CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION : A STUDY OF THE CAUSES OF STUDENTS' UNREST

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BY

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To

my parents

who knew the value

of Education all along.

'The good society is not one that ignores individual differences but one that deals with them wisely and humanely'.

- John W. Gardner -

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

Youth has always been a period of restlessness, of searching, of boundless energy, but the recent upsurge of students' unrest has not only caught the attention of scholars of human behaviour and governments alike, but has also attracted the attention of the public who look up to the students in our universities as a privileged class on whose shoulders it is hoped rests the burden of economic, political and social advancement of this country.

Students' unrest is not peculiar to the developing countries alone, it is a world-wide phenomenon. In 1970, the Federal Nigerian Government appointed an administrative Commission of Inquiry headed by the former Principal of Nigeria's own 'Eton' -- Kings College, Lagos, to find solutions to the perennial students' unrest that has become a feature of our institutions of higher learning; students' unrest was viewed by the government as a social as well as an international problem and was fully committed to finding solutions to it.[1]

PURPOSE AND CONCERN OF THE STUDY

The purpose and concern of this study is to discuss, enumerate, as well as comment on the main causes of students' unrest, examine the role of the university administrator as it relates to students' unrest and to suggest plausible solutions to these unrests now being experienced in almost all institutions of higher learning throughout the country.

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1. "New Nigerian", 19th May, 1970.

.../2.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem as far as this study is concerned is students' unrest. By students' unrest, it is generally meant the psychological and physical conditions which precipitate violent actions or demonstrations with placard carrying and generally noisy processions, or hunger strikes and sit-ins, boycott of lectures, barricading of entrances to institutions and mock 'kidnapping' of officials of these institutions to arrest the attention of the public and also poses what is often referred to as the student challenge to authority. It must be pointed out that students' unrest is not a feature of universities alone; it is fast becoming more prominent and much more violent among secondary, technical and advanced teachers' colleges throughout the country.

Students' unrest in Nigeria can be classified into the following three categories in order of importance:-

(a) Welfare -- improved conditions of living in halls of residence, better meals, generous loan schemes to enable the students complete their education with the minimum of hardship and a guarantee that they will become employed after graduation.

(b) Participation -- Students want to become more involved in University decision-making processes particularly as it involves them in (a) above; in short, they are demanding

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greater freedom and power in university governance.

(c) Political issues -- these include national as well as international affairs such as the Aper Aku affair in Nigeria, the NYSC rumpus, the country's domestic and foreign policies, the question of majority rule in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and other related issues.

Nigerian students have at one time or another demonstrated either in support or against one or more of these issues in the past. They have also been greatly worried over the transparent lack of public sympathy towards their cause.

It is important that a brief mention of the psychology of a student involved in any unrest be made in this introductory chapter. Such a student normally feels that some form of injustice has been done and attempts to express his convictions thereby drawing attention to the perceived injustice and trying to seek redress. The reason for this behaviour being that as a youth, his social awareness is becoming increasingly great and he wants to say aloud his disillusionment with many of the values and activities of constitued authorities (be it those of the universities or national governments). He becomes more serious about social betterment and prides himself on thinking of people in human terms, and not as objects to be tossed around and manipulated by those in authority. A student rebel is

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seen as a champion of his colleagues against the forces of exploitation and tyranny; and he in turn thinks of himself as the collective conscience of his colleagues to protest, even at great personal risk, against political corruption, inaction and injustice, tyranny, administrative incompetence and a host of other causes.

Our university campuses are fast becoming arenas for unrestrained criticism, social action and planned violence. The university Administrator cannot but take these trends seriously and have them properly assessed and contained. Any university administration that tends to dismiss these trends as being unimportant or trivial is doomed to fail. One hopes there are not many of such administrations.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As far as this particular topic of study is concerned, it can be said with some degree of truth, that there are no significant published books as such on the topic as it relates to the Nigerian scene so far. Students' unrest or revolt has however attracted the attention of eminent historians, sociologists, psychologists, scholars in other disciplines and government officials all over the world. (In Nigeria, publication relating to students' unrest has so far been limited to journals, newspaper articles, reports of commissions and a few papers presented at seminars arranged by students on one occasion or the other. There have been a few publications by undergraduates

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in the form of reports of their projects for their final year examination. E. Babatope's "Student Power in Nigeria - (1960 - 1970)" and A.M. Waziri's "Student Power in Nigeria: The February crises as a case Study", are two examples of such project work. They do not deal with students' unrest directly as such but with related issues. C.S. Abashiya's Ph.D. dissertation titled "A Proposed Student Personnel Program for Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria" published in June 1971, also discussed a few issues related to students' problems which are sources of frequent conflicts between university authorities and students. For an adequate review of existing and related literature as far as this study is concerned, one will have to turn to the works of scholars in America and Europe, although such works are of little significance as far as students' unrest in Nigeria is concerned.

Perhaps the best known work on the history and sociology of student protest throughout the world is that of Professor Lewis S. Feuer titled, "The Conflict of Generations: The Character and Significance of Student Movements", first published in 1969. As a survey of the subject, "The Conflict of Generations", is well-nigh exhaustive; it presented a fascinating detail of the phenomenon of student protest all over the world. Professor Feuer was Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Berkeley during the student protests there in 1964. According to Professor Feuer, the

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root causes of student protest all over the world could be found in the following issues:

1) Generational Conflict.

This is the resentment and aggression of one generation against another; it has always been the younger generation revolting against the older one. There is always present a disillusionment with and rejection of the values of the older generation.

2) Political Apathy.

Student movement which leads to protest have also arisen where political apathy or a sense of helplessness prevails among the people. Especially where the people are illiterate, the feeling exists among the young literates that the political initiative is theirs.

3) Social Change and Social Reconstruction.

Students all over the world are favoured, for they can express and act on their opinions frankly, and they are strategically placed for taking the initiative and acting on their beliefs. They have fewer social bonds, so that they can do with free will what they think right. They therefore agitate for social change and social reconstruction in the society. The back-to-the-people spirit is generated and this makes them to strive further to fill the role of the conscience of society. Students are concerned with ideal issues, not like an economic movement, with the material, bread-and-butter ones. In the words of Professor Feuer, "a student is a person who, midway

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between childhood and maturity, is imbibing the highest ideals and hopes of the human cultural heritage, his age is the age of friendship and the fullness of love. In this setting, feelings of sympathy for the deprived, the suffering, and the underdog are spontaneous and natural with students"[2]

4) Student Welfare

Issues related to student well-being, such as mutual aid, transportation, examination schedules, housing and tuition all come under student welfare. The conditions of student existence according to Feuer remain optimal for spontaneous rebellion.

Professor Feuer noted that in the early sixties, the causes of students unrest/protest shifted from the above to such issues as the civil rights movement, particularly in the U. S. A., participatory democracy in university governance and such political issues as Vietnam, Cambodia and aid to the developing nations. Some of the issues enumerated above have also been responsible for students unrest in Nigeria to some extent as will be seen later.

Another well known work on student protests has been that edited by Seymour Martin Lipset, titled "Student Politics" published by Basic Books Inc. New York, 1967. This publication comes under the general title of "Student Movements - Past and Present". The purpose of "Student Politics" is to look at student unrest in the

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2. L. S. Feuer, "The Conflict of Generations - the Character and significance of Student Movements", Heinemann, London, 1969.

..../8.

United States in a larger international perspective and to suggest some plausible inferences about its causes, conditions, and consequences; it also seek to analyse the role of students in politics and higher education, with particular emphasis on the emerging nations. In "Student Politics", the causes of students' unrest were said to vary from one continent to another. In the U.S.A. the major causes of students unrest can be directly linked with such issues as (i) the civil rights movements of the early sixties, (ii) greater freedom of expression and (iii) participation in the governing bodies of universities, i.e. democratic participation in the administration of the universities, and (iv) politics generally. In Latin America, the cause of unrest has been directly attributed to the issue of the phenomenon of change, that is modernisation. Latin American university students are very much involved in the politics of their respective country. In Europe, it has been the question of political corruption, exploitation of workers and related issues. The causes of unrest in Europe also vary from one European country to another; it can be lack of adequate facilities within the universities in one country, or the question of State control of the universities in yet another country.

Other related works of importance published in this field include the following:-

1. "Students, University and Society - A Comparative Sociological Review" - edited by Margaret Scotford Archer, published by Heinemann, London, 1972.

This is a comparative study of the sociology of higher education during a period of crisis in which student activism has become an articulate and potent force. It dealt mainly with university students of the developed world.

2. "Student Revolt" by Colin Crouch, published by the Bodley Head, London in 1970.

In recent years the perennial phenomenon of youth's rebellion against authority and the established ways of its elders has found its most widespread and vigorous - even violent expression in the form of student protest. Colin Crouch explained the significance of greater student participation in university affairs which have hardened into distinct political attitudes, critical of existing systems, advocating and often practising 'direct action' as opposed to democratic methods. He examined the situations which have given rise to student activism, with emphasis in the events at the London School of Economics and Political Science between 1966 and 1969.

3. "Students in Conflict - L.S.E. in 1967" by T. Blackstone et al.

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This is a detailed investigation of the events which began at the London School of Economics in the autumn of 1966 and subsequently led to the first strike called by students against the authorities of a British university. A detailed analysis of all these published works will give one an insight into the nature, causes and consequences of students unrest all over the world. Traces of all the plausible causes of unrest as enumerated in these works can also be found among Nigerian university students of the early fifties and sixties and also among students of this decade.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In considering the phenomenon of students unrest in Nigerian universities there are certain basic assumptions which affect to some extent the manner of resolution of such unrest. One of such assumptions is the notion held by the generality of the Nigerian public that Nigerian university students are over-pampered. A good example of such notion is borne out in these words of a mass media executive, and I quote, "talking to the average Nigerian undergraduate, one is amused by his lack of understanding of the stark realities of life. This is hardly surprising because the Nigerian undergraduate enjoys such fantastic privileges and amenities unheard of even in developed countries. A little bit of hardship would make them mature and thus enable them approach all issues more realistically"[3]. Whether this is true or not,

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3. New Nigerian, 21st May, 1970.

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this sort of assumption does have some effect on the public's assessment of issues involved in an unrest.

Another basic assumption is that students do have genuine causes though not at all times, for their frequent disturbances; university authorities must therefore not attempt to look at students' problems as if they could all be treated alike.

A third assumption, is the fact that Nigerian University authorities do in most cases allow student issues to get out of hand before remedies are sought for; it is therefore true to say that university administrators are sometimes incompetent.

It is also assumed that Nigerian university students do make frequent impossible demands from university authorities which eventually result in a conflict between the authorities and the students.

METHODOLOGY

(a) POPULATION COVERAGE

The population coverage by my study can be described as fairly varied. The first group consisted of three hundred and fifty-six 1975/76 university graduates from all the Nigerian universities who were deployed to one of the States for the 1976/77 session NYSC programme. This group meets the requirement of representativeness since members were drawn from all the universities in the country. This group was administered with the questionnaire used for the survey.

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The second group consisted of a sample of administrative and academic staff of the following universities, who of course will remain anonymous:

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

University of Ibadan,

University of Ife,

University of Benin and

University of Lagos.

I delibrately left out the University of Nigeria, Nsukka because of cost limitation.

The third group was a random sampling of the public which included the following:-

1. Ex-students' leaders from Ibadan and Zaria;
2. Members of the Nigerian Army and the Nigerian Police Force;
3. Members of the business community, including such big private companies like the U.A.C. and others;
4. Educationists outside the universities;
5. Civil Servants;
6. Members of some religious bodies;
7. An executive of the National Universities Commission;
8. Mass media executives.
9. Some university students who were on the campuses visited during my field work.

Members of this group interviewed came from the university towns of Zaria, Ibadan, Ife, Kano, Benin and Lagos. Some people were also interviewed in Kaduna.

(b) FIELD WORK PROCEDURE

Questionnaires were personally distributed to all the National Youth Service Corp members and given a week in which to answer the questions contained in them and have them ready for collection. At the end of the week, I went back to their camp and collected those that were ready. I made a second visit to the camp after one more week to check on and collect any completed questionnaire not previously submitted.

In a covering letter, I explained the purposes of the survey and also made them realise that their anonymity would be guaranteed. Overall, I had an effective response-rate of about seventy percent. The interviews were conducted over a period of three weeks in August, 1976, when I visited Ibadan, Ife, Benin and Lagos. Most of the interviews in Zaria, Kaduna and Kano were carried out between September and October, 1976.

I have also drawn freely on press reports, documents issued by university administrations, students, and from reports of Commissions of Inquiries, and from my own experiences as a one time student in one of the universities and presently as an administrative staff of the same university.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is limited to the examination and

discussion of the causes of students unrest in Nigerian universities. It will also examine the role of the university administration in conflict resolution. In other words, it is intended to focus attention on the identification of the causes of students unrest and the role of the university administrator in resolving these frequently occuring conflicts on University campuses.

The university administrator as will be used in this study includes the Vice-Chancellors, Registrars and their subordinates in Nigerian universities. It will also include Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments, Student Affairs Officers and all others within the university administration charged with the day to day running of the universities located in various towns in Nigeria. Councils and Senates of our Universities also form part of the university administration.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Students' unrest is a social as well as an international problem needing a solution. The Federal Military Government of Nigeria is fully committed to finding solutions to this problem. It is in the light of this and for the fact that I am involved in university administration, that I have chosen to make this study with the hope of coming out with some plausible suggestions as to how this problem could be effectively tackled. A lot has been lost by this country as a result of frequent closures of our universities due to students unrest. I feel that I will be contributing in some small way to finding solutions to the problem of students unrest by undertaking and reporting this study.

The study is surely of immense importance to university authorities, students and the generality of the Nigerian public.

CONCLUSION

I will like to conclude this introductory chapter by further making some more comments and observations on the issue of students' unrest.

It is important to note that campus or students' unrests though often condemned by the public are not necessarily harmful to higher education or to the society as such. J. Katz once said that "it is the response to tensions that lead to constructive or destructive opportunity and an impetus for some overdue reform"[4]

Students unrest can stimulate the processes of change within institutions of higher learning as well as in the society in which the students live. Students unrest is a form of behaviour with broadly based roots in the student culture. Students are most sensitive to the imperfections of life as it is lived today; they are also probably best opportuned to point out these imperfections. They percieve the gap between the ideal and the effective and come down strongly on the ideal. They emphasize or insist on the immediate satisfaction of demands and impulses with the hope of improving their society by the most vigorous means in order to make it conform with their ideals; they have no belief in the reality of scarcity. The consequence of this critical idealism is the manifestation of their'counter-culture'.

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4. J. Katz, 'The Learning Environment, Social Expectations and Influences", paper presented at American Council on Education, Washington, D.C. 1965.

A counter-culture according to Horowitz et al is seen as distinct from both a sub-culture and a contra-culture[5].

The sub-culture rejects far less of the major culture and is therefore less compartible with, and acceptable to the dominant culture, whereas a counter-culture is not. A contra-culture resists the major culture more than does a sub-culture but does not actively oppose and seek to change it as does a counter-culture. It is in its embodiment of a general alternative life style antagonistic to main-stream society that a counter-culture poses a great threat to society than does either a sub-culture or a contra-culture. For it can neither be easily tolerated as a minor irritant nor ignored as permanently passive opposition, since its base is too broad and its ethos rather dynamic.

One can then see two different sub-cultures. The first is essentially retreatist, characterised by a concern with self and interpersonal relationships, cultural alienation, opposition to the ideals of morality and is often associated with the use of drugs. The other is the political activist or radical. He addresses himself to the problem of political change and sees political activism on behalf of others as more important than a personalized search for truth or identity. The radical is generally sincere in his efforts at reform and has a keen sense of responsibility and so many of their protests are prompted by sincere conviction, while those of others are touched off by the impulsive acts of fanatic or self-glorifying demagogues.

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5. D. Horowitz, L. Lerner, C. Pyes (eds), "Counterculture & Revolution, 1972.

The university administrator must recognize the basic difference and be able to identify issues that have direct correlation with either. While the radicals focus on rejection of certain parts of the institutional structure, e.g. their less involvement in the decision-making process of their institution, national government policy, etc., the retreatist concentrate on the rejection of broad cultural norms.

What then are the main causes of students unrest in our university campuses? No one can claim exclusive answer to this question if any answer exists at all. An attempt has however been made to outline most of the causes in Chapter 5 as enumerated by the students themselves, the university academic as well as administrative staff and members of the public through interviews and questionnaire. One significant fact about the views expressed by these groups is that they all agreed on the fact that the communication system between students and the authorities needs to be improved considerably. It has been noted that not more than five to ten percent of a student body demonstrate actively on issues. A greater number who tacitly support aggressive reform leaders come from the mass of students with repressed hostilities, arising out of educational rigours, subsistence hardships, the fear of unemployment after graduation, and various other unresolved psychological problems.[6]

Chapter 2 is an attempt to briefly look at trends in student unrests on a world-wide basis - hence it is titled -- Students'

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6. L.M. Brammer, "The Student Rebel in the University' Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 38, No. 5 May 1967.

