of the nine executed activists to ensure that their bodies decayed rapidly — Sapa-AFP

■ More reports, pages 19 and 28.

Tutu, Sexwale lead 200 protesters in anti-Abacha demo

JOHANNESBURG — Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu said South Africa was committed to the restoration of democracy in Nigeria and he again called for sanctions against the military government there

He was addressing more than 200 placard-waving demonstrators outside the Nigerian Consulate here. Political, church, business and sports leaders joined hands to demonstrate their outrage at the execution of nine minority rights activists in Nigeria last week

(226) ART 18/11/95

"We want to express our outrage at the actions of General Sani Abacha," the Cape Town-based archbishop said as he handed a memorandum containing demands for restoration of democracy in Nigeria to acting Consul-General Adamu Abbas

"More than that we want to express our solidarity with the people of Nigeria who stood by us as we struggled against apartheid

"We want to assure them that we stand with them and

ensure that democracy is restored in that great and beautiful land"

Earlier, before giving a speech, the Archbishop asked the protesters to observe a moment of silence as a tribute to those who were "brutally executed"

Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth last week following the executions of nine Ogoni activists, including writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, following a military tribunal. The activists had been charged with murder

"They thumbed their noses at the international community," the Archbishop said about the executions, which took place in the face of international demands for clemency for the dissidents

The cleric called on General Abacha to free all political prisoners and detainees and to begin negotiations with legitimate leaders in the country

He urged President Nelson Mandela to allow only the smallest possible diplomatic representation of the Nigerian

government in South Africa

"Abacha you have already lost. There is no way your injustice and oppression can prevail forever," Archbishop Tutu told demonstrators

Ten wreaths were laid at the consulate entrance

Banners carried by the demonstrators called for the closure of the consulate, the release of political prisoners in Nigeria and a boycott of the Shell oil company

"Boycott Shell", "Remember

Nigerian martyrs", "Democracy in Nigeria now", the banners read

The protest was arranged by the South Africa-Nigerian Democracy Support Group

Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale told the protesters General Abacha and his men were 'a bunch of hooligans'

"We are sick and tired of the military dictators on the continent of Africa," he said, urging the restoration of democracy in Nigeria — Sapa

Greenpeace calls for international boycott of Shell

(226) ART 18/11/95

LONDON — The environmental organisations Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth have called for an international boycott of Royal Dutch/Shell, to pressure the company into withdrawing from Nigeria

The Anglo-Dutch oil giant, which pumps about half of Nigeria's oil, is accused of failing to help prevent the execution of nine minority-rights campaigners, including writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, by the Nigerian military regime

Greenpeace's British executive director Peter Melchett said: "Ken (Saro-Wiwa) was murdered by the Nigerian military regime for campaigning against Shell's pollution"

"Shell must share responsibility for his death.

"Shell must listen to the voice of its customers and pull out of Nigeria now."

The oil giant said it would press ahead with a \$2.5 billion (R14.25 billion) gas project in Nigeria, in spite of the international outrage which followed the executions and the consequent suspension of the West African country from the Commonwealth.

The environmental campaigners also called for an oil embargo and a ban on weapons sales to Nigeria's military regime

Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth activists will picket more than a hundred Shell petrol stations in Britain today, to ask Shell customers to buy petrol elsewhere, Mr Melchett said.

The two organisations will conduct similar action today in the United States, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand and other countries.

Public protests have taken place in the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Argentina, among others.

Shell is by far the largest operator in Nigeria, especially in the oil-rich southern Rivers state.

The Ogoni people who live in the area have accused it for many years of polluting the land while refusing to compensate the local community financially.

Nigeria's military regime handed Mr Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists for the killing of four pro-government members of the ethnic minority. — Sapa-AFP.

Protesters: No more blood for oil

ART 18/11/95

(226)

■ A protest against Shell's involvement in Nigeria drew little support in Cape Town yesterday.

ESTELLE RANDALL

Labour Reporter

ONLY about 20 demonstrators arrived at a Cape Town demonstration against the Shell oil company's involvement in Nigeria.

Shell staff said yesterday, after a demonstration outside its Cape Town headquarters, that the oil company was committed to improving living standards in Nigeria

The anti-Shell demonstration followed the execution of nine human

But only 20 city demos target Shell over Nigerian hangings

Rights activists in Nigeria where Shell has a major stake in the oil industry

The protest started quietly as office workers began to spill out on the street at lunch-time

Only two demonstrators arrived at the time for which the protest had been set, their placards discreetly folded as they waited anxiously for the crowd they had expected to appear. Their number later increased to about 20

Organised by Earthlife Africa Western Cape, the International So-

cialist Movement (ISM) and Workers for a Socialist Azania (WOSA), demonstrators displayed posters and chanted slogans blaming Shell for the human rights abuses in Nigeria and calling for the company to cease its operations there. "No more blood for oil" read one of the placards

Terry Bell, spokesman for the demonstrators and a member of the ISM, said a campaign committee had been formed. They hoped to draw in other organisations and would launch their programme of action on Thursday

He said they were targeting Shell because it owned most of the oil operations in Nigeria

The protesters handed a memorandum entitled *Shell is Guilty of Murder* to Shell South Africa's general manager of corporate affairs, Koo-sun Kalyan

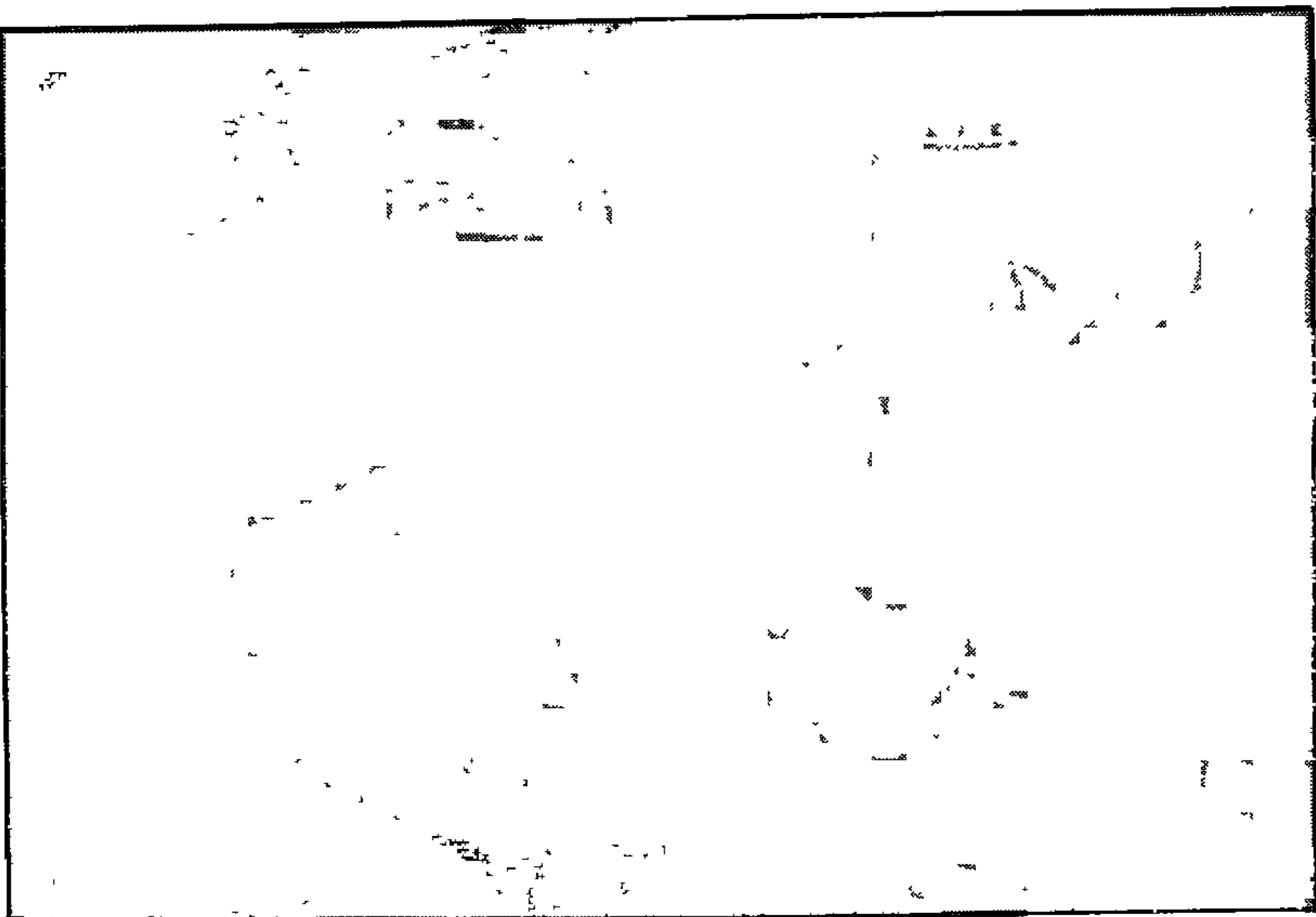
Demands in the document were that Shell publicly condemn continuing human rights and environmental abuses in Nigeria, specifically the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists, and that the company announce its support for the Nigerian democracy movement, including recognition of trade union and other democratic forces

Ms Kalyan said Shell would respond to the memorandum at a later date. She said another demonstration had been held at Shell offices in Johannesburg and the company was concerned about the issue

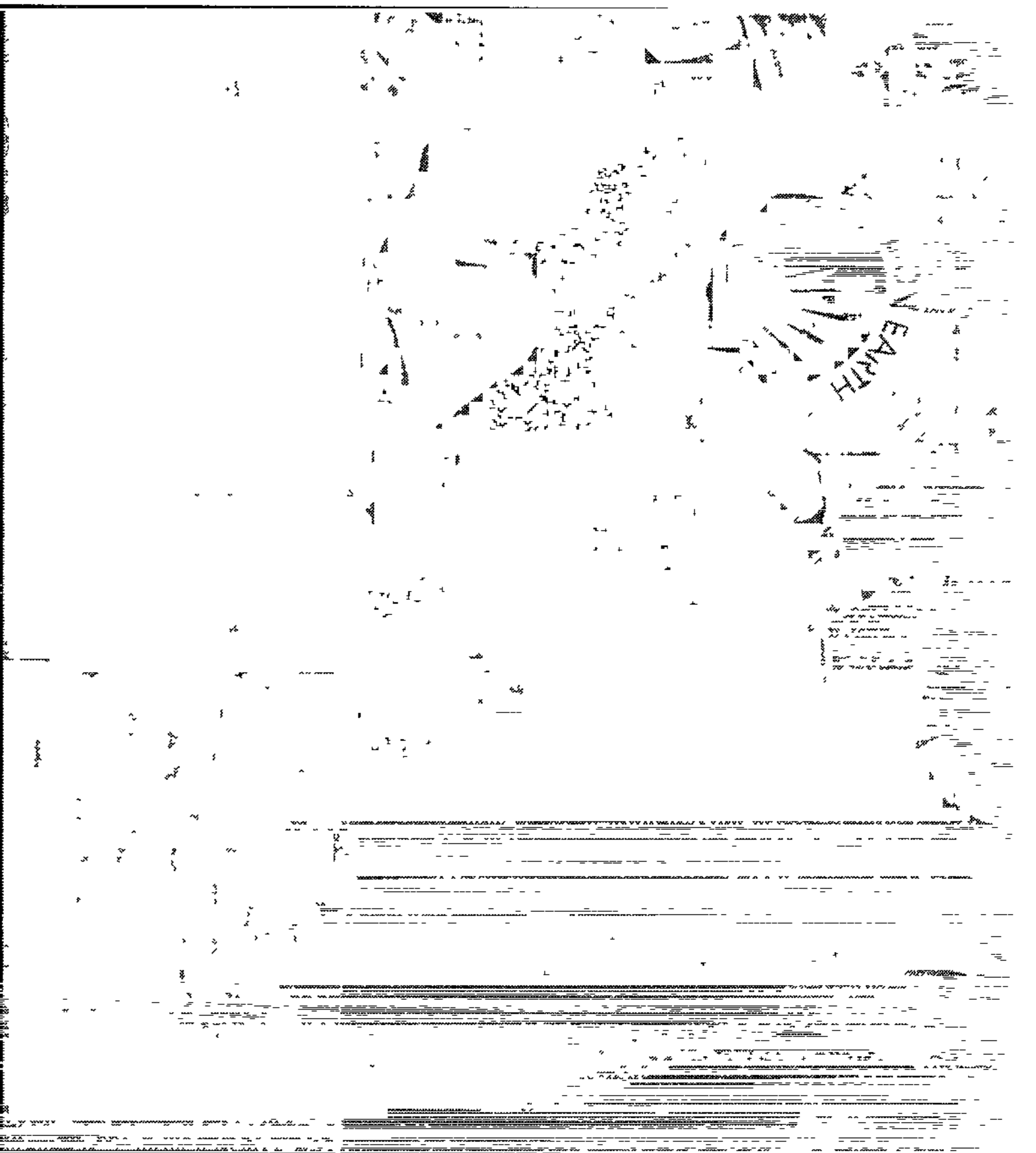
Shell Nigeria, she said, had also expressed concern about the grievances of the Ogoni community

Referring to a statement from Shell, she said the company had and would continue to make representations to the Nigerian government on issues related to oil-producing communities in the West African state.

She said communities in Nigerian oil-producing areas received three



MISS PERSONALITY: Miss Nigeria Toyin Raji, who won the Miss Personality trophy during the dress rehearsal for the Miss World pageant at Sun City, was asked to withdraw after organisers received threats that the contest would be disrupted if she participated



Picture OBED ZILWA, Staff Photographer

'Africa no place for inhuman behaviour'

WINDHOEK — About 30 Namibians laid wreaths and stuck up posters outside the Nigerian High Commission here to condemn last week's executions of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other human rights activists

"Secret trials and inhuman behaviour have no place in Africa," Council of Churches in Namibia general secretary

Own Correspondent
PRETORIA — President Mandela has urged British Prime Minister John Major to consider economic sanctions against Nigeria.

"He will go into the matter and come back to me," Mr. Mandela said on his return home from New Zealand. Mr. Mandela said South

Ngemo Nakamelah told the protesters. He called on the Namibian government and all democracies to take action against Nigeria's military junta headed by General Sani Abacha

Oil company Shell's decision to continue operations in Nigeria was also noted on a poster reading "Shell! Abacha support

Africa endorsed sanctions against the West African country and he was in the process of making contact with United States President Bill Clinton

He said the US and Britain had to lead the way in the implementation of economic sanctions against Nigeria. Mr. Mandela said a committee made up of foreign minis-

ter Lorenzen at one time on the issue, the Nigerian government had agreed to increase this to 13 per cent.

"Shell Nigeria remains committed to the long-term future of the country and its people. The company's most useful role is helping Nigeria overcome its economic problems and creating wealth that will give the people of Nigeria a better living standard and open up for them more options for progress and development."

"The liquefied natural gas project in Nigeria is a long-term project and all projects in the industry take years to plan. The plant will take four years to construct and revenues from gas sales will not start until the year 2000. The project will not generate income for shareholders until after 2007.

"If the contract is not signed by the end of 1995 the present project will collapse and it will not be possible to re-launch it for several years. The project will make a major contribution to environmental improvement in the region through a substantial reduction in the need for associated gas-flaring by the oil industry," the statement read.

The statement also detailed Shell Nigeria's involvement in a community development programme with an annual budget of \$2 million (£7.2 million) and said the company was sponsoring an independent Niger Delta environmental survey which included all stakeholders, including communities and environmental groups.

The survey aimed at planning more development more effectively and minimising social and environmental disruption. Shell said it was committed to dealing with environmental problems where they occurred.

'We might have saved Ken's life'

JOHANNESBURG — South African writer Nadine Gordimer lamented the death of Nigerian author Ken Saro-Wiwa, one of nine minority rights activists executed by the military rulers

"If a writer who takes up a cause for the common good pays with his life, it's a poor outlook for Africa," the Nobel laureate said yesterday outside the Nigerian consulate.

Gordimer was one of hundreds of activists who staged a demonstration at the consulate. "What a tragedy," Gordimer lamented. "If only there had been more indignation (before the executions) who knows? Perhaps we might have saved Ken."

The acclaimed author accused the regime of General Sani Abacha of brutality —



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This is a current and exact list of all members allowed to purport membership of SCASA Western Cape. Those pertaining to be members who are not on this list please inform us immediately and treat with caution. SCASA Western Cape has a complaint procedure. Contact SCASA SECRETARY PO Box 865 Bellville 7535



'nothing is done, the Ogoni people are going to be extinct in no more than 10 years'

(226)

ARC 18/11/95

■ These extracts are from an interview with Nigerian intellectual luminary and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, the last conducted before he was executed.

NIGERIA consists of 300 different peoples who were put together by the British. Although the country is a federation, ever since the military came into power its people have tried to turn this federation into a unitary system. Under this system, the major ethnic groups have cheated the smaller groups because 94 percent of the Gross National Product of Nigeria is oil, and the oil lies pre-eminently in the Niger delta, which is inhabited by the small groups. Ogoni country produces oil and has produced oil since 1958, but the Ogoni people have nothing to show for it.

I want justice for the Ogoni people. I want self-determination for the Ogoni people. I want autonomy for the Ogoni people. This means that Ogoni political affairs will be run by Ogoni people. Ogoni economic resources will be used for the development of the Ogoni people. The Ogoni people will pay whatever they have to the federal government. They have responsibilities to keep the federation going.

Over the past 33 years, the Ogoni country has been completely destroyed by the search for oil. If they have their own government, their own administration, they will be able to settle those laws and regulations that will control the rampaging oil companies. Oil blow-outs, spillages, oil slick and general pollution accompany the search for oil.

In most cases the oil companies have an obligation to ensure that these things do not happen. Unfortunately, they have not done these things in Nigeria. Oil companies have flared gas in Nigeria for the past 33 years causing acid rain. This is an area of very heavy rainfall. Acid rain then gets back into the soil, and what used to be the bread basket for the delta has now become totally infertile. This is the worst case of pollution I have seen in any part of the world where people have prospected for oil.

In Britain, Shell produces oil, but you look at the adverts — they are talking of keeping the valleys neat and clean so that human beings will not know that anything is going on there. In Ogoni, Shell pipelines are there for everyone to see. Because the government in Nigeria is colonial, as far as the ethnic minorities such as the Ogoni are concerned the interests of Shell and of those who are running Nigeria at this time, mix. I accuse Shell of racism because they are doing in Ogoni what they dare not do in Europe or America, where they also prospect for oil.

I am trying to mobilise opinion, particularly in the West, among shareholders of Shell, among the governments, the people of Europe, of Britain, of Germany, of France or Italy — all those who prospect for oil, whose companies prospect for oil in Nigeria, to realise that they are running the environment and dehumanising the people. I believe that if the people knew what has been happening, they would do something about it and stop this robbery and murder that is going on in broad daylight at the end of the 20th century.

All the oil that is produced in Nigeria is bought by America, the West and Japan. If they insisted, "Look, we are not going to buy this oil unless you ensure that the environment is protected, unless you ensure that rents and royalties are paid to the landlords

— to the owners of the oil," it would be a different story altogether.

The profits from oil come to Britain because they sell the equipment. It is their technology that is keeping Nigerian oil going. It is, in fact, Western credit that is keeping Nigeria alive, so they have a moral responsibility to intervene in this situation. I have asked publicly that Nigeria be expelled from the United Nations because of its oppressive ways, because it has oppressed just too many Nigerians. The military governments of Nigeria have sat on other Nigerians in a way that is just as evil and as bad as what was done in South Africa.

In the West writers write to entertain, they raise questions of individual existence — you know the angst of the individual — but for a Nigerian writer in my position you can't go into that. Literature has to be combative. You cannot have art for art's sake. This art must do something to transform the lives of a community, of a nation. And for that purpose altogether in that sort of society, it is completely different from the West.

And, you know, a writer doesn't earn money in Nigeria because, although you have 100 million people, most of them cannot read and write here, so literature has a different purpose.

So here I am — I have written 22 books, I have produced 150 episodes of one television programme, which everyone enjoys, but I am poor. It is of no interest to me. What is of interest to me is that my art should be able to alter the lives of a large number of people, of a whole community, of the entire country, so that my literature has to be entirely different.

