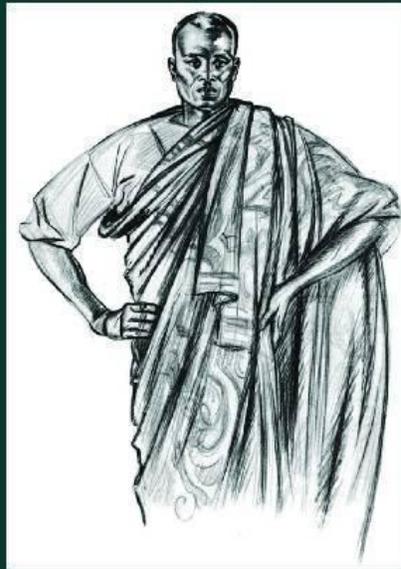


SECOND EDITION

"Excellent recipe on effective governance." - LAM

Your Excellency



A Letter to Nigerian Leaders

Bedford Nwabueze Umez, Ph.D.

Author of: "Nigeria: Real Problems, Real Solutions" & "MisEducated to Feel Inferior"

"THE FIRST -- AND THE BEST -- BOOK OF ITS KIND --
TO LEAD NIGERIA TO MASSIVE SUCCESS." -- *A.G.O.*

Your Excellency

Your Excellency

Bedford Nwabueze Umez, Ph.D.
Department of Government
Box 818
Lee College
Baytown, Texas 77522, USA

Copyright © 2005 by Bedford Nwabueze Umez.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system, without permission in writing from the author.

ISBN: 1-58961-337-6

About the Author

Bedford Nwabueze Umez's works center on political, social and economic developments of Africa. His latest books include:

1. *Your Excellency*
2. *MisEducated to Feel Inferior*
3. *Nigeria: Real Problems, Real Solutions*
4. *The Tragedy of a Value System in Nigeria: Theories and Solutions*
5. *African Lifestyle and Problems of Development: The Nigerian Example*

He has published in several journals, including *Journal of Economic Studies*, *The Journal of Nigerian Affairs*, and *The Review of Black Political Economy*. Included in his publications are "Has Social Mobilization Caused Political Instability in Africa? A Granger-Causality Test," "Modernization and Political Instability: Evidence from Ethiopia, Morocco and Zaire," "A Comparative Analysis of the Economic Performance of the Military and Civilian Regimes in Nigeria: A Time-Series Study," "Economic Growth and Democracy: Additional Evidence," "Impact of Foreign Monetary Developments on Demand for Money: Regression Estimates and Forecast Results."

Umez is a regular contributor of articles to several African newspapers and magazines, especially in the United States and Britain. He has reviewed several books on American government and politics.

He was a Visiting Scholar to the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) program, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan (Summer, 1993). He was selected among the top 5% of outstanding teachers in "Who's Who Among America's Teachers, 2002."

Umez is a philanthropist, reaching out to his community through [Umez's Scholarship Award](#). He is the Founder and the Administrator of Liberating the African Mind, [LAM](#). He serves on several Editorial Boards as well as a political analyst for public access television, Houston, Texas. He is the current president of [NIGERLEC](#) and [OPF](#).

He obtained, with honors, B.S. in Economics and B.S. in Political Science (1984) from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, Oklahoma. He received M.S. in Political Science (1986) and Ph.D. in Political Science and Statistics (1990) from the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, United States.

Umez has taught American Government, African Politics, Comparative Politics, and Quantitative Research Methods in several colleges/universities. He is presently a professor of American Government at Lee College, Baytown, Texas, United States.

Dedication

This memo is dedicated to President Nelson Mandela, a model leader, whose fight for equal right and equal treatment for all human beings will forever be remembered.

During my lifetime, I have dedicated myself to the struggle of African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve, but if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

– Nelson Mandela, during his trial in 1964

A wise man, a wise leader and his words of wisdom:

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

– Nelson Mandela

A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.

– Nelson Mandela

Preface

Decades of learning and teaching government and politics, coupled with personal life experience, have helped me reach one fundamental conclusion about the relationship between leaders and followers. Here is that conclusion:

*If leaders do not lead well,
followers will not follow well.*

Your Excellency is an emotional memorandum addressed, in a collective sense, to a particular set of Nigerian leaders, referred to as "Mr. Wazobia." Mr. Wazobia represents some of the past and present leaders of Nigeria who are expected to end the misery of the Nigerian people, but instead they have engaged in the looting of the treasury and resources of the country.

In one dimension, this memorandum recounts the grief, heartache, anguish, frustration, and sadness among Nigerian masses in light of the present political, social and economic challenges in the country. In another dimension, it narrates some measures several Nigerians are taking to confront those challenges. In the end, it offers a recipe to produce great leaders who will satisfy the aspirations of the Nigerian people.

The Intended Audience of this Book

Because this book concentrates on building dynamic leadership and effective governance in Nigeria and Africa,

concerned and serious Nigerian/African leaders, and elites will consider it a must read.

Students in African Studies, Anthropology, Humanities, Multi-cultural Studies, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, and Literature will find this book beneficial.

This book is also directed to the general public, *especially the Nigerian public*, whose interests include a better understanding of Nigeria and its major challenges.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank the reviewers of this memo for their valuable comments and suggestions. I salute SKC Ogbonnia, Western International University, and Houston based Communication Executive, Dr. David Ugwu, Houston Community College System, Patrick Chukwuonu, a psychologist, and Dr. Johnny Agbasi Mez, California State University and the Executive Director, Human Development and Leadership Institute, Barrister Ifeanyi Ubesie, Linda Strube, University of North Texas, Rev. Cyril Umez, and Cyprian Arinze, a great thinker.

I owe special gratitude to the following individuals and organizations for their *substantive* support to my publications. They include Dr. Kanayo Ubesie, SKC Ogbonnia, Dr. Johnny Agbasi Mez, Godwin Ugwuanyi, Edith Ugwuanyi, Dr. David Ugwu, Nick Chukwu, Atty. Emeka Uyamadu, Dr. Frank Jeffries, Ambrose Onwuka, Chief Emmanuel Obi, Atty. John Nwokeabia, Edmond

Umeh, Emmanuel Mefom, Atty. Tola Oresusi, His Royal Highness, Obi Chukwu, Mike Soga, Imeh Inyang, Smart Ajaja, Rev. Chike Egbo, Abraham Madu, Okechukwu Ogbuji, Rev. Emmanuel Nwosu, Dr. Theophilus Mbah, Uchenna Ojonta, Gabriel Okeke, Forster Obianagu, Ralph Obijiofor, KC Ekufu, Obed Ifebueme, KC Duru, Dr. George Ozor, Dr. Kevin Adatoma, Atty. Bob Ekwem, Ken Igboanugo, Atty. Ben Mbonu, Steve Nnake, Michael Ofoegbu, Ejike Nwabuike, Sam Ekesi, Chike Onyekwere, Ike Obi, Barrister Emenike Ibe, Emmanuel Ubesie, Basil Mbah, Emeka Aladume, Marcus Chukwu, Obryan Okoro, Joseph Ohanta, Andrew Iwe, Dr. Thomas Omeh, Sam Umoh, Rev. Lazarus Udenwagu, Dr. Michael Umeorah, Atty. Frank Mbah, Charles Nwankwo, Bernard Ugwu, Dr. Chris Ulasi, Kenneth Yellowe, Atty. Mike Orji, Michael Onuogu, Festus Okere, Bridget Akazie, Dr. Nick Muoneke, Atty. Annie Usoro, Professor S.W.E. Ibodje, University of Port Harcourt, Professor A. M. Ifeanacho, University of Port Harcourt, Liberating the African Mind, LAM, Oji-River People's Forum, OPF, Nigerian Leadership Council, NLC, and Human Development and Leadership Institute, HDLI.

Obviously, the views articulated in this memo are clearly mine. Accordingly, I am solely responsible for any errors.

Bedford Nwabueze Umez, Ph.D.
March, 2005

Caveat

A Very Important Note to the Reader

To avoid any misunderstanding, *three* fundamental points about this memo must be made *perfectly* clear.

First, this memo is *not* written to any particular leader in Nigeria. Instead, it is addressed, *in a collective sense*, to those Nigerian leaders who had robbed or continue to rob Nigerian people *only* to stockpile the loot in their private bank accounts in foreign countries.

Second, it must be noted that stockpiling of Nigerian wealth and resources in foreign countries has taken a worse dive since the mid-eighties to the present.

Third, if truth be told, the looters of Nigerian riches and treasures are not from one particular ethnic group in Nigeria; they cut across all Nigerian ethnic groups. Accordingly, the looters hail from all sections of Nigeria, and are *collectively* addressed in this memo as Mr. “Wazobia” or “Your Excellency.”

Let us proceed with an *open mind*.

B.N.U.

Capital Flight

The Nigerian No. 1 Killer at a Glance

“Nigerians have \$100 billion (N13.7 trillion) stashed abroad and 25,000 doctors working in foreign countries because of the absence of an enabling environment at home.”

--Economics Nobel laureate, Professor Joseph E. Stiglitz, former World Bank Senior Vice President and Chief Economist, *Nigerian Vanguard*, May 2004.

“Nigeria loses about \$4.5 billion (nearly N450 billion) annually as capital flight through technical services.”

--Emma Ujah, *Nigerian Vanguard*, August 2001

“The Federal Government has called for a probe of state governors over how they spend the monthly federation allocations they receive and the frequency of their foreign trips. The Minister of State for Finance, Mrs. Nenadi Usman, who made this call in Abuja during her visit to the Director-General of the Debt Management Office, Dr. Mansur Muhtar, on Saturday, said that the government was worried by the high spending pattern of some governors, whom she accused of stashing their states' resources away in foreign countries.”

--Oluyinka Akintunde, *The Punch*, May 2004

1

Your Excellency, Mr. Wazobia:

For almost two decades now, I have been reading your “letters” to my people, Nigerians. After careful analyses of their contents, and their grave implications, I am left with total disappointment, sadness and shame.

My sadness and disappointment have continued to grow day by day, year after year, and now well into another decade. I am totally ashamed of the deplorable socio-political and economic situations in Nigeria - the situations that have produced and continue to produce, at a *geometrical rate*, so many beggars, seekers of handouts, and worst of all, armed robbers. But before going any further, here is what I mean by your “letters” to Nigerian people.

Your “letters” to Nigerian people constitute an

absolute neglect and abandonment of Nigerian people by robbing them and stockpiling the loot in your private bank accounts in foreign countries.