Unrest - Historical Trends.

Chapter 3 deals with the socio-economic background of Nigerian University students. This has been done to at least show what the major social characteristics of the Nigerian University student are and how they relate to the causes of unrests on our campuses. The system of admissions into Nigerian Universities is strictly based on achievement criteria; this is bound to reflect the structure of inequality which is typical of an underdeveloped economy like Nigeria's. It then follows that the social characteristics of Nigerian University students will also reflect this structure of inequality. Inequality generally creates tension and when this tension becomes uncontrollable, protests and vicious conflicts emerge.

In chapter 4, I have attempted to outline the major problems/ issues that confront the Nigerian University students; these are quite distinct but not totally unrelated to the main causes of unrests on our campuses; Chapter 5 deals with the main causes. Chapter 6 deals with the structure of the Nigerian University and the role of the university administration as it relates to student unrests. The nature of relationships and techniques of conflict resolution within the universities is also mentioned; this is one other cause of student unrests. It can be said to be an institutional cause and is also related to the formal nature of our institutions.

Chapter 7 contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations and suggested solutions to students unrest on Nigerian University campuses. The methodology used for this study is as outlined in Appendix I. The questionnaire appears in Appendix II.

A lot of literature exists on the problem of students unrest particularly in the Western world; scholars have been engaged in this study for such a long time now that it is getting difficult to keep track of such literature. The mass media has also made this problem a favourite topic. A quick glance at the selected bibliography which is by no means exhaustive will convince any doubting being, as to the truth of this statement.

I sincerely hope that this study will at least contribute to the existing literature of student unrests as it relates to Nigeria. There are no pretensions made with the suggested solutions to student unrests on our campuses as to their adequacy in containing effectively the problems of students in Nigerian universities; at best these recommendations should be regarded as guidelines for reducing tensions on our campuses. Every unrest has its specific causes and there can be no laid down rules and regulations for resolving disputes between university authorities and students. What it all amounts to therefore is that each unrest should be looked at separately and treated accordingly, while referring to the recommendations made as a sort

*of general guideline. In that way, it is hoped that solutions could be found to each potential unrest without necessarily allowing it to get out of hand, resulting in such drastic actions as closure of the University concerned or rusticating or even expelling student leaders as has often been the case with Nigerian Universities.

CHAPTER 2

STUDENTS' UNREST - HISTORICAL TRENDS

CHAPTER 2

The phenomenon generally referred to as students unrest does demand a critical review in the body-politic of Nigeria. Students unrest has now assumed the proportion of a world phenomenon and the speculation as to its causes continues to be lively - some scholars have tended to pin it down to the generation-gap thesis. Others lay more emphasis on communication gap existing between the students and the University authorities.

By students unrest, it is generally meant the psychological and physical conditions which precipitate violent actions or demonstrations with placard carrying and generally noisy processions, or hunger strikes and sit-ins which often arrest the attention of the public and also poses what is often referred to as the student challenge to authority. There are generally two opposing camps in every aspect of students unrest; the University authorities and the government/public on the one hand and the students themselves on the other hand. The students are often looked upon by the public as being irresponsible. Students unrest has continued to attract greater attention from the public as well as the mas media which has turned it into a fashionable talking point. In this chapter, it is my intention to briefly look at the historical trends as far as this phenomenon is concerned on a world-wide basis, however scanty the information available may be, and highlighting the students challenge aspect of unrest. It is fairly well known that a conflict surrounding authority is central to any students

unrest of importance. If a satisfactory model of authority exists in a university, its relationship to its students, and the motivations and sources of cohesion that sustain both the authority and the challenges that are made to it, we shall be in a position to understand much of what takes place during an outbreak of students unrest[1]. This is where the role of university administrators becomes significant to every students unrest in our Universities.

Almost everywhere around the world, in the second half of the 1960s, established decision makers were challenged to justify themselves, especially to the younger generation. In Europe, the Americas, Canada and Japan, University authorities had first been questioned many years earlier, by the professorial staff; but the most vivid and dramatic challenge came from the students. The student challenge has centred mostly on demands for reforms, greater freedom of expression, and power (i.e. participation in the running of Universities) - much of the students unrest and, at times rebellion has, of course, been directed to problems and issues extending far beyond the confines of the academic world, and many of the reasons for it seem also to be rooted elsewhere.

In the typical British University structure which most developing countries of Africa within the British sphere of influence inherited, there are four different types of authority; these are:-

(a) the authority of Committees - the delegation of decision-making power to committees; these committees often have

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1. Colin Crouch, The Students Revolt (The Bodley Head, London 1970)

power to have their decisions implemented and can therefore be said to possess a degree of authority.

(b) Academic authority - a high degree of authority adheres to high academic rank. The Senate of Nigerian universities exercise this form of authority.

(c) Administrative authority - the University needs certain tasks to be performed to facilitate its operation - these are delegated to an administrative bureaucracy. Although in theory this is the servant of the rest of the University and exists merely to satisfy its needs, in reality it is given responsibility for the conduct of its tasks and therefore requires a degree of autonomous authority. This is the authority generally challenged by students; it is this same authority that has to devise ways and means to contain students unrest.

(d) Authority of Board of Governors (University Councils in Nigerian Universities); the University is required to have a governing body of mostly outside persons. In theory this governing body has many powers, but in practice such powers are usually delegated to Committees or Officers of the institution. It is this sort of delegation of powers that makes a Vice-Chancellor so powerful in our Universities.

In general the basis of University authority is habit and the decline of certain features of traditionalism is crucially important to the changing patterns of University authority - this has been a

substantial element in the background to the students challenge to authority. The current rise of bureaucratic elements in University authority provides minor irritations and involves an element of remoteness and complexity which provides many seeds of disaffection and much scope for unrests.

It can thus be seen that University authority is not homogeneous, and the consideration of the means by which this authority is asserted, which also makes possible some prediction of the likely pattern of responses by authority to an unrest is what this study is partly about. Universities are remarkably unlike most other large formal institutions (e.g. Industries, the Army and the Church) in that a wide range of autonomy and personal freedom is left to the individuals working within them, particularly the academic staff. There is thus no hard and fast hierarchy of authority through which decisions concerning the objectives of the institution and its ways of achieving them can be passed from a decidion-making 'top' to a merely executive 'bottom'. This study will thus focus mainly on the student challenge to University authority in Nigeria to the ways in which they have been met, and to some of the consequences for University administration. There have obviously been a lot of serious consequences. It is my belief that quite apart from the usually accepted causes of students unrest, a lot more of the causes of this phenomenon could be traced to the structure of University authority, the personalities of those in authority and the methods or

techniques used in resolving conflicts in general. The usually accepted causes of students' unrest will be outlined in detail in a later chapter; the social characteristics of Nigerian students which determine the pattern of the the causes of unrest will also be similarly dealt with in detail later, but for now let us look at the historical trends.

BRITAIN

In British Universities, the occasions for unrests, confrontations and riot have ranged from the price of meals in refectories to the right to prevent speakers airing views unacceptable to some students, the content of the files on students kept by Universities, the situation in Northern Ireland, Vietnam, the question of majority rule in Rhodesia, and matters of individual and collective student discipline or of staff appointments and dismissals[2]. All these have at some stage raised the issue of the content and sources of University decisions. One of the earliest and most widespread challenges according to Moodie & Eustace, was directed at the Universities right to regulate what students feel to be their private lives. The students revolt at the London School of Economics in 1965-67 and again in 1967-69 were mainly of political nature.

Most of these issues have been resolved by meeting students demand for more extensive counselling and psychiatric services for individuals with personal problems both academic and emotional, and also by allowing students to have substantial representation on the

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2. Graeme C. Moodie & Rowland Eustace, Power & Authority in British Universities (George Allen & Unwin Lod, London, 1974).

Committees which govern halls of residence and in all others that affect students directly. In some Universities there are student members or observers on those committees which investigate individual cases of transgression and recommend punishments for those found guilty. The most important development in the disciplinary field in British Universities has been the formalization, and institutionalization, of procedures in an area hitherto regarded as a matter largely for the Vice-Chancellor (subject to ratification by Council or Senate) in cases where the recommendation was to expel a student from the University. This process of formilization has served both to insulate the Vice-Chancellor from premature involvement in any dispute about discipline and, conceivably to lessen the likelihood of such disputes.

It must be noted that there has been relatively little challenge to the right of Universities to terminate the careers of students who are academically unsatisfactory, provided only that the criteria are known and the machinery leaves room for appeal. However, no generally accepted recipe has yet been found for dealing with cases of mass infringements of University rules by disruptive or violent behaviour. In the mid-sixties, it was the practice in most British Universities for the Vice-Chancellor and/or other members of Council or Senate to meet regularly with officials of the students union or representative council either informally or as a formal staff/student Committee. In periods of crises these assumed new importance as a convenient arena in which

to seek compromises when issues had arisen, to try to prevent matters of common concern from becoming issues, and to ensure that students were given official hearing.

In general, however, student unrest in British Universities has probably been the quietest and most restrained of the contemporary outbreaks of protest which have emerged from the student communities of most industrial societies[3]. Its effects, too, have probably been the least disruptive of the traditional methods and structures of university government, for all its success in winning for students a new and much more important place within the governmental system. Student participation in university government has worked well in many British universities, and it is my conviction that it can also work well in Nigerian universities given the right push.

THE AMERICAS: U.S.A.

Let us now look at the trends in students unrest in the Americas, beginning with the United States. As early as 1817, Harvard University experienced a violent crockery battle between its freshmen and sophomores- a battle in which every piece of crockery owned by the institution was destroyed. In 1842, repeated violent disruptions at the University of Virginia ended in the shooting of a professor by a University student. The University of California at Berkley had also recorded series of students' unrest leading to violent disruptions. The Berkley revolt of 1964 which was a result of administrative prohibition on political expression has probably been the most militant series of students unrests

3. Colin Crouch, in Archer: Students, University, & Society (Heinemann Educational Books, London 1972).

in American campus history[4]. Ever since, almost all major universities and many others have been the scene of student disturbances, defiance and demands for virtually unlimited free speech and for unrestrained political activities.

The Berkley revolt acted primarily as a catalyst not only for student activity, but also for scholarly interest in student unrest, student movements, political organisations, and higher education in the United States. In most of the American Universities, the causes of unrests, confrontations and riot generally centre mainly on political issues - governmental issues and student political activism. Race relations (the civil rights movement) have also been important issues causing confrontations between University students and the University authorities/government. American involvement in the wars in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, political victimisation and racism have all at one time or the other been fought against by American University students in the late sixties and early seventies. Their strategies varied from non-attendance at lectures, peaceful sit-ins and rallies to planting bombs and even burning a local bank that was imagined to represent American interests in Vietnam and South Africa!
In general, the American students have never been particularly active politically, and they are not expected to participate actively in their society. Student organisations have not been important in any aspect of American life, except for the civil rights movement. However, it is significant to note that in spite of initial condemnation of student

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4. Seymour Martin Lipset (ed); Student Politics (Basic Books Inc. Publishers 1967)

strategies of demonstrating their opposition to national and international affairs, most of the root causes of these unrests and confrontations were tackled by the authorities. Despite recent widespread publicity, student political activity, unrests and agitations are still regarded in negative terms by a majority of the American students, as well as by many educators and the general public. One thing must be said for students activities in the United States, however limited, and that is - they are generally very well organised; the frequency of occurence of major upheavals on American University Campuses reflects the extent to which what is generally now referred to as 'student power' has become a vital pressure group that governments even as powerful as that of the United States tend to ignore at their own peril - a rather sad realization for a society that does not expect its students to participate actively in politics and in the affairs of the society as a whole.

* In May, 1970, following the invasion of Cambodia by American troops, student demonstrations occurred in a third of the two thousand five hundred United States Universities. In Kent State University alone, four students were killed; Jackson State University lost a student, later a terrorist bomb destroyed a building at the University of Wisconsin, killing one and injuring four other people. When these are compared to happenings during unrests on Nigerian University campuses, one would be compelled to relegate our so called campus unrests to a bare child's game. However, one is left in no doubt that student unrests reflect societal disenchantment with the policies of those in authority- whether in the Universities or Government.

There is one striking difference between the causes of unrests in American Universities and in most other industrialized or developed countries for that matter, and the causes of similar unrests in Nigerian Universities; this is whereas the causes are centred on political issues and activities in the former, they are mostly centred on welfare of the students in the later. This is not saying that Nigerian University students have never had the cause to demonstrate solely over political issues, - they have even demonstrated over international political issues; what is here being stressed is that welfare for the Nigerian students more than any other issue is mostly responsible for the eruption of unrests on Nigerian University campuses. I will put this difference down to the state of development in these societies, Nigeria is still an underdeveloped country politically, economically and socially; its students barely get the minimum of comfort and essential facilities in its Universities whereas the opposite is true of these developed societies. As it should be expected, Nigerian University students will most certainly be concerned with getting the necessary facilities for themselves first before adding on the luxury of protesting over issues that they very well know they can not do much about.

Perhaps at this stage, it will be significant to look at how most American students unrest have in the past been resolved. The 1964 Berkley revolt may give us an insight into this aspect of unrests and conflicts in American University campuses. What really happened at

Berkley and why did it have such significant impact on American education? What happened in Berkley is in large part traceable to the confrontation politics of the black revolution[5]. For one thing, the civil rights movement awakened the aspirations of many American students for greater control over their own destinies. Suddenly, the students started demanding why they should not have greater freedom of political expression, more voice in how their universities were being run, and more control over what courses were offered and how they were taught. These were the main issues raised by Berkley students and what has happened since then is that students have become involved as never before in how their Universities are run.

They are not only showing concern but seeking responsibility in such areas as undergraduate teaching, participation in political and civic activities, curriculum decisions, promotion and tenure policies for the faculty staff.

What actually sparked off the Berkley revolt was an attempt by the university administration to enforce certain rules controlling political activities on the campus. Many students interpreted this decision as an attempt to stifle dissent and was therefore not acceptable to them; this led to the numerous demonstrations, protests, sit-ins and rallies that made Berkley famous. It is interesting to note that through it all, the university administration did its best to give certain concessions to the students; participation of students in decision-making was recognised. At one stage a Campus Committee on political

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5. Michael Doorman, Confrontation; Politics & Protest (Delacorte Press, New York 1974)

activity was set up to suggest long-range solutions. This Committee had students representation but unfortunately it could not operate effectively. Members reached a stalemate on the issue of whether the university could discipline students and student organisations for activities that are looked at as unlawful acts. However, the crisis was finally resolved by the appointment of a new head after the university regents were convinced that new leadership was necessary to restore normalcy to the campus. New rules permitting students to make speeches and otherwise engage in political activities, subject only to minor restrictions were announced. Although this announcement did not appear dramatic, it marked a significant victory in the history of students unrest in the United States. The confrontations at Berkley set the stage for the whole era of campus rebellion. Student across the U.S., and in foreign countries as well, learned from the events at Berkley that student unrests if carefully transformed into confrontation politics could be used effectively to overturn long-entrenched campus policies, rules and regulations. Confrontations on the Berkley campus did not end with the decision to loosen the restrictions on political activity; over the years since 1965, students have continued demonstration over a variety of issues.

LATIN AMERICA

I will now briefly take a look at students unrests in Latin

America as it relates to this study. Universities in Latin America cannot be adequately understood apart from the societal context. But there is one feature of Latin American society which unites the region, however profound the differences between the nations - the phenomenon of change. The nature, degree and pace of change have varied from country to country, but no part of the region has completely escaped its impact. This phenomenon of change which roughly equates to modernization in Latin America has had a lot to do with the pattern of students unrest in Latin American universities. Higher education in Latin America has mirrored the breakdown of traditional society, and there is every reason to believe that stress and instability will continue to dominate the university scene throughout the seventies. Universities in Latin American countries are highly politicized institutions - they are a crucial element in the struggle for power.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Latin American university was fair game for national political groups who had no hesistancy in using it to serve their own ends. During the periods of independence and after, universities were largely in recess, and, when they were in session, in constant turmoil. The universities were the seed-beds of future political leadership and became the training ground of individuals and groups whose principal objective was not to acquire an education or a degree, but to move into the national political arena. There were therefore forces at work which undermine the university as it existed in most Latin American countries. One of the earliest and perhaps, most

significant university students' rebellion took place in Cordoba, Argentina, in 1918; it led to a series of reform which had an impact on the structure and orientation of the present university in Latin America. The Cordoba rebellion was instigated and led by student groups who sought a voice in the affairs of the university; student complaints, however, were not limited to their lack of participation in university governance. The Cordoba students complained of the dependence on the University of politicians and political decisions; part-time and inadequately trained teaching faculty staff; lack of research; weak and uninterested administration, the sterile scholasticism of much that was offered in the university curriculum; the value-laden and formalistic methods of teaching; and the great gap which students believed to exist between what went on in the university and the social problems of society. In essence, the Cordoba reform movement demanded that students assume some responsibility in the running of the universities and that, in addition, they help to reorient the universities along the lines of community service.