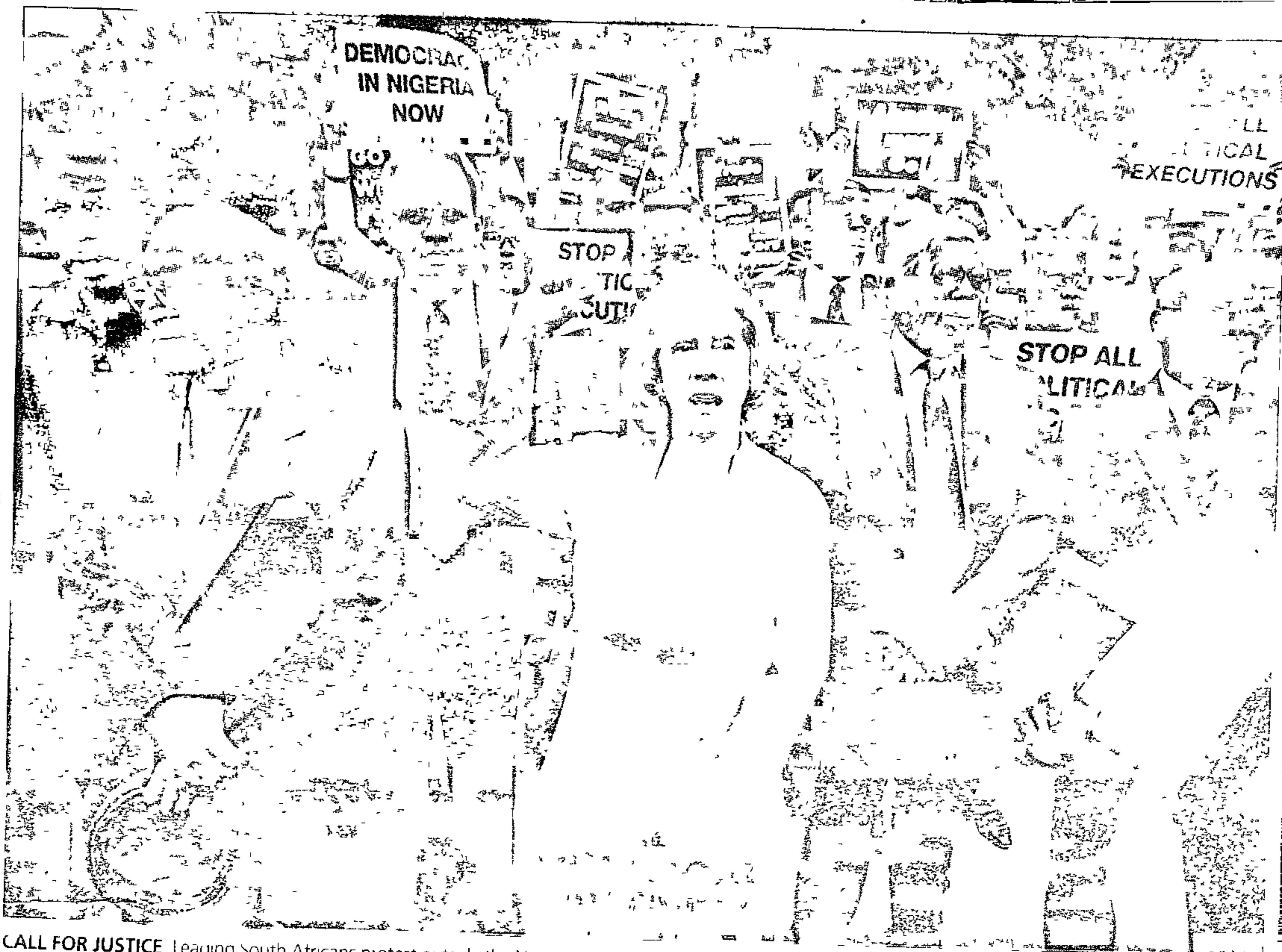
The stories that I tell must have a different sort of purpose from the artist in the Western world and it is not now an ego trip, you know, it is politics, it is economics, it's everything, you know, and art, in that instance becomes so meaningful both to the artist and to the consumers of that art, because you do not just depend on them to read your books, you even have to live their life that they can emulate. The artist in that society has a different role and, to my mind, a much more worthy role than the artist in the West.

When you are asking for the rights of the people, you cannot begin to wonder whether you are going to be killed or sent to jail or whatever. Right is right and it must be fought for. I have been at it for 20 years, and at this age, at this point in my life there's really nothing to fear. I think we have seen a lot of dictators collapse in the past and these ones are going to collapse as well.

I believe that the British government, that the American government, the governments of the European Community — all those who buy Nigerian oil — including the Japanese, and others, are encouraging genocide in Ogoni. I think that the entire international community should come forward to disavow this process of genocide.

The UN views genocide as very serious crime. The fact that the ethnic majority in Nigeria colludes in genocide does not excuse it. I appeal to the entire international community to come to the help of Ogoni now, because if nothing is done, the Ogoni people are going to be extinct in no more than 10 years.

— Independent News Service



CALL FOR JUSTICE Leading South Africans protest outside the Nigerian consulate in Johannesburg yesterday. They include, from left, Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, ANC MP Carl Niehaus, writer Nadine Gordimer and, far right, SA Olympic chief Sam Ramsamy. PHOTOGRAPH TJ LEMON

Pressure builds for sanctions against Nigeria

By ADRIAN HADLAND

Minister of Justice Dullah Omar and Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu added their voices yesterday to calls for the imposition of sanctions on Nigeria.

Addressing about 200 placard-waving demonstrators outside the Nigerian consulate in Johannesburg, Tutu said South Africa was committed to the restoration of democracy in Nigeria, Sapa reports.

Political, church, business and sports leaders joined hands to demonstrate their outrage at the execution of nine minority rights activists in Nigeria last week.

Tutu called on Nigerian military ruler General Sani Abacha to free all political prisoners and begin negotia-

tions with legitimate leaders in the country.

He urged President Nelson Mandela to allow only the smallest possible diplomatic representation of the Nigerian government in South Africa.

"Abacha, you have already lost. There is no way justice and oppression can prevail forever," Tutu told demonstrators.

"We in South Africa are committed to Nigeria becoming a free, democratic and non-sexist country."

Banners carried by the demonstrators called for the closure of the consulate, the release of political prisoners in Nigeria and a boycott of the Shell oil company.

Wreaths were laid at the entrance gate to the consulate.

Demonstrators included the Rev

Beyers Naude and South African writer Nadine Gordimer. Speakers included Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale. Tutu handed a memorandum to acting consulate-general Adamu Abbas.

Demonstrators sang *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* before dispersing.

Meanwhile, Omar told a conference in Cape Town that the time had come to take strong action.

By executing the minority rights activists, the Nigerian government had "excommunicated itself from the family of civilised nations", he said.

"It has shown utter contempt for the Commonwealth - committing this terrible deed even while its members sat at the heads-of-state summit. And it has abused the very principles upon which the African charter and

the United Nations charter were founded."

Omar, who was closing a conference on torture at Cape Town Castle, said there could be no excuse for the "evil acts" carried out by the Nigerian military council and no excuse for the world community simply standing by.

"It is not enough to express outrage. We need to take action."

Omar said he supported Mandela's call for oil sanctions on Nigeria.

"And I would like to add my voice to those urging Shell to withdraw immediately."

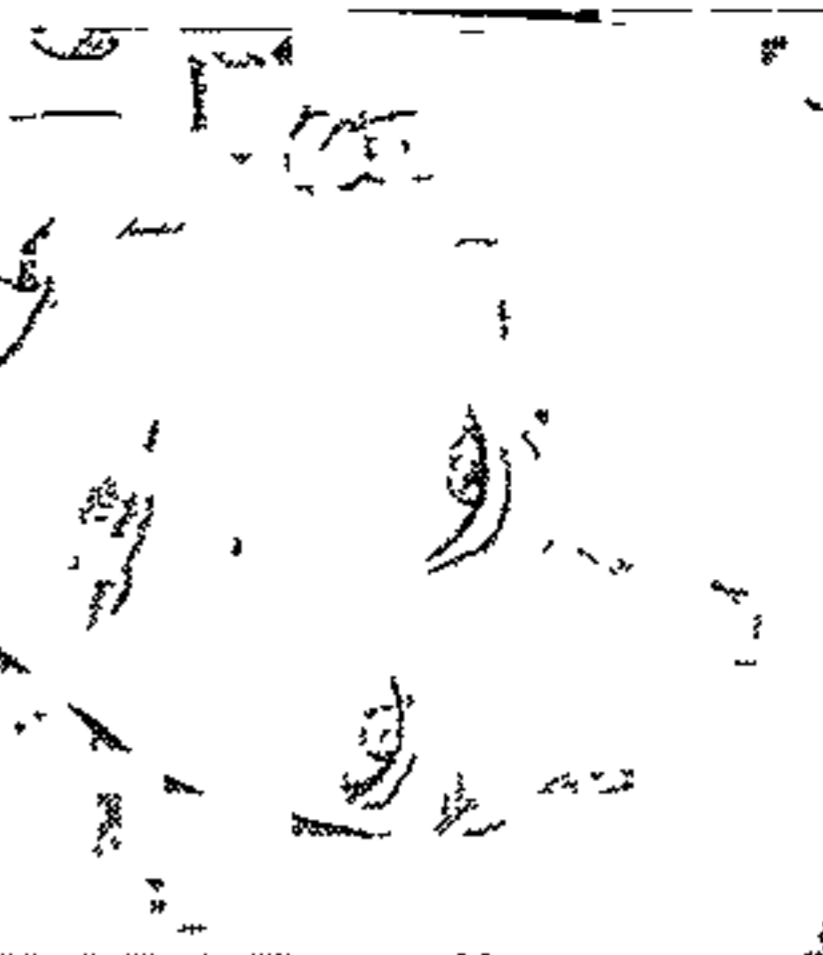
The anger of the world community must be felt, he added.

Star 18/11/95

Regret and remorse of a grieving fellow writer

(226) *STW* 18/11/95

THE MAUREEN ISAACSON INTERVIEW



The hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight fellow activists in Nigeria last week brought sorrow to the world. At the helm of protesting writers and environmentalists was Mandla Langa, president of the Congress of South African Writers

Standing outside Shell headquarters in Rosebank, we were talking about the bungled hanging of writer, journalist, publisher and environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa. Somebody said they could not bear to ponder the graphic details. Mandla Langa said he could not get them out of his mind.

Langa, president of the Congress of South African Writers (Cosaw), is a retired man. His speech like his writing, is clear and vivid. It defies one's initial impression of him as the strong,

If only Mandela, Nzo and General Abacha had responded to Cosaw's first pleas for support

silent type. He has what they call presence. When he talks, everyone listens.

It was Tuesday. A small contingent of protesters from the South African Writers Council and Earthlife Africa had gathered to protest against the hanging of Saro-Wiwa. They continued his demand that Shell cease their exploitation of Ogoniland. Langa started up a low singing, an MK song harking back to Oliver Tambo's days. Langa turned to me and said that until Saro-Wiwa's death, he felt he had been able to hold his head high in South Africa.

On Wednesday, when we continue our conversation in Norwood's Gattopardo coffee shop, we are only a little further away from the grisly details of the hanging, only a little closer to a crystallisation of the events and accompanying feelings.

What is the relationship of writers and the government of the day going to be, Langa wants to know. He is filled with helplessness, with his and butts. If only the death could have been averted. If only President Nelson

Mandela, Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo, even General Sani Abacha had responded to the first pleas for support drawn up by Cosaw in February, this year.

In July, at a writers' conference held in Johannesburg, Ken Saro-Wiwa's chair stood open on the platform as his prison ordeal continued, a diabetic deprived of medical attention, he was tortured and denied a trial and family visits. Accused of ordering the deaths of four political rivals, he had no voice to declare his innocence. Writers who had attended the conference, including Nobel laureate Nadine Gordimer and activists Denis Brutus and Keorapetse Kgositse, handed a petition to the Nigerian consul in Rosebank.

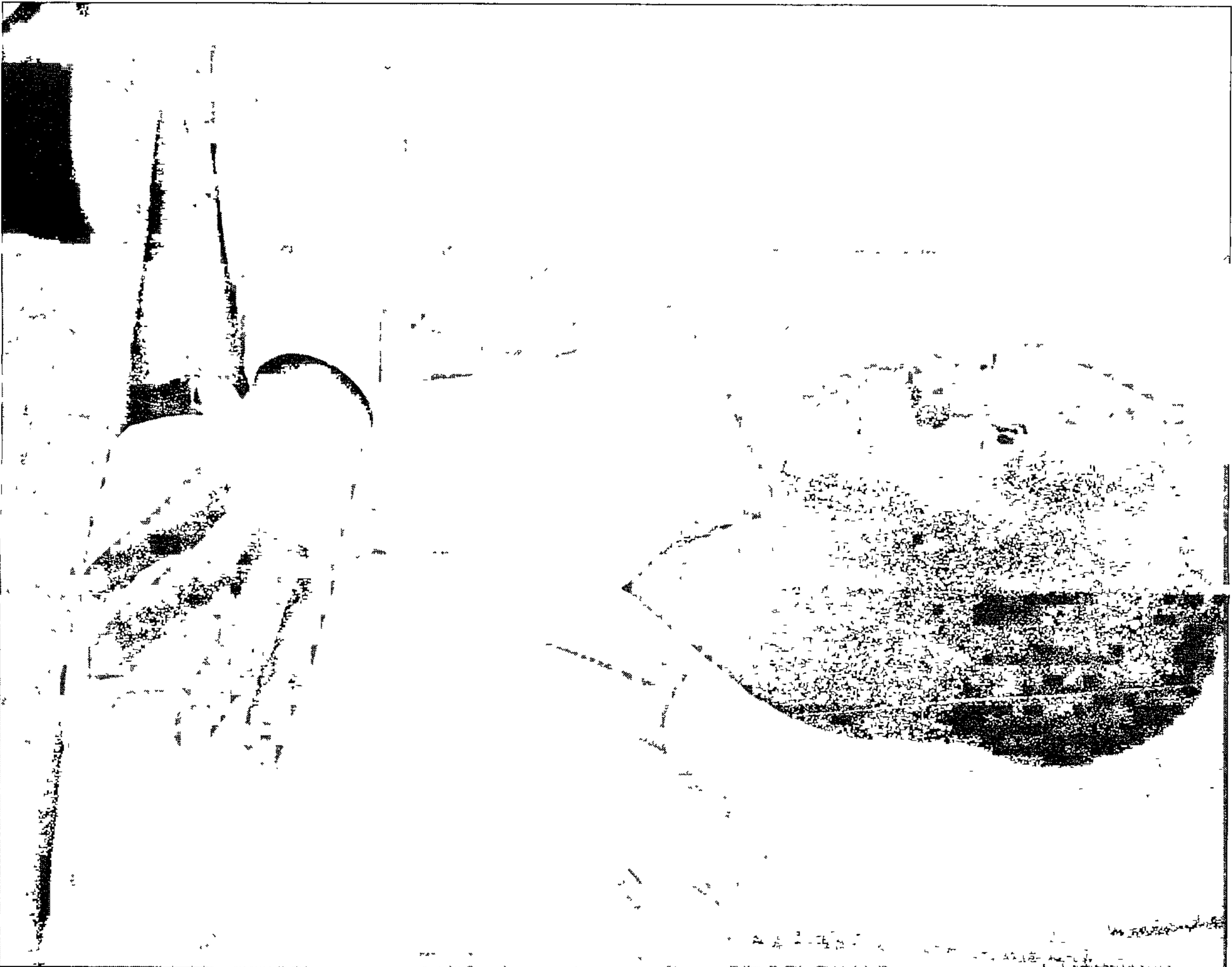
If only there had been some response from the second batch of letters sent to Mandela, Nzo and Abacha at the time. It was already too late when the third batch of letters went out - after the announcement of Saro-Wiwa's death sentence on October 31 - to Mandela and Nzo, as well as to Justice Minister Dullah Omar and Arts and Culture Minister Ben Ngubane.

Langa is angered that the writers' pleas were treated with "the kind of affection one would accord a wayward but loved child." Simply put, there was no

In this country you have to do something of heroic proportions before writing is put on the agenda

response. "In this country you have to do something of heroic proportions - like lose a corner - before writing is put on the agenda."

And this was a fellow writer - could we as writers not have tried harder, he asks. Surely we South Africans, "past masters at conflict resolution", who have



IF ONLY: Mandla Langa wishes that Ken Saro-Wiwa's hanging had been prevented

PHOTOGRAPH ANTON HAMMERL

come out of what he calls "that crucible of human rights abuse", could at least have exerted ourselves. What does it take to get people rallying around in protest? Nothing short of murder, he says.

He coughs up an old phrase "The revolution always eats its own children" if only we had accorded this campaign the same kind of energy as we did when we invited, say, Doris Lessing on an extended tour. "Clearly he is anguished."

In different ways, throughout this interview, Langa repeats his theme that of missed opportunity. Saro-Wiwa's death has left him with a sense of disgust and deep disappointment, an inability to communicate this to his fellow writers, Nigerian Ben Okri in London and Kole Omotosho in Cape Town.

As a fellow writer, the death of Saro-Wiwa reminds Langa of his own mortality. His CV is crammed with references to writing courses, with solidarity work and training, with opportunities seized rather than missed. And although he mourns the fact that musicians such as Jonas Gwangwa have not yet received recognition, surely he cannot be disappointed in his own achievements. Nineteen years have brought an abundance of poetry, film scripts, essays and documentaries. With Dali Tambo he was script adviser to Richard Attenborough on the film *Cry Freedom* in 1987.

Langa's journalistic and editorial skills were honed by the Umkhonto weSizwe journal *Dawn*, by the ANC journal *Mgqibuye* in Lusaka. He was deputy secretary of the ANC's arts and culture department in Lusaka and later the ANC cultural attaché in the UK and Ireland. He hands me copies of his two highly charged, poetic, political novels, *Tenderness of Blood*

Writing becomes an enormous burden on memory. You idealise things. You even miss the fights at home

and *A Rainbow on a Paper Sky*. A novel, *The Cull of Innocence*, and a short story collection, *The Naked Song and Other Stories*, are about to be published by David Phillip. A fourth novel-in-progress, *Memories of Stone*, will be completed next year.

Still he is flagellating himself for time wasted, drinking and

socialising when he could have been working even harder. Let this be a lesson, he says with the hindsight that comes at the age of 45.

Still he is remembering the sorrow of the years during which he was unable to attend the funerals of his mother Sibongile and his brother Ben.

Ben, a UDF member, was shot by MK soldiers in 1984. The circumstances leading to the accusation that Ben had turned police informer are mysterious.

This is the one story Mandla has never been able to write. Although the two soldiers who shot Ben were dispatched from Swaziland, Mandla, as section commissioner in Angola, had been close to one of the accused. That another brother, Pius, now a Constitutional Court judge, campaigned against the hanging of his brother's killers deepens the irony.

"In exile you cannot grieve properly for your loved ones. This burden," he says, "remains with us for ever."

Talking about exile seems to brings Langa closer to himself.

Back in South Africa for only a year, Langa's 19 years of exile continue to distance him

Several cups of coffee have sparked his poetry, he is smiling now and recalling his struggle to remember the impact of fresh rain on the earth. "Writing becomes an enormous burden on memory." You idealise things. You even miss the fights you used to witness at home. You miss the music from the streets, people cleaning shoes and ears on Sundays.

All those years that Langa was away he sought "a little piece of South Africa" wherever he was. Angola, Botswana, Lusaka, the Congo, Moscow, Budapest, London, Ireland. Back in South Africa for only a year, his exile continues to distance him. His pentecostal preacher father Simon has passed away. So has his younger sister Thebeni. Only four of his six siblings remain. The points of reference he shared with friends he left behind have shifted. He talks about nation-building and contributing to society. About young people who are strangled by the stories that still reside within. Here he is on familiar terrain. Maybe we can start from here.

Nigeria's strongman marks second year in power with 'hired support'

Star 18/11/95 (226)

Lagos - As Gen Sani Abacha marked his second anniversary in power yesterday, opponents accused him of hiring people to parade at pro-government rallies in a "ridiculous" attempt to mask his lack of support.

The opposition National Democratic Coalition also said that while it welcomed international condemnation of the dictator, it was too little and too late. "Had the world listened to our cries and entreaties since last year, the situation in Nigeria might not have degenerated to this sordid level," it said in a statement released in Lagos.

The anniversary of Abacha's coup was expected to pass quietly in Nigeria, a country cowed by the military and facing isolation for the November 6 hangings of nine political activists.

In London, the human rights group Amnesty International expressed fears for the lives of 17 more activists arrested in the same sweep that led to the convictions and executions of the other nine.

The Lagos newspaper AM News said yesterday the additional activists faced arraignment before the same military tribunal that convicted and executed playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight co-defendants from the minority Ogoni community.

"If the Nigerian government is prepared to execute Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others just before a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, there are well-founded fears for the lives of other members of the Ogoni community who may still be tried and executed," Amnesty International said on Thursday.

Amnesty urged continued political pressure on Nigeria to prevent further executions.

The date of the next arraignment is not known. Nigeria's military tribunals are conducted in secret and sometimes death sentences are not announced until after they have been carried out. Saro-Wiwa and the others were arrested in mid-1994 in a sweep of the southern Ogoni region following the deaths of four pro-government activists during an Ogoni rally.

Saro-Wiwa was a leader in a movement that demanded compensation



from the government and oil companies for pollution to land and water in Ogoniland area. The Ogonis number about 500 000, and their land is in the heart of Nigeria's oil-producing region.

Saro-Wiwa and his supporters said they were innocent of the killings and had been framed for their activism against the government and the oil industry, which provides 80% of Nigeria's foreign earnings.

The National Democratic Coalition derided Abacha for sponsoring a series of pro-government rallies in recent days. It said attempts to show that Nigerians supported the government in the face of international condemnation were useless.

The practice of using government-hired placard carriers to give a semblance of national support is both ridiculous and infantile, especially when the same government violently suppresses legitimate dissent and routinely denies Nigerians the right to peaceful assembly," the group said.

It repeated appeals for Abacha to release political prisoners and allow a new government led by Moshood Abiola, a businessman who is believed to have won June 1993 elections. Those elections were to have ended military rule in Nigeria, but the army opposed Abiola's victory and refused to hand over power.

Abacha took advantage of the resulting riots and chaos to stage a coup on November 17 1993. He promised to quickly hand power to civilians, but now says the handover won't occur until October 1998. He has also refused to free Abiola, who is jailed on treason charges.

After last week's executions, the United States, Canada, South Africa and several leading European nations withdrew their ambassadors in protest and Nigeria became the first nation ever to be suspended by the 52 member Commonwealth.

In South Africa, Miss Nigeria withdrew from the Miss World beauty pageant on Thursday after protests against the Nigerian government. Pageant organisers said pressure had led to the withdrawal of Toyin Raji (23) - Sapa-AP.

'We spared lives'

226) CP 19/11/95

By CP REPORTERS and Sapa

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela was last night quoted on the SABC defending his previous policy of quiet diplomacy towards Nigeria saying Nigerian lives had been spared by his Government's intervention

Mandela, who is leading a worldwide campaign to have oil sanctions and other punitive measures imposed against the Nigerian military regime, was quoted as saying it was unfair to say the government had betrayed Nigerians

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki's intervention had prevented the execution of 43 political prisoners, including chief Moshood Abiola and General Olusegun Obasanjo

Outraged by the killings of nine political activists, including playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa, and stung by criticism that he did little to save their lives, Mandela this week put the anti-Nigerian campaign into top gear

Yesterday morning Mandela said he would urge China to join international efforts to isolate Nigeria

He told a press conference he would later hold talks by telephone with Chinese President Jiang Zemin

"China is a very important power in the (UN) Security Council," Mandela said. "There is very little the West can do if they do not get the co-operation of the People's Republic of China."