To better illustrate your “letters” of abandonment, *re-consider* these tragic facts once more:

“Nigerians have \$100 billion (N13.7 trillion) stashed abroad and 25,000 doctors working in foreign countries because of the absence of an enabling environment at home,” as reported by Economics Nobel laureate, Professor Joseph E. Stiglitz, former World Bank Senior Vice President and Chief Economist, *Nigerian Vanguard* (May 2004).

Also, “Nigeria loses about \$4.5 billion (nearly N450 billion) annually as capital flight through technical services,” as reported by Emma Ujah, *Nigerian Vanguard* (August 2001).

Accordingly,

“The Federal Government has called for a probe of state governors over how they spend the monthly federation allocations they receive and the frequency of their foreign trips. The Minister of State for Finance, Mrs. Nenadi Usman, who made this call in Abuja during her visit to the Director-General of the Debt Management Office, Dr. Mansur Muhtar, on Saturday, said that the government was worried by the high spending pattern of some governors, whom she accused of stashing their states' resources away in foreign countries.”

--Oluyinka Akintunde, *The Punch* (May 2004)

2

Your Excellency, to know that Nigerians have \$100 billion (13.7 trillion Naira) of their money in your private bank accounts in foreign countries, and that Nigeria loses about \$4.5 billion (nearly N450 billion) annually to your private bank accounts abroad, is *very* troubling. Your irrational decision to feed those who consider you and your country the “most corrupt in the world”¹ is a big concern; it is very troubling. I am troubled; I am concerned. Should you be troubled? Should you be concerned? I think you should, and this is why:

Estimated Nigerian Money in Foreign Banks Compared with Nigeria’s Annual Budget

Nigerian Money in Foreign Banks = N13.7 Trillion
Nigeria’s Annual Budget, 2005 = N1.8 Trillion *

The Heartbreaking Reality

N13.7 Trillion = 8-Year Budget
N1.8 Trillion

* For details of Nigeria’s 2005 budget, see *Vanguard*, March 10, 2005. Notice that N stands for Naira, Nigerian currency.

Mr. Wazobia, the tragic reality of your abandonment is loud and clear: *Nigerian's money in foreign banks amounts to an eight-year budget for the country.*

Your Excellency, because of the grief your “letters” of abandonment have caused and continue to cause the people of Nigeria, I made the decision to respond to them. Your “letters” of neglect will no longer be ignored; they must be replied. You must know how the deprived, helpless, defenseless Nigerians feel.

By way of reply, I am putting together this memo, my crutch in my grief. But as I put this memo together, amidst sorrow and anguish, I am being haunted by an email Mr. Ugo, a fellow concerned Nigerian, sent to me in December 1999 after reading one of my books, *Nigeria: Real Problems, Real Solutions*. Mr. Wazobia, permit me to share a portion of Mr. Ugo's email with you:

Dear Dr. Umez: Excellent book! However, I feel sorry for people like you who still believe that there is a solution for Nigeria. Nigeria has no solution because Nigeria has no leadership, and there is no plan to have any in the near future.

Mr. Wazobia, is Mr. Ugo correct? Is he correct (like many Nigerians) by stating that “there is no solution for Nigeria?” Is he correct by maintaining that Nigeria has no leadership and there is no plan to have any in the near future? What do you think of Mr. Ugo's comments?

Your Excellency, this thinking that “there is no solution for Nigeria” bothers me a lot any time I reflect upon the turbulent road Nigeria has been riding on for almost two decades now. The rocky road, as you are quite aware, keeps on getting rockier because you keep on piling up Nigerian wealth in foreign countries. In fact, Nigerians have been living in a City of Destruction for almost two decades now, and there appears to be no wicket gate offering a way of escape.

Accordingly, I ask you these questions:

- *Who do you think should deliver Nigerians from the present City of Destruction?*
- *Who should set Nigerians free from the present evil?*
- *Who should bail the cat?*

Mr. Wazobia, as I put this memo together, I continue to brood over this general thinking that “there is no solution for Nigeria.” I continue to worry about our man-made City of Destruction. I continue to search for one who should bail the cat.

Brooding over Ugo’s comments, brooding over our City of Destruction, built and nurtured by your style of leadership, and searching for one who will bail the cat, brings some bigger concerns. Here are some of those concerns:

- *Will this memo be read by you?*
- *If you read it, will it touch your conscience?*

- *Will this memo make sense to you or will you continue to say, as you have been saying all these years, “Don’t mind those people; they think Nigeria is a civilized country”?*

Mr. Wazobia, my point at this juncture must have been clear to you by now, namely, I really needed a comfort zone to reply to your “letters.” I needed some hope, some encouragement, and some assurance that you will have a change of heart and bring back to Nigeria all the money you piled up in foreign countries. I needed that assurance.

Trying very hard to find that assurance, my comfort zone, I finally found one. My comfort zone is the sheer belief that miracles do happen; people do change their ways of life for better and for good. For instance, some of us are aware of alcoholics who “woke up one day” and decided never to drink alcohol again, and they remained sober for the remaining days of their lives. Some of us know drug users who “woke up one day” and decided to give up drug use, and remained drug-free till the last days of their lives. Some of us are aware of criminals, “who decided one day” to abandon their wicked, criminal ways of life, and stopped committing crimes against humanity, and remained crime-free for the rest of their lives.

Why did these people change their behaviors? “Something hit” them, some confessed, and from that moment on, they turned their lives around. What is that “something” that “hit” them? Could it be their conscience? Could it be their gods? Could it be their loved ones? Could it be that they

finally discovered by themselves the truth about the impacts of their behaviors on fellow men and women? Could it be all of the above?

Mr. Wazobia, what then will “hit” you? What then will be your reasons to “wake up one day” and change your heart? What then will “hit” you so that you will start empowering your own people of Nigeria by investing, *as it should be*, Nigerian wealth in Nigeria?

Your Excellency, I can only hope that this memo, my prop in my grief, will “hit” you so that you will change and lead our people, your own people, out of the present City of Destruction. I hope that the growing misery, starvation, joblessness, hopelessness, and despair in Nigeria will “hit” you so that you will deliver Nigerians from the present national catastrophe.

Mr. Wazobia, I believe people can and do change. I trust you can change, and that is my comfort zone; that is my hope for writing you; that is my assurance. The change I expect from you, which is the change so many deprived Nigerians expect from you, has been hinted at earlier in this memo; it is a change I will continue to emphasize throughout this memo; it is a change that can never be overemphasized.

Specifically, I ask that you start *today* using all the powers conferred upon you and all the resources bestowed upon Nigeria by nature and by *destiny* to put Nigeria back to a similar progressive road it was traveling when it was

appropriately nicknamed the “giant of Africa.” Please vindicate the hope of millions of Nigerians. Kindly deliver them from evil.

3

Mr. Wazobia, I just touched on the word “destiny” and its *relationship* to Nigeria’s natural blessings, as well as its *relationship* to your position in Nigeria. Let us go a little deeper into these *relationships*.

Your position as the leader of Nigeria is a function of destiny -- an article of fate. You did not know, twenty years ago, that you would one day become a leader of a country ranked 6th in crude oil reserves. You did not know, two decades ago, that you would be trusted with the running of Nigeria, a rich country by virtue of its natural resources. Similarly, Mr. Wazobia, your birth in Nigeria was by destiny; you did not choose to be born in Nigeria, the “African giant.”

The fact of the matter is that destiny has blessed you by virtue of your birth. In addition, destiny also has given you a noble position that so many can only dream of. Accordingly, destiny has given you the opportunity to serve Nigeria. Mr. Wazobia, *you must consider your position a noble calling that deserves a noble service to your own people and your own country.* You must know that a leader is a servant of the people. You must re-write your “letters” of abandonment; you must stop neglecting your own people; you must have a change of heart. You have to be merciful and real; you have to. You have no other choice!

Your Excellency, it is equally important to note that you are not the only blessed Nigerian by destiny. Actually, *all* Nigerians were given a wonderful start in life by nature of their place of birth. Indeed, I am never tired of telling my friends that we, Nigerians, are naturally blessed to have been “dropped off” on this part of the planet; the part of the planet we once proudly called the “giant of Africa.”

As Your Excellency knows, Nigeria proved to be the “giant of Africa” – the *melting pot* of its neighbors – in the late 70s through early 80s, despite some other leadership challenges of that era. I have kept alive the memories of those years -- the memories of the “good-old-Nigeria” -- the memories that proved, beyond any stretch of imagination, that Nigerians were blessed by virtue of their birthplace. Mr. Wazobia, I will forever cherish Nigeria of the late 70s to early 80s.

Having been gripped by the nostalgia for the good-old-Nigeria, permit me to recount some of those wonderful memories of yesteryears – the era of good hope.

As I close my eyes, I see Nigerian hard currency competing vigorously in the world market. As you know, late 70s to early 80s was the era when, on average, 65 kobo² (in Nigerian currency) was equivalent to \$1.00.

As I close my eyes, I see myself living comfortably on a salary of 94 Naira³ (71 cents in US currency) a month as an Auxiliary Secondary School teacher at Chukwurah High

School, Onitsha, 1978. Mr. Wazobia, you are quite aware of this era. It was the era when one Naira was enough to feed a hungry man for a whole day, an era when a 30-kobo plate of stewed rice was enough meal for a hungry lady.

As I close my eyes, I see the glorious, old days of Nigeria where motorcycles, we call “Okada” today, were not a part of the means of public transport. It was the period when motorcycles were used for what they were meant for, namely, a leisure ride.

As I close my eyes, I see happy children enjoying the “giant of Africa” in the late 70s and earlier part of the 80s. In Elementary School, children enjoyed learning, and learned substance. They enjoyed doing their art work, their “hand-work,” as we knew it then. They were taught obedience, and they had good reasons to obey the laws of the land and the authority figures. They were taught truth, and they had good reasons to be honest and truthful. They were taught to be patriotic, and they had good reasons to love their country, Nigeria.

In those days of the 70s and 80s, teachers instilled in students the spirit of healthy competition in academic work. By the time one finished Elementary School, one already mastered good writing skills. Nigerian students enjoyed going to school; they were very happy learning. Nigerian education was simply superb, outstanding, and excellent.

Because of the high premium placed on education then, Nigerians were known all over the world as *brilliant*

people. Some of us that came to the United States for university degrees in the early 80s quickly discovered that Nigeria's educational system was second to none. We realized, rather quickly, that some of the courses we mastered in Secondary School in Nigeria were being taught to freshman level students in American universities. American Professors considered Nigerian students academically brilliant and very smart. Indeed, a lot of Nigerian undergraduates got their Bachelor's degrees in three years, and several Nigerian students, including this writer, won all sorts of scholarships in American universities.