Not too many years ago, it could be said with reasonable accuracy that Latin American university students differed from students in other countries by participating in the governance of the university and, in many cases, by engaging in political activity of considerable importance. The situation has changed and the Latin American student is no longer unique in this respect. Since the student riots at Berkley in 1964, a

chain reaction spread throughout the university world. Student disturbances have broken out in both the industrialized West and the developing nations of Asia and Africa. As a result, universities have more and more acceded to one of the principal student demands, which is a role in university decision-making processes. (Some of the Nigerian universities are beginning to experiment in this direction, by giving students representatives sits on some Committees). However, the extent and importance of student participation has varied considerably among countries and within the same country, depending upon the institution. The role of the student has often reflected the struggle for power. For example, at the present time, student participation in university affairs is severely limited in those countries which have military regimes; exceptions to this are Peru, where an activist student role is encouraged, and Brazil, whose universities permit limited student participation in university decision-making under circumscribed conditions. In general, students have been and are more active in public than in private institutions, and in large universities rather than in small insitutions. Participation in a way, permits university authorities to know the students' opinion, leads to a more responsible and mature attitude on their part, once they become familiar with the problems the institution has to face, and establishes an easier relationship between the authorities, the faculty staff and the students themselves.

From the above, it would seem that reform - the issue of re-making universities into a model for democratic participation and national rele-

vancy, has been the major problem confronting Latin American university students. In the later 1960's the quality and goals of Chilean education like those of most other Latin American countries continued to draw harsh criticism from many students, as well as their professors, and university administrators. The problems resulting from inadequate educational resources, highly specialized training, centralization of bureaucratic power and insufficient involvment in national problems produced a series of challenges to the internal structure of the university and its relationship to the rest of the society.

Unlike the situation in the U.S., it is fairly obvious that the Latin American university students have a big role to play in the political life of their individual country. Deep-rooted social and economic problems served as a continuous focus of concern and a stimulus for action for Latin American university students. And unlike the situation in most countries of the developing world, say in Asia and Africa, most student organisations frequently grow and operate in close association with adult political organizations; this may account for the powerful role the students play in the political life of most Latin American countries. The problems faced by Latin American university students therefore centre mostly on the phenomenon of change rather than the issues of welfare as exhibited by Nigerian university students. Granted that the political institution in Nigeria is as yet totally underdeveloped when compared with that of most Latin American countries, it would only be fair to state that Latin American university students have helped greatly in the

various reforms both within their universities and the entire society - much more than what their Nigerian counterparts would ever hope to bring about in their own universities and the society.

EUROPE

In the early fifties and sixties when student protests/unrests were still alien to Nigerian institutions of higher learning. the militancy of student demonstrations in European countries such as West Germany, East Germany, France and Italy confounded authorities in those societies. European students revolted and their concerns traversed the whole array of problems in the European society at that time - wrongful imprisonment; exploitation of workers; hyprocrisy in the leadership cauous especially through inconsistent or double standards of behaviour etc. Between the student revolts with widespread political significance in Eastern Europe and Western Europe there is a world of difference in the underlying causes and in the risks taken by students involved. Between the student revolt in Paris and the student sit-ins for example in Birmingham, Bristol and the London School of Economics there is also a great difference. There may well be some common factors, but the differences are greater than the similarities. The manifestations of student unrest have varied enormously throughout the world, depending mainly on the seriousness of grievances, the political institutions of the country. and the nature of the university processes. The causes of unrest have been equally varied. In several East European countries one of the main causes of unrest is State control of the universities and the use of that

control to induce conformity to the 'established wisdom' and power of the ruling Party. In France, West Germany and Italy, staff and buildings are appallingly inadequate. Until recently, people were made to believe that students do not play a political role in developed industrialized societies. They played a revolutionary role in nineteenth century Russia, in China in the twenties and thirties, and in Cuba in the fifties. In 1956, the revolts in Budapest and Warsaw were set off by student protests. Let us now take a close look at student unrests in one European country, West Germany as it relates to this study. Since 1965, student protests in the free University of Berlin have been a constant feature of student life in West Germany-infact, the Free University of Berlin has been called the Berkley of West Germany. The activism of the students of Berlin is echoed at the other West German universities. In Germany the universities are state institutions vested with the power of self-government; there are therefore no independent administrations against which students could organize; the faculty therefore becomes the students' opponent. In the intra-university conflicts, three points are at issue:

(a) 'free speech'- unrestricted expression of political views.

(b) 'knowledge Factory'- inadequate facilities, structure and content of university curriculum.

(c) 'student power'- participation in decision-making processes

The German university students have pointed out that university problems cannot be neatly separated from those of society as a whole, hence they have consistently and persistently demanded that students be allowed to

express freely their views on any issue affecting the universities and the country. The universities of West Germany have been expanded hesitantly, without structural change, and have since the late fifties been externally adapted to the rapidly growing number of students by a linear expansion of the faculty. In Institutes and Clinics, Laboratories and Libraries, the mass university affords conditions that discourage many students; this subsequently resulted in mass students protests over these poor conditions and the inadequate organization of university instruction. This protest resulted in the first major sit-ins in which about three thousand students participated, and led to the establishment of joint commissions on the reform of university study, whose efficacy, nevertheless, remained limited.

The question of student power is directly related to the students demand for power of joint decision in all self-governing bodies within the universities. In the early sixties, West German university students compiled programs for university reform aimed at democratizing the universities. Students normally experience the university from a sobering perspective - from below. They see how, under the changed conditions of mass education and a large junior faculty, the perpetuated authority structures of the nineteenth century noticeably inhibit creative development and the rational planning of teaching and research. They understand that they are the prime victims of the absence of university reform, hence their desire to be part of the decision-making bodies. Student discontent in West Germany as in all other countries has causes inside and outside

the university; within the university, the major issue has been that of reform which the students considered long overdue. Students became dis-satisfied with the traditional university which was elitist and classically humanistic; they also did not want the mass university as a mere school for experts and above all they resented a combination of the worst elements of both the traditional and the mass universities. In Germany during the first post war period, until about the mid-fifties, student protest was defined by clear issues; the danger of Communism, a United Europe, rearmament, and the Nazi past; these form the causes of student protest outside the university. Participants in student protests in West Germany are almost exclusively bougeois youth -'white middle class kids - who do not represent the working class, or blacks, or the underdeveloped countries but want to act for them and in their name. These students do not understand themselves as intellectuals who renounce their social class and place themselves as an avant-garde at the head of the oppressed and exploited. After June, 1967, the student body, not only of the Free University of Berlin, but of the entire Federal Republic has become a factor in German domestic politics. Political leaders have gone into discussions with the leaders of student organisations to sort out issues; the politicization of the German academic youth which started with university problems, has now transcended this framework - that is why student unrests cannot be held back now by a reform of the university alone. It would seem that student protests in West Germany and the U.S.A. bear some similarities - administrative prohi-

bitions on political expression in both Germany and the U.S.A. were followed by student defiance and demands for virtually unlimited free speech and for unrestrained political activity. Further restraints were followed by street demonstrations, sit-ins, and student protest strikes. Student groups finally in each case came to demand vastly increased rights for themselves in the self-government of the university. In each case also, inept or insensitive administrative reaction to successive stages of the crisis lent credibility to student agitators' charge that the structure of the university was authoritarian and reactionary and therefore needed reform. As in most other industrialized nations, the West German public came to realize the important role students could play in the political life of their country through the student protest and agitation of the Free University of Berlin in particular and those that occurred in other German universities following the events at Berlin.

STUDENTS UNREST IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

It would only be proper to look at student unrests in the developing nations of Asia and Africa before concluding this chapter; the trends in student unrests in these countries are more or less similar since they are all nations in transition from traditional to modern societies. In the developing areas, a number of governments have been shaken or toppled by student agitation. Student movements in South Korea, Turkey, South Vietnam, Indonesia and other nations have played a leading role in overturning governments. In Japan, the militant Zengakuren captured

world headlines in its successful campaign to force the resignation of the Kishi government in 1960. In Burma, Ivory Coast, and many other countries governmental authorities have taken strong action to limit the scope of student opposition. Student action has also had effects, both positive and negative, on the educational process. In India, the much discussed problem of student indiscipline has caused the interruption of university life on many campuses and has become a major problem for the government. Students in Nigeria and some other countries have agitated about academic issues and often have achieved their ends. Students in certain developing countries make up a disproprotionately large section of the bearers of public opinion, because of the small size of the educated middle class; their various affinities of education, class, and kinship with the actual elites give them an audience which students in more developed countries can seldom attain. University students in developing countries have had to imitate their counterparts in Europe and U.S.A., where students have been significantly drawn toward revolutionary, agitational, and demonstrative politics. The traditions of European liberation, rationalism and nationalism were copied by university students in the developing countries.

Most of the major causes of student unrests in the developing countries revolve around the broad issue of modernization - students are concerned from a nationalist standpoint, that their countries should get modernized as rapidly as practicable, and take their places among the leading countries of the modern world. Most of the students

realised the economic backwardness of their countries and worked hard to improve this situation by continuous agitation for changes. Students in these developing nations apart from being aware of the inferior state of their countries when compared with the developed countries, also showed a lot of concern and tried hard to bring about the much needed changes. The rapid expansion in university enrollment throughout the countries of the developing world has also caused some unrest in such countries. Facilities are totally inadequate to cope with such huge expansion; student therefore complained about poor welfare and generally these complaints turn into major crises, when not properly handled by the university authorities. The question of unemployment after graduation also tended to escalate minor disturbances; the case of India is particularly noteworthy. About sixty to seventy percent of Delhi's poorest graduates spend eight to ten years looking for clerical jobs designed to accommodate high school graduates[6]. Yet another major issue partly responsible for unrest on university campuses throughout the developing countries dwells on the social and psychological distance between the student and the faculty staff. This has again shown itself most prominently on the Indian continent where during the rapid expansion of education many unqualified academic staff were recruited into staff universities, and their presence has had a demoralizing effect on the student body.

At this point, I would want to trace the history of student unrest

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6. Joseph Dibona, 'Indiscipline and Student Leadership in Indian University', in Lipset (ed) - 'Student Politics', Basic Books Inc. 1967.

in Nigeria since this study is concerned with the causes of unrest in Nigerian University campuses. The earliest recorded student unrest in Nigeria has been that of the University College (now University) of Ibadan which occurred in 1957. The cause of this unrest has been attributed partly to racial cleavages. At the university college of Ibadan, then, racial tensions were ever present because of the great disparity in number between the British and the indigenes. The resident British elite in Nigeria though very small was also temporary, ultimately indending to return to Britain and thus somewhat more British and more snobish than the British groups which planned a permanent settlement in Colonial areas, especially after such areas achieve independence. In the University College then, the Nigerians resented the fact that European faculty members were paid additional allowances which made their salaries about one-third higher than those of Nigerians of corresponding rank. Equally resented was the small number of Nigerians asked to serve on the faculty in comparison to the number of Europeans. As late as 1958 only forty-two out of one hundred and seventy-member faculty and twelve out of thirty-nine administrative staff were Nigerians. As time went on, people started observing that the British connection has made the university less responsive to the need for economic and political development of the country, and thus somewhat out of touch with Nigerian national aspirations. Gradually, complaints against importations of foreign professors and their low qualifications, about uninteresting and unrelated lectures, and about denial of their

due to Nigerian faculty members or the implication that they were of lower intellectual caliber began to form part of the tensions envinced not only by adult Nigerians, but also by the students. Students further went on to complain about the non-admission of all successful holders of the Matriculation Examination of London University into the University College directly; they also complained about the four-year university course of studies instead of three as in Britain, and that the disciplinary requirements were too strict and getting stricter with the university attempting between 1947 and 1957 to introduce 'moral tutors' to supervise the behaviour of the students. The actual disciplinary problems which caused the student unrest and led to the closing of the College in 1957 could be attributed to the following:

(a) student resentment at failure to appoint qualified Nigerians to the faculty and assigning those appointed to lower faculty rank;
(b) dislike of all top administrative posts being held by non-Nigerians;
(c) feeling that much of the teaching staff is of inferior quality;
(d) lack of confidence in top administrative officers;
(e) irritation at what they regarded as increasingly stringent disciplinary regulations;
(f) the quality of food, and certain regulations governing their use of electrical equipment in their rooms;
(g) unwillingness of the administration to meet with their representatives to discuss certain student problems.

These coupled with the use of police on the campus following a minor incident caused the student unrest in Ibadan in 1957.

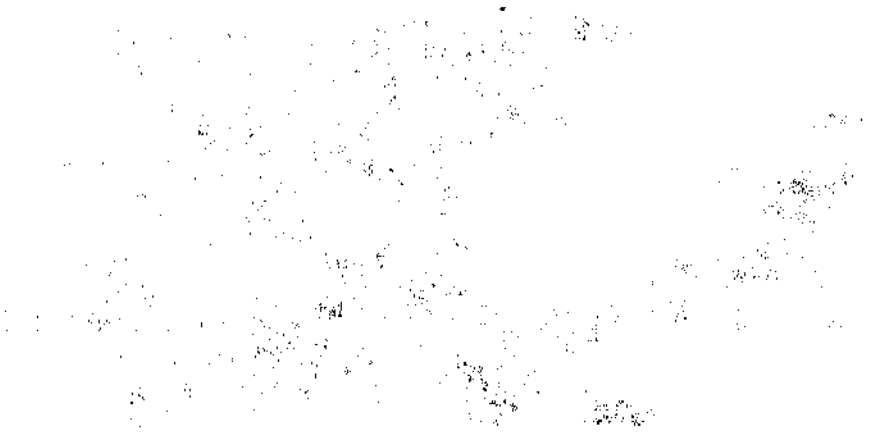
In 1960 once again, the Ibadan University students took to the

streets protesting over the Anglo-Nigerian Defence pact and managed to stop the Nigerian government from signing the agreement, which was considered as a betrayal of Nigeria's declared policy of non-alignment. Many of the students who marched on parliament building were battered by the police, arrested and charged to court, but were later discharged; the significant aspect of it all is that the students succeeded. In 1961 Ibadan students also demonstrated and demanded the deportation of one Miss Michelmore who during her Peace Corps service wrote a stinking post-card on Nigeria. In March 1965, the Lagos University witnessed a Vice-Chancellorship controversy. The students in this case were divided into ethnic groups; one group was reported to have attacked the other with stones, bottles and other missiles and several students were wounded. This led to the closure of the university and when it was reopened in June of the same year, acts of hooliganism on the part of the students resulted not only in the savage attack of the new Vice-Chancellor, but also on that of a lecturer who sustained serious head injuries. The Vice-Chancellor was stabbed and this compelled the University Council to suspend all students from the institution. This particular crisis was tribal-oriented and extremely political. In February 1971, the University of Ibadan again witnessed a major student unrest resulting from accusation of misuse of power and maladministration on the part of the university authorities. There was a violent students demonstrations which resulted in the shooting of a student by a policeman; naturally there were simultaneous sympathy demonstrations in all other

universities in the country. The University of Ibadan and some others were closed down following this violent unrest; this unrest has had the greatest effect on the Nigerian public so far as students unrests are concerned. Every year since 1971, students in all the Nigerian universities have had peaceful demonstrations during the month of February as a mark of respect for their slain colleague; at times some of these have turned into major unrest following the attitude of the authorities. There had been many other unrests in preceeding years in Benin, Ibadan, Lagos, Ife, Zaria and Nsukka. The most recent being that of Ibadan in April 1976 where some students were expelled and some others rusticated for their part in the disturbances following the refusal of Ibadan Senate to grant the students' union President a one year sabbatical. Nigerian university students have demonstrated over a variety of issues some political, others welfare. The demonstrations against the NYSC programme in 1973 and other similar unrests in 1974 represented some form of dis-satisfaction with the government of the day. The reaction of the authorities in most of these student unrests reflect sheer neglect of the issues at stake and total condemnation without any explanation even by the political powers for the students' demands.

In conclusion, student unrest is a world-wide phenomenon; it is not limited to the developing countries alone. It is even more widespread in the industrialized nations of the West. Students have for long agitated for one form of reform or another within the universities as well as the entire society in which they live. It is important to

note that University campuses all over the world have not just exploded, there had always been a substantial tradition of student activity, and students have played important role in revolutionary movements through the years. University students are not merely prospective members of the elites of their countries. In the developing countries, university students do not just prepare themselves for future roles in public life; they play a significant part in the political life of their countries. In the words of Professor Lewis Feuer, a student unrests are 'symbolic parricide' (murder of one's parents) in which a young generation tries to humiliate and overthrow the institutions of its parents, regardless of the issues or consequences[7]. The pattern of students unrest is the same in practically every country, perhaps the only difference is the effect it has in each country.



7. Lewis Feuer, 'The Conflict of Generations - the Character and Significance of Students Movements', Heinemann, London, 1969.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

Chapter 3.

In this chapter, I will deal in detail with the various social characteristics of Nigerian students which help in determining their pattern of behaviour and the subsequent pattern of the causes of unrest.

