

BABANGIDA, NIGERIANS ARE NOT MORONS!



Thirteen years is not too long a time to remember the evil that General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida did. A little over 13 years after committing one of the worst electoral crimes in the history of mankind, the unrepentant manipulator has picked up a so-called party nomination form that simply tells Nigerians he's hell-bent on becoming their next president in 2007 supposedly through the ballot box – the same ballot box he dumped in the gutter when he annulled the June 12, 1993; an election that was clearly won by Mr. M.K.O. Abiola. Before that election, Babangida had done everything imaginable to convince even the most optimistic democrat that, as the so-called Evil Genius, he was democracy's worst adversary. And after many political manipulations, the dictator eventually came out in the open by canceling without care, the results of the most believed election in Nigeria's history. Now, it is that very system which he discredited that he has now found so valuable to attempt to use to climb back to power. It is a moronic insult!

After many years in behind-the-scenes manipulation of political office holders, Babangida is back to his evil game as the archenemy of Nigeria's democracy. What Babangida worked so hard to kill is still alive, and he now wants a piece of it? Babangida wants power not just for the sake of it, or to repair a broken nation he created as some believe, but to satisfy a personal orgy for destruction, deceit, manipulation, and revenge. Above all, he wants power because he has done so much evil that he fears Nigerians will someday attempt to bring him to book. How can he allow power to migrate to strange hands in his mind's eyes when he has so much unexplained details locked up inside his evil cupboard? The malicious programmer is, therefore, always scheming not to create any beneficial social application, but to develop infective codes that will paralyze the nation.

In the face of the growing threat of a return to a Babangida presidency in Nigeria, it is so hard to understand why the majority of Nigerians are still not displaying rage about the presidential ambition of the former military ruler. Could it be that the nation is too comforted by the prosperity provided through the new-found stupendous inflow of petroleum dollar? Or has excruciating hard-knock life which is a legacy of the Babangida regime totally paralyzed Nigeria from feeling more pains? Sociologists and political scientists might be able to explain why Nigerians appear currently too numb to react, but we dare declare that Nigerians are now seeing the best years of their lives compared to what would happen if Babangida should return to power. To the suffering Nigerian masses, we say, if you think your lives are difficult enough now, just wait till you experience life under the ever-smiling but evidently dishonest former ruler called Babangida.

Because Babangida's agenda lurk, there is a great danger to our nation. Babangida's destructive ability is akin to a multitude of evil armies or billions of locusts. Nigeria is in such a grave danger that compatriots cannot but rise. To run around in an effort to thwart the plans of Mr. Babangida is neither obsessive nor compulsive. It is a sound and appropriate response to the damaging power of one of the most vicious, profligate, selfish and vindictive dictators Africa has ever known. Babangida is destructive; and with a 13-year CIA-suggested expiration limit hanging over Nigeria, he is the last doctor Nigerians want to invite to rescue their nation out of its life-threatening cancer of moral decadence.

Babangida, as we all can agree, is in love with experiments. We saw it with his Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), MAMSER, the Peoples' Bank, the state-sponsored political parties SDP and NRC, all of which are moribund. No administration or regime has a list of failed programs as long as what IBB parades as his achievements. His failed experiments are evident of his fake practitioner license to operate on the patient called Nigeria. And this pathetic quack is now poised to operate on us once again, if we give him the chance. While picking up his "nomination form" at the People's Democratic Party (PDP) headquarters on November 8, 2006, he promised to tinker with Nigeria better than he did before. The newspapers quoted him: "If I say I would copy President Obasanjo, this would be unfair. He has always expected his officers to be bold, innovative and imaginative. This is what I plan to do." This blood-creeping statement should wake up even the most dormant of us. He will take Nigeria in a different direction and tinker with her so much that by the time he is done, there might not be anything left to be called a country.

Why do we say the patient called Nigeria might die in Babangida's evil hands?

There is information on the Internet about how Nigeria's secularity would have been compromised under the Babangida administration. The annulment of the June 12 election had to do with the intent of the General to become a perpetual president. Nigerians are invited to www.againstbabangida.com for details of how Babangida could have used our religious differences to cause decades of political instability, while perpetuating his grasp on power.

It is hardly contentious that Babangida's plan was to give victory to the NRC in the state-sponsored two-party election of 1993, which presented a weak and relatively unknown presidential candidate, Bashir Tafa. Both the NRC and SDP were created by Babangida, who handed their constitutions to them and guided them from birth until death. When the Social Democratic Party of M.K.O. Abiola won the election, Babangida simply blew up, and scampered to quickly annul it without any real reason. Up till today, Babangida has not given Nigerians any direct reason for annulling the election, which is certainly the freest ever conducted. He has kept saying for 13 years his hands were tied, and that at a time in the future, he would provide the reason. The electoral commissioner at the time, Professor Humphrey Nwosu, was strangely quieted, and has not spoken publicly for 13 years.