I still remember the "Udoji Award" in the mid 70s. That was the award that earned Nigerian Headmasters (the Elementary School Superintendents) free brand new Passat cars, and earned Secondary School Principals, free 404 Pugeot cars. I remember the Volkswagen "kombi" buses donated to all Secondary Schools in Nigeria then. I remember our joy and happiness, riding those "kombi" buses to other schools for debating tournaments, football matches, and other extracurricular activities.

Still fresh in my memory is the children's moonlight play. As I close my eyes, I see Nigerian children joyfully rushing out of their parents' houses at night to play with their peers in the moonlight after a rich, delicious supper. Mr. Wazobia, as you know, Nigerian children were well fed then, and they often played till midnight without the slightest worry about kidnappers or armed robbers, and still maintained their virginity.

I still remember the excellent enculturation and socialization processes of our children in late 70s. Parents and our communities taught children never to date nor marry thieves and those who made money by illegal means. In fact, the late 70s to early 80s was the time when “men were men,” and “women were married to those who *really* deserved them,” so to say. Your Excellency, life was quite enjoyable during those years, despite the civil war (1967-1970) that ravaged Nigeria.

Mr. Wazobia, the late 70s to early 80s was the era when Nigerians “hailed” Nigeria, their father land. Indeed, it was the era of good hope.

Why was life more enjoyable in the late 70s to early 80s than today? The answer is obvious: most Nigerian leaders then practiced “charity begins at home” by investing much of their income and Nigerian wealth in Nigeria. In those days, Nigerian currency was much valued in the world market. Investors had good reasons to invest in Nigeria. Accordingly, Nigeria witnessed rapid economic growth. There were jobs in Nigeria then. Workers were paid well, no one was owed his/her salaries, and retirees got their pensions as and when due. Those Nigerians who studied abroad then had no reason to spend extra days abroad after completing their degrees. Above all, corruption and armed robbery were not as acute and rampant as they are today.

Mr. Wazobia, the point here is that Nigeria was blessed by destiny and by nature. All Nigerians are blessed to have

been born in Nigeria. Unfortunately – yes, unfortunately – you have been *hiding* and *concealing*, for almost two decades now, Nigerian wealth in foreign countries. In so doing, you are causing *big* economic erosion in the country.

Because of this ongoing erosion in the economy of Nigeria, which has taken a much deeper plunge for almost two decades now, things are no longer the way they used to be in Nigeria; things are no longer at ease. A substantial number of our men are no longer men; they have been beaten “hands-down” by your “letters” of neglect and abandonment. Today, a good number of women are no longer married to those men who *deserve* them; some women now marry those they do not love; they marry them in order to survive; they marry them because of money. Millions of Nigerian children are hungry today; many are unsure of their next meal. Worst of all, children are now worried about being kidnapped and sold by men of underground economy. Accordingly, children’s moonlight play is now a thing of the past. Mr. Wazobia, it is very hard to play on an empty stomach; it is not wise to risk being kidnapped.

4

Your Excellency, the atmosphere of Nigeria is now charged with the currents of animosity, of strife, of destruction, and of greed. Millions of Nigerians are hungry and angry. Armed robbery is rampant, and hatred tends to replace love. In fact, the “giant of Africa” is now a City of Destruction.

The era of good hope has given way to the present era of despair, abject poverty, and hopelessness. The world is witnessing an eclipse of Nigeria, and here is the *desperate* situation in brief.⁴

Nigerian currency, Naira, as Your Excellency knows, continues to depreciate almost on a daily basis. In the late 70s and early 80s, an average of 65 kobo amounted to \$1.00. Today, October 1, 2004, 132 Naira amounts to \$1.00.

Today, price stability is simply a joke; it does not exist in Nigeria. The rate of inflation in Nigeria is staggering. While this memo is not a lecture on inflation, it is well to note that inflation adversely affects wage earners, the working poor, and those on pension the most. In Nigeria today, the standard of living for these groups has fallen to the point of hopelessness and despair. This is because a pay raise usually lags behind the rate of inflation. As such,

control of inflation is as vital to a progressive economy as to the direction of investment.

Mr. Wazobia, the alarming rate of unemployment in Nigeria is frightening. As you are completely aware, more than half of the Nigerian graduates today do not have jobs. The money that could have been invested in Nigeria to create jobs for them is mostly abroad in your private bank accounts. Outsourcing of Nigerian jobs overseas continues to grow unabated. Acute and chronic rate of unemployment in Nigeria has produced and continue to produce, at a geometrical rate, so many beggars, seekers of handouts, and worst of all, armed robbers.

Workers are being enslaved and exploited because of your “letters” of neglect. Millions of workers in Nigeria are underpaid. Many retirees are not being paid their pensions; they are left to die of hunger and starvation. Why? Their salaries are in your private bank accounts in foreign countries.

A substantial number of civil servants are paid meager wages and salaries because of your “letters” of abandonment. Today, Nigerian university graduates are paid, on the average, a salary of 7,000.00 Naira a month (an equivalent of \$50.00 per month). Mr. Wazobia, given the present rate of galloping inflation in Nigeria, how can a family survive on a salary of \$50 per month?

To make matters worse, often your government will not pay these workers their so-called salaries for several

months. How do you expect them to live? Is it not clear to you that Nigeria distributes income and wealth more unequally than most countries in the world? Accordingly, the rich continue to get richer by whatever means and the poor continue to get starvation and agonizing death. Is this fair, Mr. Wazobia?

Worse still, joblessness, poverty, hunger, starvation, undernourishment, malnourishment, and hopelessness have perverted some women's sense of self-respect and self-dignity to the point that they mostly ignore the natural ignominy inherent in sleeping around, especially with married men. These days in Nigeria, an extra-marital affair is generally seen as a normal way of life, and the rate of prostitution continues to rise. Tragically, some consider this dreadful phenomenon "enjoyment," when, in actuality, Nigeria is quickly falling from grace to grass.

Mr. Wazobia, what is driving these single women to such desperation? You already know the answer, which is the theme of this memorandum. *The answer lies squarely with joblessness, hunger and starvation directly linked to your decision to conceal Nigerian money in foreign countries instead of investing it in Nigeria to create jobs for Nigerian people.*

At the present time, banks are closing like no man's business in Nigeria, and several are currently in financial distress. Why? If the Nigerian \$100 billion (13.7 trillion Naira) in your private bank accounts in foreign countries is deposited with Nigerian banks, none of these banks will

close and none will be in financial distress. Above all, our businesses will flourish, and jobs will be created. Once jobs are created, unemployment, prostitution, and armed robbery will be minimized drastically.

Your Excellency, *investment is the engine of economic development; in fact, investment is the key to all development.*

Mr. Wazobia, our roads are in a total mess. Your “letters” of abandonment have contributed to the worsening of Nigerian roads. Roads connecting several states, cities, and towns in Nigeria are simply deathtraps; they are dusty, narrow, and congested. Worse still, they are filled with endless pits some mildly call “potholes.” A substantial number of fatal automobile accidents in Nigeria are related to bad and dangerous roads. Several towns and villages have never seen tarred roads since the history of man; as a result, those towns are always covered in red dust created by bumpy, dusty roads. Some village dwellers suffer from bad eye-sight and blindness due to endless dust from their dusty roads.

In addition to health hazards associated with bad roads in Nigeria, Nigerian economy is further jeopardized by bad roads. Here is the situation: A 10-mile trip that is supposed to take 10 minutes on a good road can last up to 4 hours in some Nigerian cities because of the bumpy, narrow roads and their accompanying heavy traffic jams (or “go-slows,” in Nigerian parlance).

Mr. Wazobia, you know quite well that the Onitsha traffic jam is a nightmare. You are completely aware that Lagos' "go-slow" is dreadful. Similarly, you know that Port Harcourt's heavy traffic is terrifying, to name just a few. All these "go-slows" happen on a daily basis throughout Nigeria, all day long, and they are hurting Nigeria's economy and Nigerian people. To buttress my point, consider this report:

Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has estimated an annual loss of N132.8 billion due to poor road maintenance in the country, according to a statement from the office of the Minister of Works, signed by the chief press secretary, Mr. Lawrence Ojabo. The annual loss due to poor maintenance [of roads] was N80 billion, while vehicle operating costs resulting from bad roads were valued at N52.8 billion.⁵

Mr. Wazobia, why are these roads so terrible? Again, the answer is rooted in the senseless and brutal robbery of the Nigerian people, only to proudly and shamelessly hide the loot in foreign countries. This senseless and destructive act, born and bred mostly by *MIS*-education of the African mind, that African countries are "unsafe havens," is the root of all evils in Nigeria and several African countries. Among those evils are the man-created, man-nurtured and man-maintained dangerous roads in Nigeria.

Mr. Wazobia, before concluding my point on terrible Nigerian roads, kindly examine this scenario – a scenario I have repeated many a time:

A \$20 million contract has been awarded to Mr. X, an “Honorable” Nigerian contractor, to construct a road connecting city “A” to city “B” in Nigeria. Instead of doing the right thing by committing the money to building an excellent highway that will last for years, he simply stopped at grading the road with a bulldozer in the amount of \$2 million and disbursed the remaining \$18 million as follows:

- *\$2 million to purchase dozens of cars from Germany;*
- *\$1.5 million to purchase several cars from Japan;*
- *\$2 million to build a mansion;*
- *\$1.5 million, in the form of kickbacks, to public officials who awarded the contract;*
- *\$11 million to his private bank account in one foreign country.*

The next rainy season, the rains washed off the soil surface of the road built by our contractor. Consequently, the road developed several deep potholes and turned into deathtraps. As Mr. X, the “honorable” contractor, was driving on this road in a convoy -- the typical, *showmanship* style of traveling in Nigeria by many “rich” Nigerians -- his cars and SUVs somersaulted into one of the deep potholes and all the passengers died at the scene.

As heartbreaking as this hypothetical accident appears, here are the real tragic implications that have kept Nigeria down for so long:

Mr. X, the “rich,” multimillionaire contractor, is dead; his “men” - the bodyguards - are dead. Germany is richer by \$2 million. Japan is richer by \$1.5 million. The foreign country in which the contractor deposited Nigeria’s \$11 million (he called his own money) is richer by \$11 million.