The talks with the Chinese leader follow similar discussions Mandela had with his United States counterpart Bill Clinton a few hours earlier

Mandela and Clinton spoke on the telephone for 10 minutes

The hangings, despite official pleas for clemency from around the world, sparked an international outcry and Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth

The Nigerian crisis is still reverberating around the world

This week Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu said South Africa was committed to the restoration of democracy in Nigeria and he again called for sanctions against the military government there

He was addressing more than 200 placard-waving demonstrators outside the Nigerian consulate in Johannesburg

Political, church, business and sports leaders joined hands to demonstrate their outrage at the execution of the nine minority rights activists

handed a memorandum containing demands for restoration of democracy in Nigeria to acting consul-general Adamu Abbas

"More than that we want to express our solidarity with the people of Nigeria who stood by us as we struggled against apartheid

"We want to assure them (Nigerians) that we stand with them and will ensure that democracy is restored in that great and beautiful land"

About 35 people protesting against Shell's involvement in Nigeria demonstrated at the company's offices in Cape Town on Friday, calling for a boycott of its products and accusing it of complicity in last week's executions

The protesters handed a memorandum to corporate affairs general manager Koosum Kalyan, demanding the company's public condemnation of continuing human rights and environmental abuses in Nigeria, and specifically the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight comrades

They also demanded that the company announce support for the democracy movement in Nigeria, including recognition of trade unions and other democratic forces

Protesters held up posters showing a skull and crossbones above

the Shell symbol, and accused Shell of being "guilty of murder"

The secretary general of the African National Congress, Cyril Ramaphosa, called for sanctions to be applied rapidly against Nigeria's junta

"We are calling for all countries in the world to club together to put pressure on the Nigerian dictators," he said in London

As the international offensive against the Nigerian dictatorship began to bite, military strongman Abacha marked his second anniversary in power on Friday with the launch of a public relations campaign aimed at convincing the world he's not a bad guy

Saying his military junta is on a "rescue mission" for Africa's most populous nation, a defiant Abacha condemned what he called unjust criticism of his human rights record

"The government will adopt measures to educate the world about our true character, which is different from how we are depicted," Abacha told an audience of government, military and business leaders at an elaborate ceremony in the capital, Abuja

He introduced a 297-page book and three-part television documentary titled *Not in Our Character*, which the government says should disprove critics' allegations

The opposition National Democratic Coalition said on Friday that the international condemnation came too late

"Had the world listened to our entreaties since last year, the situation in Nigeria might not have degenerated to this sordid level," it said in a statement released in Lagos

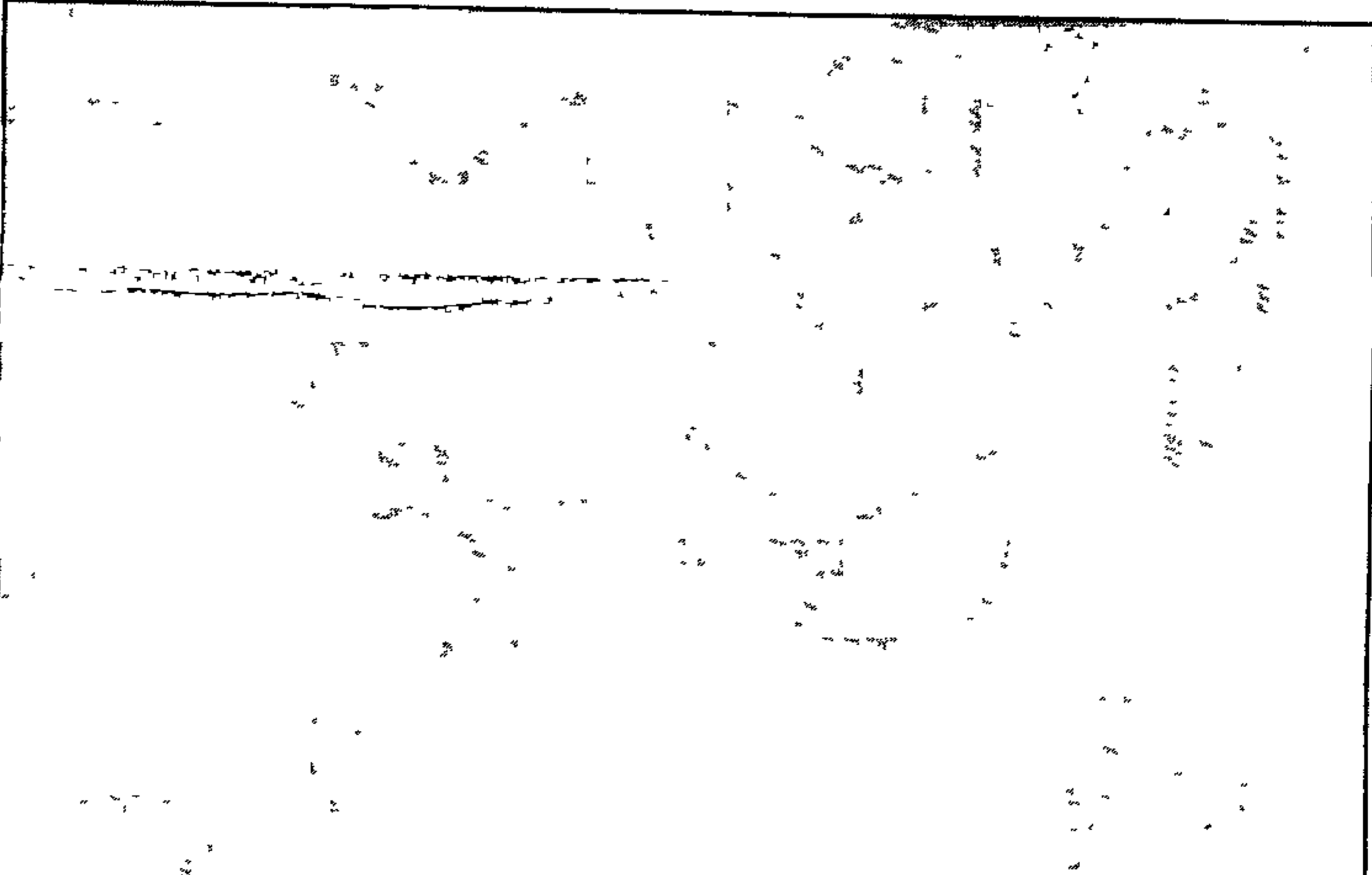
Emboldened by growing international support, around 100 Nigerian opposition activists, some wearing black and sporting symbolic nooses round their necks, gathered for a day of mourning to mark the regime's second anniversary

Braving a strong police presence, the rally in central Lagos lasted no more than 20 minutes

The protesters, visibly nervous, carried placards reading "End military rule today", "Ken Saro-Wiwa, your ideals live forever," and calling for an international embargo on sales of Nigerian oil

Further protests against the Nigerian junta were registered on Friday with the wife of jailed Nigerian opposition leader Moshood Abiola in London

Alhaja Kudrat Abiola said the international community could contribute "in a decisive way" to the campaign for democracy



DEFIANT . . . Nigerian military leader General Sami Abacha is being pummelled by worldwide criticism after the hangings of nine human rights activists.

THE UNITED Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) this week released its report on the state of the world's refugees and Africa still remains the continent most afflicted by this problem.

Africa, according to the report which was released in Johannesburg and several other major centres throughout the world, still accounts for a large proportion of the world's refugee population, which is currently estimated at about 27 million.

Coupling these figures with those people displaced within their own countries, the status of Africans who are victims of political, religious, social and economic problems paint a grim picture.

Although the UNHCR report does not touch on Nigeria, there are fears that if the political problems of Africa's most populous state are not resolved, the continent's refugee problem could worsen.

Since General Sani Abacha seized power in Nigeria two years ago, then imprisoned president elect Moshhood Abiola and former president Olusegun Obasanjo and recently executed nine political activists, this country of 100 million people is fast descending into chaos.

Most of Africa's refugees are concentrated in Sudan and the Horn of Africa, which has traditionally been a volatile area, the area of the Great Lakes in central Africa and West Africa, which has in recent years also experienced an upsurge.

For several years West Africa was relatively unaffected by the scourge of refugees. Civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone have overnight changed this and it is estimated that one million people have fled into exile in Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire.

Action stations for UNHCR

(226)

CP 19/11/95

Nigeria threatens to become Africa's and the world's worst refugee nightmare

the increase of the century, the UNHCR has been forced to change gears in its approach to combating this intractable global difficulty.

In the past the UNHCR did not concern itself with internal refugees under the excuse that this was interfering with a country's internal affairs.

Nigeria provides the UNHCR, other humanitarian agencies and the developed countries with their first serious challenge on how to avert a large scale refugee problem.

If Nigeria explodes, Africa's present refugee crisis will pale by comparison. This is why it is important for the world to intervene before it is too late.

Nigeria presents the UN and the developed world with its first challenge to intervene in the internal affairs of a country, for if the African nation of 100 million explodes former problems of refugees will pale by comparison. SEKOLA SELL0 reports.

An estimated 800 000 Hutus fleeing an offensive by the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front poured into Zaire in a matter of days. Earlier an RPF offensive against government forces had precipitated the flight of about 250 000 refugees into Tanzania.

A number of Rwandan refugees eventually found their way into South Africa. However, the majority of Rwandan and Burundi refugees are to be found in Zaire and Mobutu Sese Seko's regime had earlier threatened to repatriate all of them by the end of the year.

Intervention by the UNHCR has won them a temporary reprieve. But, it still remains to be seen for how long the unpredictable Mobutu will keep his word and not use them as political pawns.

The collapse of apartheid in South Africa, the end of Renamo/Frelimo conflict in Mozambique and the ongoing peace process in Angola has meant that there is now relative stability in the subcontinent.

This has resulted in an estimated 1.6 million displaced Mozambicans who were spread throughout the region returning home while large numbers of Angolans in countries like Nam-



DISPLACED ... A boy born in South Africa waits at Mapai transit camp.

ibia and Zaire also trekking back home.

While generally the region is returning to stability in spite of trouble in a few areas, for the South African government, the problem of the refugees still represents a nightmare which goes largely unnoticed by the general public if official figures are correct.

Speaking in Mandeni in Northern Natal a day after the release of this report, Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthezi said there were presently an estimated five million illegal immigrants inside the country.

This would mean that South

Africa takes a sizable chunk of refugees - nearly half of the figure quoted by the UNHCR.

However, there are some people who dispute that the country has so many refugees.

Buthezi said the illegal immigrants had until the end of March to apply for official refugee status.

Compounding the problem of the refugees are people who are dislocated within their countries. Such people are beyond the reach of assistance by agencies such as the UNHCR and their numbers are unknown - although it is believed they are on



GOING HOME ... Mozambican refugees board a train in South Africa last year on their way to being repatriated.

Mandela calls on the world to bring Nigeria to its knees' (22b)

ST 19/11/95

Sunday Times Reporters

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela said yesterday he had called for the US to impose an oil embargo on Nigeria and had received a "positive" response from President Bill Clinton.

"I asked the United States to apply oil sanctions," Mr Mandela told reporters at his Johannesburg home several hours after he spoke by telephone to Mr Clinton over how to act against Nigeria following its execution of nine human rights activists last weekend.

Mr Mandela, who said he also wanted China's support, did not spell out Mr Clinton's response. But a White House spokesman said last night that sanctions had not been ruled out.

Mr Mandela said the West could bring Nigerian military leader General Sani Abacha "to his knees" if it imposed sweeping sanctions and he was confident Mr Clinton would act.

The US buys most of Nigeria's two million barrels of crude oil produced daily. Earlier, Nigeria had attacked South Africa for spearheading a campaign for economic sanctions to be imposed on Nigeria, accusing it of interference in its internal affairs.

In a statement published in the *Zimbabwean* daily, the *Herald*, yesterday, Nigeria singled out South Africa and said the executions were justified under Nigerian law.

"For a country to seek to impose its own legal system on another smacks of undue interference," said the statement signed by the foreign ministry in Abuja.

Political, church, labour, business and sports organisations in South Africa have formed a loose alliance to protest the hangings.

Actions already taken include a ban on arms sales, the expulsion of the Nigerian team from a four-nation soccer tournament in Mthabatho and Johannesburg and the withdrawal of Miss Nigeria, Toyin Rahun, from the Miss World contest held at Sun City last night.

Protests were staged outside the Nigerian Consulate in Johannesburg and in Cape Town on Friday, and demonstrators called for a boycott of Shell products, accusing the company of complicity in the execution of the Ogoni activists. In Johannesburg, Archbishop Desmond

Tutu, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, had strong words for General Abacha and his regime. "Abacha, you have already lost. There is no way your injustice and oppression can prevail forever." Archbishop Tutu said, addressing demonstrators outside the Nigerian Consulate.

He called for sanctions unless General Abacha freed all political prisoners and detainees and began negotiations with legitimate leaders in the country.

Parties in the government of national unity are, however, divided over steps that should be taken to exert more pressure on Nigeria's military rulers.

ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa said in London on Friday his organisation was considering a boycott of Shell products following the oil company's decision to continue with its investments in Nigeria.

This drew a sharp response from the NP which said yesterday Shell could not be held responsible for the military regime's actions.

Gauteng leader Pk Botha said the NP would support any measure to bring about a democratic government in Nigeria, but the party believed it was "totally inappropriate and even improper" to threaten a company like Shell for the Nigerian government's transgressions.

"We will strongly oppose any such move," Mr Botha said.

Mr F W de Klerk, the Deputy President and NP leader, said this week he supported the arms embargo imposed on Nigeria. But he warned that "pressure alone is not going to change things, and there's a limit to what sanctions can do".

Speaking at a press conference in London on Friday, Mr Ramaphosa accused Shell of "arrogant defiance of the international community and the people of Nigeria".

Shell announced earlier this week it would go ahead with its R12-billion investment in a liquefied natural gas plant in the populous West African country.

"Shell's action is really despicable and all pressure must be brought to bear on the company to bring a halt to its activities," Mr Ramaphosa said.



PROTEST . . . ANC MP Carl Niehaus, writer Nadine Gordimer, Jeremy Cronin of the SACP and Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Picture: JON HRUSA



Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu leads members of the SA-Nigeria Democracy Support Group on a march on the Nigerian consulate on Friday. Nigerian acting consul-general Adam Abbas received a petition from protesters, including Cosatu president Sam Shilowa and Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale. Picture NICKY DE BLOIS

ANC targets Shell in anti-Nigeria campaign

Linda Ensor (226) BD 20/11/95

LONDON — Shell is to be targeted by the ANC in its anti-Nigeria campaign to pressurise it to reverse its "despicable" decision to go ahead with a £2,5bn investment and to immediately halt operations there.

At the conclusion of a week-long visit to Britain as a guest of the government, ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa said the multinational was in the firing line as it was its actions in degrading the environment in Nigeria which had been opposed by executed activist Ken Saro-Wiwa.

He said the ANC and the newly formed SA-Nigeria Democracy Support Group would be looking at a number of initiatives to put pressure on Shell and did not rule out a boycott of Shell products.

Ramaphosa said Shell's decision to proceed with a multibillion-pound gas project constituted defiance of those countries wanting to bring about change in Nigeria. "The issue of human rights should be seen as outweighing many other considerations," he said. Pressure would be brought to bear on the UN and the OAU to take action against Nigeria.

In discussions with British Prime Minister John Major on the Nigerian question, Major had indicated the British government had not excluded economic sanctions and an oil embargo, but believed such a decision would have to be taken by the UN.

"Britain does not have a closed mind on the oil embargo," Ramaphosa said, pointing out that it had imposed an arms embargo and travel restrictions on key Nigerian political leaders to Britain.

Ramaphosa objected to criticism of President Nelson Mandela, saying many world leaders had endorsed consultations. He said many did not think the Nigerian dictators would be so defiant as to execute Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues once Commonwealth heads of state were meeting in Auckland.

Abiola daughter angry over oil giant's adverts

ARG 20/11/95
(226)
LONDON. — The daughter of the jailed winner of Nigeria's 1993 presidential election has accused oil company Shell of misrepresenting her in advertisements designed to defend its activities in Nigeria

The Anglo-Dutch giant, under pressure to pull out of its operations in Nigeria to punish the military government for the execution of nine human rights activists, yesterday took out full-page advertisements in British newspapers in which it quoted Wura Abiola, daughter of Moshood Abiola.

Ms Abiola said Shell had used comments she made in a recent television interview out of context and without her permission

"Using my words selectively in this way associates me and my views with Shell's own po-

sition I refute this in the strongest possible terms," she said

Shell's advertisements argued that pulling out of its Nigerian operations would hurt the very people in Nigeria that campaigners wanted to help

They quoted Wura Abiola as saying "The regime does not react well to threats I believe that this (the executions) is the way of showing that they will not listen to threats"

Ms Abiola said she believed Shell's campaign could backfire by exposing its lack of sensitivity.

"I believe that the definition of effective action (against Nigeria's rulers) should not be constrained in any way by the need to preserve the commercial interests of multi-national companies," she added. —
Reuter

UN to decide on Nigeria this week

Sowetan 20/11/95 (226)

By Pamela Dube
Political Staff

THE UNITED States and Britain have indicated that unless the United Nations imposes oil sanctions against Nigeria the two countries would not do so as individual countries

Sources within the South African Government said yesterday that Britain and the US hoped to convince the UN Security Council at its meeting this week to apply blanket sanctions against Nigeria

The call for sanctions against Nigeria first came to the fore during the summit of Commonwealth leaders in Auckland, New Zealand, two weeks ago

The decision followed the execution by the Nigerian military rulers of nine human rights activists of the Ogoni tribe, including renowned

Mandela confident West can bring Abacha's regime 'to its knees'

writer and poet Ken Saro-Wiwa

President Nelson Mandela, who was among the first to call for economic sanctions against Nigeria, said on Saturday that he was in constant touch with US President Bill Clinton to impose an oil embargo against the country

Mandela confident

Mandela said he was confident that Clinton would act against Nigeria and that Western countries could bring General Sani Abacha's regime "down on its knees"

African National Congress secretary-general Mr Cyril Ramaphosa visited Britain last weekend to seek an audience with British Prime Minister John Major on the matter

Ramaphosa was quoted as having accused the oil company Shell, which is at the centre of the controversy for proceeding with its investment in Nigeria, of "arrogant defiance of the international community and the people of Nigeria"

Shell announced last week that it would go ahead with its R12 billion investment in a gas plant in Nigeria

According to sources, the feeling in the American and British governments is that if they went ahead with imposing oil sanctions against the West African country, other countries might step in and clinch oil deals with the military regime

The security council is expected to make a ruling on the matter this week

'Shell wanted Wiwa to drop demos for freedom'

LONDON The brother of executed Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa says Shell tried to trade Saro-Wiwa's freedom for an end to international protests against the oil giant, The Observer reported yesterday

Shell has been criticised for continuing its links with Nigeria despite international condemnation of the November 10 hanging of Saro-Wiwa and eight other human rights activists

The Observer said it interviewed Dr Owens Wiwa at a secret location in West Africa. He escaped from Nigeria recently after a year on the run from the country's military rulers, the newspaper said

During secret meetings with Wiwa last year, Mr Brian Anderson, head of Shell Nigeria, offered to use the company's influence with the Nigerian government to gain Saro-Wiwa's freedom, The Observer reported

In return, said the newspaper, Shell wanted leaders of the oil-rich south-eastern Nigerian region of



OIL BAN CALL: ANC secretary-general Mr Cyril Ramaphosa

Ogoniland to call off global protests against Shell

A spokesman for Shell International said yesterday that Mr Anderson held "a number of private meetings" with Wiwa, but refused to elaborate

"Each time, I asked him to help to get my brother and the others

(226) ET 20/11/95

out. He said he would be able to help us if we stopped the protest campaign abroad," The Observer quoted Dr Wiwa as saying

"I was very shocked. Even if I had wanted to, I didn't have the power to control the international environmental protests

"If they had threatened to withdraw from Nigeria unless Ken was released, he would have been alive today," Dr Wiwa said

Saro-Wiwa and the others had protested that their land and water were being ruined by oil production and exploration

● Nigeria hit out at South Africa at the weekend for spearheading a campaign for economic sanctions against it, accusing SA of interfering in its internal affairs

Attacking Nigeria yesterday, ANC secretary-general Mr Cyril Ramaphosa renewed calls for an oil ban and also called on Shell to pull out of the West African country.

Nigeria said the executions were justified under Nigerian law — Sapa-AP

Ramaphosa urges oil giant Shell to pull out of Nigeria

(226) Jan 20/11/95

London - ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa tightened the screw on Nigeria over its human rights record yesterday, renewing calls for an oil ban and urging Anglo-Dutch oil giant Shell to pull out of the West African country

Ramaphosa, who is also chairman of the Constitutional Assembly, said an oil embargo by the United States and the European Union would be very effective against Nigeria's military rulers, who outraged world opinion by executing nine human rights activists earlier this month.

"A lot of pressure is going to be exerted on Nigeria because none of us must ever tolerate the abuse of

human rights anywhere in the world," Ramaphosa told BBC television

"On our side in South Africa we are advocating all-out sanctions against Nigeria," he told interviewer Sir David Frost.

He was speaking a day after Mandela made a direct appeal to US President Bill Clinton to stop buying Nigerian oil

Mandela said Clinton's response had been positive, and a White House spokesman later said Washington had not ruled out multilateral sanctions. The United States buys about half of Nigeria's oil exports

Ramaphosa confirmed that South Africa was also considering

whether to take sanctions against Shell operations in South Africa

"There's a mood of outrage at the ground level within South Africa and I think the momentum will start building up. If it leads to an oil ban, I think we will turn the tide around," Ramaphosa said

He said Shell should not only put on hold a planned plant in Nigeria but should cease operations there entirely

"Many people in Nigeria are calling out for that, and I think Shell's response has really been disgusting in terms of refusing completely to look at the key issue - the question of human rights," Ramaphosa said

Shell took full-page advertise-

ments in British newspapers yesterday to defend its case, saying a pull-out would hurt the very people in Nigeria that campaigners wanted to help

"The oil would certainly continue flowing. But the sound and ethical business practices synonymous with Shell, the environmental investment, and the tens of millions of dollars spent on community programmes would all be lost," it said

"It's easy enough to sit in our homes in the West, calling for sanctions and boycotts against a developing country. But you have to be sure that knee-jerk reactions won't do more harm than good," the company added. - Reuters

Shell's 'hard line' may lead to picket

(226) DD 21/11/95
Renee Grawitzky

SHELL SA could face demonstrations and pickets by members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union as a result of a pay dispute and the company's stance on Nigeria, a union spokesman said yesterday.