First of all, I shall endeavour to look at where the students come from and then go on to enumerate their social characteristics. In an analysis of interviews with students and from answers from the questionnaire administered to a batch of students deployed to a certain state for the National Youth Service Corp programme, it was found that a large percentage of Nigerian university students come from relatively poor and rural families such as non-literate and semi-literate parents, who are either farmers, petty traders or manual workers. (I must point out here that I chose to interview and administer my questionnaire to this group of students - NYSC members, because of its representativeness and for the fact that the period this was carried out, all universities were on holiday).

To the extent that most students come from poor homes, university education is regarded as a sure avenue to economic security and professional success. The few students who come from the so called 'elite' backgrounds take university education as a natural component of their style of life. It is probably because of the fact that majority of Nigerian university students come from poor homes, that we find that majority of the students are more or less inactive and non-partisan during most of the student unrests that this country has witnessed. Most of such students when they do join in demonstrations are naturally

forced into them by their more 'sophisticated' colleagues who normally are in the minority.

A higher proportion of Nigerian university students come from the southern states; this is expected when one looks at the admissions into the universities. Admission is generally based on achievement criteria and the southern states with their numerous post-primary institutions and a particularly earlier start on western education are bound to produce more students for admission into universities than the northern states which tended to favour Islamic type of education.

The Nigerian university students appear conservative when compared with their counterparts in the U.S., Europe, Latin America or Japan; this element of conservatism can be more clearly seen in students from the northern states than those from the south. This is yet another reason why most of the student unrests have taken place in the universities located in Lagos, Ibadan, Benin and Ife. Until recently, Zaria has always been a relatively quiet campus as far as unrests and student agitations are concerned. It must be pointed out that Zaria students have however, recently been more concerned with national, international and political issues - this may not be unconnected with some efforts of faculty members who may be trying to portray their students as being politically aware and in turn hoping to make themselves important or gain higher positions in government.

Another social characteristic of the Nigerian university student can be found in the so called urban - rural dichotomy. There are more

students from the better off post-primary institutions within urban areas in Nigerian universities than those institutions located in the rural areas. A ready and clear example of this can be seen in the number of students who go into Nigerian universities from one particular institution - the Federal School of Arts and Science located in Lagos.

Most Nigerian University students nowadays are unmarried and have few responsibilities of their own at least while still in school. There are more male students in Nigerian universities than there are female. There is a higher proportion of students who identify themselves as christians than those who are moslems. One last important characteristic of the Nigerian university student is age. Majority of students in Nigerian universities nowadays are much younger than the pioneers of university education in this country. One can thus easily link the differences in issues that caused student unrests in the early sixties and now to the age factor. The pioneers of university education in this country were much more matured than the present generation of students. Most of them were either married or were with children of their own; most left responsible and relatively permanent or secure jobs to attend the university. On the contrary, the present generation of students apart from being very young and single are free from all the constraints of marriage and the family and mostly undecided about what they planned or expected to choose as careers. The now generation of students can therefore afford to be temporarily rusticated after an unrest only to begin again! The pioneers of university education in this country could not afford to be so treated by university authorities and hence

had to be sure they were on the right path before embarking on any agitation or demonstration of any sort. The 1957 student unrest at the University College, Ibadan, mentioned earlier is a good example of the maturity of the students who were involved in the crisis. One can also easily recall an issue - the Anglo-Nigerian Defence pact of the early sixties which the University of Ibadan students clearly demonstrated against and thus prevented the Nigerian government from signing; no one can really say exactly what would have resulted from such a defence pact when one considers the events of the Nigerian Civil War. These days it is not impossible for students to go on demonstration over poor quality of food which has earned them the press tag of protesting over 'bread and butter' (Students have argued incessantly that this is not true).

It is my belief that this age factor has a lot to do not only with the students but also with the administrative staff charged with the responsibility of administering the function of the universities. To the extent that administrative staff are matured, there is the tendency to reduce friction between students and university authority. Nigerian university students have not shown much of political activism as their counterparts in U.S. and Europe.

Above are the basic social characteristics of the Nigerian university students - understanding these characteristics and taking them into consideration during crisis would go a long way in helping to resolve conflicts between students and university authorities amicably.

Closely linked with these social characteristics are found the major

problems and issues confronting the Nigerian university students which are generally manifested by protests. These problems/issues would form the substance of the next chapter. If there is anything one can link with these characteristics, it is that despite the relatively young age of the present generation of students, the university authorities must see students as adults and not kids and should treat them as such. Their psychology is such that they will respond positively given the right atmosphere.

C H A P T E R 4

MAJOR PROBLEMS/ISSUES CONFRONTING NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

CHAPTER 4

The problems the Nigerian University students face throughout the duration of their courses are numerous and varied. The philosophy of university education in Nigeria has been strongly influenced by the British philosophy of university education - the training of an 'elite' who will perform various roles in the bureaucratic structures of the 'modern' sector[1]. This type of education places a lot of stresses on university students.

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM

The university curriculum which is patterned on the British system makes for specialisation in one subject while graduates may be ignorant of other important areas of knowledge. The specialization however makes for depth and competence in that particular subject. Efforts are being made by some of the Universities to correct this defect.

NON-EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRIES

On graduation most university students are faced with the problem of non-employment by industries because their training has not provided them with necessary skills - this is why one finds graduates in physical sciences, engineering and allied subjects teaching elementary algebra and geometry in Secondary Schools, while agricultural graduates teach botany. This is a serious problem although it has not featured prominently as a major cause of student agitation amongst the university students. It does however causes some frustration among university undergraduates, which generally goes to add to the tensions experienced by students throughout their university years.

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

Another issue closely linked with securing jobs on graduation is

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1. Professor F. O. Okedeji, Nigeria's University Student in West Africa Magazine 29 Oct., 1973.

related to university examinations. University examination happens to be one of the most sensitive areas of student's life. There is so much examination consciousness and academic competition is so fierce that the whole educational experience for most students is an extremely difficult and traumatic one. It is not a mere coincident that most of the student's protests are usually staged when university examinations are rather imminent!

The structure of university examination creates frustration and a lot of problems for the students; the synchronic nature of students' assessment rather than a diachronic form of assessment raises several questions in the minds of students concerning the fairness or appropriateness of such a system of examination. One finds that students are generally reduced to mere 'bookworms' who only 'swot' and memorise notes just for the sake of passing examinations and not really trying hard enough to understand what his notes are all about. This causes a lot of inadequacy on the part of the student in later life when he eventually finds himself having to do things he does not really understand. (This is not unconnected with the reason why industries are reluctant to employ fresh university graduates).

FORMAL NATURE OF UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Perhaps the most related problem faced by university students as regards this study of the causes of student unrests and conflict resolution in general, is the question of the formal nature of university system. The Nigerian university system is so elaborately formalised, that is, it is highly bureaucratised. The characteristics of a bureaucratic structure in the 'ideal-typical' case according to

Weber are as follow:[2] -

1. the regular activities required for the purposes of the organisation are distributed in a fixed manner as official duties.
2. the organisation of offices follows the principle of hierarchy
3. operations and functions are governed by a consistent system of abstract rules and consist of the application of these rules to particular cases.
4. the ideal official conducts his offices in a spirit of formalistic impersonality, without hatred or passion, and hence without affection or enthusiasm.
5. Employment in the bureaucratic organisation is based on technical qualifications and is protected against arbitrary dismissal. It constitutes a career and there is a system of promotions according to seniority or to achievement, or both.
6. Experience tends universally to show that the purely bureaucratic type of administrative organisation is, from a purely technical point of view, capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency.

It would appear that the combined effects of these characteristics of a bureaucracy is to establish those conditions which constrain each actor within the organisation to act in such a way as to foster the rational pursuit of the goals of the organisation. Studies have shown that informal structures often emerge from these formalised structures which may operate at cross purposes from the attainment of organisational objectives. Informal structure is generally an elaboration of the formal structure. So much then for the characteristics of a typical bureaucratic organisation.

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2. N.P. Mouzelis, 'Organisation and Bureaucracy - An Analysis of Modern Theories' Rootledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1967.

In the formal structure of the Nigerian university system, there are rules and procedures about doing almost everything such as appointments and promotions of staff members, admission of students, the implementation of loan schemes, the award of scholarships, payment of fees, sitting for examinations, discipline of students, sports and games etc. Students are generally so baffled by the elaborateness of the rules, the impersonal way in which they are treated by the academic as well as the administrative staff members alike, and the rigid super-ordinate - subordinate type of relationship between them and the academic/administrative staff that they (the students) resort to various means to survive within the system. A cafeteria steward once asked a group of students whether they thought that the token sum of money they paid for their meals was enough to provide them with all what they do demand from the university. Naturally this led to a fracas between the students and the steward; all other students as well as other stewards joined and the university was once again thrown into confusion. The university administration blamed the students for not showing some form of respect for the much older stewards! This and many other unfortunate incidences are what students generally have to bottle up within them while at the same time trying so hard not to be distracted from their studies. It is not very easy, hence the frequent friction between students and university authorities.

PARTICIPATION

To survive within this system, students have continuously agitated for participation in the decision-making processes of the university

administration, particularly in those areas that are directly concerned with student welfare. This has been a major issue confronting Nigerian university students. Most of the Nigerian universities now have student representatives in committees whose decision directly affect students. In the University of Benin, there are students' representatives in the following committees and Boards:

(a) Physical Planning, Development and Estimates Committee
(b) Students Disciplinary Committee
(c) Ceremonials & Honorary Degrees Committee
(d) Board of Health
(e) Campus and Students Welfare Board
(f) Library and Routine Publications Committee
(g) Committee on Sports and Cultural Activities
(h) Bookshop Management Committee

WELFARE

One other major problem faced by students is related to their welfare. In all the Nigerian universities, there is acute accommodation problem such as insufficient reading places in the libraries, lack of adequate sitting places even in lecture rooms and laboratories and most important of all there is the perenial problem of lack of accommodation in halls of residence. At the beginning of this current session, 1976/77 session that is, the female students of the university of Ife have protested against their being accommodated five in a room meant for maximum of three students! It is interesting to hear university authorities and the public alike say that in other countries, university students are not provided residential accommodation, so the students

are not being realistic. One wonders who is not really being realistic in this situation - the students or the university authorities and the public. In these countries often quoted, there are generally adequate housing facilities within the university vicinity or suburb, and of course a reliable and dependable transport facility that caters for the public as well as the students.

The National Universities Commission has stipulated that 75% of student population must be comfortably accommodated in halls of residence by the end of the current plan period - this decision clearly shows that the Commission is aware of the inadequate housing and transport facilities in most of the Nigerian University towns to warrant the enforcement of off-campus residency. Students welfare problem has been one of the biggest and most important issue in any student' unrest in this country. It caused the 1971 February crisis at the University of Ibadan in which the first Nigerian student lost his life.

FINANCE

I would like to mention the process of financing their education as one other issue confronting Nigerian university students - this is rightly put after welfare. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, most Nigerian university students come from relatively poor homes and their education involves very severe financial difficulties for themselves, their parents and unwilling relatives. Most of the students have to take up vacation employments to pay for their university expenses. This situation combined with a high probability of achievement of

success in the future explains to a significant extent, the attitudes, orientations and collective behaviour of most students. It also shows the various stresses and strains that the students have to put up with - thus this situation often leads to the creation of tensions and when these tensions become uncontrollable, protests, cleavages and vicious conflict tend to emerge.

STUDENTS UNIONISM

I would like to mention briefly another issue (although not very important to most students, themselves) confronting the Nigerian university students; this is the politics of the students unions. Student Unionism (politics) is very closely related to the power structure of the university system and the broad Nigerian political scene. There are accusations of ethnicity, nepotism, corruption, parochialism in students' politics just as in the university system and in the country as a whole. It would appear that the character of students' politics bears some semblance to the politics in the Nigerian university communities and the totality of political style in the Nigerian society. This situation tends to make for lack of unity among the various union officials of the different universities. Often there are struggles and violent conflict over posts in the national student body - the National Union of Nigerian Students. What all these amount to is that the Nigerian public is unable to take Nigerian university students serious hence the students are always blamed in most crisis. This is a problem that the students themselves will have to find an answer to so that their credibility in the eyes of the Nigerian public can be up-

graded. The University authorities might help by enforcing some stricter measures on a code of conduct for students Union officials.

In summary, it is my conviction here that the typically formalised Nigerian university system constitutes the biggest problem for the Nigerian university students. This highly bureaucratic system has so much emphasized the superordinate - subordinate relationship between the staff members (whether senior, intermediate or junior) and the students, that it has created so much inequality. Generally, inequality creates tension and all systems of inequality contain those conditions which create tensions. When these tension become uncontrollable by the system, we have open conflict. This line of reasonning helps us to understand the extent to which the highly stratified nature of the university system accounts, at least in part, for the problems confronting the students and also for the much talked about breakdown in communication between the authorities and students as being another major cause of students' unrest in Nigerian universities.

CHAPTER 5

On the 4th of February 1971, Justice B. O. Kazeem was appointed Sole Commissioner with full powers and authority to inquire into the disturbances at the University of Ibadan on Monday, 1st February, 1971, in which an undergraduate was shot dead by a Nigerian policeman.

The terms of reference of the Commission are :

The Commission shall, with all convenient speed -

(i) establish the immediate and remote causes of the disturbances;

(ii) submit a detailed account of the incidents;

(iii) ascertain the nature and assess the propriety of the measures taken to quell the disturbances with particular reference to the circumstances in which one student was killed and others were injured;

(iv) make recommendations as to the respective degrees of responsibility of all concerned and make any other appropriate findings[1].

In recent times, most student unrests in Nigerian institutions of higher learning after numerous inquiries, have been attributed to certain causes of which the following are most prominent:

1) inadequate residential (hostel) accommodation and unsatisfactory supply of food and catering services;

2) the over-emphasized superordinate-subordinate relationship between staff and students which causes strained relationship between these two groups;

3) stringent administration of discipline with particular reference to rustication of students;

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1. B. O. Kazeem, Report of University of Ibadan Commission of Inquiry, 1971.

4) the use of armed military and police men by university authorities during students' demonstrations; and
5) lack of adequate communication between the university authorities and students.

In the case of the Ibadan crisis, the following were suggested as probably being the remote causes of the crisis;

(1) lack of uniformity in the menu and quality of catering services in the various halls of residence;
(2) non-participation of students in decision-making bodies of the university;
(3) inadequate hostel accommodation as a result of the phenomenal rise in the number of students, and the problem of the essentially residential nature of the University;
(4) corruption in many different facets of life within the university such as in hall administration, in the maintenance department, and among some members of the academic staff and the catering department;
(5) non-utilization by the students of the normal channel of communication laid down by the university;
(6) absolute dependence by students on the university administration in making provisions for students domestic life and in matters relating to students welfare generally;
(7) baneful influence of ethnic rivalries within the university resulting in divided loyalties among staff and student and of outside interference (probably for personal or political reasons) by individuals or bodies outside the university;
(8) segregation of the academic community and the creation of personality cult;
(9) official absenteeism by important university officials with the result that they are not around when serious issues crop up and degenerate into chaos.

But in actual fact, the Commission did find that the following were the actual remote causes of the February 1971 crisis at University of Ibadan;

(a) inadequate supply of food and poor catering services generally within the university;

(b) the question of non-participation by students in decision-making bodies of the university;

(c) inadequate hostel accommodation as a result of the phenomenal rise in the number of students and the problem of the essentially residential nature of the university; and

(d) lack of mutual confidence between the university administration and the students thus resulting in the non-utilization by the students of the normal channels of communication laid down by the university for redressing grievances.

As for the immediate causes of the disturbances the Commission found among others the following:

(a) there was gross official misconduct on the part of the Cafeteria Manageress in misappropriating students and Hall property;

b) the Hall Master and the Warden of the hall concerned failed to act proficiently to resolve the crisis;

c) the Vice-Chancellor of the university acted tactlessly by refusing to pacify the students of the hall involved in the disturbances on the first night when they marched on his residence;

d) the Vice-Chancellor's arrogant indifference to the issues involved in the disturbances;

e) the students demand in the hall of residence;

f) the administrative incompetence shown by the Vice- Chancellor for not consulting and getting the approval of Senate in time over the issue of closure of the Hall involved in the disturbances;

g) the high-handedness and rashness on the part of the Vice-Chancellor in calling the police at the time he did and for the purpose for which he called them.

I have chosen to use the above students' unrest as an illustration of what could be the major causes of students' unrest in Nigerian universities for the following reasons:

1. the Ibadan crisis has had the most profound effect on the general public;
2. it illustrates the oft-repeated allegations of administrative bureaucracy and incompetence in our universities;
3. the corrupt practices of university officials;
4. the complete lack of understanding of students problems and their mentality by those charged with the running of the universities; and
5. the superlative positions to which the university officials have put themselves, coupled with unnecessary high-handedness of top university officials in dealing with students.

These and all the other major issues confronting Nigerian university students as outlined in the last chapter are the major sources and causes of student unrests in general.