In this scenario, Nigeria has lost \$14.5 million to foreign countries and continues to suffer and languish in bad roads and poor economy. Specifically, Germany, Japan, and the country in which our “wise” contractor deposited Nigeria’s \$11 million, continue to have excellent roads while bad roads continue to retard businesses and claim innocent lives in Nigeria. What a “leadership!” What a shame! What a man-made tragedy!

Your Excellency, Nigeria is presently experiencing a health-care crisis. Our health care system leaves a lot to be desired; it is deplorable. Why? Because you have *completely* abandoned health-care delivery in Nigeria, and this is exactly how you did it, and continue to do it.

Every year, you travel abroad several times for a medical check-up. When you fall sick, you jump into an airplane and fly to one of the foreign countries where you pile up Nigerian money, to be treated. Similarly, when a family

member is sick, you fly him or her to the same hospital in a foreign land to be treated.

In addition to flying abroad for a medical checkup and treatment, you have gotten a “new idea” which is now being copied by so many rich Nigerians; it is the *new* idea of flying your pregnant wife abroad to deliver your children.

In your characteristic “leadership” thinking faculty, your own children are better off being Swiss citizens, American citizens, British citizens, Japanese citizens, Canadian citizens by birth. Your children must be the citizens of the “civilized” countries; they must be the citizens of the “safe havens;” they have no business being Nigerian citizens – the citizens of an “uncivilized” nation.

Mr. Wazobia, here are the cold facts:

So many Nigerians do not have access to basic medical care. Potent medications capable of saving lives are mostly unavailable, especially to the poor. Many have no access to any scientifically proven treatments or drugs for various diseases and infections. Today, a substantial number of our people rely solely on "konka-mixtures" of some sort by the native doctors and the local herb manufacturers whose medicines are, as we know, scientifically untested, un-sanitized, and even dangerous to human consumption. In fact, some become sicker or even die after taking those medicines. As such, the mortality rate among the masses in Nigeria keeps on rising by leaps and bounds. The alarming

death rate in our country, especially in rural areas, is simply alarming and heart-breaking.

Your abandonment of health care in Nigeria has left so many Nigerians dead. People die in Nigeria today like rats, and are often buried like rats.

To make matters worse, some of our hospitals are buying and dispensing fake drugs from "unregistered sources" as reported below:

*"National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) yesterday indicted the authorities of University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH) for purchasing drugs from an unregistered source."*⁶

In addition to dispensation of fake drugs, our health-care problems are compounded by an unequal distribution of health-care facilities. The location of the medical facilities is often based on political factors or physicians' choices rather than where the most deserving patients live. A hard look at our health-care system will reveal that in Nigeria medical facilities may range from one facility per 5000 people in some local governments to one per 30,000 in other local governments. Hospitals are clearly lacking in rural areas. In fact, the few medical facilities we have in Nigeria are concentrated in cities, leaving rural areas without medical facilities. To survive, the citizens in those rural areas rely on some quack doctors and crude, native doctors.

It also must be noted that the *few* existing medical facilities in Nigeria are in serious trouble. Ambulances to transport seriously sick or injured people in times of emergencies are clearly lacking in most parts of Nigeria. Several hospitals in Nigeria are not capable of treating minor injuries let alone performing surgeries, and many health centers lack effective medicines. Medical equipment is not serviced as often as needed and some are simply out of order. Today, numerous health facilities in Nigeria have deteriorated to the point of despair and hopelessness.

In addition to your frequent trips to foreign countries for medical checkup and treatment, our health-care delivery is further worsened by serious infrastructure problems. As I mentioned earlier, so many towns in Nigeria have never known tarred roads since the history of man; their roads are filled with red dust and deep holes, making travel from those towns to cities almost impossible, especially during the rainy season. In essence, the sick from such rural areas find it extremely difficult to get to medical facilities in the cities.

Frequent power failure in Nigeria weighs heavily on our health-care delivery. Several towns in Nigeria have never been electrified to this day, and those towns with electricity tragically experience power failure almost on a daily basis. As Your Excellency knows, the acronym NEPA, which stands for Nigerian Electric Power Authority, has been disparagingly, but accurately, nicknamed “Never Expect Power Anywhere.” While this nickname amuses some

people, those in my camp know quite well that frequent power failure in Nigeria has devastating impacts in the country. Your Excellency, does this frequent power failure bother you? I think it should.

Mr. Wazobia, it is obvious that without electricity, hospitals will not function effectively. It is well known that some patients have died in operating rooms in Nigeria when power failed. To make the matter worse, lack of proper refrigeration, due to constant power failure, has rendered some vaccines impotent and unusable.

Communication problems in Nigeria also have contributed and continue to contribute to our health-care crisis. It is well known that phone and fax services do not exist or are unreliable in so many local governments and towns. As such, communication problems frustrate all efforts to communicate throughout the network of health facilities. Mr. Wazobia, how can one call emergency or ambulance services in the case of health emergencies when there are no phones? How can one quickly contact police in a life-threatening situation when there are no phones or when the existing phones annoyingly malfunction almost all the time? In fact, how long, Mr. Wazobia, will Nigerians endure “all circuits are busy; try again later?” How long?

Your Excellency, you are aware that safe, clean water and sanitation facilities do not exist in several towns and villages in Nigeria. This not only complicates oral administration of medicines, it also contributes to rapid spread of diseases in those towns and villages.

Your Excellency, as you fly to foreign countries for medical checkups and treatment, as you send your children to foreign countries for medical treatments and checkups, you should bear the following bare facts in mind:

Millions of Nigerians cannot fly abroad for medical checkup and neither can they afford to fly abroad when they fall sick. As such, some health problems get worse before being treated, and several die because their health problems cannot be treated.

The pregnant wives of millions of Nigerian men are flying nowhere to deliver their babies; they are battling it out here, in Nigeria, with the local midwives and poorly equipped hospitals. Truth to the reality, a sizable number of them and their babies tragically die in the labor rooms as they struggle to deliver their babies by local midwives or in those unequipped and un-maintained hospitals. Does that bother you, Mr. Wazobia? Should that bother you? I think it should.

Mr. Wazobia, education has been abandoned and neglected in Nigeria. To say the least, our educational system is in complete shambles. Only a handful of Nigerians read books these days. As such, book production in Nigeria has decreased tremendously. School libraries, ranging from Second School to Universities, are almost empty. Research has been neglected. Several universities have no access to the Internet. Computers are miserably lacking in so many universities. As such, students who major in Computer

Science hardly understand the basic mechanics of computer hardware.

Teachers are grossly underpaid. Institutions of learning, especially universities, are often closed due to teachers who go on strike because, in addition to being paid meager salaries, they are more often left unpaid for several months.

Today, Nigerian Secondary Schools and Universities are producing so many graduates who can hardly write simple letters. Mr. Wazobia, this is deplorable. To better make my point on the current deplorable state of education in Nigeria, permit me to ask these simple questions:

How can Nigeria see the light of real civilization, industrialization and development without sound education? If Your Excellency continues to neglect education, what do you think the future of Nigeria will look like in about two decades from now (when those who got good education in Nigeria are either retired or dead)?

Your Excellency, you must think, at every stage of this memo, about the consequences of your “letters” of abandonment to our people. You must realize that piling up Nigerian fortunes in foreign countries is creating and recreating more and *more* greener pastures in those foreign countries while your own people of Nigeria, the people you are “chosen” by *destiny* to lead and serve, have no pasture. Specifically, you are going *against* the law of nature -- which suggests, on no uncertain terms, the spirit of “me first,” “my family first,” “my country first,” by providing

abroad what you do *not* have at home, namely, massive investments and sustainable economy. This is troubling.

As you continue to deny your own people shelter, jobs, food, roads, good health, education, and other amenities necessary to sustain better lives, by looting and hiding the loot in foreign countries, you should be aware that such an irrational action on your own part is contributing, in no small measure, to the “civilization,” “industrialization,” and “development” of those foreign countries while Nigeria continues to remain “uncivilized” and “underdeveloped.”

Your Excellency, you have to think of your actions and their impacts upon your own people of Nigeria. *You have to.*

5

Mr. Wazobia, I just mentioned again the following buzz words, “civilization,” “industrialization,” “development,” “uncivilized,” and “underdeveloped.” It is necessary that we critically examine them, at this juncture. We should do so because you often respond to anyone who tries to compare the socio-economic and political situations in Nigeria to those of the Western countries with this statement:

*Do not compare Nigeria with Western countries;
Nigeria is not a civilized country.*

By this response, you imply that Nigeria cannot be compared to those “civilized,” and “developed” countries because Nigeria is “uncivilized” and “underdeveloped.”

Considering the implications of this assertion that “Nigeria is not a civilized country,” it is very important that we examine the major difference between “civilized” Japan, Switzerland, United States, France – the West, in general – and “uncivilized” Nigeria.

Mr. Wazobia, if we go by your labels, that those countries where you pile up Nigerian riches are “civilized,” “industrialized” and “developed,” while Nigeria is not, we

must ask and answer these two critical, fundamental questions:

- Why are they “civilized” while Nigeria is “uncivilized?”
- Why are they “developed” and Nigeria “underdeveloped” or “developing?”

Your Excellency, those countries are considered “civilized,” “industrialized” and “developed,” because of one primary reason: their leaders know *exactly* what leadership is all about, namely, *my country first*. They are proud of themselves and their countries and they display that pride in every step of the way. For instance, they know that it does not make any iota of sense for them to provide and promote in Nigeria, what their own people do not have at home. They know the theoretical as well as the practical meaning and implications of “charity begins at home.” They know quite well that a squirrel does not and will not labor for a rat. Accordingly,

- *These “civilized” foreign leaders, e.g., Swiss leaders, Japanese leaders, American leaders, German leaders, Canadian leaders, to name just a few, prudently refuse to open and maintain any bank account in Nigeria. They do not hide their countries’ resources in Nigeria.*
- *These “civilized” foreign leaders do not abandon their own hospitals only to come to*

Nigeria for medical checkup and treatment. They do not fly their pregnant wives to Nigeria to have them deliver their babies in Nigeria. Instead, they invest in their own health care system, knowing that nothing is more important than good health.

- *These “civilized” foreign leaders consider education of their own people seriously, a job number one, knowing quite well that knowledge is not only power, knowledge is the real power. As such, they wisely invest in the education of their own people. They pay their teachers decent salaries, and pay them on time. They equip their schools with modern technologies and maintain excellent libraries. They promote, encourage, and fund research of all kinds, knowing that it is through research that all sorts of discoveries are made. Accordingly, some of them build world-class Presidential libraries for generations to come, following their departure from office.*
- *These “civilized” foreign leaders pay their workers, their civil servants, reasonable salaries and wages, and they pay them on time, knowing that inadequate pay and poverty can lead to violence and other substantive evils in a society.*

Mr. Wazobia, the simple truth is that these “civilized” foreign leaders take care of their *own*; they take care of their own people first, recognizing that charity must begin at home and not in Nigeria or elsewhere. They know that leadership is action, not position. They know that leadership does not end in *titles*.