CWIU spokesman Meshack Ravuku said Shell had taken a hard line in local wage negotiations and in Nigeria. "Workers have linked the two and will react," he said.

Ravuku said the union was demanding a wage increase of 13% while the company had offered 10%.

Meanwhile, President Nelson Mandela called for a Southern African Development Community summit to discuss measures against Nigeria's military leaders after meeting Shell SA chairman John Drake yesterday.

Mandela met Drake after reports that SA was considering action against the Anglo-Dutch group. Shell handles about half Nigeria's crude oil output.

"The President ... raised very strongly the need for Shell to show its outrage about what was happening in Nigeria and then to place pressure on the Nigerian regime because of the economic power that it holds," ANC MP Carl Niehaus told a news conference.

"I must say that despite the strong

plea from the President there has not until now been any substantial positive response from Shell," he said.

Niehaus said the SA government was waiting for Shell to come back with "indications of what tangible pressures they will be prepared to put on the Nigerian regime".

ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa, who visited Britain last week, said the UK was "not ruling out an oil embargo but they want to look at a whole range of other things that can put pressure on Nigeria".

"They said they, as the UK, had decided to impose an arms ban against Nigeria and they would also be taking other measures such as freezing the assets of the military dictators and their civilian collaborators as well as restricting their movement in the UK."

Ramaphosa said he was disgusted with Shell's handling of events in Nigeria, particularly its decision to go ahead with a \$4bn liquefied natural gas project there.

A spokesman for Shell SA said the company would hold further talks with government officials. "We hope to find a way forward. We have gone back to our office in London and we will come back with something.... There will be further talks, maybe today, but not with President Mandela."

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ANC threat to boycott Shell

(226)
Negotiations between pressure groups and Shell SA are already underway

By Themba Molefe
Political Correspondent

SHELL SOUTH AFRICA must – and will – be boycotted if its international head office does not take decisive action against Nigeria's military dictatorship, the African National Congress has warned.

The ANC said a local boycott of the multinational was a foregone conclusion but international concurrence on the matter was essential.

Local pressure groups

Sowetan 21/11/95
Returning from a week-long official visit to Britain yesterday, angry ANC secretary-general Mr Cyril Ramaphosa said "The scene is now set to coordinate action against Nigeria. There has been no substantial positive response from Shell except its commitment to discussions."

Negotiations between local pressure groups and Shell SA were already underway.

The ANC would also consider a new name for Shell House, its national headquarters in Johannesburg, said Ramaphosa replying to a question at a Press briefing.

He said Britain was ready to impose an oil embargo on Nigeria for its human rights violations and to force the Sani

Abacha military regime to restore democracy to the country. Ramaphosa said British Prime Minister John Major had told him his government had decided on an arms embargo, the freezing of all assets and halting entry to the UK of the current Nigerian leadership.

On action against Shell, Ramaphosa expressed his "disgust".

He said it was totally unacceptable that a meeting between President Nelson Mandela and Shell SA chairman and chief executive Mr JM Drake yesterday failed to yield a commitment from the multinational to act against the Abacha regime.

What made the ANC "extremely unhappy", Ramaphosa said, was Shell's insistence on proceeding with a R25 billion gas project in Nigeria in spite of international consternation.

The multinational claimed its decision was based on "strategic reasons".

Human rights

It did not regard the political activity and the demands of 17 other political detainees as important enough to exert pressure on Abacha.

"When it comes to Africa, Shell is hypocritical. Therefore the corporation must be pressurised into being more sensitive to human rights in Nigeria," Ramaphosa said.

Mandela calls in Shell chief

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela called Shell SA's chairman for an urgent meeting yesterday.

In another development, the European Union slapped an arms embargo on Nigeria and froze aid, but stopped short of imposing an oil ban in spite of calls to do so from several members

The meeting between Mr John Drake and Mr Mandela followed reports that the South African government was considering action against the oil company

"The President raised very strongly the need for Shell to show its outrage about what was happening in Nigeria and for Shell to use its economic clout to place pressure on the Nigerian gov-

ernment," ANC national executive member Mr Carl Niehaus said

"The government was waiting for Shell to come back with indications of what tangible pressures it will be prepared to put on the Nigerian regime"

Further action would depend on Shell's response

Mr Mandela, outraged by the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other human rights activists, has also called for a regional summit to discuss measures against Nigeria's military leaders

"I have asked President (Ketumile) Masire of Botswana to call a meeting of the Southern African Development Community summit," he said

One of Mr Mandela's senior aides, briefing reporters on his return from talks with British Prime Minister Mr John Major and members of his cabinet, said London planned to freeze the assets of Nigeria's military leaders. Mr Major's office declined to comment

A spokeswoman for Shell SA said the company would hold further talks with the government "We hope to find a way forward," Ms Koosum Kalyan said.

Meanwhile, Royal Dutch Shell said it intended to continue its operations in Nigeria and would suspend these only if the UN declared a boycott on oil from that country — Sapa-Reuter-AFP

● See Page 18

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(226)

Shell is the villain once again with decision to stay in Nigeria

CT (BR) 21/11/95

(226)

This is the first of a two-part series dealing with the accusations by environmental campaigners and politicians that Shell is responsible for the damage inflicted on the Niger delta over the past 40 years and who are demanding that it pulls out of Nigeria

By KIRSTIE HAMILTON

London — Security at the Shell Tower, an ugly 1960s tower block on the south bank of the Thames in London, was so tight last week it squeaked — with good reason

For the second time this year Shell has become the corporate bad guy in the minds of thousands of customers. Its decision to push ahead with a £2.6 billion investment in a Nigerian gas plant days after the Nigerian government executed Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other human rights workers caused outrage

Last Saturday the firm was the target of demonstrations at petrol stations around Britain. Coming close on the heels of Shell's climb-down over the disposal of the Brent Spar oil rig, the furore over Nigeria has raised public consciousness about Shell's activities to the highest level for years

All this attention is deeply unwelcome to a company not comfortable in the limelight. Until recently, those who bothered to have an opinion would have described Shell as a huge but essentially faceless company with an Anglo-Dutch structure that defies

comprehension and a corporate culture resembling a well-paid public service. Most outsiders had only the dimmest perception of how the firm worked, but most would have banked on Shell being a good corporate citizen

According to many, that description is accurate. But environmental campaigners, politicians and the Ogoni Community Association, the group Saro-Wiwa founded, tell a different story. They maintain that Shell is responsible for the environmental damage inflicted on the Niger delta over the past 40 years and that it should pull out of Nigeria

Members of the European parliament voted to press for an oil embargo against Nigeria last week, and will push for sanctions. Although oil sanctions are not on the agenda of the European Community foreign-affairs committee when it meets tomorrow, it will consider an arms ban and the extension of visa restrictions

The battle and the publicity generated have instilled fear in the hearts of other oil producers and other multinational companies. Customers and investors are increasingly demanding higher

standards from the companies they deal with. And those that do not match up are being penalised

Shell has acknowledged the need to consider more than just profit in a fightback campaign it launched last Friday. "If we are investing in Nigeria you have the right to know why," say its full-page press advertisements. So far, the City has remained unmoved by the fuss, and Shell shares climbed 50.5p to 787.5p last week

But brokers report that many small investors were selling Shell, and some bigger investors, such as charities, are reconsidering their holdings. Shell is at least safe from the wrath of the ethical-investment trusts — none would have had it in their portfolios anyway

While it remains a smaller-investor issue, Shell can withstand the pressure. But if campaigners whip up a product boycott, as the Germans did over Brent Spar, big investors will start to get nervous

Calls this weekend from the ANC for a ban on Shell will unsettle the City. Shell's claim to be non-political has not prevented it from forming a close relationship with the ANC, and Shell has a big business in South Africa. Losing friends like the ANC will hurt

□ The second part of the article will look at Shell's history in Nigeria and the rationale behind its decision to push ahead with its liquefied natural gas project

Mandela tells Shell execs to put pressure on Nigeria

Star 21/11/95 (22b)

ANC wants the oil company to show outrage at the activists' hangings, and does not rule out a boycott of its products

By Jovial Rantao
Political Reporter

Although it would not call for an immediate boycott of Shell products in SA, the ANC has not ruled out the move as a measure to force the oil giant to exert pressure on the Nigerian government to stop human rights abuse, top ANC leaders said yesterday.

The ANC and the Government have expressed their unhappiness at Shell's failure to publicly condemn the Nigerian government and to use its economic muscle to force the West African government to expedite the democratisation process.

Yesterday President Nelson Mandela met Shell SA executives

MP Carl Niehaus said Mandela raised the need for Shell to show outrage at the hanging of nine Ogoni activists two weeks ago, the detention of political activists and the general abuse of human rights.

"Mandela also strongly expressed his unhappiness at Shell's decision to go ahead with a R14-billion gas project despite worldwide calls for the project to be shelved. Despite the strong plea from the president, there has not until now been any substantial positive response from Shell," Niehaus said.

The meeting ended with a challenge to Shell to come forward with tangible steps to pressure the Nigerian government, but no deadline had been set for the oil company.

Niehaus addressed a media conference with ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa, who had returned from Britain where he had talks with British Prime Minister John Major.

He said while the SA-Nigeria Democracy Support Group has not ruled out a boycott of Shell products, the organisation has equally not committed itself to calling for it.

"We will consult widely, locally and internationally, before a decision is taken," Ramaphosa said.

"When dealing with the Western world Shell has showed good reason and has bowed down to pressure, but when it comes to Africa its reaction in dealing with environmental and human rights issues has been hypocritical," Ramaphosa said.

Petrol depot workers start go-slow over wages

Star 21/11/95

(~~133~~) (~~133~~) (226)

Oil giant Shell, already under international pressure over its involvement in Nigeria, faces further headaches after workers at some of its Gauteng petrol depots staged go-slows to press home wage demands

Petrol dealers claimed yesterday deliveries to garages had been delayed over the past four days after

workers at Shell's Alberton depot had gone on a go-slow. Other depots had been hit by sporadic go-slows

Chemical Workers' Industrial Union spokesman Meshack Ravuku said yesterday he was not aware of any go-slows, but added workers were angry over drawn-out wage negotiations

Shell spokesman Koosum Kalyan said yesterday she was not aware of any go-slows at the company's depots

The union is demanding a 13% pay hike while the company has offered 10%. The parties will hold a conciliation board meeting on December 1 - Labour Reporter

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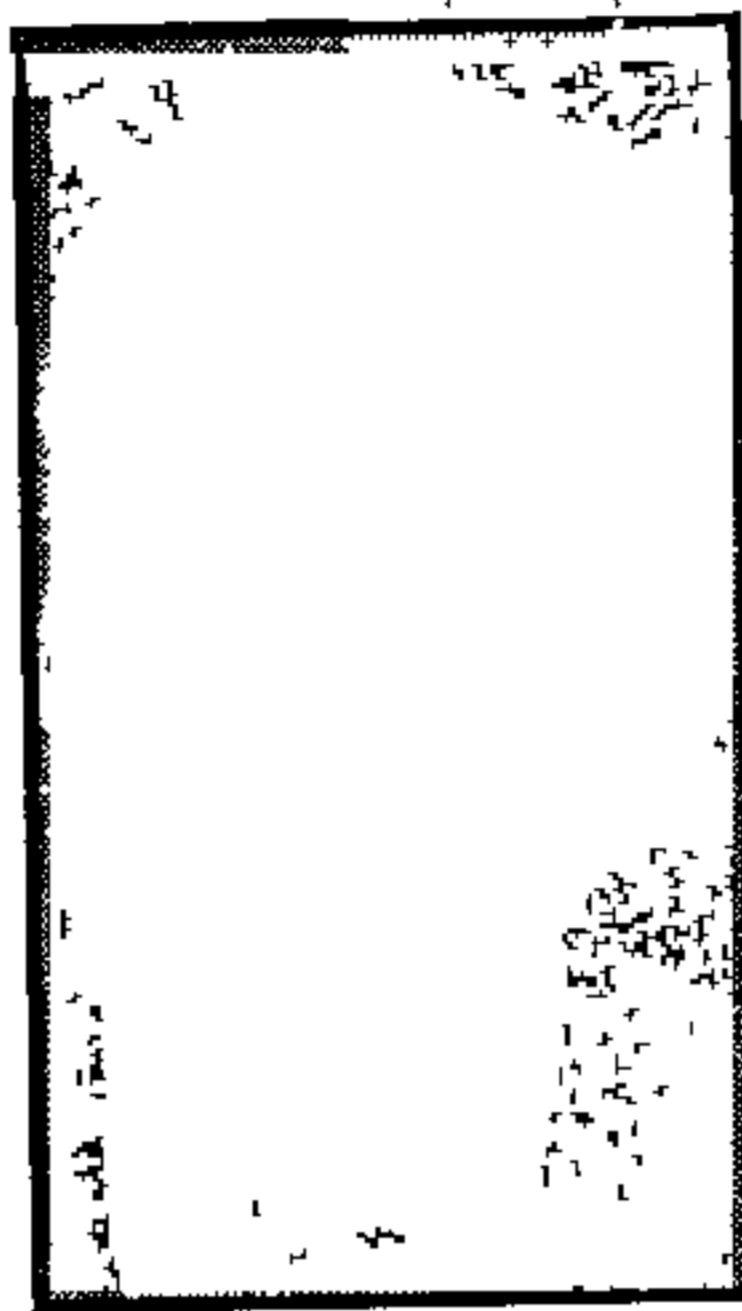
FRG 22/11/95

Nigerians rally (22b) to back Abacha's hanging decision

ABUJA — Thousands of Nigerians have heeded the call by pro-government groups to mass in the West African country's capital in support of a decision by their military government to execute nine minority rights campaigners

Some supporters of General Sani Abacha's government openly expressed anger at South African President Nelson Mandela for leading the campaign to isolate Nigeria after the hanging of author Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others earlier this month.

Witnesses said tens of thousands of people had assembled at Abuja's new parade grounds, while the Nigerian government said it would do more to explain to the world why it had hanged the activists



"This is the opportunity for patriotic Nigerians to show their loyalty to their fatherland," said Ademola Adebo, chairman of the organising committee

The hangings prompted many governments to withdraw ambassadors and impose sanctions on Nigeria

Nelson Mandela

"We should review our stand, especially regarding South Africa," said Bashir Tofa, a former presidential candidate

Among placards carried at the rally were many denouncing Mandela. Some read "Mandela is biting the finger that fed him" and "Mandela is a saboteur".

The Abuja rally is the climax of demonstrations staged in many of Nigeria's 30 states and is organised by two pro-government groups — the Association of Concerned Citizens headed by Adebo, a former academic, and the National Unity Foundation — Reuter

PAC regrets executions but... warns

THE Pan Africanist Congress yesterday regretted the recent execution of author Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Nigerian activists but warned that the West African country should not be made "a victim of international double standards".

In a statement, PAC deputy president Mr Motsoko Pheko warned that "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones".

He said over 50 people died in KwaZulu-Natal every week and over

400 Azanian People's Liberation Army and other liberation army members were in prison

Many had been sentenced to life imprisonment while the "perpetrators of apartheid" were "roaming the streets"

He urged the Commonwealth to call for the release of those who fought against apartheid

"There is dead silence in South Africa on the illegal imprisonment of Apla and Umkhonto we Sizwe cadres

and other forces who fought against the crime of apartheid

"International law declared apartheid a crime against humanity

"The Nazis are still being hunted for crimes committed 50 years ago, the latest being 83-year-old Erich Priebka"

The PAC, said Pheko, saw it as "a shame that Miss Nigeria and the Nigerian soccer team had been refused to perform or play in South Africa"

"What have they done? How has

this punished the Nigerian government?" Pheko asked

He said Shell should be boycotted because it had destroyed the Nigerian environment

Referring to the African National Congress, Pheko said "In South Africa people who are now vociferous about sanctions against Nigeria and urging Shell to pull out, are operating in offices at Shell House which is used as ANC's headquarters headquarters in Johannesburg

Source: 22/11/95 (226)

Motsoko Pheko

Shell's past coming back to haunt Nigerian project

This, the second of a two-part article from the Sunday Times of London, examines Shell's history in Nigeria and the rationale behind its decision to push ahead with its liquefied natural gas project

BY KIRSTIE HAMILTON

Shell has been drilling for oil in Nigeria for more than 40 years and is the largest foreign oil company in the country. Much of Nigeria's drilling is on land. This makes the oil cheap to produce, but brings environmental hazards. There are more than 4,800km of pipeline in the Niger Delta.

Shell produces almost 1 million barrels of oil a day and owns 30 percent of what it drills. Analysts estimate that the after-tax return on each barrel is \$2,50, adding about \$300 million to its profit. That may sound like a lot — and margins on oil production in developing countries are higher than elsewhere — but it accounted for only 4 percent of Shell's revenues last year.

But Nigeria's future is more important. Oil experts say that, unlike the North Sea, Nigeria has a long-term future. But the future is now being put into jeopardy by the past. The environmental standards of the oil industry 40 years ago were different from those of today and the Niger Delta is suffering the consequences.

Repairs

Shell executives concede that Nigeria does not measure up to the environmental standards of other countries, although the company is spending \$100 million this year. But Brian Anderson, the head of Shell in Nigeria, talks of the difficulties of implementing expensive repair programmes when the Nigerian government, the company's partner, has been unwilling to match Shell's input.

Whatever the reason for lower standards, Shell is increasingly coming under fire for not maintaining the values it adheres to elsewhere. Keith Macmillan, the deputy director of Henley Management College, said "Companies compromise standards at their peril." He said, however, Shell was trying its best in very difficult circumstances.

This is not the view of Lazarus Tamana, the president of the Ogoni Community Association in Britain. He said "In the West, oil companies don't make a move before they have carried out exhaustive environmental surveys. After 35 years, Shell in Nigeria is only now in the process of doing its first (surveys)."

Shell's decision, at the height of international condem-

CT(22)22/11/95(226)
nation of the Nigerian executions, to push ahead with its liquefied natural gas project, is at the heart of the row. Glenys Kinnock, the Labour member of parliament for South Wales East, said "Shell has shown a mind-boggling degree of insensitivity."

Shell is equally adamant that the plant will be a positive move. It says much of the area's pollution results from gas flaring — burning off the gas that comes up with the oil. The project would reduce gas flaring, cut pollution and bring in revenue.

Oil analysts laugh about the gas project, saying it has become a standing joke at Shell. One said "The rule was always that when a trainee joined Shell he would be told the project was about to be signed and when he retired it would still be about to be signed."

But now Shell insists the final deadline is approaching. "It is true that over 30 years all attempts have failed," said an executive. "But if we don't get this signed up by the end of the year we may have to start all over again bidding for the contract, and the contracts with gas buyers will expire." At Shell Centre the panic is far from over, the battle is far from won.

The company is aware that for it to win over outsiders, it must stop cracks appearing within itself. Like the other big Anglo-Dutch group, Unilever, crises bring out differences in approach between The Hague and London. At Unilever, it was a Dutch executive who first admitted that Persil Power, its revolutionary new washing powder, was possibly not the miracle product the company had claimed.

In much the same way, the Dutch half of Shell decided to give in to pressure and not dump the Brent Spar oil rig at sea, despite believing it was the best option. With Shell in the midst of a tough programme of job cuts, the chances of a split are increased. Already, executives in Britain are outraged at the suggestion that Dutch staff will receive better redundancy terms because the Dutch belong to the European Union's social charter.

Some London executives blame the Nigerian problem on the Dutch, who handle more of the technical issues and who they believe have been less interested in environmental and human-rights issues than the British.

Other oil companies, meanwhile, are praying that Shell will survive this and at least convince the world that its new project should go ahead. Other oil executives have said Shell should inject as much money as necessary to solve the environmental problems, but ensure it is not pushed into withdrawing. As one oilman said "If they give in on this one, God help the rest of us."

NIGERIAN LINK 'EMBARRASSING'

Shell name irks ANC, UCT

CT 22/11/95

(226)

THE ANC, embarrassed at Shell's involvement in Nigeria, is having the Shell House name chipped off its headquarters in central Johannesburg. **ANEEZ SALIE** reports.

OIL multinational Shell, under threat of local boycotts and international embargoes for its alleged collusion with the Nigerian military junta, is under further attack from two divergent groups who want its name removed from their buildings.

Angry and embarrassed academics, staff and students housed at the Shell Environmental and Geographic Science Building at UCT are unanimous in demanding a name change, failing which, a suspension of the name

And the ANC, whose headquarters are commonly referred to as Shell House, is so embarrassed it has ordered the name chipped off the central Johannesburg skyscraper it took over from the oil

giant shortly after its unbanning in 1990

In a letter to the Monday Paper, UCT's weekly campus publication, Dr Belinda Dodson and Associate Professor Michael Meadows of the environmental and geographic faculty, writing on behalf of all occupants of the building, state that their original misgivings at being associated with Shell have been validated by the recent events in Nigeria

In particular, they are outraged at the judicial executions of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight fellow activists, and at the environmental devastation allegedly caused by the company

"Shell has chosen not merely to continue with business as usual but, with the most crass timing, to

approve the go-ahead of a major new billion-dollar natural gas plant in the country," they complain. They have consequently written to Shell and to their vice-chancellor demanding the name change, and have attached nine black ribbons to the Shell name on the outside of their building. They have also draped in black a Shell plaque in the building's foyer, unveiled in 1991 to mark the naming

'Misleading'

In response, Shell spokeswoman Ms Koosum Kalyan denied Shell had colluded with General Sam Abacha's military dictatorship. It had condemned the executions, which occurred despite its appeals

"Allegations of environmental devastation are misleading and simply not true," she said

"While it does have some environmental problems in the Niger Delta, these do not add up to anything like devastation. Shell Nigeria takes its responsibility towards the environment very seriously"

This year it spent about R400 million on "environmental improvement" and had sponsored an R18m environmental survey, in addition to a R100m community development programme, said Ms Kalyan

She added "However, it should be noted that 60 to 70% of spills in the Ogoni area (Saro-Wiwa's home region) have been the direct result of sabotage in order to claim compensation"

ANC spokeswoman Ms Pumla Mtyeku said the organisation's official address was 51 Plein Street, Johannesburg, although most referred to it as Shell House, its name before the 1990 deal in which the ANC took occupancy

● See Page 23

New SA push for Nigerian oil boycott

(226)

ARG 23/11/95

Political Staff, Sapa, Reuter
and Agencé France Presse

PRESIDENT Mandela is likely to launch a new effort to secure a worldwide boycott of Nigerian oil, after reports that the United States has ruled out an embargo.