From the analysis of my interviews and respondents' answers to the questions contained in the questionnaire (see appendix II), various groups gave different but not unrelated reasons for the recent upsurge in student unrests in the country. It is however interesting to note that most of the reasons given all revolve around the same

major causes except that they have been put differently to suit the respective moods of the groups concerned. I have grouped the respondents into three categories as follow:

(a) students
(b) university staff (academic/administrative)
(c) others - members of the public which included people from the business community, the army and the police and of course civil servants in government ministries.

(a) STUDENTS

It is rather unfortunate that most commentators on student unrests do not really show the public how complicated an unrest among students can be; it is therefore necessary to learn a great deal more about it before it can be convincingly explained.

Student unrests or protests in Nigerian universities can be classified into three categories:-

1. Political issues (which include national as well as international issues, corruption in government, high political positions as well as political appointments)
2. Student welfare - improved conditions of living in students halls of residence, this is at the core of student unrests - overcrowding in the halls of residence, poor quality of food, inadequate bursary and loan schemes, the conditions of facilities and services available to students and the stringent rules and regulations controlling student behaviour, and what the students consider to be their private lives.
3. Participation in university decision-making processes, particularly as it affects students in (2) above; this refers to the question of democratisation of some aspects of the authority structure of the university. Most of the students interviewed have argued that the

public has been rather unfair to them by insisting that they only protest over food; they pointed out that their main concern was to be able to be a party to any decision that is bound to affect them most. This point might not be unrelated to their reaction to their being criticised for protesting over food.

INADEQUATE HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

Majority of the students interviewed are of the opinion that the problem of inadequate hostel accommodation gives rise to conflict with the university authorities. In most of the older Nigerian universities, the student population has considerably increased since their inceptions, without a corresponding increase in accommodation facilities. Hostel rooms originally designed for two students now house a maximum of five students. This situation causes a lot of friction between the students and the university authorities and if not properly handled normally becomes a source of open challenge to university authorities resulting in protests. Most of the universities now consider that an essentially residential nature of the university cannot be maintained if the student pupulation continues to increase and has therefore introduced a policy whereby some students live off-campus. Most students have not taken kindly to such a policy; the question of hostel accommodation continues to be a major source of students' unrest in Nigerian universities.

POOR QUALITY OF FOOD AND WELFARE FACILITIES.

Second on their list of the major causes of unrest as explained by the students is the question of poor quality of food served in dinning halls and the general attitude of all those connected with students' welfare - functionaries in the students Affairs Office, Accounts Office, Hall Administrators/Wardens and Catering staff. Inadequate supply of food and poor catering services have always been indentified as a constant source of friction between university administration and the students; this was responsible for the 1971 crisis mentioned earlier, at the University of Ibadan. Some universities have tried to evolve a system whereby students have the option of going to buy their meals in the dinning halls; if a student finds that the meal is not good enough he can look for an alternative outside the university.

The students have pointed out that this pay-as-you-eat system does not really work well; the catering staff have tended to be more careless in the preparation of the meals and frequently there is not enough food to go round. Those mostly affected are the male students, somehow the female students seem to be able to prepare their meals in the hostels, although this is illegal as far as the university authorities are concerned.

Students have continuously been blamed by members of the public for being so particular about meals, so much so that it is almost always the main cause of major students unrest in our university campuses. This has not been taken too kindly by the students; it baffles them that the public does not see the importance of good meals for young men and

women who are engaged in serious academic work most of the times.

PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING BODIES.

The question of non-participation of students in decision-making bodies of the university has also featured prominently on the students list of the major causes of unrests on university campuses. Students have attributed their non-representation in the Council, the Senate and other Committee of those bodies dealing with matters relating to their welfare within the university as breeding a feeling of alienation; and it has also been contended that whenever far-reaching decisions on students welfare were being taken they (the students) were not often consulted. Most of the so called students activists who demand greater involvement in the decision-making processes of the university generally feel that they have the capacity to influence the decision-making process of the university as well as that of the society. They want their members to be included in most policy-making Committees like the University Council, the Senate, Students Disciplinary Committee, ad hoc Investigation Committees and a host of others.

Participation in the decision-making processes of the university should be seen as a concession to 'buy' off irresponsible students, or a means of channelling excessive and potentially disruptive energy into possibly constructive but at least harmless, student activities. Though as representatives, their votes may not be particularly significant in passing resolutions, it does afford both parties the chance of confronting issues and seeking solutions by mutual accord.

Student leaders to my mind, could be encouraged to debate issues and probably come up with their own resolutions within their own governing bodies, for presentation to the actual policy makers of the institution. Students, faculty staff and administrators are thus brought together in such committees to hear and discuss issues with open minds and act with reason thereby bridging the communication gap that exists between these groups. Issues that are likely to get out of hand are thus easily resolved. A leading Nigerian Scholar, Professor Awojobi of the University of Lagos has consistently argued for the inclusion of students representatives on such bodies as the University Council, the Senate and even suggested the inclusion of the president of the National Union of Nigerian Students as a member of the National Universities Commission. In his words, "it is not easy to see the psychological impact of injecting students on the highest bodies of university administration but what cannot be challenged is that such an injection will have covered almost every point of argument on the manifestly one-sided nature of student discipline as in the status quo. It is also the surest means of bringing the students into a full and proper focus of genuine difficulties of university authorities in meeting their not-too-infrequent demands"[2].

This question of participation generally tends to hold together the various groups of students, because they feel that they are far

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2. Professor Awojobi; 'Lecture on Foundations of Social Order 1976-1979', in Sunday Times, October 17, 1976.

removed from direct access to the machinery of decision-making. As long as university authorities are reluctant to include students respresentatives on these policy-making bodies, students agitation over the issue will continue to be a major source of friction in our universities. The maturity of the student can be nurtured as he is drawn into the orbit of decision-making on the campus. Such decisions that have to do with academic programmes, with adaptations or expansions of calendars, with regulations relating to students life, with experimentation and innovative change, will help in the development of the student. Samuel Gould rightly summarises this when he said that "---- granted that the student lacks experiences with most of these matters, he is the one who contributes to making them succeed or fail. And so, although he is in no position to make the deciding judgements as to what should be done, he can participate in the process that brings about such judgements"[3].

CORRUPTION AND ADMINISTRATIVE INCOMPETENCE

The question of corruption and administrative incompetence in many different facets of life within the university administration such as in halls of residence, the maintenance department, and among some members of the academic staff and the catering department has also been a source of students unrest. Closely associated with this is the very elaborate rules and regulations (often time-wasting according to the students) that students have to obey and follow to get even the

3. Samuel Gould, 'The Role of Students in the Life of the University', N.A.S.P.A. IV October, 1966.

minutest transaction between students and functionaries concluded. Such rules and regulations are sometimes very irritating, and could cause some friction between university authorities and students. This particular issue thus brings into focus once again, the highly stratified, and bureaucratic nature of the University, which makes access to officials rather difficult. It is not uncommon for students not to know who or where to go to in periods of crisis. Students have also complained about the official absenteeism by important university officials with the result that they are not around when serious issues crop up and degenerate into chaos; most of the students are of the opinion that most of the Nigerian universities' Vice-Chancellors, spend too much time away from their respective universities.

CREATION OF PERSONALITY CULT.

This above situation has also led to the students accusation of segragation of the academic community and the creation of personality cult. Most students hardly see their Vice-Chancellor or the Registrar throughout the session. Students think that they are being snubbed by these university officials; they claim that there are no avenues for students and staff to interact other than in lecture rooms for the academic staff at best, and none at all for the administrative staff. There are separate facilities for staff and students in all the Nigerian universities! In any society, this could very well be a source of frustration which is capable of being manifested by protest. Perhaps, this is the source of the communication block between students and university authorities.

ADMINISTRATION OF DISCIPLINE

Majority of the students have also viewed the question of the stringent administration of discipline with particular reference to rustication of students, with a lot of reservation. Most students are convinced that the university authorities are rather too high-handed when it comes to discipline; trivial issues are either delibrately blown up to justify the heavy penalty to be meted out or such issues are just twisted round to suit the beliefs of those in power. Closely linked with this question of stringent administration of discipline is the habit of calling into university campuses armed military personnel and policemen whenever there were student protests. Granted that the military and the police are used almost anywhere in the world to put down student unrests, and that students do not have any special immunity from their action (the military and police), it has become an undisputed fact that most of the Nigerian University student protests have turned from being a peaceful affair to a violent situation for the simple reason that the military and police have been called in to 'restore' order. A top executive of the National Universities Commission sees this development as rather unfortunate, but insists that university authorities have the right to call in the military and the police when they feel justified to do so. He noted that the most significant issue in this particular situation is the question of the form of briefing issued to the military and the police. One would like to point out here that there seems to be a constant dislike of the students

by the military and the police for no justifiable reason; one might be tempted to put it down to the education gap between these two groups. However, realising that student protests and unrests consitute a breakdown of law and order requiring law enforcement personnel to put right, it would be in the interest of the students, the university authorities and the public in general not to resort to this drastic measure unless where it can be proved beyond reasonable doubts that the safety of lives was involved and in any case, such law enforcement personnel should on no account be armed. Afterall, Nigerian University students have not reached that stage where they have to carry arms during protests.

POLITICAL ISSUES OF THE DAY.

It has become fashionable for Nigerian university students to take to the streets over such issues as govenment policies, political corruption, the country's relationship with other countries, the economy of the country and even over such issues as the liberation struggles of black people in Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique Namibia and Azania (South Africa). This should not come as a surprise to the public; students read the speeches writings and the ideas of great political scientists, theorists and philosophers, great economists, and historians and they are bound to compare the ideas of these people about free, experimental and utopian societies with the contrasting politico-economic and social realities they now face. Besides, the process of education itself fosters social evaluation and innovation. Students are taught, and even urged, to question, to think and to be critical.

The liberation effect this process has on the individual is the eventual criticism of the society and its leaders in spite of the constant danger of reprisal by the power elite so threatened. Most of the students share with some of the few real intellectuals in the society such fear that our social transformation, and the pace of modernization are rather too slow or non-existent; they impatiently demand for immediate reforms, stoppage of bureaucratic red tape, reorganisation of government and a guarantee of individual's rights.

Recent happenings in Thailand illustrate the extent to which students have gone with respect to their genuine concern for reorganisation of government and the restoration of the rights of individuals. There are other well known and documented examples of national governments being brought down by student movements calling for reforms. Nigerian university students cannot be written off when the time comes to look back at the fall of the country's last military regime! The students see the government's indifference to such political issues enumerated above as a potential source of major students unrest.

In concluding this portion of the survey of causes of students unrest one would like to point out the nature of relationships and techniques of conflict resolution within the universities, as a possible cause of other unrests. This will be expanded upon when dealing with the role of the administrator in conflict resolution in the next chapter. Above are the major causes of unrests on our campuses as seen from the students' viewpoint.

(b) UNIVERSITY STAFF

In presenting the views of the university staff as to what they consider to be the causes of student unrests on Nigerian university campuses, it would be significant to differentiate between views held by the administrative staff and the academic staff for some fairly obvious reasons. In most Nigerian Universities, most of the academic staff are rather far too removed from the problems confronting the students; they show a disappointing lack of concern even on academic problems facing the students. It is also not unheard of for some academic members of staff not to be conversant with the procedures involved in say matters connected with committee membership and the general university laws and regulations. Perhaps, they might justify these their shortcomings on the fact that they are primarily hired to teach and do research and not to be concerned with how the university is administered. A recent announcement by a Vice-Chancellor that expert academic staff should be allowed to concentrate on lecturing, conducting research, supervising and guiding research students and helping in the evolution of curricula might further justify the lack of interest in students problems and university administration as shown by some of the academic staff in Nigerian universities. There are however some exceptions - these are those academic members of staff who serve in the numerous committees of the university.

I shall begin by looking at the administrative staff viewpoint since they are the most involved with student unrests. Students

generally focus attention on the administrative staff any time there are issues to be resolved.

NON-UTILIZATION OF NORMAL CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATIONS.

The University administration sees the non-utilization by the students of the normal channel of communication laid down by the university as the major source of unrests on Nigerian university campuses. Most frequently the students would by-pass the normal channel of communication in seeking redress for their grievances. They would even go as far as making it impossible for the university administration to communicate with them by sacking their Union Executives and setting up what they call a Joint Action Committee (members of this Committee remain anonymous). There seems to be a lot of truth in this since the students themselves have not denied that they were in the habit of employing such tactics whenever they are engaged in some form of confrontation with the administration. They have contended that this has been as a result of the non-fulfilment of official promises or some partially fulfilled ones.

This question of non-utilization of the normal channel of communication has even been found to be one of the causes of conflict within the student body itself. Judged by their actions, students prefer to attempt to solve their problems and redress their grievances by publicity releases, grandiose gestures, demonstrations and letters to the highest authority rather than by the much taxing and arduous ways of first exploring all the possible ways of constitutional action, and

informal delegations to and persuasion of authority, be it the students Union Executive, the university administration or a Government[4]. The danger of this approach is that it readily leads to the escalation of any issue into a major conflict.

Some members of the university administration sees this development as a result of most students being unaware that there are constitutional channels available to them and for the fact that the issuing of grandiose releases is spectacular and as such appeals to student politicians far more than behind-the-scene's activity which may turn out to be no more successful than a release. Students also see politics in the society as that of expedient confrontation and they merely follow the older national politicians in this respect. The university administration sees the only solution to this problem as that of restoring confidence that routine administration and constitutional methods can achieve redress of grievances. Students should also be made more aware of the constitutional channels available to them, and they be advised to utilise such channels all the time.

STUDENTS TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

The university administration also sees the absolute dependence by students on the administration in making provisions for students domestic life and in matters relating to students welfare generally as another source of frequent conflict between students and the university authorities. The purely residential nature of the Nigerian

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4. Professor Beetlestone, Beetlestone Committee of Inquiry, University of Ibadan, 1970.

universities has made it incumbent on the university administration to provide almost everything required for students domestic life. Thus in such wide areas like feeding, supply of beddings, laundry service, provision of television, mosquito nets, refrigerators in every hall wing, cleaning of rooms and making of bed, friction between the students and the domestic staff is almost inevitable. The administration therefore considers that such friction could be obviated or competely eliminated if the university do not have to assume total responsibility for students domestic life. Hence the introduction of such policies by the university authorities, whereby some students live outside the campus and making arrangements for their welfare all on their own, and the pay-as-you-eat system in the dinning halls. Unfortunately these policies also have their adverse effects - the general student body has consistently and vehemently opposed the off-campus policy resulting in generating what the policy was originally intended to contain -- conflict.

PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING BODIES

The issue of non-participation by students in the decision-making processes of the universities is seen by the university administrative staff as a mere propoganda device by the students to win public sympathy during crisis. It is a well known fact that greater consultation and participation is being demanded by workers in all types of organisation these days, even by members of churches, Parliament and by the more junior staff of the universities. It has therefore come as no surprise

for students to demand for greater participation in the decision-making bodies of the Universities. But the irony of this demand is that the students themselves are not willing to trust their own elected officers and representatives to any university committee of which they have membership. The university administration while regarding this issue as a possible cause of unrest, views it as being unimportant for some reasons. Students have been found to contribute very little to the proceedings of most Committee work; they are hardly present for most meetings of Committees and when they do show up, they only succeed in wasting time over trivial issues. Some students have even gone as far as denouncing participation in Committee work as bureaucratic.

The university administration feels that the students should make a case for representation in such important university bodies, apart from the usual demand for representation on all important university committees. So far, the students according to the university authorities have not been able to make such a case for representation.

INADEQUATE HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

The university administration sees the issue of inadequate hostel accommodation being a frequent cause of unrest as rather unfortunate. Members of the university administration blames this on the total lack of cooperation and understanding on the part of the students. It is not unknown for students to demand for the completion of a student hostel block being constructed by an outside organisation (a building company) within an absolutely impossible period of time. There have

been cases where student leaders have been convinced, by the provision of relevant information, that their demands cannot be met, but they confessed that they could not go back and tell their fellow students what the real situation was like. It is the view of the administrative staff that students should show more maturity and understanding when considering the issue of inadequate hostel accommodation. The government as well as the various university authorities are doing their best to ease the hostel accommodation problem - it definitely cannot be solved overnight.

LACK OF ENOUGH INFORMATION ABOUT ISSUES

One other cause of unrests in university campuses according to the administrative staff can be linked to the general lack of effort on the part of the students to seek enough information about issues before rushing to conclusions. This issue is not totally unrelated to the question of non-utilization of normal channel of communication laid down by the university. This issue of not seeking enough information allows students to make unreasonable demands; if enough information had been available to them in the first place, such demands would not have been made at all.

THE MASS MEDIA

University administrative staff are all agreed on the fact that the mass media had more than significantly perpetuated and escalated various institutional conflicts through their inaccurate reporting and their frequently error-filled, highly selective perspectives. The mass media is one of the most important channels of communication linking

various parts of the university campus and the community, and often create issues which never existed thereby polarizing stances and intensifying potential conflict. An inexperienced and ill-informed university administrator answering press questions not only can create violent reactions within the campus, but gives eager pressmen an opportunity of issuing distorted and therefore embarrassing reports. One Nigerian daily newspapers once carried a false story of a student having been killed in a student disturbance; this eventually infuriated the students who managed to get hold of and beat up one army officer and then set fire to his landrover, in an obviously retaliatory mood.