How then can Babangida come before Nigeria to ask the people for approval to make him a president through an electoral system he disrespected and disbanded? How can a man whose democratic legacy is a concocted interim government that lasted only three months now ask people in the same nation to vote him president of a state he attempted to destroy? If we allow him to rehabilitate, the blame for the desecration of democratic ideals would very much belong to us the citizens.

Instead of giving him power, shouldn't Nigerians be asking Babangida for a sincere reason for is annulment of the June 12 election? Instead of rewarding him with the most exalted position in the land, Babangida ought to be telling us why his eight years in power were some of the worst Nigeria had ever seen. We disagree with those who say the former dictator should just apologize for June 12. Apology is not relevant to the crime. Even then, Babangida is not at all apologetic, which is why he had been trying to play with our collective intelligence by telling us he cancelled, not annulled the election in 1993. How can he be so bold to be lecturing Nigerians on English grammar as if he had tertiary education? Had he been made to answer charges about his misrule, he would have been explaining the linguistic difference not to right-thinking Nigerians but his fellow criminals in the prison. There is a clear distinction between apology and justice. Justice is what we demand. Instead of joining the race, Babangida should be racing to the prison if Nigeria were truly a nation where truth and social justice mean anything.

The truth of the matter is that there is so much dishonesty from the most exalted rooms of Aso Rock to every street in Nigeria. Babangida's confidence and bravado is derived from our total lack of standards and morality. In a nation where anything goes, people like Babangida and all the shameless so-called leaders who followed him to pick the blood-stained nomination form from the PDP, know they will not be held accountable and will therefore go to unbelievable lengths to tell us we know so little about how the nation should be run. We demand so little from our so-called leaders, and we deservedly get so little in return.

A great heap of the Babangida problem belongs to the Obasanjo administration. It is the virtuous government of Olusegun Obasanjo, which has sponsored democratic coup d'état against several state governments on the ground that they were corrupt, that has let the greatest gangster in the land loose for seven years. While paying lip service to fighting corruption through the Economic and Financial Crimes

Commission (EFCC), a laudable concept, the administration has largely allowed Babangida and all other retired soldiers, civilians and politicians who stole public funds to enjoy their loot. Retired and serving military officers and political office holders ride cars and build houses that their official lifetime incomes cannot support. A sense of selective justice cannot be more apparent than with the laziness with which the EFCC has pursued known crimes initiated and perpetuated by the House of Babangida. It is not a surprise that the presidential hopeful list is filled with retired generals and their mates in the other armed forces. It is hardly difficult to see how the restraining hands of Aso Rock have paupered Mr. Nuhu Ribadu in his efforts to make history by bringing corrupt leaders to book. By the administration's own figures, no fewer than \$350 billion of our public funds have been stolen over 40 years. The EFCC arrived at the figure by going through the records of the Central Bank. Why has the EFCC not told us from the same Central Bank documents, who collected how much and when?

At least on one occasion, we know who took the money. Babangida took \$12 billion between 1991 and 1993 and has since not accounted for the money. The Okigbo Report, the most secret and open document in Nigeria's history, we now know has details of how the Maradona helped turn us into the poorest rich nation on earth. Yet, in line with the policy of providing the most cozy environment to the enabler of the current administration, the Okigbo Report has never been acknowledged, refuted, released or approved, in spite of editorial pleas for it to be made public by The Guardian and The Punch newspapers.

Who killed the late Newswatch founder and journalist, Dele Giwa? Is there anyone who doesn't know who did it? Yes, the Nigeria Police and all the security agencies still claim they don't know who the murderer(s) are because if they did, they would have arrested the culprits. The Nigeria Police, just as the EFCC, the SSS, the Nigerian Army, the Central Bank and other public institutions, are littered with evidence of Babangida's atrocities. These institutions have never followed up, or made to provide evidence of the junta's daring escapades in its eight-year span. Had they done so, the fairy tale about Dele Giwa tracking a story about a drug courier called Gloria Okon, just before his murder, would have become non-fictional. And the Jennifer Madike drug-dealing connections would have been illuminated. But as it is, all these allegations remain allegations never to be investigated. The former military dictator Ibrahim Babangida has President Olusegun Obasanjo to thank for providing him (Babangida) with security from the victims of his (Babangida) atrocities.