Senior ANC officials familiar with Mr Mandela's thinking say he will persist "come what may", and expect him to be in contact with President Bill Clinton and European Union leaders again before the weekend.

They also expect a South African initiative at the United Nations to further isolate the Nigerian dictatorship.

There was no immediate comment from Mr Mandela's office or the Department of Foreign Affairs on Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha's apparently disparaging remark that "Mr Mandela knows nothing about diplomacy".

But officials do not expect Mr Mandela to rise to the bait. They believe that to do so would obscure the real issue — democracy and human rights in Nigeria.

General Abacha summoned prominent Nigerians yesterday to discuss how to respond to the country's diplomatic isolation and sanctions imposed after the hanging of the nine minority rights activists.

Journalists present at the meeting said General Abacha and about 500 prominent figures exchanged views for five hours at the Aso Rock presidential palace in the capital Abuja.

General Abacha, irritated by South African criticism of the execution of nine

● Turn to page 2

New SA push for oil boycott

ARG 23/11/95

(226) ● From page 1

dissidents, said that President Mandela "knows nothing about diplomacy".

"Because probably being incarcerated for decades, he knows nothing about modern world diplomacy," he told a delegation of traditional South African leaders who came to Abuja in a show of support for the Nigerian military junta.

● Reports that a South African delegation of traditional leaders had arrived in Nigeria and pledged support to military leader General Abacha today sent political parties and staff at the Department of Foreign Affairs running around to establish details of the alleged event.

If true, the move might set traditional leaders on a collision course with the ANC and other parties. A senior member of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) today said his organisation was not involved.

A Department of Foreign Affairs spokesman said they had no knowledge of any South African group which had gone to Nigeria.

Reports from Abuja said the group arrived in Nigeria on Tuesday.

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CONAL FINANCIAL & DATA SERVICES

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 23 1995 17

Shell to advertise human rights policy in papers

By MAGGIE ROWLEY

Cape Town — Shell SA is embarking on an advertising campaign to put forward its views on human rights in the face of mounting pressure for its sister company to withdraw from Nigeria

Koosum Kalyan, the general manager, corporate affairs, at Shell SA, said the firm, and its parent company Royal Dutch Shell, supported human rights and ads would be taken out in every daily South African newspaper this week

(226) CT (BR) 23/11/95



outlining this stance. She said Shell SA and Shell Nigeria were independent, decentralised operations of Royal Dutch Shell, and the South African company had no commercial links with Shell Nigeria and did not import any of its crude oil.

"We believe it is unfair that Shell Nigeria is being singled out to withdraw from Nigeria when many multinational oil companies, such as Mobile, Chevron, Stat and BP are also operating there and

expanding their activities. This is particularly ironic in view of Shell Nigeria's \$25 million annual budget for social responsibility and upliftment projects in that country," she said.

Kalyan said it also needed to be pointed out that Monday's meeting between Shell SA and President Nelson Mandela had been initiated by the company.

Meanwhile, the Chemical Workers Industrial Union yesterday denied it had linked a demand for Shell to withdraw from Nigeria to its wage dispute with the company.

Neil Behrmann reports from London that Royal Dutch Shell could not confirm speculation that Queen Elizabeth II and Queen Juliana of The Netherlands were shareholders in the group.

Analysts said a vested interest by the queen could put the British government in an awkward position in view of mounting pressures for Britain to be party to sanctions against Nigeria.

Nirvana wants

Nigerians take Western media to task

(22b) Star 23/11/95

BY ROSE UMOREN
Washington

As recriminations flow over the execution this month of renowned writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority rights activists, some Nigerians say their country's evolving crisis would not have gone this far had the West's media reported more fairly and regularly.

Now the Western media appears to be in a bout of self-examination, especially because Saro-Wiwa was a fellow journalist.

The Freedom Forum, which is the US newspaper giant Gannett's public interest arm, brought the two sides together for a 90-minute roundtable discussion this week entitled "Nigeria after Ken Saro-Wiwa: media under siege".

Forum vice-president for international operations Chris Wells summed up the self-doubt which some US journalists expressed in private since the executions: could the Western media have done more?

Three Nigerian journalists and a human rights activist put their three US counterparts on the defence. They argued that Western media hardly reported on the growing crisis in Nigeria until the executions.

Western media all but ignored Saro-Wiwa in the year he was detained prior to the executions.

This is according to Josh Arinze and Sunny Ofili of the Lagos-based Tell magazine, Tunji Lardner of West Africa magazine, and Felix Morkak, who works with the Washington-based International Human Rights Law Group.

The Nigerians charged that by failing to focus on the crisis, the Western media effectively prevented the international public from being informed about the human rights abuses of the regimes of Gen Ibrahim Babangida and the current strongman, Gen Sani Abacha.

"With trade unions, local media and political opposition virtually destroyed, the international media has be-

come the only recourse Nigerians have," said Morka. Also, said the Nigerians, international coverage often had a restraining effect on dictatorships.

The US journalists acknowledged that their media's coverage of the Nigerian crisis had been minimal, but they insisted that it was at best doubtful that more coverage would have made much difference to Washington's policy or the repressive tendency of the Abacha regime, let alone stop the latest executions.

"Our sustained coverage of Bosnia has produced no peace agreement until now," said Paul Ghickman, Africa editor for National Public Radio - a point taken up by other American journalists. According to them, media reports of atrocities and human suffering in Bosnia failed to elicit strong policy response from the West.

"But your reports on Somalia induced action," countered Lardner.

The Nigerians' grievance appeared borne out by a re-

cent study of post-Cold War coverage of Africa by the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post.

The study, led by Furman University journalism lecturer David Gordon, showed that the US media's coverage of Nigeria and other parts of Africa, historically minimal, had been declining since the end of the Cold War.

In 1988, the four newspapers had just five major stories about Nigeria, taking up 350 column centimetres.

This dropped to three stories of only 90 column centimetres in 1993 - in the year that the ongoing political crisis took root with the annulment by the military of the presidential election.

However, according to The Star's Washington correspondent, Peter Fabricius, the solution to the Nigerian crisis lies in "Africans taking responsibility for themselves and not relying on outsiders", including the international media. - Sapa-IPS

Consternation over proposed SA role in Nigeria

(226) Mar 23/11/95

By **NORMAN CHANDLER**
Defence Correspondent

There is consternation in defence quarters over statements made by local politicians that South Africa should be in the forefront of international efforts to isolate Nigeria as a result of the recent execution of nine political opponents

South Africa at this stage is unable to take up any military role, which will almost certainly be a crucial part of a blockade and this message has been passed on to the Government by senior military officers over the past few days

They have told Cabinet ministers of the huge logistical problems which would face the nation and therefore the future of any pan-African force used in an attempt to isolate Nigeria. The cost to this country in terms of money and manpower has also been spelt out.

In the past week, President Nelson Mandela has asked President Bill Clinton to ban the purchase of oil

from Nigeria - which supplies the United States with 50% of its oil - while ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa has called for "all out sanctions" against the powerful West African state

To place a stranglehold on Nigeria would mean mounting a huge land, sea and air blockade - and that is where South Africa may just have to draw back from active participation.

The country would find it particularly difficult to participate in a naval blockade in the Gulf of Guinea, while a major international peace force would be needed to patrol thousands of kilometres of border separating Nigeria from its landward neighbours. Air blockades would be almost an impossibility given the long border the country has with Islamic countries such as Chad and Niger which, in turn, are under political and military pressure from Libya, itself a subject of international sanctions.

The key South African force needed for any blockade of Nigeria would be the navy, one of the three biggest on the African continent.

The Chief of the Navy, Vice-Admiral Robert Simpson-Anderson, has made it clear on several occasions - the last when he delivered his navy policy speech recently - that without ships, it was impossible to assist with peace enforcement duties or effectively patrol South Africa's own economic enforcement zone (EEZ), let alone help to maintain regional security or mount naval blockades

For an African state, Nigeria has a formidable naval force - at least two missile-carrying frigates, three corvettes, a clutch of fast attack craft and patrol boats as well as mine-hunters

The rest of Africa, apart from Egypt and Libya, will be unable to muster much to face them. The other 16 African navies (including our own) can put into action three age-

ing submarines, a number of fast attack craft, the odd corvette, a frigate, and small to medium-sized coastal patrol boats. In the case of Mauritania, there is doubt over whether her light patrol boats are even operational.

South Africa also does not have the maritime air support needed to lend support to the navy, even in our own waters.

In terms of the army, the Chief of the SA National Defence Force, General Georg Mering, recently told diplomats that while South Africa was training its troops to possibly participate in United Nations peace enforcement operations on the continent, the problem of logistics was uppermost in his mind.

This scenario is one of the reasons why South Africa's defence establishment is waiting keenly for policy statements from the politicians.

They hope the order to join in a blockade will never be given.

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela and Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe are to meet today to discuss a plan for an African summit on Nigeria.

They are to meet at Beit Bridge following Mr Mandela's spearheading of a campaign against the Nigerian military regime for its execution of nine human rights activists

The talks are expected to last about two hours.

Senior officials said a simultaneous effort was under way at the United Nations in New York to reach agreement among African countries on a resolution condemning the Nigerian executions

They said the talks at Beit Bridge are expected to focus on Mr Mandela's call for a summit of African leaders to discuss options for action against Nigeria

Mr Mandela is said to favour an African summit as soon as the end of this month or early in December.

Mr Mugabe is known to be among leaders who support some form of sanctions against Nigeria

Meanwhile Nigeria has started a campaign to defuse international anger over the hanging of the activists and accused President Mandela of seeking to hurt its economy, reports Reuter from Abuja.

Foreign Minister Tom Ikimi told heads of diplomatic missions of more than 30 countries that Nigeria did not deserve the isolation and sanctions imposed on it over the execution of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight associates.

Mr Ikimi criticised Mr Mandela, who failed in his softly-softly approach in seeking reprieve for Mr Saro-Wiwa and the others and is now leading a campaign for an international embargo on Nigeria's crude oil, its main export

"We held Mr Mandela in high esteem but our experience in recent times has shown that he is working against Nigeria," Mr Ikimi said, adding, "His hope is to inflict damage on Nigeria's economy"

● Shell South Africa placed full-page advertisements in the South African press today, defending its human rights record in Nigeria

"Shell denies any collusion with the Nigerian military," the advertisement said.

It was untrue that "occupying forces" in Nigeria's Ogoniland were there at the request of Shell, it added.

"Shell sympathises with many of the grievances felt by the people of the oil producing areas, and has argued for an increase in the proportion of oil revenues going to these communities"

Summit call on Nigeria

□ *Mandela and Mugabe set for Beit Bridge talks*

Political Correspondent

ARL 24/11/95

(226)

Abacha hits back at his detractors

(226) *Sametay 24/11/95*
ABUJA — Nigeria's military ruler General Sani Abacha has expressed outrage at the Commonwealth's two-year deadline for returning the country to civilian rule and repeated his determination to ignore it

"It is an insult for our nation to be told to review our transition programme, which has been praised by Nigerians. We will not allow ourselves to be dictated to by outsiders who know very little about us," Abacha told a conference in the capital yesterday.

Abacha's two-year-old government is facing international isolation for its execution on November 10 of nine activists. The hangings prompted the Commonwealth to suspend Nigeria. More than a dozen countries withdrew their ambassadors.

As part of its effort to maintain an appearance of national unity against the global condemnation, the government convened a meeting on Wednesday of more than 1 000 people, including prominent traditional chiefs, to discuss how to respond to critics.

Abacha made clear Nigeria's future policy towards other African countries would reflect his anger towards critics. Noting Nigerian support for other African countries in the past, Abacha said "These same nations are conniving with people from outside the continent to embarrass us." This was a reference to South Africa, where President Nelson Mandela has urged international oil sanctions against Nigeria.

During the apartheid years, Nigeria was a strong supporter of Mandela's African National Congress. A pro-government political group, Concerned Nigeria, now is urging Abacha to cut diplomatic ties with South Africa and to withdraw assistance to other African states —
Sapa-AP

MILITARY RULER URGED TO CUT TIES WITH SA

Abacha to 'show his anger'

ABUJA: Nigeria's future policy toward other African countries would reflect his anger toward critics, says Nigeria's military ruler, General Sani Abacha.

NIGERIA'S military ruler, General Sani Abacha, expressed outrage at the Commonwealth's two-year deadline for returning the country to civilian rule and repeated his determination to ignore it.

"It is an insult for our nation to be told to review our transition programme, which has been praised by Nigerians," he said. "We would not allow ourselves to be dictated to by outsiders who know very little about us," he told a conference in the capital on Wednesday.

Gen Abacha's two-year-old government is facing international

isolation for its execution on November 10 of nine dissidents, including prominent playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa. The hangings prompted the Commonwealth to suspend Nigeria. More than a dozen countries withdrew their ambassadors.

Commonwealth leaders said Nigeria faced expulsion unless Gen Abacha returned the country to democracy in two years. Gen Abacha earlier this year announced a three-year transition plan that would leave him in power until October 1998.

As part of its effort to maintain an appearance of national unity

against the global condemnation, the government convened a meeting on Wednesday of more than 1,000 people, including prominent traditional chiefs, to discuss how to respond to critics.

A 33-member task force of traditional rulers was set up to advise the government, and Gen Abacha promised to take its views into consideration. The task force's credibility was immediately called into question, however, with the announcement that it would be headed not by a traditional leader but by Lieut-General Jeremiah Useni, a senior member of Gen Abacha's ruling council.

In his speech Gen Abacha said Nigeria's future policy toward other African countries would reflect his anger toward critics.

Noting Nigerian support for

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other African countries in the past, he said "These same nations are conniving with people from outside the continent to embarrass us." This was a reference to South Africa, where President Nelson Mandela has urged international sanctions against Nigerian oil.

During the apartheid years Nigeria was a strong backer of the ANC. A pro-government political group, Concerned Nigeria, is now urging Gen Abacha to cut diplomatic ties with SA and withdraw assistance to other African states.

That would hurt Nigeria's West African neighbours, such as Liberia and Sierra Leone.

As Gen Abacha spoke, his UN ambassador was in New York trying to head off a possible condemnation from the Security Council.

Sapa-AP

FOREIGN POLICY

No time for moral trumpeting

SA's quiet diplomacy has palpably failed in Nigeria. Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight fellow Ogoni activists have been hanged, in defiance of Nelson Mandela's wishes and to chorused indignation of many countries throughout the world. But in their anger at the "betrayal" of Nigerian military ruler Sani Abacha, SA policymakers, from Nelson Mandela downward, should be careful not to overreact. The signs so far are not auspicious.

Mandela, reportedly conceding that he felt slighted by Abacha's refusal to heed requests to spare the dissidents, is now spearheading a campaign for tough action against Nigeria's military junta. He has urged the UK and the US to take the lead in imposing oil sanctions on Nigeria.

ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa has adopted an equally tough stance in a series of statements since the hangings. "None of us must ever tolerate the abuse of human rights anywhere in the world," he has said. "On our side in SA, we are advocating . . . all-out sanctions against Nigeria." Ramaphosa simultaneously targeted Shell for criticism, citing its "disgusting" refusal to look at the issue of human rights in Nigeria.

Mandela has been ill-served by the Department of Foreign Affairs and his dozy Foreign Minister, Alfred Nzo. A shake-up of the department and the replacement of the soporific Nzo by a more dynamic man — Pallo Jordan comes to mind — would be in order. But, for a range of cogent reasons, Mandela would be ill-advised to press ahead with a moral crusade.

Pre-eminent among them is the risk that the policy may be counterproductive. Instead of dislodging Abacha, it may entrench his junta in power. Already there are signs that the Nigerian military regime is seeking to turn SA's righteous indignation to its advantage. SA has been accused, through an advertisement in the Zimbabwe newspaper *The Herald*, of interfering in Nigerian internal affairs. More to the point, in terms of effectiveness, has been the allegation that SA has seized the opportunity to attack Nigeria because it covets the anticipated permanent African seat on an expanded UN Security Council. This may rally a segment of Nigerian opinion-makers to Abacha's side. But, worse still, it may win African countries to Nigeria's side by playing on envy of SA.



Those who call for sanctions should remember that they seldom work as intended. They may not have the desired effect of toppling the Abacha regime. They may hurt the poor rather than humble the mighty, as, arguably, was the case in SA. As *The Economist* has pertinently observed: "Sanctions are a blunt weapon. They have failed to dislodge Saddam Hussein in Iraq."

Concerted indignation by SA's new political establishment strikes a discordant note, not because the Abacha regime has any commending features but because SA seems happy to hold hands, diplomatically speaking, with a host of morally dubious governments.

Ironically, Mandela's condemnation of Nigeria coincides with his renewed call for full diplomatic ties with Beijing, where soldiers, acting on the orders of the communist regime, massacred pro-democracy students at the time that democrats succeeded in claiming their rights against communist governments in eastern Europe and the former USSR. Mandela's condemnation of Nigeria stands in contrast with his silence — which Portugal's Mario Soares has urged him to break — on Indonesian oppression in East Timor.

Ramaphosa asserts that SA must not tolerate human rights abuses anywhere. He seems oblivious of SA friendship with a range of countries where human rights are abrogated. One is Algeria, where an election was aborted because early returns pointed to victory by the opposition Islamic Salvation Front and where an estimated 10 000 people have been killed since a state of emergency was imposed in 1992. Another is Cuba, where, according to *Amnesty International*, there are at least 500 prisoners of conscience.

One wonders, too, whether Ramaphosa is conscious of the irony implicit in his support for Ogoni activists, one of whose major aims was self-determination for the Ogoni people. Talk of Zulu self-determination at home is not well received by the ANC.

Mandela has sought to be a peacemaker in southern Africa, a role which he fulfilled with some success in Angola, Mozambique and Lesotho. He should seek to do the same in Nigeria. That does not imply effete diplomacy or moral condonation. It means steady, unrelenting, behind-the-scenes pressure on Nigeria to restore democracy. It is a more challenging role than that of a moral trumpeter. ■

X SA man holds key to UN moves

By MIKE LITTLEJOHN
Star Foreign Service

New York - How the United Nations will respond to the hangings of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Nigerians will depend largely on consultations to be conducted by South Africa's delegate.

A packed meeting of the African representatives in the UN agreed that Khuphusizi Jele, the SA delegate, who is also their chairman, should negotiate the terms of a resolution.

Since the matter is not related to international peace and security, the General Assembly, not the Security Council, is dealing with the issue.

The Assembly's social committee will consider whether to condemn, deplore or take stronger measures against Nigeria, whose neighbours have voiced fears that sanctions might destabilise not only Nigeria, but the entire region.

4
Mandela's office hits out at 'back-against-the-wall' Abacha

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South Africa hit back at Gen Sani Abacha yesterday, after the Nigerian military ruler asserted that President Nelson Mandela "knows nothing" about diplomacy.

"He had his back against the wall so he is expected to say all sorts of outrageous things," said Parks Mankahlana, a spokesman for Mandela.

Gen Abacha made the statement on Wednesday after South African criticism of the recent execution of nine Nigerian dissidents.

"Probably, being incarcerated for decades, he knows nothing about modern world diplomacy," Abacha told a delegation of traditional Nigerian leaders, who had travelled to the federal capital of Abuja in a show of support for the Nigerian military junta.

Agence France Presse had earlier reported that the chiefs were South

African, and this was published in one edition of The Star yesterday but then dropped when AFP corrected the mistake after an inquiry by this newspaper.

Nigeria believes Mandela has betrayed it, by leading an international campaign to press for an oil embargo against the country in reprisal for the junta's execution of minority rights activists on November 10, including the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa.

Mandela will continue the campaign today when he meets Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe in a bid to put further pressure on Nigeria's rulers, Mankahlana said.

Mandela also asked Botswanan President Ketumile Masire, leader of the 12-nation South African Development Co-ordination Conference, to hold a summit to discuss the Nigerian problem shortly - Sapa-AFP

Corrupt, unjust ... not us, says Abacha

Chris McGreal in Abuja

NIGERIA'S military leader, General Sani Abacha, marked the second anniversary of his coup last weekend by dismissing international outrage at the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, and vowing that foreign pressure to democratise would not affect his plan to stay in power for another three years.

Appearing in what would have been the parliament building if the military had not annulled elections two years ago, Abacha made a rare speech launching a campaign to clean up his country's image abroad and a financial

appeal for the Sani Abacha Foundation to promote Peace, Unity and the Brotherhood of Man.

"Ken Saro-Wiwa is being hailed as a hero, as a pro-democracy activist and an environmental campaigner, whereas it is no secret that 60 percent of oil spillages in Ogoniland are attributable to sabotage at his behest," Abacha said to polite applause from an invited audience of military leaders, traditional rulers and few remaining foreign diplomats.

Abacha vigorously defended "the due judicial process when those accused of gruesome murders in Ogoniland were tried and convicted".

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He dismissed claims that he was behind the imprisonment of Moshood Abiola, the winner of the annulled 1993 election who was jailed for declaring himself president. There are no political prisoners in Nigeria, the general said.

But Abacha conceded that now, more than ever, Nigeria needed to improve its image.

"Regrettably, our nation is currently facing some of the most misinformed, baseless and foul criticism from the international community. This administration has been unjustly and persistently criticised and persecuted over human rights, freedom of expression and democratisation. It is this that cul-

minated in our ill-conceived suspension from the Commonwealth and the unwarranted clamour for sanctions against us."