The university administration therefore requires a well-informed, experienced and dynamic public relations personnel capable of giving accurate reports of events in the institution, not only at crisis period, but also to counteract the actions of the mass media. Inaccurate and sensational newspaper accounts only worsen issues. Unfortunately for the university administration, students often have the best hearing with the press - this is probably due to the fact that the mass media regards the students as the underdogs!

Having enumerated the causes of unrest on campuses as seen from the viewpoint of the university administrative staff, I will now present the views of the academic staff.

CORRUPTION

A number of academic staff in most Nigerian universities believe that there is the existence of a general malaise within the universities as well as the society as a whole. They believe there is corruption in

many different facets of life within the universities such as in hall administration, in the maintenance/estate department, and among some members of the academic staff and the catering department. This situation has to do with a very basic dissatisfaction amongst the students of their own place within the universities or prospect of their existence and contribution towards a nation whose values they very deeply question. Students generally see this development as a form of challenge -- they feel they have all the right to demonstrate against corruption and corrupt practices, thereby making the general public aware that (the students) as future leaders of the nation, should be responsible for the crusade for moral uprightness and acceptable mode of behaviour amongst officials whether in the universities, or governments. Hence students frequently embark on protest demonstrations. Students, according to some members of the academic staff, are aware of the existence of favoured groups in almost all the Nigerian Universities; they know that appointments to certain positions within the universities are grossly influenced; they also know that there are within the universities certain elements who readily interfere in academic performances of students; they are also aware of the irregularities in promotions of staff members; they also know of ethnic rivalries within the universities; and most of all students feel that the universities should be the last place where all these irregularities should be found. What it all amounts to for the students is frustration and total dissatisfaction with the entire system and a general call for change; this

often takes the form of protests which become escalated into major unrests with the help of certain government agencies. The academics hold the view that students are rapidly becoming sophisticated and politically powerful, so much so that well organized student opinion and disciplined action will begin to have an accelerating impact on national policies very soon. And with the increasing university enrollments, and an increasing number of students involved in social issues, student movements may become a decisive force in national politics, in the very near future, ready to effectively tackle the problem of corruption within the universities and the society at large.

ADMINISTRATIVE INCOMPETENCE & THE PROCESS OF DECISION-MAKING

A good number of academic staff of the Nigerian Universities tend to put the blame for student unrests on the inaccessibility and incompetence of administrative staff of the universities in handling potentially disruptive student problems. They claim that management procedures and operations in our campuses are notoriously poor. Often they claim, administrative staff are too slow in tackling and finding solutions to students problems. In some instances, officials responsible for students welfare are known to have made obvious omissions when dealing with issues related to students.

A lot of issues that could have been dealt with administratively are often refered to various Committees and by the time decisions are reached and implemented, students would have run out of patience and they generally resort to protests to get their demands granted.

An Ibadan university academic pointed out the case of the expelled president of the Ibadan students union - Mr. Adegboro as one good example of the rather cumbersome and slow decision-making processes in Nigerian universities. Mr. Adegboro was supposed to have applied for sabbatical leave sometime in January 1976; the Senate did not make any decision on this application until the 26th of April, 1976, when sessional examinations were barely three weeks away, and when the decision was finally made, Senate disapproved of the application. What happened in Ibadan after this decision is now history. It is the view of this academic that the University of Ibadan authorities should have anticipated the political nature of Mr. Adegboro's application and should have been treated with dispatch. What is being suggested therefore, is that flexibility, when demanded by situations, should be put into use -- it is a mark of mature administration. It is no use adhering strictly to accepted or normal procedures in the face of what could amount to open confrontation with the student body. Most academics think that students should be given sits on university Committees that deal directly with them -- in that way there will be a reduction in the frequent conflicts arising from lack of information on issues affecting students.

COMMUNICATION GAP

Communication gap between students and university authorities has been a permanent feature of Nigerian universities. It is the belief of most academic members of staff of the Nigerian universities,

that this gap could be a result of distrust of either party by the other and consequently no matter how well-intentioned, actions or statements are deliberately misunderstood or misconstrued. Sometimes the established procedure for taking decisions are not clearly understood by students and in fact, some members of staff too. This situation often leads to open confrontation between students and university authorities. It is interesting to note that while the administrative staff stress the non-utilization of normal channels of communication, the academic staff believe that the students do not know these channels of communication. Some academics also pointed out that if administrative staff took the trouble to explain these procedures properly to students, without being too arrogant about it, students will learn to use the correct procedures when they make demands.

INADEQUATE FACILITIES

In the words of an Ibadan university academic staff interviewed, "the mounting pressure on facilities is not limited to halls of residence; cafeterias are so jammed that students at times wait on the queue for upwards of one hour to buy their ration. Plates, cutlery, glasses are in so short supply that students wait for others to finish their meals so that they could wash the glasses and cuttlery for their own use. Classes are getting so large that lecture rooms become too over-crowded to be conducive venues for sharing ideas; it is not unusual to find students who come in on the dot of time standing up for the duration of a one-hour lecture. Not to mention

the pressure on the library; only few of the students who care to check up reference materials will ever get to consult them. Recommended text books are not available in the university bookshops either. A student who starts the day queuing to use the toilet, to take his bath, forgoes his breakfast because he has to make his eight O'clock lecture, tries in vain to consult important reference materials and cannot even have a quiet rest at the end of it all because he shares a room with four others is a very likely candidate for a demonstration. The psychological stress is too much to be absorbed and one form of tension release is agression towards persons or objects".

As long as university authorities continue to pay little attention or are unable to impress on the students the efforts being made to alleviate these unsatisfactory conditions, our universities will continue to experience student unrests.

RECEPTIONS OF FOREIGN INNOVATIONS AND IDEAS

The less technologically developed countries of the world are either going through a culture-lag crisis, or are victims of selective receptions of foreign innovations and ideas. Nigerian university students are continuously being exposed to the ideals of political and economic liberation of subject peoples and the virtues of the so-called democracies of the West; and yet it appears that the opportunity to put the ideas to practical test is being denied by the authorities -- both

in the government and the universities. This generation of students is more politically informed and conscious than the previous ones --- which is the way it should be; they ask more questions, which any university should see as a healthy development from the largely unquestionning past. Answers to these questions do not come as fast as they imagine they should and the impatience they display is unparalleled in the history of students' agitation in this country.

One solution to this issue would be the setting up in our universities systematic staff-students out-of-class forums as a way of generating discussions on campus problems as they are perceived by both academics and administrators on the one hand and the students on the other. It is a well known fact that students' expectations are generally out of proportions to what exists in reality; they could be made to come to realise the true position of things in such forum discussions. With genuine spirit of cooperation and understanding on the parts of both the students and the authorities, such forums will go a long way in reducing campus tensions in general.

STUDENTS IMMUNITY

One other cause of student unrests in Nigerian university campuses as seen by an academic staff of one of the universities, is the immunity their status as students confers on the students themselves. Law-enforcement officers cannot set their feet on any campus unless invited by the appropriate university authorities; students therefore enjoy perpetrating such acts of violence and lawlessness in their campuses

way out of the current trend in our universities. The alternative is recurring chaos.

OTHERS

In concluding this survey of causes of student unrests, I will now enumerate the causes of most of the unrests as seen by the third group of my respondents which I have referred to as -- Others; these include members of the business community, the army, the police, Civil servants and other members of the general public.

The usual thing that emerges and re-emerges both at the outset and at the close of student unrests in Nigeria is a blatant fallacy of composition which always holds the students to be wrong and the university authorities to be right. This has been due to the inclination or disposition to examine student unrests in terms of their effects, rather than in terms of their causes. Nobody and no group is always right while the other side is at all times wrong. Stability ensues when both the authorities and the students agree, at least on certain general prinoiples and on some modus operandi arrived at, through effective communication and dialogue.

The first reaction from the general public when there are student unrests is that these 'thugs', 'hooligans', 'vandals' and irresponsibles', who call themselves students are at it again and that they must be wrong. Some people have gone to the extent of calling them the above names without even bothering to find out the facts leading to such unrests.

LACK OF MATURITY

Most people outside the universities whom I talked to were of the opinion that the present generation of university students show a disappointing lack of maturity in their every day life. Students are constantly making absolutely unreasonable demands without even pausing to consider the lots of their fellow country-men who are less privi-ledged. The present generation of university student think they have all the answers to every issue and are always too eager to make their views on such issues known to the general public without giving any consideration to the consequences of such actions. In most cases their views are frequently antagonistic to those of responsible authorities and individuals within the society. Closely linked with this lack of maturity is the age factor; these days Nigerian univer-sities are beginning to turn out graduates of twenty-one years old, the average age for Nigerian university graduates being twenty-three years. When one compares this age to those of the pioneers of university education in this country, one would readily see the consequences of the youthful exuberance of the present generation of Nigerian university students - a total disregard for constituted authority. This issue of lack of maturity also has something to do with the broader issue of discipline in most Nigerian homes. In the past, every family looked up to the fortunate educated member of the family for those qualities of the western educated elite -- decency, respect, cleaniness, regard for the less fortunate lots within the

society and above all such an educated member of a family was his brother's keeper - he assumes responsibility for the welfare of his extended family, clan and even his community. These days with more and more families putting their children through universities and with better living standards in general, things seem to have changed from what they used to be. Children hardly obey parents nowadays, not to talk of showing respect to the older members of the society -- herein lies the challenge of the present generation of Nigerian university students to constituted authorities.

FREEDOM WITHIN THE UNIVERSITIES

A good number of people interviewed believed that there exists in the universities excessive freedom for the students to do almost anything with little or no reperoussions. It seems quite absurd for students to decide to stay away from classes without their being penalised for it; perhaps this is the essence of university education - the willingness on the part of the students to condition their minds to certain rigorous demands made on them by university learning. Students are allowed to run their affairs entirely on their own with little or no guidance or direction except for some few rules and regulations which are never observed anyway. We have heard a lot about misuse of students union funds, embezzlement comparable to those of public officers in our society, drunkness, illegal use of drugs and malpractices ranging from cheating in examinations to sexual promiscuousity among our students. With all

these vices and malpractices going on frequently unchallenged or not properly investigated and dealt with, with all the seriousness they deserve, students generally tend to make themselves believe that they are not doing anything wrong afterall, hence they are only too happy to go on their not too infrequent rampage demanding one thing or the other from university authorities and governments alike.

Members of the public believe that our universities require more stringent discipline to curtail the excesses of some of our delinquent youth on campuses all over the country. It is not enough for government and parents to waste so much funds on these students without getting anything from them in return. Universities should cut down on the freedom of action given to students in this country. Some people feel that this country has not reached that stage of development whereby its university students could be allowed that freedom of action which could from time to time disrupt the smooth running of our universities through students unrest.

THE GAP IN INFORMATION BETWEEN THE AUTHORITIES AND STUDENTS

There is a general lack of flow of information between the authorities and the students. Students union officials either deliberately refuse to inform their colleagues of decisions reached with the authorities or they are totally misinformed. This has continued to cause disharmony between the authorities and students in our universities. Members of the public interviewed were of the opinion

that if conscious efforts were made to close the gap in information between the authorities and the students, students unrest on university compuses would be considerably detered and curbed. Perhaps the best way to go about this will be through publications widely circulated among staff and students alike. The Students Affairs Division of the University of Lagos publishes a students newsletter in which matters affecting the students and the ways they are being handled are discussed and widely circulated to the student body. (See Appendix IV). I think this is a right approach to the issue of this gap in information between the authorities and students. Other universities do have similar publications but they do not deal extensively with students issues and they do not reach the students body e.g. Ahmadu Bello University's Bulletin published every Friday could be redesigned to take care of this aspect of students welfare, if the Students Affairs Division cannot undertake the publication of a students newsletter.

INADEQUATE HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION & WELFARE FACILITIES

Members of the public though realizing that inadequate hostel accommodation could be a serious cause of unrest amongst Nigerian University students, just as bad quality of food could similarly cause major unrests, do not believe that students should put more emphasis on these short-comings considering the fact that majority of Nigerians hardly get three good meals in a day or the fact that some Nigerians do not have shelter over their heads; where houses are available, they are overcrowded and rents charged are very high. People believe that

our students should champion the causes of these unfortunate Nigerians rather than embarking on wanton destruction of properties because of inadequate hostel accommodation and bad food.

Members of the public are all however agreed on the fact that university officials who are found wanting with respect to students welfare such as misappropriation of students food items and stealing of materials such as bed and beddings meant for students should be dismissed from the services of the universities. On the other hand, students should learn to show some restraint and understanding especially over issues such as inadequate hostel accommodation, lack of space in lecture rooms, libraries etc., for in most cases the causes of such inadequacy may not be the making of the university authorities as such.

METHODS OF RESOLVING CONFLICTS

A good number of people I talked to also pointed out that the methods of resolving conflicts in our universities could be another possible cause of student unrests. Most of the people who know the working system in our universities feel that matters that can be administratively dealt with are often committed to the long process of committee decision and in the end confrontations are generally the end results. It is believed by most people that if discipline is maintained in our universities, and penalties involved clearly made known to the students for various offences committed by not obeying rules and regulations, then it would be much easier to punish a student for

breaking the laws of the university. Another thing is that officials tend to go about their duties without any seriousness, they let issues become major problems before seeking the right solution to such issues; they also show a disappointing lack of understanding of students problems. There are very good examples of such cases in most of our universities; a Vice-Chancellor of one of the universities has had to be removed for this sort of administrative incompetence.

The use of armed military and police personnel to quel students unrest has been criticised by members of the public with the exception of the army and the police of course. Apart from escalating minor students' disturbances, the 'participation' of armed military and police in students unrests seems to have a certain feeling of raw justice perpetuated on the students. This has constantly put the students on edge any time they are involved in conflict with the authorities; it should be avoided at all cost since it turns trivial issues into major unrests.

NON-PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN DECISION-MAKING BODIES

Some people are genuinely concerned over the non-participation of students in some of the university decision-making bodies, particularly those that deal with the students mostly. They feel this could be a source of confrontation with university authorities. In any case, some of these people do not see the harm it would cause to include students representatives on such bodies if at all there are any. They feel that at best the participation of students in the decision-making

IBRAHIM LIBR

processes of the universities will reduce considerably the frequent tensions that exist between students and university authorities, and will also make the students see the realities of the universities' difficulties and perhaps their own unrealistic demands which cannot be too frequently met by the university authorities.

Above are the most important causes of students unrest in our universities as seen by members of the public in general. Perhaps one other cause that need mentioning is the question of ethnic rivalries within the universities resulting in divided loyalties among staff and student and of outside interference by individuals or bodies outside the university. With our universities gradually becoming institutions for indigenes of the localities where these universities are located (never mind the talk about our universities being federal or what not in terms of students intake), a lot of people have expressed fear that Nigerian university campuses might become grounds for fostering tribalism in the very near future; this could be a very sad event for the country.

In concluding this rather lengthy survey of the causes of student unrests on Nigerian university campuses I would like to draw attention to the causes which all the three groups of respondents are agreed upon as being the major sources of students unrest on Nigerian university campuses; the three groups have equally laid a lot of emphasis on (a) inadequate hostel accommodation and welfare facilities in general, (b) the lack of adequate communication or flow of information between

university authorities and the students, (c) the use of armed military and police personnel by university authorities during unrests, (d) the question of age factor of the present generation of university students, (e) participation by students in the decision-making processes of the university (f) corruption and administrative incompetence on the part of university authorities and (g) the issue of non-utilisation of the laid down channels of communication by students during crises. These together with other causes which have been discussed in this chapter are what have been responsible for most of the students unrest this country has witnessed so far; they would probably continue to be the major causes of unrest, on our campuses for quite sometime unless efforts geared towards rehabilitation and discipline are made by the university authorities and the government as well as making conscious efforts to close the gap in information between the authorities and the students; these will help deter and curb students' frequent outbursts.

CHAPTER 6

THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

CHAPTER 6

(a) STRUCTURE & ORGANISATION OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

The constitutional, administrative and organizational structures of Ibadan, Lagos, Ahmadu Bello, Ife, Nsukka and Benin Universities are all essentially similar, although the framework of Nsukka was slightly different from the rest at the early stages. Nsukka was initially structured along the typical American university system -- Michigan State University helped to establish Nsukka as a land-grant institution through a ten-year trilateral agreement: Michigan State University - USAID - Nigerian Government represented by the former Eastern Nigerian Government. The new Universities and University Colleges located in Calabar, Maiduguri, Sokoto, Jos, Kano, Port Harcourt and Ilorin because of their initial association with the older universities would be expected to develop along the same line as the old ones which were modelled after British Universities; there might be some slight innovations here and there.

The constitutions of all Nigerian Universities now provide for a Chancellor, a Vice-Chancellor, a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, a University Council headed by the Chairman of Council or Pro-Chancellor in some cases, a Senate and a Congregation. Each University also has a Registrar, a Bursar and a Librarian who are all Officers of the University.