Now that it is very clear why these countries are called “civilized,” “industrialized,” and “developed,” it is important that you know *specifically* why Nigeria, our own country, is considered “uncivilized,” “underdeveloped,” “developing,” and a “Third World” country. Here are the specifics.

- *First and foremost, you have trillions⁷ of Nigerian money concealed in your private bank accounts in foreign countries. By maintaining these accounts, you have practically abandoned your own people, the people of Nigeria. The looting of your own people only to hide the loot abroad means further civilizing the already “civilized” while keeping your own people closer to the “uncivilized,” stone age.*
- *Because of your “letters” of abandonment, Nigeria continues to lack meaningful investments and real growth. Accordingly, more than 50% of Nigerian graduates do not have jobs today in Nigeria, and therefore are sentenced to beggars and seekers of hand-*

outs, and in some extreme situation, to scam experts known as 419ers (four-one-niners).

- *Because of your abandonment, a substantial number of Nigerians are not paid decent salaries, and often go for months without getting paid. Accordingly, millions of Nigerians are leaving Nigeria today in search of greener pastures in those foreign countries where you continue to pile up Nigerian wealth. In so doing, Nigeria continues to have serious impediments to development and civilization.*
- *Because of your abandonment, armed robbers are so rampant in Nigeria, and a good number of them are jobless university graduates. Considering this joblessness and the accompanying violent armed robberies, millions of Nigerian professionals remain abroad, and several of them are unsure as to when they will come back to Nigeria for nation-building. Mr. Wazobia, your “letters” of abandonment have created and continue to create a “brain drain” in Nigeria – a fact you must bear in mind always.*
- *Because of your abandonment, Nigerian roads are worse than ever, retarding Nigerian economy and causing fatal accidents on Nigerian roads.*

- *Because of your abandonment, Nigeria's health-care system has collapsed. As such, the mortality rate, especially infant mortality rate, in Nigeria continues to rise by leaps and bounds.*

Your Excellency, the point has been made, loud and clear: Nigeria is today considered “uncivilized,” “underdeveloped,” “developing” and a “Third World” country because of your abandonment, nothing more, nothing less. We are now living in a City of Destruction because of your abandonment, period!

Having examined the main differences between “uncivilized” Nigeria and “civilized” countries where you continue to hide Nigerian money, it is equally important to understand what makes the leaders of the “civilized” world refuse to invest in Nigeria while you continue to conceal Nigerian money in those “civilized” countries. Put differently, what is the difference between you, our leader, and those “civilized” leaders.

Mr. Wazobia, the difference lies with *common sense* – the greatest asset of great leaders – nothing more. Your Excellency, *common sense* is everything. *Common sense* is “civilization.” *Common sense* is “industrialization.” *Common sense* is “development.” *Common sense* defines consideration for fellow countrymen and women. *Common sense* defines love and caring for one's own people and country. *Common sense* is the real meaning of “charity

begins at home.” Indeed, *common sense* defines patriotism – the love for one’s country.

Mr. Wazobia, no man will grow and become successful and civilized if he refuses to take care of himself first; he must use his common sense. Similarly, no society will become “civilized,” “industrialized,” and “developed,” if its leaders refuse to take care of that society. Nigeria will NEVER become a “civilized” country if Your Excellency continues to rob the people of Nigeria only to hide the loot in foreign countries. Nigeria will NEVER become a “developed” country if Your Excellency continues to conceal Nigerian money abroad.

Your Excellency, now is the time to start using common sense.

6

Mr. Wazobia, I have spent a greater portion of this memorandum pouring out my personal grief about the situation of things in Nigeria. It is time to take a *specific*, hard look at how Nigerian masses are feeling at this moment and what they are doing to survive in our present City of Destruction.

Your Excellency, millions of Nigerians are appalled at the deplorable state of affairs in Nigeria, a deplorable condition created by your “letters” of abandonment. They are sick with the way you continue to treat them; they are lamenting in anguish, trying to understand what brought the “African giant” to its knees.

Accordingly, they have been crying and fasting over your “letters” of neglect -- your decision to abandon them cold. They want you to dry their tears – their tears of anguish and pain; their tears of chronic hunger and starvation; their tears of rampant armed robberies; their tears of poor health; their tears of poor medical facilities; their tears of burying their loved ones who die daily of misery and starvation.

Mr. Wazobia, millions of Nigerians hate living in our man-made City of Destruction; Nigerian masses want you to deliver them from evil. In their desperation, and

frustration, this is what millions of Nigerians are doing: *they have turned to all kinds of religion.*

Your Excellency is quite aware that Nigeria has become a breeding and a dumping ground for all kinds of religions and religious groups. Houses of worship are everywhere in Nigeria, each one of them, in its own unique way, promising to save its members and Nigeria from the present national shipwreck. Some Nigerians have even converted their houses into miniature places of worship. Some have even switched to different religions, probably thinking that their sufferings are a function of their “old” religion.

Every day, everywhere, people are praying⁸ in Nigeria. For instance, some are praying through loudspeakers; some are praying quietly. Some pray every night before going to bed, and every morning before starting their daily activities. Those who have not gotten jobs for months and years are praying to get employment. Those who are lucky to have gotten jobs continue to pray that they get paid for doing their jobs. Those who have not been paid for months continue to pray that their arrears be paid to them so that they can pay their rents and debts.

Mr. Wazobia, all these prayers amount to one thing: people are praying to survive the misery and starvation unleashed in Nigeria by your “letters” of abandonment.

As Your Excellency knows, these prayers do not stop in the houses of worship; they do not stop in the families. There are signs of continuous prayers all over Nigeria. Take a

look at the mass transit vehicles in Nigeria today. Look at those public transport services, e.g., the buses, the vans, the lorries, the motorcycles, nicknamed, “okadas.” What do you see? What does one see? One notices that most of these vehicles have some sort of religious references or inferences boldly written on them. Such words as “God,” “Lord,” “Jesus,” “Allah,” are striking; they are clearly written in multiple colors to attract attention. Some lorries have pictures of a group of angels praying. Common among such religious inferences, or prayers, are as follows:

“Lord is my Shepherd”
“Washed with Blood of Jesus”
“Trust in Allah”
“Allah is the Savior”
“Lord is my Dependability”
“God dey”
“God’s case, No appeal”
“God’s time is the best”
“Jesus is the Savior”
“The wages of a Sinner is Death”
“Thanks be to God”
“Trust in God”
“Hope in God”
“Devine Intervention is the answer”

Mr. Wazobia, let us do some comparative analysis here because without comparison the mind does not always know how to proceed. Have you noticed that the mass transit vehicles in those foreign countries in which you open bank accounts or buy houses with the money you

steal from Nigeria do not have such religious invocations or inferences as we have them in Nigeria, *yet* they are “civilized?”

Have you realized that the mass transit vehicles in those foreign countries you frequently visit several times a year for medical checkup and treatment do not have such written prayers on the bodies of their public transport vehicles let alone their private cars as we have them here in Nigeria, *yet* they are “developed” and “industrialized?”

Have you observed that there is a “wall of separation” between church and state in the United States, *yet* the country currently commands the greatest economic power across the globe? Put differently, do you know that government sponsored (or led) prayer in public schools in the United States is unconstitutional, *yet* the country is the most powerful nation today? For instance, no teacher, in the US public school system, can say or lead a prayer at the beginning of the school day. If truth be told, it is unconstitutional in the United States for a teacher in public school to lead a prayer similar (or identical) to the one below:

“Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, And we beg Thy blessings up us, our parents, our teachers and our Country.”⁹

Mr. Wazobia, the greatest irony of all these is that our own rates of “development” and “civilization” lag far behind the rapid growth of different religions in Nigeria. Put

differently, the sufferings in Nigeria continue to supercede the growth rate of differing religions. All told, the worsening economic, social and political situations in Nigeria, in light of the astronomical growth of different religions, is enough to make one ask this fundamental question:

Given the rising population of different religions and religious groups in Nigeria, why do Nigerians continue to suffer so much? In other words, if God/Allah cares, why do Nigerian masses continue to suffer a great deal?

Mr. Wazobia, the answer to the above question is quite simple: *prayers alone, i.e., prayers without action on your own part, are not enough to deliver Nigeria from the present evil – the City of Destruction.* This is a fact. While nothing is impossible to the Creator, the answers to Nigerian ills today do not lie ONLY in prayers for the following reasons:

You preach what you do not practice. Here are the apparent inconsistencies:

You preach patriotism, but your actions, your “letters” of abandonment, defy patriotism.

You preach economic growth and development, but how can people grow and develop when you robbed them of \$100 billion and hid it abroad?

You preach anti-corruption, but how can corruption cease when you continue to rob Nigerians only to pile up the loot abroad?

You preach love for fellow men and women, but continuous robbing of fellow men and women *only* to conceal the loot abroad totally underscores hatred.

Worse still, Mr. Wazobia, many Nigerians *worship* you and your money more than they worship their creator. They *worship* you and your “rich” cronies more than they worship their own creator. Have you wondered why or do you think that it is normal for people to worship human beings instead of their creator?

Your Excellency, I am sure you know why they worship you and your cronies. They worship you and your cronies because they are being starved to death! They are as hungry as hell, so to speak; they do not know from where their next meal will come. Nigerian masses are drowning, and like drowning men, they are hanging on to all sorts of straws to see whether they can stay afloat in that ocean of hunger, misery and starvation created by your style of leadership, the style of robbing the people only to hide the loot in foreign countries.

In addition to worshipping all sorts of gods, some are using evil ways and crude means to put food on their table; they are doing anything and everything to survive. As Your Excellency knows, this crude means of making ends meet is known today in Nigeria as “419” (four-one-nine).¹⁰

Because of your abandonment, so many Nigerians are eating today by “419” – the crooked means -- which we know is the antithesis to good work ethics and the teachings of the Creator. Since this is the case, how can the Creator answer the prayers of those who are eating by crooked ways? How can the Creator answer your own prayers (you often include in your political speeches) when you keep on looting the treasury of Nigeria only to pile up the loot in your own private bank accounts in foreign countries?