Then the military leader struck out his hand and asked for money. Some of his guests were a little surprised at this sudden demand for cash. But that did not deter a stream of politicians, religious leaders and cabinet ministers from competing to push up the pledges.

Within the hour, more than \$1.5-million (R8.5-million) had been pledged to promote the image clean-up and establish the "Abacha Foundation for Peace and Unity" — *The Guardian*

'There is only one Ken Saro-Wiwa

MHG 24-30/11/95 (226)

John Vidal discovers why Ken Wiwa wants to escape his father's legacy and regain his innocence

ON the sixth floor of the European parliament in Strasbourg, Ken Wiwa (the name by which he prefers to be known) waits for United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali

He looks young, alone and askance at events, stunned as much by the political forces that have been unleashed by his father's death as by the scrum of global concern. He is grieving, yet deeply aware there has been no time to mourn his father, nor come to terms with this most public of deaths. The twin strains of family tragedy and being the centre of public attention shows.

A small, shrivelled, man approaches Boutros-Ghali holds out his hand. Another important door opens for the Ogoni — and Ken, now composed and focused, gets 10 minutes to plead his father's case for the Ogoni, for human rights, for the world to step in to pull down the Abacha regime.

"This is a nightmare," he says. "The whole thing is maximum manipulation. I have to play their game for now. It's regrettable."

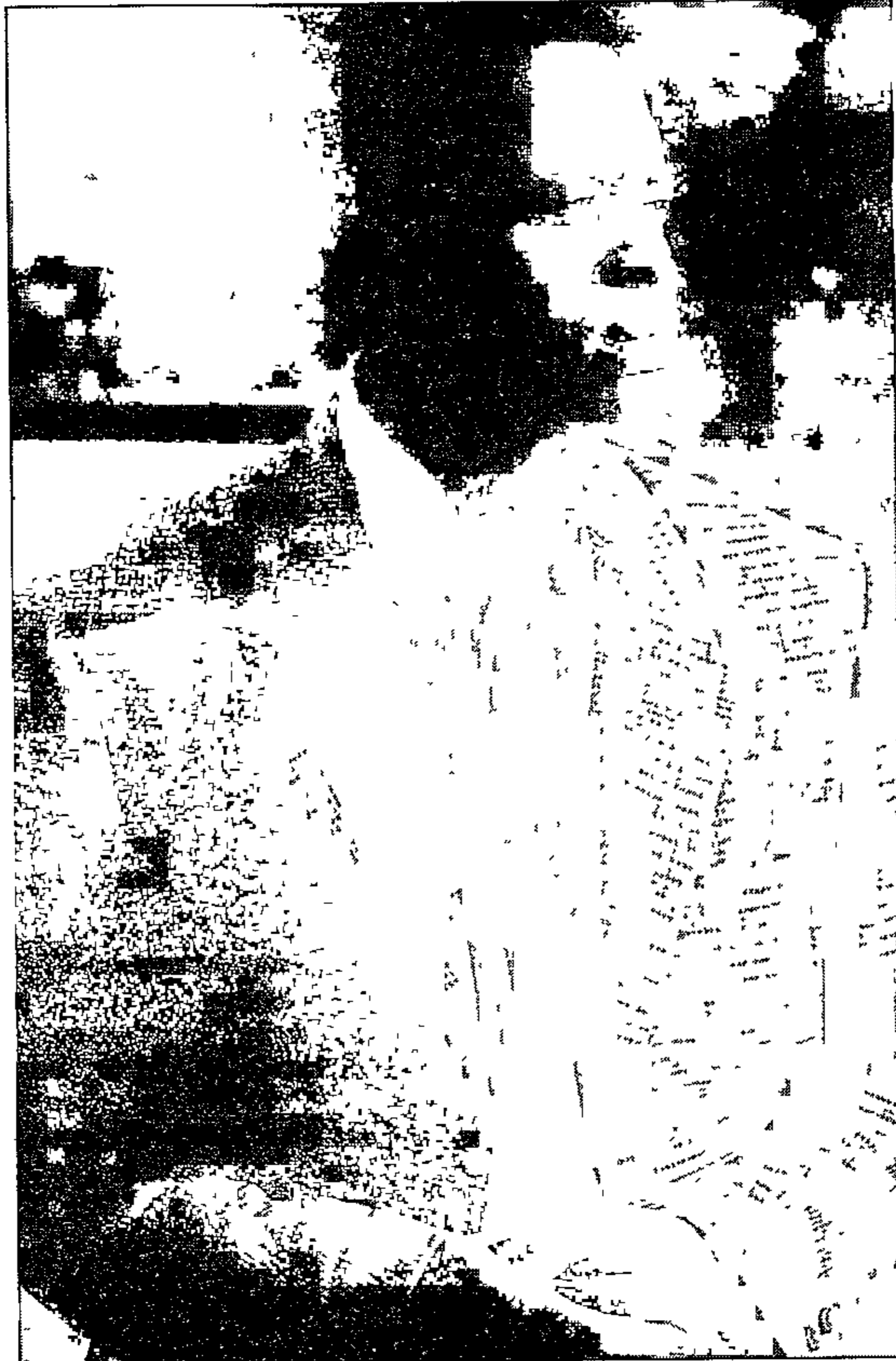
To die for a cause, as Ken senior did for the Ogoni people, has a heroic ring. But to bear, as Ken junior must, the name of a man around whom the myths are already growing, and be expected to take on the martyr's mantle is heavy. And to fight day in and out for your father's life, to give up in effect your own life for a father who, almost until his death, has dominated you and whom you have opposed at every turn, has a mythic, biblical ring.

Since Ken senior was arrested in 1993 for involvement in the murder of four Ogoni chiefs, his son (26) has travelled the world spreading his father's word about the Ogoni, Shell and Nigerian human rights abuses.

Mostly it's been duty, what any son would do for a father.

He knows he failed to save his father's life and that hurts, but in his death may have come his son's own deliverance and success. The name Saro-Wiwa is now global currency. One of the world's largest companies is on the rack, the Ogoni are on the map and the international ramifications are still unfolding. "It's what my father would have wanted," he says.

In another sense, though, Ken has made his father's name. Saro-Wiwa was a good, if second-division politician, a fine writer, broadcaster, a successful trader of foods and foreign



Ken Wiwa: 'I am not my father, it's not my cause'

PHOTOGRAPH ROSE SMITH

exchange dealer

Only when he turned his energies to fighting Shell and the Nigerian government did he play the larger stage — and he might have remained all but unknown outside Nigeria but for his son's efforts to save him.

There is dreadful irony here. For years, Ken junior has longed only to be himself, to make his own name and to break away from a dominating, remote father who invaded every aspect of his life.

The father-son relationship was complex and difficult from the start. The family lived between Port Harcourt and London, and Ken hardly saw him. "He was never around, always travelling and doing things." It didn't seem to matter, then. General Abacha's family lived close by. Ken would play with the future dictator's children, fishing together in one of the tributaries of the Niger. "It was idyllic. Everything was in abundance. We were oblivious to politics. I remember

Abacha coming to the house. He was the quiet one."

Father and son were both called Kenule because both were born in war. His full name, Kenule Bornale Tsaro-Wiwa, literally means "where there is strife — there is no fear — first son of Wiwa." "But he named me Ken. He wanted me to be in his image. He wanted me to emulate him. He always had the idea that he would pass his struggle on to me. He always had strong opinions about what I should do. I always rebelled. He was trying to mould me into something. He put me in a straitjacket. I was trying not to fit."

Ken tried to give the impression he wasn't interested in his father's work in Ogoniland but secretly he read his books. He took on his father's role, too, practically acting as father for his younger twin sisters and brother. Meanwhile, he was sent to Tonbridge where he excelled as a cricketer and rugby player. He scored centuries and wanted to turn pro. His father hated

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the idea. Ken wanted to be a sports journalist but his father disapproved. The Guardian gave him a bursary to study journalism. His father was pleased. But then his father was sent to prison and Ken's life went on hold.

Under mounting pressure from him, via letters smuggled out, Ken junior was sucked away from the normal life he was trying to establish and found himself, once again, on his father's worthy back.

"It was always a battle to establish myself. I never wanted to use his contacts. It would have been to negate myself. I had to be an individual. But then when he went to prison I had to tear up the script. In the end, I alone decided to campaign for him. It was my decision."

But while the world hails his father's name, Ken plays it down. "Father is not a saint even if people want him to be. But he did die for his principles and no one can forget that. Here is a guy who could have had a comfortable life anywhere in the world, yet he chose to go to the most dangerous place.

"He knew the regime. He knew them personally and he knew that they were going to kill him. I think he knew that the best thing that he could do was to die as a martyr. I thought it was bravado, but having read his letters to me again, I can see that it was more. He was prepared to die. He dedicated himself to the cause. Once he had done that, he just went for it. It's eerie, but in death he achieved everything that was possible for the Ogoni. Now I'll never get away from him."

But he must. The world, he says, wants pieces of him and his personal tragedy, but he refuses to be the only spokesman for the Ogoni, and says that no one should assume that as one Ken Saro-Wiwa dies another one has come along. "Father said that I would not inherit his enemies. I am not my father, it's not my cause. It will run and run but nothing I say will change anything. This is the final act."

He recognises he may be linked forever with his father's cause, but it's not his in the same way. There are lessons to be learned from the tragedy, by everyone from Shell to the international community, he says, but he does not think that he should be the one to teach them. "Everyone has seen what happens when people do not act.

"The consensus is that the only thing that will work is an oil embargo. I'm not keen to march to the top of the hill. All I have done is try to save my father's life. I'm just my father's son, not a spokesman for anyone. There's only one Ken Saro-Wiwa and it's not me."

"There are plenty of capable, talented people who fight for Nigeria better than I could," he says. "We must listen to them." — *The Guardian*

Loud silence as leaders ponder Nigeria problem

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The government has retreated behind a wall of silence to wrestle with the Nigerian issue, writes **Gaye Davis**

FEARS of ruffling the feathers of African leaders and of being seen as acting as an agent of western governments abrogating their own moral responsibility dominated top-level government talks on the Nigerian situation this week

Led by President Nelson Mandela, the consultations — involving Foreign Affairs Minister Alfred Nzo, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and senior foreign affairs and ANC officials — took place behind a wall of official silence

Foreign Affairs spokesperson Clara Kiesewetter said on Wednesday a statement would be issued only once the discussions were concluded "They've decided that until consultations are finished they will not be pressurised by the media to give further news," she said

Sources close to the talks said Mandela was consulting widely, particularly with southern African countries, in an attempt to bring them on board. They described the government's dilemma as two-fold. It had to steer a morally correct course, yet it was clear Mandela's strong lead in denouncing the Nigerian junta and calling for sanctions had already pitched South Africa way ahead of the position of any other African government. This, they said, could upset delicate political balances and compromise future interventions in Africa.

The second horn of the dilemma was a perception that South Africa had been "set up" by Britain and the United States to take the lead on Nigeria, allowing them to avoid taking any significant action themselves when their political and economic clout put them in a better position to do so.

"Traditionally, African countries close ranks when one of their number comes under attack from the West," a source said. "We are the only African country that has come out strongly against Nigeria and we could alienate people because of the stand we are taking."

Said another source "It's a cau-

tion similar to the restraint shown in responding to calls to send South African troops to Rwanda, which is in danger of becoming a new version of the former government which trampled over the region in pursuit of narrow national interests."

Efforts were focused on maintaining pressure on western governments, especially Britain and the United States, to take action that went further than United Nations General Assembly resolutions of condemnation. Foreign observers, however, said while western governments appeared open to hearing Mandela's arguments in favour of oil sanctions, they detected no headlong rush down this road on the part of either Britain or the United States, who had experienced their limited effect when used against Iraq, Iran and Libya.

Opposition politicians are now gearing for next week's meeting of Parliament's portfolio committee on foreign affairs, saying hard questions will be asked.

Indications this week were that ANC MPs would refrain from publicly criticising an ANC minister. MPs privately conceded that concerns about the management of the foreign affairs portfolio had been repeatedly raised in the ANC caucus but said a Cabinet reshuffle was extremely unlikely at this stage.

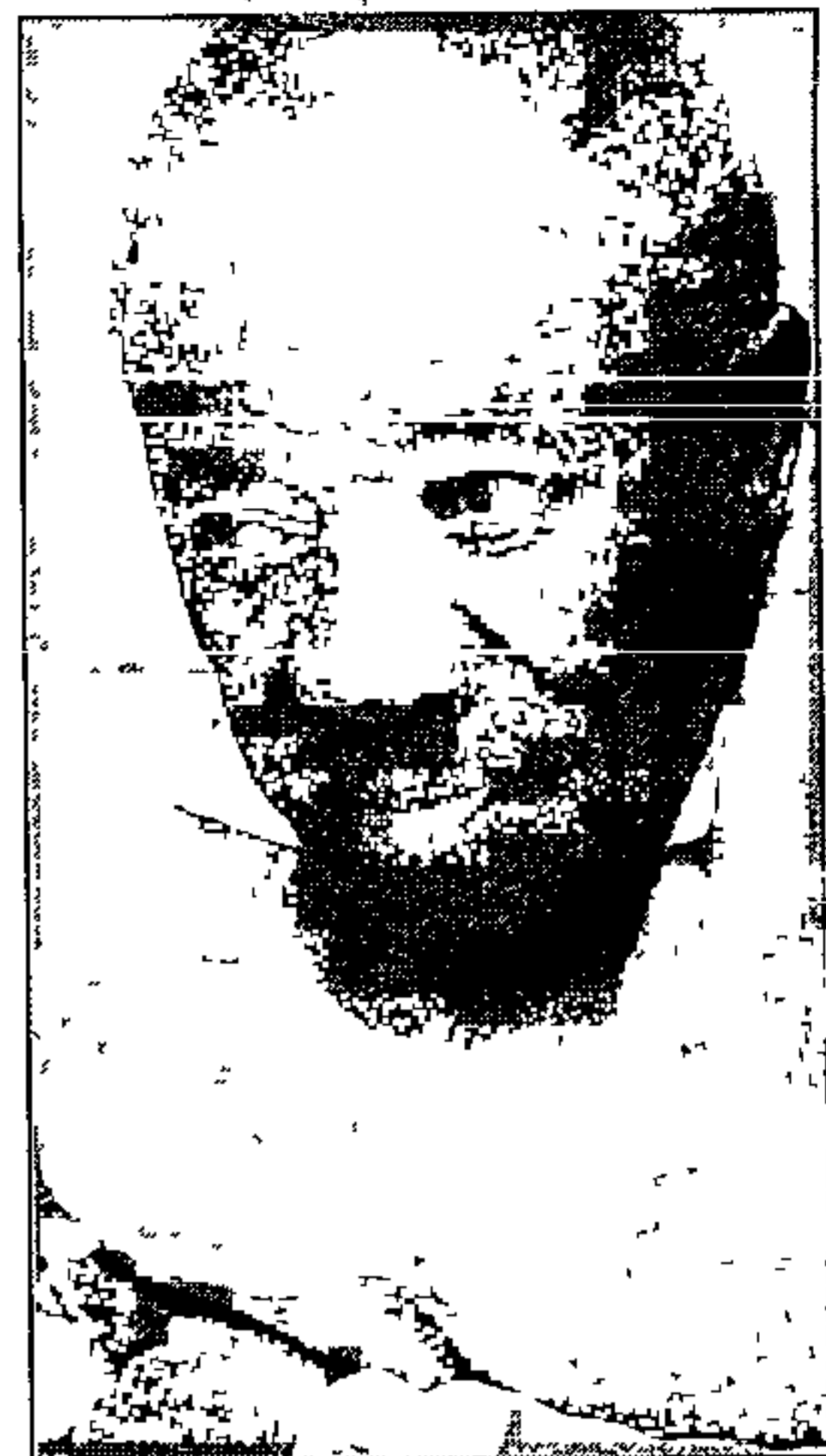
Said a cynical backbencher "The culture is no-one gets fired — especially when newspapers are calling for the minister's head".

Democratic Party foreign affairs spokesman Colin Eglin said his party would push for a review of foreign policy formulation using Nigeria as a case-study of how the process had broken down.

He echoed ANC MPs when he said the portfolio committee and "the wider interested public" should play a role in making foreign policy and that a mechanism for this be speedily created.

"Three issues will have to be addressed: what happened, what should be done to remedy the structural defects in foreign policy making and what should be done in the case of Nigeria," Eglin said.

Political observers see the committee's response as a crucial test of the separation of powers in the new government. The two-day meeting will be the first time that the public's representatives hear first-hand from



Under fire: Foreign Affairs Minister Alfred Nzo

the ministry about its Nigerian policy; an August request for a briefing was refused.

The ANC national executive committee's sub-committee on international affairs will be briefed on Nigeria when it meets today. Also on the agenda is the "re-tuning" of the ANC's own foreign policy and a close scrutiny of the form and function of the ANC's own department of international affairs. A shadow foreign affairs ministry during the days of exile, it is now seen by many as little more than a sub-department of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Chairperson Blade Nzimande said the meeting would give flesh to resolutions taken at the ANC's national conference last December pledging continued contact and solidarity with countries, often former anti-apartheid allies, still fighting for their own freedom. A report would be given to the NEC for discussion when it meets on December 8, he said.

The politburo of the South African Communist Party last week took the position that government's contact with the Nigerian regime should have been backed by contact with opposition groupings. Politburo member Jeremy Cronin said, "It reflects a need for all of us in the ANC to realise that foreign policy is effected at different levels and that the ANC in its own right has an important role to play."

The party, whose central committee meets this weekend, said it was unfair to blame Mandela for the executions and criticised western governments for not taking a stronger line, as did the ANC.

ANC secretary general Cheryl Carolus said the ANC was "outraged" by attempts to shift moral responsibility (for the Nigerian crisis) on to South Africa's and particularly Mandela's shoulders.

"We are disgusted by the moral cowardice displayed by Britain and the United States, countries with far more political and economic clout than South Africa." They should stop "twiddling their thumbs" and using Mandela as a "red herring" to draw attention from the role they should be playing.



Issues to be addressed: DP foreign affairs spokesman Colin Eglin

Angry Ogonis depend on world for support

(226) (252) ARG 25/11/95

ABUJA — An uneasy calm, suppressed anger and subdued tension are felt throughout the length and breadth of Ogoniland in the aftermath of the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight fellow activists

Markets, schools and businesses are thick with anger and tension.

And the Ogoni nightmare may not be over. In January, another 21 Ogoni activists will appear before the Ogoni Civil Disturbances Tribunal on charges of murder. For the Ogoni people, and most Nigerians, the continued existence of the tribunal is a daily terror.

But a soothing balm for their bruised psyches is the reaction of the international communi-

ty. In hushed tones, the people gather to discuss the knocks inflicted on Nigeria, but not before they conduct a thorough check for "listening" government ears. The average Nigerian, particularly the Ogonis, are jubilant about the decisions taken by the Commonwealth, European Union and many African and Western nations to impose sanctions on their country.

The military regime has countered this by sponsoring pro-government rallies in which public servants, prostitutes, market women and vagrants carry placards denouncing the international community's action — Independent Foreign Service

Call for oil boycott missguided, says Shell

MXOLISI MGXASHE
Staff Reporter

A TOP executive of Shell's operations in South Africa has described as "unfair and misguided" calls for the boycott of the oil company's products as punishment following the execution by the military rulers of nine Nigerian human rights activists.

Koosum Kalyan, general manager responsible for corporate affairs, said Shell was one of several oil companies operating in Nigeria and the giant oil company was doing more than any other single organisation in its wide involvement in community development efforts in the Niger Delta, as well as in ensuring that the environment was protected.

She said that if Shell pulled out, as some people had proposed, it would not have solved the political crisis in Nigeria where the company had been engaging in quiet diplomacy and dialogue with all the parties involved in the conflict — in keeping with its global commitments.

"It is really not for us to prop up or overthrow governments, no matter how much we may feel subjectively about their policies and actions. That is the task of the people in those countries."

"In the case of Nigeria, can we really point out any particular movement and say it is the liberation movement? I doubt, in the face of the apparent differences existing among the people resisting General Abacha's rule. Some want Shell to get out and others say we must stay," said Ms Kalyan.

Ms Kalyan has been kept busy since the execution of the nine human rights activists by the Nigerian military junta two weeks ago, explaining Shell's

APR 25/11/95

(226)

■ Shell is one of several oil companies operating in Nigeria and the giant oil company says it is doing more than any other single organisation in community development efforts in the Niger Delta, as well as ensuring that the environment is protected.

case in response to local human rights groups pressures and worldwide condemnation of the company's stance on the issue.

This week she briefed President Mandela in a meeting attended also by Cosatu secretary-general Sam Shilowa in defence of Shell's public image.

Ms Kalyan said most of her attempts to update the media by feeding it with fact sheets on Shell's role and policy in that country had been ignored by the media. She has had to take full-page adverts in more than 20 South African newspapers.

The ads explain Shell's attempts to stop General Sani Abacha's government from hanging the nine activists.

"Shell believes that communication of the sentences would have helped to foster reconciliation in Ogoniland," says one of the adverts.

Ms Kalyan is going back to Gauteng next week to hold discussions with the various human rights organisations of proposals for a plan to bring about change in Nigeria through dialogue.

"That is all we can do for now. But we will definitely consider pulling out if the UN passes a resolution to that effect," she said.