The Chancellor's office is purely a ceremonial one - he is the titular head of the University and his main function being that of opening and closing a degree convocation, and sometimes meeting staff

and Officers of the University socially, and also granting degrees 'in cursu' and 'honoris causa'.

The Vice-Chancellor of each Nigerian University is the chief executive and academic officer of the university, and ex-officio chairman of the Senate and a member of the University Council. The Vice-Chancellor presides over all the statutory committees such as the Appointments and Promotions Committee of Council and Senate, the Committee of Deans and Directors, the Development Committee, the Admissions Committee, the Higher Degrees Committee, the Library Committee, the Students' Disciplinary Committee etc. It appears that the universities of Ibadan, Ife, Lagos, Ahmadu Bello and Benin overtax their Vice-Chancellor with more committee work than does Nsukka. For example the Vice-Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University is also the Chairman of each Faculty Board, the Board of Basic Studies Congregation, and also Chairman of all the Board of Governors of the Institute of Health, the Institute of Education, and the Division of Agricultural and Livestock Training. He is also a member of the Professional and Academic Board of all the Institutes. In Nsukka, the Vice-Chancellor divests himself of most committee work and limits himself to a few important committees while allowing the most senior and suitable professor or dean to head some of the other committees. For example a professor or dean heads the following: University Entrance Board, the Senate Committee on Postgraduate Studies, the Senate

Scholarship Committee, the Junior and Intermediate Staff Appointments and Promotions Committee, the Student Welfare Board, the Curriculum Committee, the Library Board, the University School Committee and the Research Committee, while the Vice-Chancellor heads the following: the Senate, the Dean's Council, the Appointments and Promotions Committee and the Joint Advisory Committee. From the above, it would appear that the Vice-Chancellor at Nsukka has more time to devote to the overall peaceful academic development of the University than his counterparts in the other universities.

All Nigerian universities are run through the Committee system and through this system a Vice-Chancellor has an opportunity to examine issues objectively and, if need be, to amend or reject committee proposals with good reason or explanation. As the Chief Executive of the university however, a Vice-Chancellor must of necessity bear the responsibility for the effective running of his university.

(b) UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES

Who are the authorities of a Nigerian Universities? Let us look at the Ahmadu Bello University as an example. These are : (a) Officers of the University made up of the following:

Chancellor
Vice-Chancellor
Provost of Abdullahi Bayero College (before becoming the Bayero University College)
Provost for Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine
Director, Institute of Administration
Director, Institute for Agricultural Research and Special Services

Ife and Lagos. The Council of Ahmadu Bello University has the power to call for reports from the Senate on any matter relating to the instruction and teaching in the University. By and large the Council (which mostly comprises laymen) interferes as little as possible in general academic matters, but there have been instances when the Senate and the Council clashed on issues that were academic, administrative or ceremonial, or a combination of all three. All the other universities, Nsukka, Ife, Lagos, Ibadan and Benin (though young) have all had their own Council -- Senate clashes in the past; the Vice-Chancellorship crisis at the University of Lagos in 1965 is one good example. The Council of University of Lagos turned down the recommendation of Senate for the reappointment of the existing Vice-Chancellor for another three years -- this led to the sad crisis, which turned out to be a tribalistic and political affair altogether. Since all the Councils of Nigerian universities meet at least twice a year, there exists a committee -- the Finance and General Purposes Committee which is the action committee of the Councils; this meets more frequently to take decisions on behalf of Council in matters requiring such decision-making. This is the level that important decisions are taken in all the universities; Council merely ratifies these decisions which go to it as recommendations of this committee later; Council has the powers to reject such decisions/recommendations.

The Councils of the different universities do not all have the same functions; these depend on the powers assigned to them, the

extent to which they are able to carry out their duties and also in part the extent to which they are able to usurp power which has not been assigned to them or to the Senate. Recent happenings in the country as regards the role of the Councils vis-a-vis the position of the Federal Government in taking decision for the universities have not been well received by the members of the universities. The extent to which a university administration can operate smoothly largely depends on the Chairman of Council, the Vice-Chancellor, the Council members and the Senate. The Vice-Chancellor being the executive head of the university is responsible and accountable to Council and Senate; the Chairman of Council takes precedence after the Vice-Chancellor. So it can be seen that in times of crisis in the university, a lot depends on the personality and capability of the Vice-Chancellor for effective resolution of such crisis. The Registrar is the Secretary to Council.

THE SENATE

The Senate in all the universities is responsible for the organisation and control of the academic aspects of the university; these include teaching, research, admission of students, discipline, appointments and promotions of academic staff, examinations, curriculum development, award of degrees 'in cursu', and the control of halls of residence. The Senate does not always have absolute control of some of these functions when it comes to actual operation e.g. appointments of Senior academic professorial posts in most of the

universities have in the past been largely handled by the Inter-University Council in London. Nsukka happens to be the only exception to this again.

Senate spends most of its time in all Nigerian universities dealing with a myriad of all kinds of business assigned to it by the Statutes of each university. At Ahmadu Bello University for example, the Senate is specifically empowered

(a) to direct and regulate the admission of students and the teaching and instruction within the university and the examinations held by the university subject to the powers of the Council as herein-before defined:

'provided in the case of examinations for the university degrees the Senate shall arrange for the appointment of at least one external and independent examiner of high academic standing for every subject or group of subjects forming part of the course of studies for such degrees:

(b) to promote research within the university;

(c) to confer degrees (other than honorary degrees), diplomas, certificates, licentiateships and other distinctions;

(d) to report to Council on all Statutes and Ordinances or proposed changes thereof;

(e) to exercise and perform such other powers and duties as may be conferred or imposed upon Senate by Statute.

'Subject to a right of appeal from the decisions of the Senate to the Council and from the decision of the Council to the Chancellor, the Senate shall have power to deprive any person of any degree or diploma of the university which has been conferred upon him if after inquiry he shall have shown to have been guilty of dishonourable or scandalous conduct in the obtaining of such degree or diploma'[1].

Because a university is an academic organization, the Senate in each university is the most important part of the university and although its main concern in all matters relates to the academic aspect of each university, in practice it has a lot of influence on the non-academic (particularly the administrative) side of the university. Once again for an effective and efficient running of a university, a Vice-Chancellor must always strive to maintain an equilibrium between the academic (represented by Senate) and the administrative segements of a university, since it is him who bears the brunt of the administrative and academic burden of the university.

The Senate of the Ahmadu Bello University is made up of the following:

the Vice-Chancellor (Chairman)
the Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Provost A.B.C. Kano,

Provost for Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine,

Director of Institutes and D.A.L.S.T.

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1. Ahmadu Bello University Calendar 1974 - 75.

Deans of Faculties

Professors holding established chairs

Acting Heads of Departments within Faculties who are not professors.

Members of the academic staff elected by Congregation,

The Secretary of the Senate is the Registrar of the University.

The Senate in each university works through its numerous standing committees, and most of the important decisions taken by Senate come as recommendations from these standing committees.

THE FACULTIES

Next in importance in the structure and organization of the universities, after the Senate, is the Faculty Board of each academic division or unit of the university. The Faculty board is made up of departmental heads, professors and all academic staff assigned by the Senate to that Faculty. The Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor are also members of each Faculty board. It may also have such other members, whether members of the Faculty or not, as the Senate may from time to time on the recommendation of the Faculty board determine. The functions of the Faculty boards in Ahmadu Bello University include the following:

(i) to regulate, subject to review by the Senate, the teaching and study of subjects in the Faculty;

(ii) to constitute boards of studies for separate subjects or groups of subjects;

(iii) to consider the progress of students in the Faculty and to report to the Senate thereon;

(iv) to recommend to the Senate examiners for appointment

(v) to make recommendations to the Senate on regulations dealing with syllabuses, courses of study and examinations for degrees, diplomas, certificates and other distinctions in the Faculty, or with any other matters relating to the work of the Faculty;

(vi) to make recommendations to the Senate for the award of degrees (other than honorary degrees), diplomas certificates and other distinctions in the Faculty;

(vii) to consider matters relating to the Faculty and to report thereon to the Senate, and to deal with any matters referred or delegated to it by the Senate[2].

Below the faculty boards are the departmental committees of each department within a Faculty; these committees run the departments, and make recommendations to the Faculty boards.

THE CONGREGATION

The Congregation in Ahmadu Bello University consists of the Officers of the University (other than the Chancellor and the Pro-Chancellor), all members of the academic staff and all members of the senior administrative staff. The academic and administrative staff of the constituent Institutions of Ahmadu Bello University are excluded. The Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman of Congregation.

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2. Ibid

The functions of the congregation are:

(a) to provide a forum for the discussion of all matters affecting the University and to make recommendations from time to time to the Council or the Senate on such matters as it thinks fit;

(b) to receive information from time to time on the state of the university from the Vice-Chancellor.

The Congregation has a way of influencing matters within the university, though such matters normally get to Congregation after a while.

The typical structure of any of the Nigerian university more or less conforms to the above. As mentioned earlier the universities are run on committee basis; for instance in Ahmadu Bello University, the university Committee structure consists of:

(a) Committees of Council

(b) Committees of Senate

(c) University Administrative Committees

(d) Other Principal Committees.

As far as this study is concerned, we would be mostly concerned with (c) above. The most powerful person after the Vice-Chancellor is the Registrar, who heads the administrative section of the University. All other officers are under his jurisdiction and he cordinates both the academic and the administrative functions of the university. The Registrar keeps the records of the university, he is the admissions officer, the Secretary to Council and Senate, the

welfare Officer, the employee and public relations Officer, the students welfare officer etc. He is in fact the most knowledgeable Officer on university affairs and he is the central figure in any students' crisis. He is assisted in the execution of his duties by a large number of senior, intermediate and junior staff. However, the smooth day-to-day running of the university is his responsibility.

ROLE OF UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

I have attempted to outline the structure and organization of the Nigerian universities, now I should be in a position to examine the role of the university administration during crises. As far as students unrest is concerned I shall be mostly concerned with the Students Affairs Division of the Universities and the Faculty boards particularly as in Ahmadu Bello University; the Students Affairs Division deals exclusively with matters connected with students, such as hostel accommodation, welfare facilities, payment of fees, scholarships, bursary, loan schemes, career opportunities, interviews for appointments after graduation, discipline, Students Union matters, students clubs and societies etc. The Faculty boards are concerned with the academic progress of the students. Most of the above functions are carried out through the University Administrative Committees, and the Committees of Senate. The Students Affairs Officer in each of the universities is an assistant to the Registrar. Under normal circumstances students welfare complaints are supposed to go to the Students Affairs Officer via the Hall Officers. The Students Affairs Officer

then decides how such complaints should be dealt with, and he immediately calls the students' union president together with one or two other students' representatives, for discussions. If he fails to convince the students representatives, he then takes the complaints to the Registrar directly. The Registrar then calls the students Affairs Officer, and the Students Union President plus some other students representatives and they all try to reach a compromise solution. It is only when this attempt by the Registrar fails, that he (the Registrar) will decide to bring the matter to the attention of the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor normally asks the student welfare Committee -- a University administrative Committee to look into the complaints. The Committee which is charged with advising and assisting in the making of policies relating to students' non-academic affairs in all sectors of the university then meets and makes decisions on matters so referred to it. The Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman of this Committee with the Students Affairs Officer as the Secretary. There are two to three students' representatives on this Committee. The Directors of the Institutes, Registrar, Bursar, Chief Medical Officer, a representative of Senate, two Deans, one representing the Humanities, the other Applied Sciences nominated by the Vice-Chancellor, the Principal, School of Basic Studies, three representatives of Congregation are all members of this Committee.

In cases where disciplinary action might be required, the advisory Committee on Student Discipline -- a Committee of Senate handles such cases. This Committee is constituted at the request of the Vice-Chancellor to afford advise and guidance to him in the exercise of his responsibility for discipline. The composition of this Committee also includes three representatives of the Students Union, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman, with the Students Affairs Officer as Secretary.

The Committee having looked at the cases referred to it then makes a report to the Vice-Chancellor who in turn reports to Senate. Senate has the last say on any such cases and comes out with decisions, but it must be pointed out that the Vice-Chancellor being Chairman of Senate as well as the Chief Executive of the University wields a lot of power in the Senate and can nearly always have his way in majority of the cases. These are normally the methods used in almost all the universities during normal conditions. It is only the failure of the university administration to deal immediately with issues and coupled with the intransigence of students that universities get thrown into crisis situation. To be fair to the university administration, students do sometimes refuse to even make their problems known to the authorities and before one can even get about finding solutions to such problems, the students would have resorted to protests, demonstrations, and what have you.

At times of crisis therefore, the Registrar who is closest to the students through his deputies, should be expected to give the right advice and assistance to the Vice-Chancellor for the immediate handling of such crisis. This is when the maturity and the administrative competence of the Officers of the university, the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar in particular, are called to play. The quickness of mind to take a decision and a right one for that matter, on the part of the Vice-Chancellor, makes all the difference between an unrest and its resolution, and also between an effective Vice-Chancellor and an ineffective one. Granted that situations during crisis could be very explosive, under no circumstances should the Vice-Chancellor fail to call a meeting of the Senate as soon as he senses that things are beginning to get out of hand, to take a firm decision on what should be the stand of the university authorities. Once this has been done, an effective way of informing the students should be put into motion immediately. I do not see anything stopping the Vice-Chancellor from personally going to address the student body on the decision reached by the Senate. It is fairly well known that it is almost always impossible to get the students together during crisis, but a university authority that has been previously far removed from the students will obviously find this difficult to do -- of course the opposite is true and this is what I expect all university authorities to be -- maintaining close relations both official and informal ones with the students body. It is only in this manner, that students will listen to a Vice-Chancellor or

a Registrar of a University, at times of crisis. If these steps are carefully and promptly followed, the role of the university administration during crisis will be very well known to both the public and the students alike so much so that the course or pattern of a major crisis can easily be determined by the ever watchful public.

In quite a number of students unrests in the past, the methods used by the university authorities to attempt to resolve such crisis have often resulted in disastrous effects; perhaps the one that comes into mind readily is the use of armed military and police personnel on university campuses. I have discussed this in an earlier chapter, but I must mention here that this method to my mind has been a failure and it should never be employed by university authorities in this country again. I will conclude this chapter by stressing on the maintenance of good personal relations both at official and informal levels between the Officers of the university (particularly the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar together with his numerous deputies) and the Students Union officials and the entire student body. There should be more avenues for interaction between the university academic and administrative staff and students. Most academic problems of the students are looked after by the Faculty boards and the Senate, but then there are not many of such problems since the students have very little say on academic rules, regulations and issues. It is not a mere coincidence that Nigerian university students have not demonstrated over their course structure, the relevance of their courses, methods of teaching and the

quality of their teachers in the past!

And finally, having regard to the milieu in which university administrators operate, it is important that university administrators possess certain minimum qualities. These include being aware of the problems of his university, of higher education and of education generally and public affairs. A university administrator must possess certain special or general academic interests which will relate him to the academic in his university. A university administrator must be efficient in performing his routine assigned duties and must be able to communicate effectively in writing and speech, especially as he operates in a setting of highly intelligent and not so intelligent scholars, students and workers. In the words of one of the Registrars of our universities, "University administration requires intelligent men and women to effectively run our universities in all their dimensions."[3] Students unrest in Nigerian universities has continued to put to test the effectiveness and competence of Nigerian university administrators, this will continue to be so for a long time.

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3. S. J. Okudu, Registrar, University of Ibadan, in an article, "The University Administrator", published in The University Administrator - Journal of Association of Nigerian University Administrators, Vol. I, No. 1 July, 1976.