The Justice Chukwudifu Akunne Oputa Human Rights Violation Investigation Commission of Nigeria (HRVIC) was set up by the Obasanjo administration to investigate human rights abuses from 1966 to 1999 so as to develop a national consensus on the boundaries of acceptable behavior by government entities as well as individuals. The panel heard cases throughout 2001, mostly involving allegations of unlawful arrest, detention, and torture as far back as the 1966, taking claims from more than 10,000 petitioners. On the basis of its report, a multitude of legal standards as well as compensations to various families and groups (including the victims of the Biafran War as well as the relatives of Fela Anikulapo-Kuti) were to be implemented, except that Babangida had his way as usual.

True to type, Justice Oputa was ingeniously disrespected by Babangida and his fellow retired officers who boycotted its sittings to cover up the shady activities of their regimes, to which the erudite judge said "fear has changed sides" in obvious reference to the fact that when the General was in power, he instilled terror in Nigerians' minds. In one of its recommendations, the Oputa Commission is reported by the Vanguard to have recommend that the murder case be re-opened for further investigation in the public interest. Was this why Babangida could not afford to have the findings and recommendations released? Instead of appearing before the panel, Ibrahim Babangida filed a lawsuit which eventually blocked the implementation of the panel's findings.

And it is obvious why Babangida would attempt to stop the compensation to many deserving families from the Biafran War. His selfish ambition, which was consummated when he picked the nomination form to the delight of the ruling PDP, was threatened by the Oputa Commission's final recommendation. The HRVIC had concluded that any former head of state who failed to appear before it should not be allowed to seek public office ever again. Had Babangida appeared before Justice Oputa, or even, had that recommendation been allowed to be implemented, there would have been no Babangida renting a crowd to make a 15-meter walk in 25 minutes on November 8 in Abuja, to tell all of us we can do nothing, no matter what we know about him.

When Babangida picked the form, he added the twist of the Evil Genius, saying "that God will use the good people of Nigeria to make this dream come true." Will the just God of the Heavens and the Earth really use the good people of Nigeria to make Babangida's evil dream come true? Is Babangida's confident aura flowing from a secret pact he might have with the Obasanjo government that we Nigerians don't all know about? Is Babangida bigger than the rest of us? Should one man be so powerful as to disregard the law and decent rules of the society and get away with it all the time?

Is Babangida taking us for morons or are we simply a nation of morons?

Babangida truly knows something the majority of Nigerians do not seem to grasp. The politicians can not save us: he has most of them in his pocket. He knows our political system is for the highest bidder, as he is one of its architects. He knows we lack the structures to deny even a known armed robber from becoming a political office holder. He knows we have elected or allowed to emerge as political leaders, certificate forgers, 419 tricksters, corrupt policemen, pilfering soldiers, immoral husbands, unethical academicians and all the evil people imaginable into offices, from the highest levels in Abuja to the lowest levels at the local councils. He knows the people in power are within his beck and call. He knows most Nigerians are too tired mentally, spiritually and physically to resist him. And because we are so lenient with our leaders, our nation has become an international laughing stock, since all the riches that God has blessed us with have only impoverished us.

If we never got it before as a people, this is the time to get it.

What is on the way is worse than a multitude of tsunamis. Babangida represents the destructive power of several hurricanes, tornados and tsunamis working together. It is not an exaggeration; it is a fact. If we recall the decay and destruction that took place between 1985 and now, we will appreciate this fact.

Babangida is coming not to repair anything he has previously destroyed. He does not know how to repair anything as his supporters would have you believe. Had he known how to repair, he would have done so in eight years of scandal and gerrymandering that expired in 1993 when the people forced him out disgracefully. Professor Tam David-West has, perhaps, given us the best advice about the Evil Genius, when he recently said: "The only programme Babangida has is for Babangida. He has nothing to contribute. I worked with him. My position is not coloured by his having jailed me so unjustly. It is by what I know of him. Indeed, Babangida is a very pleasant man. He is one of the most charming persons I'd ever met in my life. But it's all to oil himself into gaining people's confidence." Professor David-West gets it, and so must the rest of Nigeria, whether one is an educated person in the city or peasant farmer in the village.

This is the hour of resistance. If we fail to stand for something, we will fail in everything. We can no longer adopt a 'siddon look' attitude to a growing danger in our midst. Babangida is a desecration of democracy. This is the right time to uproot him. If we in the civil society don't get it, the implications are too damning to contemplate. If Babangida is allowed to fool us again, it might spell the end of Nigeria as we know it. His presidential ambition is not only an insult to all Nigerians, but also a severe threat to the labours of our heroes past, which might end up being in vain.

Every compatriot amongst us must arise and fight this evil man called Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. It's a sacred duty which we all owe to our own dear native land, the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STOP BABANGIDA NOW, VISIT OUR WEB SITE ONLINE AT: **WWW.AGAINSTBABANGIDA.COM**
There is a wealth of valuable information and resources for you at our address on the web.

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