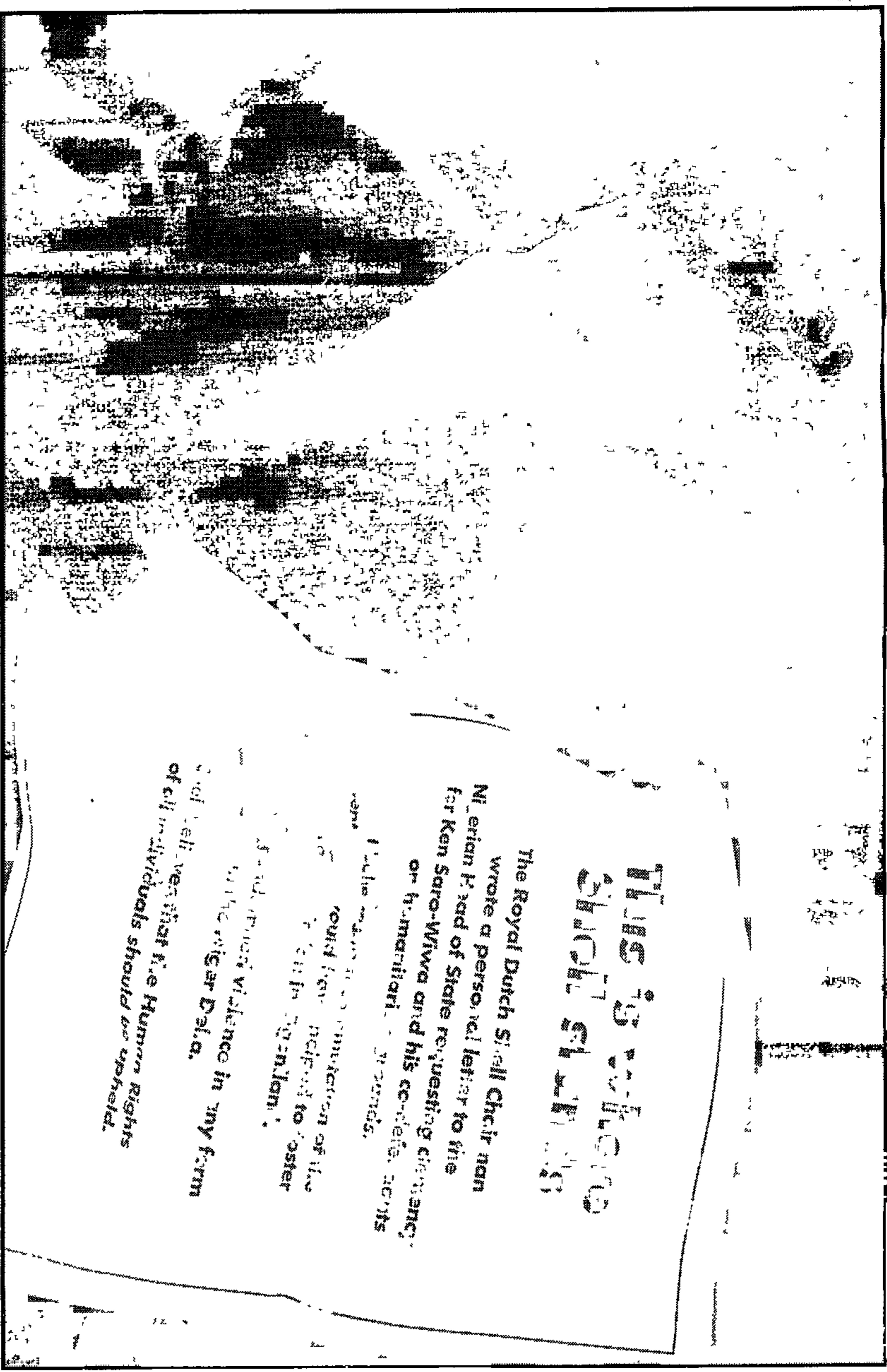
But pressure groups who have emerged lately in the country are very vocal on abuse of human rights in some parts of Africa, including Nigeria, and feel Shell is only interested in its profits and not in human rights as it claims. What has angered people involved in the latest protests is Shell's record in South Africa itself where the oil company refused to disinvest when some major multinationals pulled out.

Addressing a Press conference in London recently, ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa expressed his organisation's anger with Shell's determination to go ahead with a R12-billion oil development scheme in Nigeria in spite of worldwide condemnation of the recent executions.

Mr Ramaphosa called Shell's conduct "arrogant, defiant and inexcusable." He said Shell was talking about the interests of the people and yet had a "total disregard for the environment."

Ms Kalyan said she sympathised with all these views, especially that they expressed deep concern for human rights and environmental issues, which Shell had tried to respect and even highlight in all its dealings with governments and countries. It was a role Shell had to be very cautious in playing lest it be seen as interfering in the internal affairs of these countries.

"We had a consultative business movement here during the apartheid days and it had quite a lot of dialogue with the government on what needed to be done to achieve peace, progress and growth in the country. Maybe we need that too in Nigeria."



UNFAIR: Shell (South Africa) general manager for corporate affairs Koosum Kalyan says calls for a boycott of Shell's products is unfair and misguided.

Picture: LEON MULLER, Staff Photographer

THIS IS WHAT SHE SHOULD SAY

The Royal Dutch Shell Chairman wrote a personal letter to the Nigerian Head of State requesting clemency for Ken Saro-Wiwa and his co-defendants or humanitarian grounds.

...round for help to foster ... in Ogoniland.

... violence in my firm ... Niger Delta.

of oil individuals should be upheld.

Ogonis angry in aftermath of hangings

Star 25/11/95

(226)

Abuja - An uneasy calm, suppressed anger and subdued tension are felt throughout the length and breadth of Ogoniland in the aftermath of the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his compatriots

In the markets, schools and businesses, the anger and tension is thick enough to cut with a knife

And the Ogoni nightmare may not be over as another 21 Ogoni activists

will appear before the Ogoni Civil Disturbances Tribunal in January on charges of murder. For the Ogoni people, and most Nigerians, the continued existence of the tribunal is a daily terror

But a soothing balm for the bruised psyche of the Ogonis is the reaction of the international community

In hushed tones, the people gather

to discuss the knocks inflicted on Nigeria, but not before they conduct a thorough check for "listening" government ears

The average Nigerian, and in particular the Ogonis, are jubilant about the decisions taken by the Commonwealth, European Union and many African and Western nations to impose sanctions on their country - Independent Foreign Service

ANC to meet Nigerian

(226) ARCA 27/11/95

□ Bid to boost internal resistance

democrats

JOHANNESBURG. — Top African National Congress leaders will this week consider ways to speed up the restoration of democracy in Nigeria, says ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa

He said that among proposals before the ANC's national working committee were a meeting with Nigerian pro-democracy groups based in South Africa, the aim being to strengthen internal resistance to Sani Abacha's military regime.

The working committee of the coalition SA Nigeria Democracy Support Group would meet at ANC headquarters today to consider ways of pressurising General Abacha's government, Mr Mamoepa said



General Abacha

He said the ANC fully supported President Mandela's call for a strengthening of internal opposition to General Abacha

"The struggle against apartheid has taught us that the principle forces for change and development in Nigeria remain the resistance and pro-democracy movement inside that country"

The ANC urged the Nigerian opposition to critically assess the tactics it used against the government in the light of Mr Mandela's call

'Abacha sitting on volcano'

JOHANNESBURG — The extent to which President Mandela has dedicated himself to bringing down Nigeria's military ruler Sani Abacha was made clear in two short sentences here

"Abacha is sitting on a volcano," the president told Johannesburg's Sunday Independent yesterday

"And I am going to explode it underneath him"

It represented a complete

The struggle against the military government could not rest on international mobilisation

"The main thrust should be the mobilisation of all sectors within Nigeria behind the banner of democracy, peace and justice and for the isolation of the military government," said Mr Mamoepa

But it has been reported from Lagos that Nigeria has rejected criticism, voiced by Mr Mandela, of its human rights record, saying he was being used by Western countries to create instability in Africa's most populous nation.

"On the negative action of Nelson Mandela against the nation, the minister believed that Mandela was being used by Western countries to cause instability in Nigeria that could lead to a wider conflict in Africa," Nigerian state radio said, referring to comments by Minister for Special Duties Alhaji Wada Nas

Mr Mandela, criticised internationally for being too soft on Nigeria's military rulers, changed tack and has campaigned hard to isolate Nigeria since it hanged playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority rights activists on November 10

Earlier, crusading opposition lawyer Gani Fawehinmi said he supported a call by Mr Mandela on Nigerians to fight harder within the country rather than from abroad He said opposition groups lacked the courage to confront General Abacha's regime — Reuter.

about-face by Mr Mandela, who only a few weeks ago had urged the world not to push the Nigerian military regime into a corner

Mr Mandela vowed that South Africa would press ahead with its campaign for "strong actions", including oil sanctions, against Nigeria to ensure that democracy was attained in "the shortest possible time"

— The Independent, London

ANC for 'punitive' action against Shell

STAFF REPORTER

PUNITIVE measures against Shell, including a boycott of Shell products, should be investigated by the ANC's National Executive Committee, the ANC Western Cape resolved this weekend

This was one of several resolutions adopted at a meeting of the ANC Western Cape Provincial General Council held on Saturday at Good Hope College

The provincial council noted the "horrendous record" of the Nigerian military regime, its deliberate and intentional flouting of international human rights law and the recent execution of nine opposition leaders

It was resolved to support initiatives taken by the government, including the recalling of the South African high commissioner and the suspension of all diplomatic, sporting and cultural ties with Nigeria

The provincial executive committee was mandated to establish a Western Cape Nigeria support committee to link up with a national campaign

CT 27/11/95

(226)

Ogoni people 'have never had a fair share'

Mismanagement in the oil rich country leaves the majority poorer

Lowe Jan 27/11/95 (226)

By Jacques Pinto

LAGOS — NIGERIA'S OIL wealth, which has made it the fifth largest producer in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, has also been at the heart of political and social crises that have plagued the nation over the last 30 years

The execution by the military regime this month of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists who had sought a fair share of the oil bounty for their Ogoni people sparked a firestorm of international condemnation

The hangings once again thrust the petroleum industry to the forefront of Nigerian political life

Until the start of the 1970s and before it became a major oil exporter, Nigeria — Africa's most populous country — was not only self-sufficient in food but was even able to export agricultural products

Oil revenues now account for 90 percent of the country's hard currency earnings and have transformed the national economy — but at a cost

The lure of supposedly easy money quickly obtained from the oil boom triggered an exodus from rural areas to the big cities, notably the economic capital Lagos

By the year 2000, Lagos should become one of the world's 10 most heavily populated cities, where already hundreds of thousands of people are packed in and living in squalor and want

The oil-rich Niger Delta, home to Saro-Wiwa's Ogoni people, was at stake in a bloody civil war that erupted in 1967 when another group, the Ibo of eastern Nigeria, tried to break away

The fighting left a million people dead, traumatising the nation and horrifying the world

More than 30 000 Ogonis, 10 percent of their community, died in the struggle, which ended in 1970 with the surrender of the secessionists

Nigeria's massive oil earnings meanwhile failed to prevent an acute economic deterioration in recent years due principally to mismanagement and corruption

Several billion rands in state funds have reportedly gone missing, according to recent studies by experts both in Nigeria and elsewhere

In the last two years, a political crisis triggered by the cancellation of a presidential election on June 12 1993 has been exacerbated by strikes and social unrest in response to increases in fuel prices

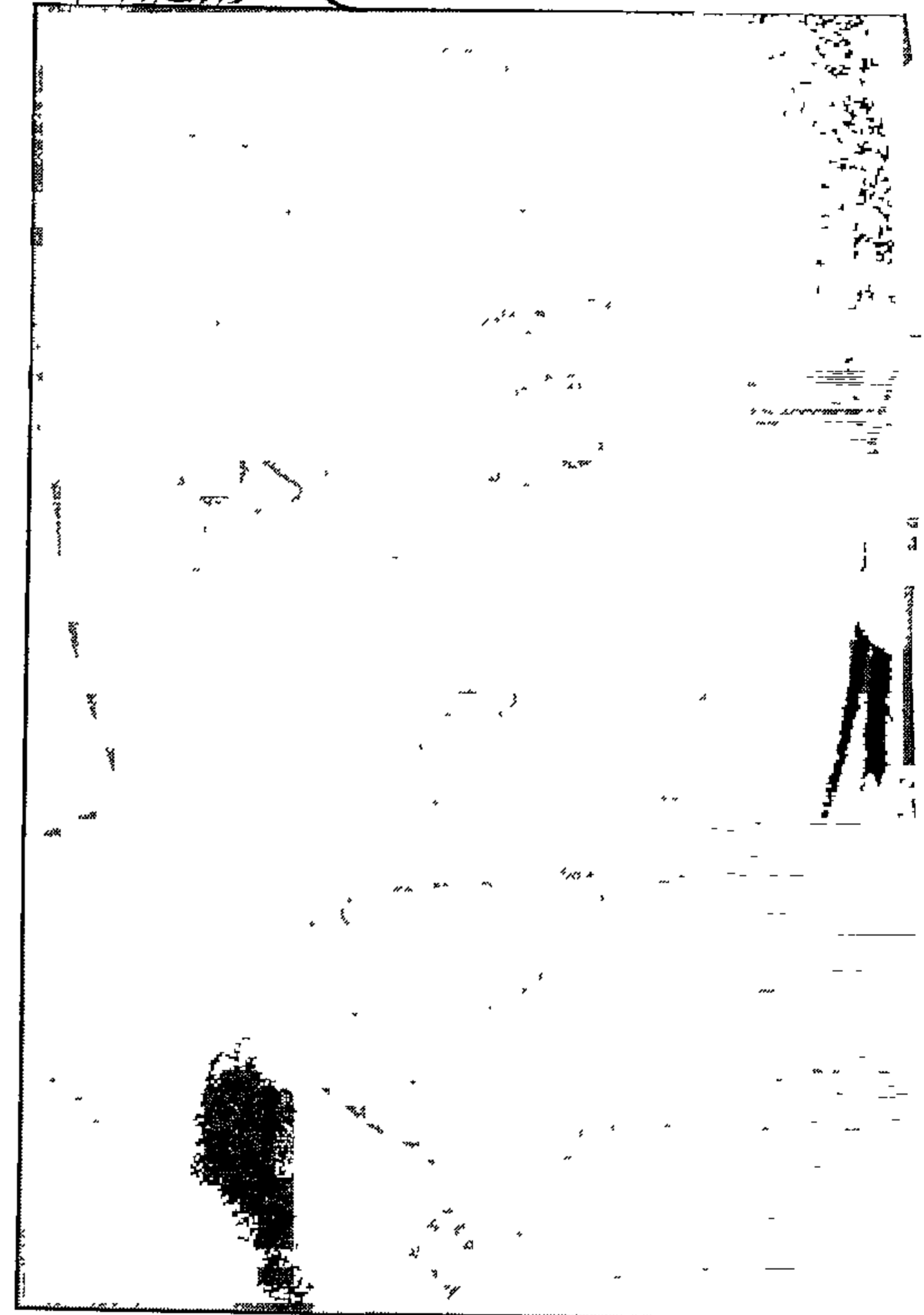
Protest demonstrations in November 1993 brought down an interim government under Ernest Shoneken, who had been installed by the former military strongman, General Ibrahim Babangida

In 1994, trade unions and opposition groups organised a strike in the oil sector aimed at driving out the military regime under General Sani Abacha, who came to power in November 1993

For two months Nigeria suffered fuel shortages that paralysed entire sectors of the economy

As part of their particular struggle, Saro-Wiwa and his partisans wanted to call attention to the misery and plight of the Ogoni people some 35 years after oil was struck on their land by foreigners

The equitable distribution of the national treasure among the different states in the Nigerian federation, an issue highlighted by the Ogoni movement, dominated debate at a constitutional conference established last year by the regime to draw up the basis for a future state which would be fully



The campaign continues ... Ken Wiwa, son of the Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, calling for action against Nigeria's military regime after his father and eight other activists were hanged.

democratic

In London this month, a spokesman for the giant Anglo-Dutch oil company Shell, which has been working in Ogoniland since 1956, said the oil company believes the Ogoni people has not received their fair share of oil revenues

from the government

The company has also gone to great lengths to distance itself from the executions of the activists including Ken Saro-Wiwa, which it has described as a strictly domestic Nigerian matter Sapa-AFP

WHO WOULD REPLACE ABACHA?

SA's Nigeria policy may be simplistic

CT 28/11/95

(226)

JOHANNESBURG: Political analysts say it is all very well to topple Nigeria's military rulers, but who will take their place and will the benefits of change outweigh those of stability?

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela would be naive to think the South African political fairy-tale could be repeated in Nigeria, political analysts say.

Mr Greg Mills, a South African Institute of International Affairs researcher, said Mr Mandela was in danger of seeing the situation in Nigeria in simplistic terms.

"It's one thing to change everything in Nigeria, but another thing to find a system to replace the one you destroy. There are a great many dangers in toppling (military ruler General Sami) Abacha without considering who or what would take his place."

Mr Mills said South African pol-

Parallels

icy should be based on a deeper analysis of what was best for Nigerians. "You have to weigh up the benefits of change against the importance of stability."

Mr Mike Hough, an analyst with the South African Institute of Strategic Studies, said the international campaign against Nigeria's military rulers had parallels with that which had helped bring down South Africa's apartheid system.

"We were pushed into democracy, to push Nigeria into an artificial democracy it is not ready for could be a mistake," he said.

To be consistent, South Africa would have to take a stand on human rights abuses everywhere. "What about other African countries that have military rulers, what about Cuba, what about China?"

● Nigeria said yesterday that Mr Mandela's stance threatened African unity.

"By his utterances, the South African leader is now clearly posing a serious threat to African unity," Nigeria's No 2, Lieutenant-General Oladipo Diya, told a news briefing.

"We hope that he will quickly retrace his steps from this course."

Officials of Nigeria's military government said the issue could split Africa as many African states had expressed solidarity with Nigeria over the onslaught it was facing over its hanging of nine activists — Reuter



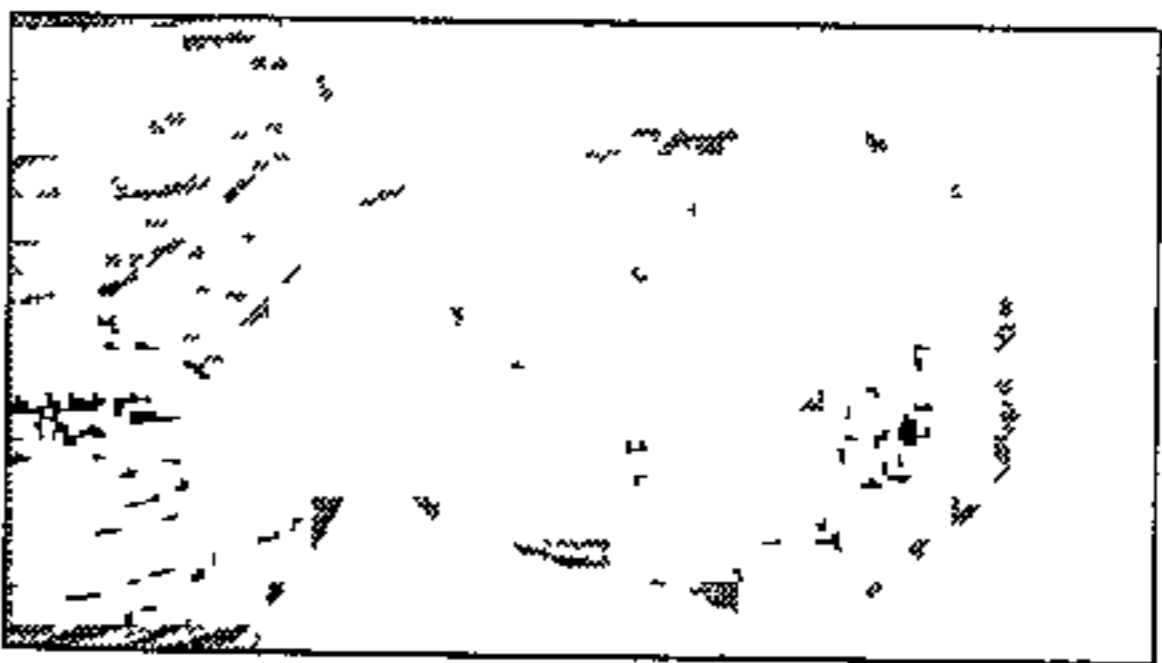
PROTEST: SA Students' Congress (Sasco) members marched to the Shell building in Cape Town yesterday to protest against Shell's continuing involvement with the Nigerian government. **PICTURE: NIC BOTHA**

Students call for boycott of Shell

THE South African Students' Congress (Sasco) called yesterday for a boycott of all Shell garages in protest against Shell's continued involvement with the Nigerian government.

About 300 Sasco members took part in a march from the Grand Parade to the Shell building, where a memorandum was handed to a Shell representative.

In its memorandum Sasco expressed its disgust at Shell's insistence on proceeding with its R14 billion gas project in Nigeria. Shell's Western Cape public affairs manager, Ms Simone Lehave, accepted the memorandum and said the company would first be reviewing it before responding — Staff Reporter



Nigerian issue gave SA the chance to take a moral lead in foreign policy

But it would be unusual for a nation to act solely for reasons of morality, writes Greg Mills

success of the nation's political blooming and the Mandela-dividend

Third, on the domestic front, South African policy toward Nigeria was seen to be vacillatory and weak at best and lagged some way behind civil society in calls for a harsher line towards General Sani Abacha and his government. Pretoria's policy of dialogue lacked direction and substance

If not properly addressed, Nigeria's difficulties threaten to spill over into West Africa and ultimately possibly even to the Southern African region, bringing refugees and associated problems

Finally, while there have been no fewer than six military governments in Nigeria in its 35 years since independence, Abacha's regime is, in the words of one senior Eastern diplomat, "especially nasty and brutish, even by Nigerian standards"

Related international criminal activities, notably in drug-running and money laundering, are a serious concern in Western capitals

While not wishing to detract from the need for firm action on Nigeria, President Mandela's move from almost passive bystander to advocate raises some interesting questions about South Africa's foreign policy

The sudden shift on Nigeria, while admittedly the direct result of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight associates, is an indication of how badly the Government of National Unity misread Abacha all along

As if the failure of the Tutu and Mbeki missions to Abuja were not enough, the visit to South Africa last August of the bombastic Nigerian Foreign Minister, Chief Tom Ikim, should at least have told Pretoria's policy pun-dits something. The Nigerian press painted a triumphant picture of the chief's visit, which was ostensibly to explain Nigeria's "reform" process

(226) *Shaw 28/11/95*

The irony that the South African Government appeared more willing to believe Abuja than Nigeria's opposition forces as to the sincerity of these reforms should not be lost. Imagine if the world had listened to Pretoria in the 1970s and 1980s?