Mr. Wazobia, it is time Nigerians realized that being “knighted” in a church does not *automatically* translate into being knighted in heaven. Our Creator does not support accumulation of wealth by corrupt and illegal means, hence the indomitable admonishment, “Thou shall not steal.”

Your Excellency, the bottom line is that the Creator helps those who help themselves. In other words, while God feeds the birds of the air, he does not bring food to the nest. You must start weaving in order for the Creator to give you thread. Hence,

$$\textit{Effort} \times \textit{Time} = \textit{Achievement}$$

Accordingly, you and your cronies must start putting more effort and time into Nigeria’s economy. You and your cronies must start investing Nigerian money in Nigeria in order for the Creator to help Nigerians. Investing Nigerian money in Nigeria will create jobs in Nigeria and provide food for the people of Nigeria. Once people are employed, they will be eating by *hook* – the proper way, and their

prayers will be answered in abundance. Again, you must start investing Nigerian money in Nigeria in order for Nigeria to become a “developed” and “civilized” country. It is that simple!

7

Mr. Wazobia, I have taken you to the joyous days of Nigeria, the era of good hope. I also have taken you to the current state of affairs in Nigeria, the City of Destruction. What about the future of Nigeria? How bright is the future of Nigeria? Is there some hope for the long suffering people of Nigeria? Let us see.

Early this morning, specifically between 3:30 a.m. and 5:00 a.m., I was up, in my characteristic way, reading, writing and wondering about the future of Nigeria. I was thinking of the impacts of your “letters” on the future development efforts in Nigeria.

Your Excellency, I must tell you that I see no future for Nigeria, *if* the current trend of economic erosion – capital flight – continues. Your “letters” of abandonment and neglect suggest that the worst tragedies and calamities have yet to hit Nigeria and the people of Nigeria *if the trend continues*.

The future of Nigeria is ominous. It is ominous because of the *style* of your leadership, which is being copied by so many Nigerian leaders and a good number of Nigerian leaders-to-be, your *followers*.

You have successfully, but tragically, established in Nigeria a style of “*get-rich-quick and let us pile up the riches abroad.*” It is a style of leadership that has damaged the traditional value system¹¹ of good work ethics in Nigeria. You have been nurturing and glorifying this style of leadership for almost two decades now.

Some call that style, “419,” others continue to call it “corruption.” To me, your style of leadership is far beyond “419”; it is far beyond “corruption.” Your style of leadership is worse than “419”; it is worse than “corruption.” Your style of leadership is what I call “hyper-419” and “hyper-corruption,” strongly rooted in what I referred to earlier as a feeling of inferiority. This feeling of inferiority¹² to anything foreign gives you the false pride in banking Nigerian money abroad when it is obvious to you – yes, very obvious to you -- that “civilized” foreign leaders have *wisely* refused to deposit one penny in your own country, Nigeria.

Your Excellency, this feeling of inferiority has destroyed in you the spirit of consideration for your fellow citizens of Nigeria, the people you consider, “uncivilized.” This feeling of inferiority has prevented you from using your common sense. [For details of the relationship between capital flight on the part of so many African leaders and a feeling of inferiority, kindly refer to one of my recent works, *MisEducated to Feel Inferior.*¹³]

Today, politics is considered by many Nigerians as the *most* lucrative business in the country. The rich and

famous in Nigeria today are mostly politicians. So many Nigerians enter politics today for their own personal, selfish gains. Very few Nigerians enter politics to serve the people of Nigeria. Worse still, Nigerian politicians do not even hold debates these days on how best to solve mammoth problems hindering positive developments in Nigeria.

Your Excellency, your followers are following your examples; they are following your footsteps; they are following your style of leadership. In fact, they have “joined” you, with pride and without shame, to rob and loot their own people of Nigeria with God-forbidden impunity *only* to pile up the bounties in foreign countries, your defined “civilized,” “safe havens.” They have joined you, without thinking for one second about the consequences of robbing their own people only to stockpile the loot in foreign countries. They have learned from Your Excellency that leadership is not action, but position. This is horrible!

Mr. Wazobia, does it bother you and your cronies to know that Nigeria has been consistently ranked, for the past ten years now, as “the most corrupt nation in the world?” For details of this ranking of nations in terms of corruption, see Transparency International web site.^{14]}

Mr. Wazobia, to better foresee the gloomy future awaiting Nigeria, given your style of leadership, I request that you ask yourself these simple but fundamental questions:

- *Whose interests am I serving when I steal my people's money and hide it abroad?*
- *Why am I not aware of the obvious fact that the leaders of these "civilized" countries have no penny in my own country, Nigeria?*
- *Will Nigeria ever become "civilized," "industrialized," and "developed," amidst massive capital flight on my own part?*
- *If patriotism is love for one's own country, how am I showing love for my own country, Nigeria, when I am robbing my country only to pile up the loot in another country?*
- *Where is my spirit of patriotism? What is wrong with me?*

Your Excellency if you ask yourself these essential questions and sleep over them, you are bound to change. That is, Nigeria will change for the better as you start investing Nigerian wealth in Nigeria as supposed.

Mr. Wazobia, the future of Nigeria depends on your decision: the decision to start from *today* investing Nigerian wealth in Nigeria and bringing back to Nigeria that \$100

billion you already hid abroad and to stop hiding more. It is that simple!

8

Mr. Wazobia, this memo will not be complete if some attention is not given to the word, “leadership.” Because of your “letters” of abandonment and neglect, I would like to start with some fundamental questions:

Is leadership synonymous with misappropriation and embezzlement of public funds? Is leadership defined by hiding Nigerian resources in private bank accounts abroad while millions of Nigerians are being starved to death? Your Excellency, *what is leadership without moral imperative? What is leadership without ethics and ethical standards? What is leadership without moral law? What is leadership without transparency and probity? What is leadership without the love for one’s own country and one’s own people? What is leadership without patriotism?*

Do you see, Mr. Wazobia, a clear, direct relationship between embezzlement of public funds and the high unemployment rate in Nigeria? Do you observe a clear, direct relationship between your continuous banking of Nigerian money abroad and starvation in Nigeria? Do you understand that stealing Nigerian money only to hide it in foreign countries is the number one cause of moral decadence in Nigeria?

Mr. Wazobia, what is leadership to you? Specifically, what is the relationship between leaders and followers?

Your Excellency, years of learning and teaching Government and politics have helped me reach one fundamental, lasting conclusion about the relationship between leaders and followers – the government and the governed. Here is that conclusion, which has become my belief as well as my motto:

*If leaders do not lead well,
followers will not follow well.*

Since the basic style of your leadership is to rob Nigerians only to stockpile the loot abroad, so many rich Nigerians, especially Nigerian leaders-to-be, are currently following that crooked style of leadership. The order of the day in Nigeria now is to rob the country as much as possible and hide the loot in foreign countries.

Conversely,

*if leaders lead well,
followers will follow well.*

Therefore, to produce “civilized” people, our leaders must act “civilized.” That is, to re-produce a great Nigeria (the “giant of Africa”) our leaders, including Your Excellency, must exhibit great leadership qualities. Below are some of those great leadership qualities.

Mr. Wazobia, one of the qualities of great leaders is vision. Great leaders are visionary. They are creative thinkers, futuristic, and farsighted. They plan, set laudable goals,

and execute them with great dispatch and precision, knowing that the future belongs to those who are ready for it today.

Great leaders display tremendous maturity, experience, efficiency, competence and dedication. They are well organized, and decisive. They are very resourceful, imaginative, inventive, quick-witted, energetic, productive and self-motivated. They have the capacity and ability to inspire others, not only to help them achieve the laudable goals they set for their countries but also to assist their fellow citizens to reach their potentials in life.

Great leaders are task oriented, and as such are considered equal to the task of leadership -- managing time, money and state resources efficiently and effectively. Great leaders know that *leadership is action and not a position*.

All great leaders have a great sense of self-worth, self-respect and patriotism. They are confident. They are proud of their accomplishments. Above all, they are proud of their countries. They understand the meaning of “national interest.” Specifically, they put their countries first, doing everything necessary and possible to make their countries great. Because of that understanding, they refuse to rob their countries only to send the loot to Nigeria or some other foreign countries. Because of that understanding, they invest their countries’ resources in their own countries, knowing that the first step to leadership is servanthood. Great leaders know that a leader is the servant of his/her people.

Great leaders maintain a strong military, knowing that a strong national defense provides optimum national security for their own people.

Great leaders display a tremendous amount of flexibility, altering ineffective habits, and adapting constantly to changing circumstances. They are not rigid. They know their own strengths and weaknesses. They are great listeners. They respect others and their view points. They seek knowledge.

Great leaders admire wisdom, knowing quite well that two thinking heads are often better than one. Accordingly, they constantly assess past successes and failures, striving to overcome setbacks for a better future. They give and receive feedback, and above all, learn from it. In fact, they hire wise men and women to advise them on how best to run the affairs of the state, knowing that when a king has good counselors, his reign will be prosperous and peaceful.

Mr. Wazobia, great leaders are known for their forgiveness. They understand that politics is a game in which the opposing forces basically differ on how best to run a nation's affairs. Because of this mutual understanding, assassination of the opposing forces is not a consideration; it is not a choice. Because of this mutual understanding, the loser congratulates the winner and the winner reaches out to the loser and his/her supporters. Indeed, great leaders are proactive and diplomatic, mediating conflicts, constantly building consensus with the full understanding that "united

we stand; divided we fall.” Great leaders know that peace is costly but worth the expense.

Your Excellency, great leaders also exhibit great compassion. They are passionate and sensitive to the plight of the common man. They are compassionate toward their fellow citizens – the followers. They understand the utilitarian philosophy (of the greatest happiness for the greatest number), knowing that great leaders are the servant of the people. Because of this understanding, national interests, the interests of the people, become their priorities. They are democratic at heart, knowing that the best form of government is the government of the people, by the people and for the people and not government of the few, by the few and for the few. To them, autocracy is sadism, dictatorship, total destruction.

Mr. Wazobia, the simple truth is that Nigeria needs a great leader with great leadership qualities who will command good followers. Specifically, Nigeria needs her own Nelson Mandela, who will direct the reconstruction of the devastated nation. Could that Mandela be you? Who will become Nigeria’s Mandela? How can Nigeria produce her own Mandela? An effort has been made in this memo to provide some answers, and that effort will be summarized in section 10.

9

Mr. Wazobia, I have to conclude this memorandum. But before I do, there is another burning issue to be addressed, namely, the frequency of your trips to Western countries, ostensibly to “learn” their political and economic systems as well as to “attract” foreign investments to Nigeria.

Your frequent trips to the West, which have been going on for almost two decades now, are well known. It is also well known that you frequently send some members of your administration to Western countries to “learn” their “democracies,” political systems and technological innovations. I want to comment on these visits abroad because Nigerians have yet to see any improvements in their lives due to these visits.

Let me start by asking you some simple questions.

- *What have you learned from these frequent visits to the West? Have you learned from the Western leaders – your hosts – that no Western leader will rob his own people only to feed and enrich Nigerians?*
- *Have you learned that the U.S. government, for instance, has made education of its own people the number one priority? Accordingly, not only that much funding is pumped into education, ex-*

presidents build excellent Presidential libraries upon leaving office.

- *Have you learned from your visits that in the West, telephone, electricity and water supplies remain uninterrupted year in, year out? Have you learned from your visits that all the cities and towns in the West have good roads, telephones, electricity, clean air and clean water?*
- *As you fly back and forth, have you learned from those flights that the world-class services provided to passengers leaving America for Europe cannot be compared to the poor services given to Nigerians leaving Europe for Nigeria? I am sure you notice that the airplanes taking Nigerians from Europe to Nigeria are much older and services therein sub-standard. Have you, for one second, wondered why such differences in the services and airplanes exist? If all people are created equal, do you think it is proper to treat you and your fellow Africans as second-class people?*
- *Have you learned that democracy – the government of the people, by the people and for the people -- is meaningless when the well-being of the people is neglected?*

Needless to say, nothing substantial has been learned from those visits to the West. Instead, the visits are mostly used to do the obvious, namely, to open more bank accounts and

conceal more Nigerian resources abroad. Your Excellency,
this is a tragedy.

10

Mr. Wazobia, despite everything – economic erosion, capital flight, staggering unemployment, galloping inflation, massive hunger, “hyper-419,” “hyper-corruption,” concealing Nigerian money in foreign countries, political victimization and assassination, despair and hopelessness – hope still lives on within me.

That hope is the trust that you can change and start investing Nigerian resources in Nigeria as supposed.

That hope is also rooted in the fact that it is from the dirt and nauseating humus that green plants sprout into life. I can see some concerned Nigerians “sprouting” to turn Nigeria around. Please give them a chance; make them a part of your administration.

Your Excellency, I trust that this memo will touch your conscience. I trust it will make sense to you. If it does, will you turn to Nigerians and say to them, with intent and purpose, that

- *I, Mr. Wazobia, have finally seen the light. I have come to the full realization that no society will ever see the light of “industrialization,” “civilization,” and*

“development” if its leaders continue to conceal the fortunes and wealth of their own people in foreign countries.

- *I have made a solemn determination, from now on, to improve your lives. I have determined to make Nigeria a civilized, industrialized and developed country.*
- *From this day forward, I will no longer hide Nigerian money abroad. I must bring Nigerian funds I deposited in foreign banks home.*

Mr. Wazobia, the axiom that “charity begins at home” does have real meaning. I hope you go out in search of it.

Thank you for reading this memo. Thank you for a change of heart, as you begin to invest Nigerian resources in Nigeria. PEACE!

Your Sincere Compatriot,

Bedford Nwabueze Umez, Ph.D.
Professor, American Government

Appendix A

Author's Led Petition to President Obasanjo: Please Reject \$1 billion IMF Offer

Concerned Nigerians

August 16, 1999

President Olusegun Obasanjo
The President of the Fed. Rep. of Nigeria
[c/o Nigerian Embassies in US (NY, DC), UK, Italy,
Germany, France, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland]

Your Excellency,

Please Reject \$1 billion IMF Offer**

To say that concerned Nigerians were (and still are) in shock following the report [Reuters, July 22, 1999], that "a visiting International Monetary Fund delegation had offered a \$1 billion cushioning facility for short-term economic help" to Nigeria is an understatement. So many Nigerians are visibly disappointed because our core problem is not necessarily lack of money; it is mostly misappropriation of public funds by some of our leaders. In fact, your promise to stop corruption in Nigeria demonstrates a general understanding of this core problem. Please permit us to briefly illustrate our points.

Misappropriation of Funds

In November, 1998, we learnt that "the family of Nigeria's late dictator, Gen. Sani Abacha has handed back to the government more than \$750 million in state funds illegally

amassed by the former leader," and that "others in Abacha's government also siphoned money from the state to amass personal fortunes." According to the then finance minister, Anthony Ani, "Abacha's national security adviser, Ismail Gwarzo, channeled about \$1.3 billion worth of foreign reserves into private accounts." [JET, Nov. 1998; AP, Nov. 10, 1998].

In June, this year [1999], we also learnt that Your Excellency "fired 29 top officers from the military and seized hundreds of millions of dollars from associates of the late dictator Gen. Sani Abacha," and that a "new law published in a special government gazette authorized the immediate seizure of more than \$420 million in a petroleum refinery, including \$140 million held by Abacha's former national security adviser, Ibrahim Gwarzo." [AP, June 9, 1999].

This month, August, 1999, we received the following report: "Abubakar's government said that more than \$1 billion of missing state funds and illegally acquired property had been recovered from the aides and family of the late dictator," and that "another \$2.5 billion was siphoned over a deal involving debts owed Russian firms for work on a giant steel complex in central Nigeria." [Reuters, August 1, 1999].

As you know, these three examples of recoveries are just a drop of water in the ocean of public funds stolen from Nigerian people by some of their leaders who were supposed to take care of the people. As a matter of fact, there are several Abachas and Gwarzos still in Nigeria today, starving millions of Nigerians to death. Therefore, all that is needed is for Your Excellency to (a) ensure that all current and future funds are directed towards the

upliftment of the long suffering people of Nigeria, and (b) continue recovering all the stolen/embezzled funds from our treasury, and have them INVESTED IN Nigeria. In fact, the news [Reuters, August 1, 1999] that "Nigeria has decided to file a suit against the family of late dictator Sani Abacha over state funds missing in a \$2.5 billion debt buy-back deal," and that you "had taken an interest in a suit filed against Abacha's estate in a London court by a Swiss-based businessman, Nessim D. Goan, over the deal," is quite refreshing.

In addition to misappropriation of funds, let us consider its twin enemy, namely, illegally amassed millions of Nigerian funds in foreign countries.

Nigerian Funds in Foreign Banks

Your Excellency, there is concrete evidence pointing to the fact that illegally amassed millions of Nigerian funds are in private bank accounts in foreign countries. Just consider the following:

"Two prominent Nigerians arrested over an alleged deal to try to transfer \$100 million from Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation to the United States." Daily Times, June 24, 1996 (as posted to Naijanet -- Nigerian Information Network, June 24, 1996).

This is shocking; but, Your Excellency, there is more:

"We at the Citibank had a large account deposited FROM NIGERIA (our emphasis). When the Nigerian government changed hands in a military coup, some of the new

authorities came to claim the money of someone in the previous regime. They were NASTY THUGS (emphasis ours). We called the police, and the police did some checking. They came back to me the next day and said, 'Mr. Dessauer, you don't have to worry about these fellows anymore.' We put them on a plane to Nigeria and told the Nigerian embassy if they ever tried this stunt again we would send all Nigerians home." [Statements by John Dessauer, the former top Citibank official (Swiss branch), as quoted in THE NIGERIAN, May, 1996, p. 3.]

Mr. President, how can one explain this behavior of such leaders who steal our funds only to deposit them in foreign banks owned by those who consider them "THUGS" while millions of their own people are dying of malnutrition and inadequate medical care. To us, the undersigned, this kind of behavior makes no sense. In fact, it is this kind of behavior that makes some people consider several countries in Africa "underdeveloped" because if their leaders are really "developed," they should not be robbing their own people only to pay outsiders/those who call them the "most corrupt thugs" in the world, as in this case:

"Nigeria is the most corrupt nation in the world," according to Transparency International [Houston Chronicle, July 28, 1996, p.2E].

It might be instructive, to add, at this juncture, a recent media report [July, 1999] that "N1.605 billion has been allocated to the elected members of the National Assembly,

allegedly for the purpose of 'furnishing' their residential quarters." Your Excellency, this does not sound right to a nation that is ready to borrow money. If Nigeria really needs this \$1 billion loan from the IMF, this kind of lavish spending is obviously not a good example of how to manage the country's meager resources.

Before conclusion, it must be emphasized, Your Excellency, that Swiss leaders, American leaders, Japanese leaders, Canadian leaders, German leaders, French leaders, and the leaders of other progressive countries DO NOT have [illegal] bank accounts in Nigeria; they do not have mansions in Nigeria. But so many Nigerian leaders/elite not only have huge bank accounts, and mansions in those countries, but are proud to have them. Why is this the case? As Your Excellency reflects upon this question, we are pleading with you and your administration to borrow this basic principle that charity begins at home from the leaders of the progressive countries where most of our leaders/elite shamelessly run for medical check-up (when they have enough money to build such caliber of hospitals at home).

Conclusion

Mr. President, we DO NOT need the loan from the IMF. What we need in our government are MEN AND WOMEN OF GOOD MORALS and CONSCIENCE to (a) help you stop corruption as you promised, (b) recover the stolen funds from the rogues disguised as leaders/elite, and (c) invest them wisely, properly and equitably IN NIGERIA.

For your administration to excel, our present leaders/elite must start investing Nigerian resources in Nigeria. In deed, encouraging Nigerians to invest their resources in Nigeria is a key to economic recovery for the country. This, in

addition to staying with the course you have embarked on which includes, stamping out corruption, recovering the loots from the rouges, and pleading for patriotism in all Nigerians at home and abroad will go a long way in assuring the success of your administration.

May God bless Nigeria and be with you in your efforts to change Nigeria for better.

Yours Faithfully,

Concerned Compatriots:

1. *Bedford Nwabueze Umez, Ph.D.*, USA, and the rest of the 245 Nigerians, whose names are not included in this Appendix for space consideration.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The petition was sent out on August 6, 1999, to all Nigerians across the globe via Internet discussion groups. Due to the urgent nature of the petition, the call for signatures was terminated on August 15, 1999. The petition was mailed to the President Obasanjo through the following Nigerian Embassies in US (NY, DC), UK, Italy, Germany, France, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland on August 16. In addition, the petition was published in at least seven Nigerian newspapers, and was published in several Internet sites, including Umez's web sites, exclusively devoted to issues affecting Nigeria and Africa: www.umez.com, www.africangovernment.org, and www.liberateafrica.org

The petitioners were happy to learn that on Friday, November 12, 1999, "Nigeria shuns \$1.8b IMF loan." **In the page to follow is President Obasanjo's response to the petition.