Questions about what messages our foreign representatives are sending back to Pretoria have been raised. Did Pretoria misread its information from Abuja, or was there information to read? Also, while the president has now obviously grasped the nettle in this regard, where is the foreign ministry and minister in all of this - sidetracked or sidelined?

Cyril Ramaphosa is today active in the call for a Shell boycott, an unusual position for the head of the Constitutional Assembly. Is South Africa doing the right thing over Nigeria? This is the most difficult question of all to answer. Moral considerations aside, this re-

resident Mandela's high-profile stance on Nigeria has been paraded as something of a watershed for South Africa's foreign policy and relations. It is seen as the moment South Africa finally stuck its diplomatic head out beyond the parapet, taking the African lead in a manner vastly different from its previously cautious - some would say over-cautious - foreign role

South Africa's new-found assertiveness is necessary for a number of reasons. First, if South Africa did not offer the lead on what is essentially an African issue, then it is unlikely that the West, particularly sensitive as it is to accusations of racism and neo-imperialism, and mindful too, of substantial economic interests, would do so

Second, in this regard South Africa carries with it a certain moral authority in international relations, a factor born both out of the ongoing

lates to whether our action is in our national interest and also what is ultimately and most importantly, in Nigeria's best interests

The broader picture, however, presumes a different responsibility towards Nigerians, and stresses the moral imperatives of engagement. But the efficacy of South Africa's new-found foreign policy is most difficult to ascertain. Yes, call for sanctions and remove Abacha. But replace the diminutive generalissimo with what or whom? Should this be Chief Moshood, Abiola, a man whose origins of financial wealth are as unclear as those of Abacha and his henchmen?

A creative and systematic foreign policy will be one that not only effects change in Nigeria, but also sets in place and consolidates structures to provide legitimate, good governance - Independent News Service

Dr Greg Mills is director of studies at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg. He writes in his personal capacity.

Nigerians seek safety behind iron bars

By ADE OBISESAN

Lagos

Nov 28/11/98
Nigerians living in Lagos, the nation's commercial capital, and many other major cities are being forced to live in steel cages to ward off attacks by armed robbers and paid assassins who operate under cover of darkness

Strong burglar-proof iron is placed over doors, windows and the main entrances of houses and shops to make them impenetrable by night marauders and unwanted guests, making the human beings inside look like caged animals or prisoners

The robbers and assassins are most often armed with weapons such as guns, machetes, axes, knives, batons, broken bottles and acid

The insufficient number of policemen, most of whom

are ill-equipped to match the sophistication of armed robbers, has caused residents to look elsewhere for means of assuring their protection, one of which is to turn themselves into caged animals

For example, Lagos, Nigeria's most-populated city, with a population of six million people, has about 9 000 policemen, making a ratio of one policeman to nearly 670 people, much fewer than the UN recommendation of one to 400 people

Besides the gigantic gates, doors in some apartments are backed up with reinforced iron bars, with the attendant risk of people being trapped inside rooms in the event of fires breaking out

The erection of gates, some as high as three metres at the entrances to some of the major streets in Nigerian

cities, especially in the centre and outskirts of Lagos, poses much inconvenience to inhabitants and strangers visiting these areas

Some of these roads are permanently closed to motorists, even during the day when one would expect them to be open to allow passage

Last March, a man who was seriously sick in his house in Mushin, a popular residential quarter in Lagos, died while waiting for the big steel gates leading to his street to be opened to allow access to an ambulance that was to have taken him to hospital, residents said

A police officer who spoke under cover of anonymity said that while the police were not against residents seeking complementary peaceful means of ensuring safety for their lives and property, such

means should be within the law and should not infringe upon the rights of other people

In order to combat the recurrence of armed robbery and other forms of crime in society, the police announced recently that they have mounted an all-out war on robbers and assassins

Despite some recent arrests policemen have made in Lagos and other parts of the country, citizens still live in fear

A prominent Nigerian nationalist, opposition figure and businessman, Alfred Rewane (79) was assassinated in daylight at his house here last October

Unknown people walked straight into his house, gained entrance to his bedroom and pumped bullets into him before escaping - Sapa-AFP

Intershore chases Nigerian oilfield contracts

BY SHIRLEY JONES

Durban — Intershore, the joint venture comprising Dorbyl Marine, Murray & Roberts and British-based Amec Process & Energy, is tendering for contracts for Nigeria's Asari field. The company is building two oil platforms for Angola's Cabinda Oil project.

Intershore managing director John Cheeseborough said that together the projects would outstrip the R375 million Angolan contract which is due for completion in May next year.

If Intershore wins the tender, its purpose-built construction site would see the development of another two oil platforms built to handle 25 000 and 35 000 barrels a day respectively.

The Angolan contract, which was the first of its kind for South Africa, was more than 50 percent complete with deliveries of sophisticated equipment from overseas in



IN THE PIPELINE Further deals are on the cards, say John Cheeseborough and construction manager Eric Coull

PHOTO PETER DUFFY

progress. Cheeseborough said, planning had begun for the offshore hook-up phase to be carried out late next year.

Cheeseborough expected Intershore to win more contracts. "We

intend to keep this facility fully employed. If all parties play their cards right, there are good prospects. The oil and gas market along the west coast of Africa is immense," he said.

Nigeria warms to visit by SA

(226) CT 29/11/95

LAGOS: Nigeria has welcomed a planned visit by a group of South Africa parliamentarians to discuss the row triggered by its execution of nine human rights activists

In a softening of Nigeria's reaction to Pretoria's call for an embargo on its oil, Mr David Attah, spokesman for military leader General Sani Abacha, said yesterday it was good news that the South Africans would have talks with officials and the opposition

"If our argument is we've been misunderstood, then we must be seen to be receptive to such worthy endeavours" — Reuter



ROSEN, T...

SA MPs to hold talks with Abacha, opposition

(226) ARG 29/11/95
CLIVE SAWYER

Political Correspondent, Sapa-AFP

A DELEGATION of MPs, with the full backing of the ministry of foreign affairs, will visit government and opposition leaders in Nigeria

The visit will be led by Raymond Suttner, head of the national assembly committee on foreign affairs

The committee decided on the visit after a briefing this week by Aziz Pahad, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

A foreign affairs spokesman welcomed the initiative and said the ministry would assign advisers to the delegation.

The separation of powers among arms of government meant that a parliamentary committee did not need the permission of the minister or any other member of the executive to embark on such a trip, he said

Mr Suttner said the group hoped to hold talks with Nigerian ruler

Sani Abacha, as well as opposition leaders like Moshood Abiola and Olusegun Obasanjo.

Mr Abiola and Mr Obasanjo are in prison

The committee plans to visit Ogoniland, the home territory of author Ken Saro-Wiwa who with eight other minority activists was hanged by the Abacha government on November 10

"We don't just want to meet the government. The visit will be worthwhile only if we can hear a wide range of views," Mr Suttner said

A spokesman for the Nigerian government is reported to have welcomed the visit by the MPs as an opportunity to "set the record straight" about the Nigerian government's point of view

Earlier, a spokesman for General Abacha accused the media of exaggerating tensions between President Mandela and the Nigerian ruler

Stop attacks, Mandela urged

ACCRA — Ghana's President Jerry Rawlings has urged President Mandela and Nigeria's military ruler Sani Abacha to stop personal attacks on each other in the interests of African unity

Mr Rawlings, in an official statement, said such attacks increased tension and bred bitterness, and he suggested that quiet diplomacy was often the most effective way to resolve problems

Nigeria earlier denied there was a rift between the two leaders, who have clashed since Nigeria defied worldwide appeals for clemency and hanged nine minority activists — Sapa-Reuter-AFP

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Shell rejects Mandela's call to halt Nigerian project

(226) CT (BR) 30/11/95
By ROSS HERBERT

Johannesburg — Shell Oil executives yesterday rejected calls to stop operations in Nigeria, and requested an urgent meeting with President Nelson Mandela to discuss his threat of sanctions against Shell South Africa if it goes ahead with a \$5 billion gas project in Nigeria.

Shell executives said they were surprised by the president's strong tone and asked to meet him after The Sunday Independent newspaper quoted Mandela as warning Shell to suspend the gas project as an act of protest over the hanging of nine Ogoni activists.

The company also brought an executive from its London office to South Africa to explain its position and head off sanctions.

Mandela had said he expects Shell to demonstrate its commitment to democratisation immediately or face possible sanctions in South Africa.

The nature of such sanctions will be left to consultation among Cosatu, the ANC and various civic groups, who are scheduled to meet with Shell this morning.

John Barry, Shell's regional coordinator for Nigeria, said company policy was to stay out of local politics and said the firm would not be allowed under Nigerian law to halt oil operations.

John Drake, chairman of Shell



DRILL ON Shell executives John Barry, Koosum Kalyan and John Drake held a conference in Johannesburg yesterday to explain their opposition to suspending oil operations in Nigeria

PHOTO JOHN WOODROOF

South Africa, said Shell stations in South Africa are independently run and a boycott would hurt employees and owners more than Shell, which would sell its output to other oil companies or to foreign customers. He said Shell South Africa, which has turnover of about R8,5 billion, used no crude oil from Nigeria.

In the past, Shell paid a price for not actively participating in public debate about its actions

and Barry said it intended to publicly argue its case over Nigeria.

Barry admitted environmental problems existed in Shell's Nigeria operations. The company has expanded its community-support projects ten-fold in the past five years, in part due to public pressure.

Asked about company policy on bribery, Barry said Shell's policy was to fight corruption in its operations, but "it's not just the

government that is corrupt. It's a system that runs through the whole of Nigerian life."

Reuters reports from Lagos that the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture called for a speeded-up return to civilian rule within a year.

"Not yielding to international pressure for democratisation could be devastating on the (Nigerian) business sector."

World must act together over Nigeria — Clinton

30/11/95

(226) ARG 30/11

LONDON — United States President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister John Major have called for worldwide pressure on Nigeria's military regime after talks here

The pair discussed the crisis in the oil-rich African nation which was sparked by the execution of nine activists early this month

"There was an agreement that the effort to build pressure on Nigeria needs to be precise and it needs to be universal," said Michael McCurry, a spokesman for Mr Clinton

"As we explore various forms of sanctions or pressure, we need to be sure that the rest of the international community will join in those efforts for them to be successful," Mr McCurry said

The activists, who on behalf of their Ogoni people had demanded greater control over the oil industry which they said was devastating their land and water, were hanged for their supposed involvement in the murder of four pro-government Ogoni leaders

The US State Department yesterday refused to rule out further sanctions against Nigeria, but White House spokesman David Johnson said current policy involved

"concentrating on those (sanctions) already announced"

Britain also did not discount further sanctions — including an oil embargo — against Nigeria, with Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind saying yesterday that such a move would "deserve further consideration"

"With regard to the question of oil sanctions, we have not excluded that possibility," Mr Rifkind said, adding that "it would be important to see whether in the United Nations Security Council there is a likelihood of unanimity for such an imposition"

Washington's sanctions against Nigeria have included a ban on military sales and a prohibition on US visas to military and civilian backers of the regime

● Northern Ireland today mounted its biggest security operation in 25 years as Mr Clinton becomes the first US president to visit the British province

Mr Clinton's visit to a land scarred by centuries of sectarian hatred puts Washington's stamp of approval on Anglo-Irish efforts to graft a political settlement onto a guerrilla ceasefire. — Reuter-Sapa-AFP.



SOLEMN: United States President Bill Clinton reviews the Royal Guard at Buckingham Palace.

Not shaken or stirred

LONDON. — US President Clinton said at a dinner hosted by British premier John Major last night that the Anglo-American relationship was unlike James Bond's preference for martinis: "Our relationship can never be stirred nor shaken" — Reuter.

Queen's grandson selected for top rugby side

EDINBURGH — Queen Elizabeth's grandson Peter Phillips has been selected to play rugby at international level for Scotland.

December 22

Earlier this month he made the squad for a Scottish Schools versus Scotland Under-18 game as a reserve, but did not play

six, and is one of two pupils from Gordonstoun school chosen for the team.

Said Chris Barton, Gordonstoun's teacher in charge of

226 236
New SA spells out steps
for human rights to UN

PETER FABRICIUS
The Argus Foreign Service

WASHINGTON. — As President Nelson Mandela mounts an international sanctions campaign against Nigeria for its execution of dissidents, South Africa has reminded the United Nations that the promotion of human rights is the cornerstone of its foreign policy.

Diplomat Peter Soal said this to the UN human rights committee in New York yesterday, in a speech reviewing the new South African government's many steps to institutionalise respect for human rights.

These included the establish-

ARG 30/11/95
ment of the Human Rights Commission and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Constitutional Court's landmark ruling declaring the death penalty illegal because it violated the provision of the constitution, which enshrined the right to life.

South Africa had also ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and parliament had given approval last month for South Africa to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women.

The final steps before depositing the instrument of ratification for this convention were now under way.

LAG 20/11/95
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Nigerian fuel crisis eases

LAGOS — The petrol shortage that gripped the Nigerian commercial centre of Lagos over the past two days has eased, motorists said

Long queues of vehicles that stretched from pump stations have vanished and normal quantities of fuel are being sold, they said yesterday

Commuters said transport had also improved

The country's major fuel marketers said they had pooled efforts with state-owned Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to bring the situation under control — Reuter

Nigerian's dramatic escape

□ *British businessman helped to rescue Ken Saro-Wiwa's brother*

JOHN VILJOEN
Business Staff

THE British foreign office, its Nigerian and Ghanaian high commissions and an international airline assisted in the dramatic escape of Nigerian activist Owens Wiwa, the English businessman who is harbouring him in Cape Town.

Dr Wiwa, whose brother Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others were executed by the Nigerian government earlier this month, and his wife and son are staying at the home of Gordon Roddick, chairman of British company The Body Shop in Sussex, England.

Mr Roddick, in South Africa on business, described during an interview yesterday how Dr Wiwa was smuggled out of Nigeria only to have to spend an anxious hour under the nose of that country's authorities while in

the aircraft taking him to freedom.

Dr Wiwa, who like his brother is a member of the Ogoni tribe and a critic of the Nigerian government and the Shell oil company, had been in hiding from the Nigerian government for a year and a half at the time that his brother was executed.

"He was living in terror as he knew they were hunting them. They had been harassing his wife and his family," Mr Roddick said.

Dr Wiwa's escape from Nigeria was engineered by exiles in England who approached Mr Roddick's company for assistance.

"We lobbied our high commissions in Nigeria and Ghana to help Dr Wiwa and we also got our foreign office to get him into the United Kingdom."

An international airline,

which Mr Roddick said did not wish to be identified, agreed to fly Dr Wiwa and his wife and son to Britain free of charge, and under an assumed identity.

A problem was that Dr Wiwa could not leave through normal Nigerian emigration channels as his photograph had been widely published to assist in his arrest.

To enable him to catch a flight to London he first had to be smuggled across the border to Ghana, avoiding border posts, Mr Roddick said.

Dr Wiwa and his family made their freedom flight but the jet had to make an hour-long stop in Lagos on the way to London.

"He was just beside himself with fear. He was in the airliner for a whole hour and was just absolutely frozen in his seat wondering if they

would come on to the plane, wondering if they had got news of his escape," Mr Roddick said.

"We believe he escaped death at the hands of the Nigerian authorities."

Mr Roddick said he had first met Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa more than two years ago when a group called the Unrepresented Peoples and Nations Organisation approached the Body Shop company, which has hundreds of branches around the world, to raise the profile of the Ogoni people and the environmental destruction of their region.

The group, formed in the Hague in the Netherlands, represented people who had no political voice — like the Canadian and North American Indians and Nigeria's Ogoni minority.

Mr Saro-Wiwa asked Mr

Roddick's company to challenge Shell, which has been accused of causing environmental devastation in Ogoni land through its oil drilling activities.

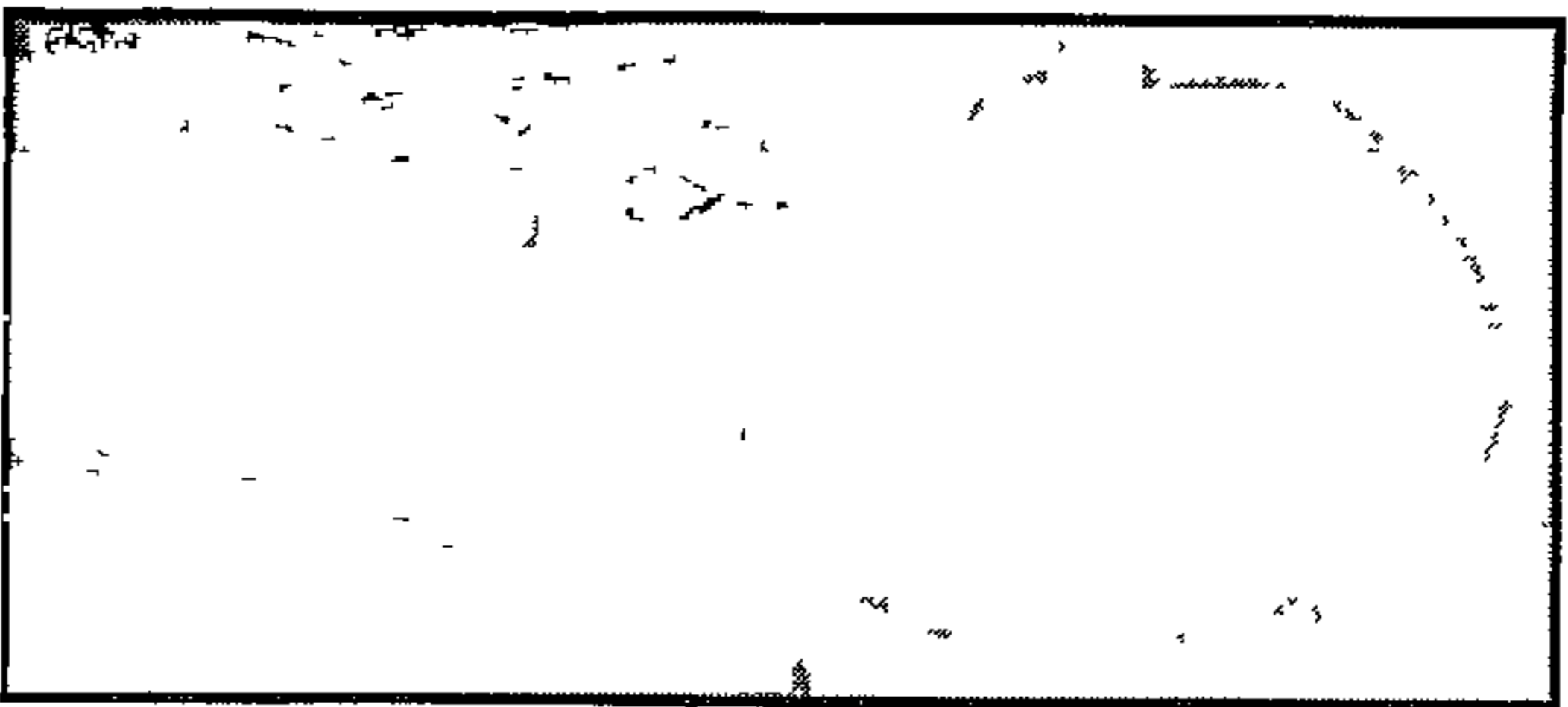
"Because there are 500,000 of them living in an area which has been environmentally destroyed."

Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa had decided to return to Nigeria a year ago to fight the government from within the country, Mr Roddick said.

"A few days before he left, I spent an evening with him and he said to me then 'They are going to try to kill me.'"

"I said 'Well, my God, why do you go home then?' He said 'I have to because we have to continue the fight within the country.'"

"But he knew he would be framed and hanged. He knew it."



SLAIN: Ken Saro-Wiwa



FUGITIVE FRIEND: Businessman Gordon Roddick who helped Owens Wiwa escape death at the hands of the Nigerian authorities who executed his brother, Ken Saro-Wiwa.
Picture: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus

Shell asks to see Mandela

(22b)
Mungo Soggot
BD 30/11/95

SHELL SA had asked for another meeting with President Nelson Mandela to clarify his weekend comment that it would be severely penalised unless Shell pulled out of its \$5bn liquefied gas project in Nigeria, Shell SA chairman and CE John Drake said yesterday.

Drake said Mandela's reported comments in the weekend Press were not consistent with his conciliatory approach at their first meeting on November 20.

The meeting had been called to discuss Shell's activities in Nigeria, after the execution of nine human rights activists there earlier this month.

Drake felt it unfair that Shell, of five others, had been singled out.

Shell not leaving Nigeria or S Africa

Sowetan 30/11/95

(226)

By Themba Molefe
Political Correspondent

BELEAGUERED international oil company Shell will not pull out of South Africa nor from Nigeria as its multi-billion rand business interests would be jeopardised

On the eve of a meeting with local pressure groups, Shell South Africa chairman and chief executive officer Mr John Drake yesterday denied any knowledge of President Nelson Mandela's threat to curtail the corporation's South African activities

At a Press briefing in Johannesburg, Drake and Shell's regional international assistant Mr John Barry defended the multinational's continued presence in both countries in the face of growing pressure to isolate General Sani Abacha's military regime

Barry, who heads Shell's Nigeria desk from London, argued that Nigerian law prohibited the corporation's pull-out as it was also involved in a R14 billion gas development project

"What would happen to the 5 000 people, 95 percent of whom are Nigerians, presently employed in the Niger Delta? What would the impact be on the contracts sealed with European clients?" Barry asked

He said Shell was already engaged in long-term projects both in Nigeria and South Africa with projections up to the year 2007

In South Africa the 850 independent Shell dealers would be adversely affected, said Drake, who revealed that Shell made R8 billion annually in turnover in the country alone

The two executives refused to be

drawn into a political debate, saying Shell had failed to save the lives of Ogoni minority leader Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight activists in Nigeria two weeks ago in spite of appeals to Abacha for clemency on humanitarian grounds

However, only the international community should spearhead political pressure on the Abacha regime and not Shell, said Barry

He also rejected suggestions that Shell was in collusion with the military government against the Ogonis, saying the company no longer operated from Ogoniland following fierce resistance three years ago

Meanwhile, President Nelson Mandela has requested a meeting of the Southern Africa Development and Economic Countries next week