STATE HOUSE
ABUJA,
NIGERIA.

Reference:

15 December 1999

SH/COS/107

Dr. Bedford Nwabueze Umez,
Lee College,
P. O. Box 818,
Baytown, Texas,
USA.

RE: PLEASE REJECT \$1 BILLION IMF OFFER

I write on behalf of the President, Commander-in-Chief to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 16 August 1999 which you and other co-signatories routed through our Mission in Saudi Arabia and to inform you that due note has been taken of the content.

2. As you are aware, this Administration places high premium on transparency and accountability in the act of governance and has therefore irrevocably committed itself to an anti-corruption policy that would be backed by effective legislation in order to rid our society of this cankerworm. In this connection, you can rest assured also that the Government would not relent in its efforts to recover from concerned public officials all ill-gotten monies and assets whether located in the country or stashed abroad.
3. Of course it must be admitted that in tandem with the above efforts, Government also has to concern itself with the socio-economic development of the nation, which unfortunately was for over a decade stunted by the gross mismanagement of past military Administrations. This situation has indeed contributed to the huge foreign debt hanging over the country, for which there is a clear duty to negotiate favorably in order to revamp the economy and restore hope to our long-suffering people. Thus, I should like to note that in all these negotiations our national interest remains paramount.
4. Please convey His Excellency's best wishes to all the signatories for their well being and continued success in their various endeavours.

Amb. A.O. Esan
Deputy Chief of Staff
For: Chief of Staff to the President, C-in-C.

Appendix B

The Zairean Tragedy: A Lesson for Africa

by Bedford Nwabueze Umez, Ph.D

(Published in *Houston Punch*, *African Herald*, *African News Weekly* and *US-Africa Voice*, 1996)

I was moved to tears while watching the CNN evening news (Nov. 6, 1996) about the killings, the starvation, malnutrition, diseases and death tolls in Goma, eastern Zaire. As I was watching these atrocities -- akin to the ones in Rwanda, Burundi and Sudan -- being committed by these Africans against their fellow Africans, I was also considering a general rise in unemployment, closure of schools, increasing hunger and starvation of civil servants, galloping inflation, mass exodus of youths, and shameless lack of consideration for others in Nigeria. While brooding over these brutal facts (amidst the thought that Mobutu is now enjoying his huge mansion in southern France, following his treatment for cancer in one of the best hospitals in Switzerland -- a hospital built and equipped directly or indirectly with the money stolen from the people of Zaire, and many other African countries), I was equally asking myself a series of questions:

What is going on in Africa? Who will save Africa? Why is it that most African leaders (like Mobutu) have huge bank accounts in foreign countries such as Switzerland and France, live in extravagant mansions (with gold bathtubs,

like that of Mobutu shown to the whole world in the same CNN evening news of Nov. 6, 1996), while their OWN African people are dying of hunger, diseases of all kinds, and malnutrition? Why are these Mobutu-like leaders of Africa so *mindless, ruthless, savage, deadly* and downright *stupid*? Why should they use their nations' funds to buy guns and bombs (from the West) just to kill their own people, and use the rest to build safe-havens abroad, while none is invested in their economies? Are these people (we call leaders) really sane human beings, or are they simply sadists deriving enormous joy by inflicting acute, painful and chronic wounds on their own people?

My fellow Africans, while the above disturbing questions may seem difficult to answer, there is, in my view, a simple solution to them, namely, *true education*. As I have said before (and will continue to say until our ills are adequately addressed), Africa must be ruled by TRULY educated Africans: those who are not driven by meaningless and senseless titles, and extravagant display of ill-gotten wealth, but by humility and service to their own people; those who cannot stand the shame of seeing their own people being licked to death by flies while they are having parties and enjoying life; those whose visions and missions go far beyond their narrow, selfish interests, and self-aggrandizement; and those with common sense to understand that Africans are ONE all over the world, and that what is destroying and tearing Africa (and Africans) apart is mostly Mobutu-like mentality of "charity begins abroad," and the general lack of patriotism. Africa is

overdue for the captainship of TRULY educated men and women.

I am therefore appealing to all Africans -- African leaders, African elite, and ordinary citizens of Africa -- to understand that Africa needs REAL educated men and women. We must start practicing charity begins at home, not charity begins abroad. That is what others (of the nations we call "developed") are doing; we should not be different. Our education should no longer be defined by nominal degrees and titles, but by the substance of what we do for Africa. Our education should no longer be controlled by a colonial mentality, an inferiority complex, and ethnic patriotism. We must say NO to those (of us) who are building (and developing) other people's homes while we have no home. Africans must work together to help one another build and develop the continent of Africa. Africa deserves the best in us, namely, our common sense, our commitment, our vision, our patriotism, and hence, our REAL education. May God bless Africa with men of decency and common sense.

Appendix C

Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King and President Nelson Mandela

by Bedford Nwabueze Umez, Ph.D.

*(Presented at the Black Heritage Society, George Brown Convention
Hall, Houston, Texas, January 15, 2001, in celebration of the 23rd
Annual Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome all of you to this memorable day of remembering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I thank Black Heritage Society for hosting this heroic event and for granting me the privilege to address you. Better still, I am gratified that this occasion is also being used to honor Mr. Nelson Mandela.

I will not dwell on the history of Dr. King and that of Mr. Mandela; they are readily available from various sources, including the Internet. Instead, I will pinpoint some of the lessons humanity has learned from their struggle to liberate Africans from the bondage of racial oppression and bigotry.

We are honoring Dr. King and Mr. Mandela today (and will continue to eternity) because their contributions to mankind captured what our Creator had in mind when He said, in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image:"

It is an image of one world under God; it is an image that

rejects, without any trace of doubts, racial bigotry; it is an image of one human race.

Dr. King, born in January 15, 1929, had a dream of a free America where racial oppression and bigotry will no longer exist. He tirelessly pursued that dream until the force(s) against injustice assassinated him in 1968. Today, "de jure" segregation in the US is unconstitutional

Mr. Mandela, born in July 18, 1918, pursued a similar dream of a free South Africa where racial oppression and bigotry, otherwise called Apartheid, will cease to exist. He pursued that dream with vigor. In 1994, he became the President of South Africa. Today, Apartheid regime is history.

Collectively, both men were fighting to preserve the indisputable ideal that "all men are created equal" and therefore must be treated equally. They were fighting to maintain the ideal of equality of man to man; an ideal of men of good will; an ideal well conceived by the Creator when He made man in his own image.

That ideal was the sum total of Dr. King's dream: that one day, his "four little children," will live "in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." It is a dream that will remain forever immortal. The same ideal was echoed by Mr. Mandela during his trial in 1964:

During my lifetime, I have dedicated myself to the struggle of African people. I have fought against

white domination, and I have fought against black domination. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve, but if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

But here is my question for all of us: Has this dream of Dr. King been realized to the fullest? Has that ideal of equality of man-to-man come full circle? The simple answer is that today is better than yesterday; as such, there is much work on our part to realize the dream fully. We must not sleep until justice is guaranteed to all human beings!

I thank those who are celebrating this day by emphasizing Dr. King's contributions and accomplishments to humanity. And to those individuals, I say this: the day has dawned in which the wound of yesterday should be cast in oblivion; when old prejudices, old misunderstandings fade and we start living in harmony within this human race.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there is only one race, and that race is the human race. The dream must live on!

Happy Dr. King's Day!

Notes

¹ Transparency International ranks Nigeria among the “most corrupt nations” in the world. For details, see, <http://www.transparency.org>.

² Naira is the official Nigerian currency. 100 kobo make 1 Naira (just as 100 cents make \$1.00). During the glorious days of Nigeria, between the mid 70s and early 80s, an average of 70 kobo equaled \$1.00. For over a decade now, Nigerian currency has been steadily depreciating. This month, September 2004, N132 equals \$1.00.

³ Again, Naira is the Nigerian currency.

⁴ For details of the concrete problems facing Nigeria and solutions thereto, see Bedford N. Umez, “Nigeria: Real Problems, Real Solutions,” Morris Publishing, Kearney, 2000.

⁵ Published December 29, 2003, by *Daily Trust*, and distributed by AllAfrica Global Media. For complete details, see, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200312290760.html>.

⁶ For details, see "NAFDAC indicts UNTH over fake drugs procurement," <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/printable/200307300320.html>.

⁷ “Economics Nobel Laureate, Prof. Joseph Stiglitz, identified the impediments to the Nigerian economy. He, therefore, called for an immediate action to end the trend. Stiglitz revealed that Nigerians have \$100 billion (N13.7 trillion) stashed abroad and 25,000 doctors working in foreign countries because of the absence of an enabling

environment at home.” For details, see *Nigerian Vanguard* (May 2004).

⁸ Praying is good; the utility of prayer cannot be overstated. The point here is that the explosion of these religious groups and constant prayers in Nigeria today suggest the depth of hopelessness and despair in the country. As we know, many people usually pray when they find themselves in trouble. Rapid growth of different religious groups in Nigeria and constant prayers at every nook and corner reveal the magnitude of the trouble the people of Nigeria are currently facing.

⁹ See, the US Supreme Court decision, *Engel v. Vitale* (1962), for details of this ruling on the separation of church and state.

¹⁰ The term “419” (four-one-nine) is derived from a section of the Nigerian criminal code outlawing all sorts of frauds. “419”, in its simplest term, is *advanced fee fraud*. While there are many schemes and scams used by 419ners, e.g., unsolicited mail, faxed and telephone promises designed to facilitate victims parting with money, all involve requests to help the [fraudster] move large sums of money with the promise of a substantial share of the cash in return. As is always the case, any advance payment for the transaction cost involving the movement of the money is lost forever. Basically, “419” is synonymous with cheating, e.g., stealing by trick. Accordingly, to have “419” done to someone means to have that person cheated or tricked or defrauded.

¹¹ Bedford N. Umez, “The Tragedy of a Value System in Nigeria: Theories and Solutions,” International Scholars Publications, Bethesda: 1999.

¹² For details of the relationship between a feeling of inferiority on the part of Nigerian leaders and capital flight, see *MisEducated to Feel Inferior*. Bedford Nwabueze Umez.

¹³ Bedford Nwabueze Umez, *MisEducated to Feel Inferior*, PageFree Publishing Inc, Otsego: 2005.

¹⁴ <http://www.transparency.org>.