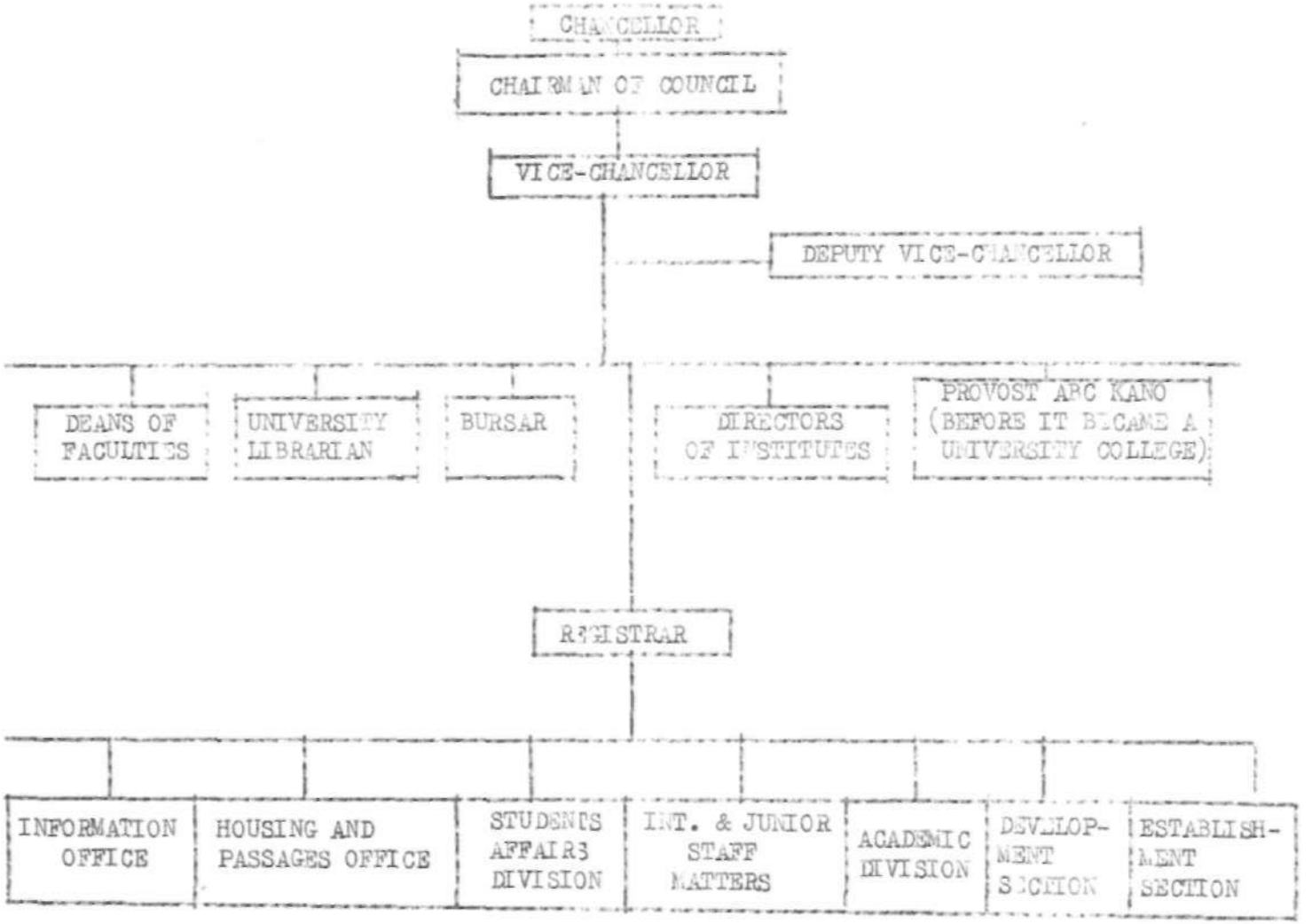


Fig. 1. STRUCTURE OF THE AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 7

The purpose of this study has been to discuss, enumerate as well as comment on the main causes of students unrest in Nigerian Universities, examine the role of the University administrator as it relates to students' unrest and to suggest solutions that will make for effective resolution of conflicts between Nigerian University authorities and the students.

From the analysis of the questionnaire and interviews conducted for this study, together with information curled from existing literature and my own experiences of the issues involved, the following have emerged as the causes of students unrest in Nigerian universities. It should be noted that in enumerating the causes, there has also been an attempt to give a fair amount of commentary and discussion alongside these causes in an earlier chapter.

1. Inadequate residential (hostel) accommodation as well as other educational facilities such as lecture rooms, libraries, recreational facilities etc., have been of greatest imprtance in any students' unrest.

2. Poor quality of food and other welfare facilities which include reasonable loan and bursary schemes for financing students' education, transport facilities etc. It is hoped that with the Federal Governments' introduction of free tuition for all university students as from the 1977/78 sessions, the question of financing their education will be removed from the list of the causes of students unrest in our universities.

3. The question of non-participation of students in the decision-making processes of the universities; students want to become more involved in the administration of their respective universities; at least they want to have a say in matters that directly affect them.

4. Non-utilization by students of the normal channel of communication laid down by the university authorities; students tend to ignore or bye-pass the normal channel of communication in seeking redress for their grievances.

5. Students' total dependence on university administration in making provisions for students' domestic life and in matters relating to students welfare generally.

6. The question of communication gap between the students and university authorities; university administrators feel that students do not make any effort to seek enough information about issues before rushing to conclusions; the students as well as some academic staff feel that it is the university administrators that do not make enough effort to inform the students properly on issues which affect the students most.

7. Administrative incompetence and the cumbersome process of reaching decisions affecting students; administrative staff responsible for students problems are often inaccessible and sometimes disappointly incompetent in handling matters affecting students.

8. Closely linked with administrative incompetence is the question of corruption in different facets of life within the university administration, such as in halls of residence, and among some members of the

academic staff and the catering department.

9. The formal nature of the university system; there is an over-emphasized superordinate - subordinate relationship between staff and students which causes strained relationship between these two groups; there is also a trace of personality cult in our universities which irritates students.

10. The stringent and sometimes rash administration of discipline with particular reference to rustication of students; linked with this, is the frequent use of armed military and police men by university authorities during student demonstrations. Experiences have shown that this merely escalates such disturbances. Some university functionaries also tend to be too arrogant and totally indifferent to the issues involved in an unrest.

11. The mass media had more than significantly perpetuated and escalated various institutional conflicts through inaccurate reporting, and frequently error-filled highly selective perspectives; the mass media generate a lot of rumours during students unrest which result in helping to escalate such unrest.

12. Reception of foreign innovations and ideas by university students; innovations and ideas which are yet to be put into practical use in Nigeria.

13. The immunity which is conferred on students by their status as students and the excessive freedom granted them by university authorities all over the country; it is interesting to learn that one or two of the

universities have banned the students organisation known as "Pirate Confraternity". Anybody familiar with this organisation will know the extent to which the members have gone as far as indiscipline and other weird activities are concerned.

14. Lack of maturity on the part of the students; university students are constantly making absolutely unreasonable demands, which can only be said to have been made because of their lack of maturity.

15. The methods and techniques evolved in resolving conflicts; this is an institutional cause of students unrest among university students; in most of the unrests this country has witnessed so far, efforts made by officials to bring peace have tended to have opposite effects.

16. Political issues of the day; students are becoming more aware of such issues as government policies, political corruption, the country's relationship with other countries, the economy and liberation struggles of black people all over the African continent.

In any major unrest among Nigerian University students in the past, one or more of the above causes have been identified as either being the remote or the immediate cause/causes of such an unrest. The extent to which an unrest becomes violent depends a lot on the degree of commitment by the students to the causes for the unrest, and the responses of the university authorities or government that are so being challenged. A lot also depends on the capabilities and the coercive power of the few student leaders who organise these unrests. The success or failure of any students unrest depends a great deal on these

students leaders. Sometimes a situation may arise in which the student leaders find it difficult to control or stop a potentially violent unrest once the student body has been fed with all the relevant information concerning a planned protest; this may be due to an irresponsible student leadership. It is this sort of unrest that becomes very difficult to handle by the students themselves as well as the university authorities.

CONCLUSION

In concluding this study, it would be appropriate to put down some recommendations and suggestions about how the phenomenon of unrest among Nigerian university students can best be tackled. But before then, I would like to make a few more remarks about students unrest in Nigerian universities.

Students unrest in Nigerian universities from all available evidences have been comparatively mild when compared with similar unrests in universities of the Western World; the only unrest in which a student was killed would not have gone to the extent it went had armed military and police personnel not been called in by the university authorities concerned; this was despite the fact that the students protest did not pose any threat or danger to lives of individuals.

It is also my belief that students unrest in Nigerian Universities are totally devoid of any outside influence; this is contrary to what most government officials and some university authorities believe.

There have been such allegations of students being influenced or pushed into action by such organisations as the American C.I.A. powerful political groups within the country, and some big business concerns, to resort to protests. Whenever students protest against any issue/issues, they do so solely on their own convictions rather than on any outside influence. Each student unrest has its specific cause/causes; university authorities must therefore avoid making sweeping generalizations when attempting to resolve such unrest. It is also pertinent that anybody involved in the resolution of students unrest should know a great deal about the psychology of students and should be prepared to deal with them as mature adults.

Finally, I do believe that Nigerian University students do have genuine causes for their frequent protests, but what is wrong about these protests is the way and manner they go about them. It is also a fact that Nigerian university students have not made any attempt at pressing for relevant educational curricular that will make them relate more closely to the masses and be in a position to speak for the masses of this country. Once Nigerian university students are able to force this change, they will find that they have less time for such issues as poor food, and inadequate hostel accommodation, instead they will be more concerned with the lots of the masses of this country. It is only then that the Nigerian public will relate more to the students in our universities; the students would then get the public sympathy they so much need.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having come this far, I now venture to put down the following as recommendations and guidelines suggested for curbing the phenomenon of students unrest in Nigerian Universities:

1. All Nigerian universities with the financial backing of the Federal Military Government should embark on the provision of adequate hostel accommodation, clean and effectively run dinning halls and other facilities in all the universities.

This country is not yet ready for an off-campus residency for her university students. It is a well known fact that good housing facilities in our university towns are more or less non-existent and where available it is out of reach of students because of the exorbitant rent; added to this is the fact that the transport system is hopelessly poor. There will come a time when this recommendation will no longer be valid, but for now there seems to be no other alternative.

2. Student representatives should be elected into such university committees and boards that deal directly with their welfare, and into others which might be related to student activities and their progress within the universities. So long as university authorities are willing and able to work with students on these committees and boards, and the students are willing to work within the framework of the university set-up, the much talked about gap in information or communication would be on its way to being eliminated. The students will no longer talk of their not being consulted when decisions on issues affecting them are

reached and it is hoped that such representatives will always go back and report to the student body on such decisions. Participation in the decision-making processes of the universities is thus effectively taken care of. It would do no harm to any university authority to have students represented even on the highest bodies within the university, instead, it would only make for conscious efforts at closing the gap in communication and information between the university authorities and the students. The present move in a few of our universities to involve students in the appropriate structures of the decision-making process, especially those which are closely related to student welfare, is highly commended.

3. In all our universities, efforts should be made to put the right person in charge of students affairs; by this I mean whoever is put in charge of the Students Affairs Division must be somebody acceptable to the students. He should be a person quite close to the students in all respects, and quite capable of communicating with the students easily. He must understand the psychology of youth and students alike. It is not wise putting an elderly university administrator who will want to treat students as if they were his children in charge of Students Affairs Division in any of our universities. Students tend to deal effectively and more meaningfully with such people they relate to in terms of current trends within the society.

4. The Government in conjunction with the universities, must come out now with a new philosophy of university education for the nation. The

elitist philosophy of university education which was a direct transplant from the British educational system is totally unsuitable for Nigeria of the twentieth century and beyond. The relevance of university education to our developmental, socio-cultural and technological needs must now be emphasized. Our universities must start to train students who can relate and fit their training and skills to the needs of the masses of this country. It is only then that Nigerian university students will no longer see themselves as snobbish elites. Perhaps one way of going about this is to set up a task force whose members should be drawn from the universities, industries, government and parents to constantly examine the relevance of university education to the Nigerian situation, evolve policies and suggest mechanism for implementing such policies. I believe an enlarged National universities Commission should be in a position to do this kind of job.

5. The cost of university education in this country is very high. Efforts should be made to create employment opportunities for students both within and outside university campuses while still in school so that some of them can earn their way through university. The merit of this recommendation is that our universities should not continue any longer to perpetuate 'structures of dependence' which do not give most of our students the right attitudes to the realities of the Nigerian situation.[1] Perhaps the Federal Governments' decision to make university education tuition-free as from the next academic session

is a right step in the right direction.

6. The social structure of our older universities is so rigidly stratified into status groups. Efforts should be made so as not to duplicate this structure in the newer universities. Universities are established to transform societies at large; to do this, they must be close to the ethos of their societies. Universities should not encapsulate themselves from the total society, talking only among themselves, enjoying an elitist style of life and perpetuating an ivory-tower orientation.

7. Efforts should be geared towards rehabilitation and discipline in our universities. The constitution of the students union should be part of the responsibility of the universities; students union elections should be strictly supervised by the university authorities. Added to this, students must be made aware of all the rules and regulations governing their conduct while in the universities, just as they must be made aware of the disciplinary measures that will be taken against any of them who runs foul of these rules and regulations.

8. Genuine efforts must be made by university authorities to investigate (without wasting much time) students allegations before concluding that such allegations are mere resistances to legitimate authority. Those in authority whether they like it or not have to recognise that there is a new generation of students who are not

prepared to comply with directives of authorities which they define as illegitimate. And by the same token, there is a new generation of students who desire to get answers when they ask legitimate questions. There may be instances when student resentment of authorities is justifiable; such instances should be investigated rather than condemned 'a priori' as contumacious.

9. University students on their part, must truthfully abide by their oath at matriculation and must accept all disciplinary measures justly imposed by the university authorities.

10. University authorities should concern themselves with innovation and improvement while taking a more open and active attitude towards change and show greater readiness to discuss students proposals for change as well as to make such changes themselves. The university administrator must be intensely interested in whatever he is doing and must make the interest manifest. Being interested is like justice, it must not only be done but also be seen to be done! The University administrator should be concerned with how to encourage and direct students action in the community and to relate public service more closely to educational experience; he must show interest in how their enthusiasm, idealism and organized power can be linked with other humanizing forces in the world to realize the universal hopes of society.

Finally, the increasing wave of students unrest in Nigerian universities is not totally unrelated to the ills of our society and

the diminishing responsibility of parents to their children. Perhaps the overall panacea to students unrest lie within the hands of the adults at large. Here our parents have a duty to perform, the teachers, religious leaders, University administrators, public officers etc. all have their own roles to perform in ridding this nation of further campus unrest. As long as injustice reigns supreme and all aspects of the adults life riddled with contradictions, so also shall we be faced with students unrest. The frequent closures of universities will not solve the problem of students unrest in this country, at best it shows that Nigerian university authorities are yet to face the realities of students movement within our society.

APPENDIX I

METHODOLOGY

APPENDIX I

POPULATION COVERAGE

A. STUDENTS

The population coverage by my survey can be described as fairly varied. The first group consisted of three hundred and fifty-six university graduates from all the Nigerian Universities who were deployed to one of the States for the 1976/77 session NYSC programme. This group meets the requirement of representativeness since members were drawn from all the universities in the country. This group was administered the questionnaire used for the survey.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE/ACADEMIC STAFF OF UNIVERSITIES

This second group consisted of a sample of administrative and academic staff of the following universities, who of course will remain anonymous.

Ahmadu Bello University,

University of Ibadan,

University of Ife

University of Benin

University of Lagos

I delibrately left out the University of Nigeria, Nsukka because of cost limitation.

C. OTHERS

The third group was a random sampling of members of the public

which included the following :

1. Ex-students' leaders from Ibadan and Zaria
2. Members of the Nigerian Army and the Nigerian Police force
3. Members of the business community, including the private sector, such as big companies like the UAC and others.
4. Educationists outside the universities
5. Civil Servants
6. Members of some religious bodies
7. An executive of the National Universities Commission
8. Mass media executives
9. Some university students who were on the Campuses visited during the field work.

Members of this group interviewed came from the university towns of Zaria, Ibadan, Ife, Kano, Benin and Lagos. Some people were also interviewed in Kaduna.

FIELD WORK PROCEDURE

Questionnaires were personally distributed to all the NYSC members and given a week in which to answer the questions contained in them and have them ready for collection. At the end of the week, I went back to their camp and collected those that were ready. I made a second visit to the camp after one more week to check on and collect any completed questionnaire not previously submitted.

In a covering letter, I explained the purposes of the survey and also made them realise that their anonymity would be guaranteed.

Overall, I had an effective response-rate of about seventy percent. The interviews were conducted over a period of three weeks in August, 1976, when I visited Ibadan, Ife, Benin and Lagos. Most of the interviews in Zaria, Kaduna and Kano were carried out between September and October, 1976.

I have also drawn freely on press reports, documents issued by university administrations, students and from reports of Commissions of Inquiries and from my own experiences as a one time student in one of the universities and presently as an administrative staff of the same university.

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete this questionnaire as appropriate. You need not write your name, but try to be as specific as possible when answering the questions.

1. What is your date of birth? _____

2. Indicate your sex (a) Male (b) Female

3. What State do you come from? _____

4. What is your religion? _____ (a) _____ Moslem
   (b) _____ Protestant
   (c) _____ Catholic
   (d) _____ Other.

5. Which of the following best represents your primary reason(s) for going to the University?
   (a) _____ I wanted to improve my economic status
   (b) _____ I wanted to improve my social status
   (c) _____ Because my parents wanted me to go to the University
   (d) _____ I went just for schooling sake.
   (e) _____ Other.

6. Which university did you attend? _____

7. In what Faculty were you enrolled? _____

8. What degree did you obtain _____

9. With what qualifications were you admitted into the University?
   (a) _____ WASC
   (b) _____ H.S.C.

(c) _____ G.C.E. 'O' Level

(d) _____ G.C.E. 'A' Level

(e) _____ Other

10. Where did you obtain these qualifications? _____

11. Did you experience any difficulty in obtaining admission to the University? (a) _____ Yes, (b) _____ No.

12. If your answer to item 11 is 'Yes', in which of these areas did you experience any difficulty?

(a) ____ Obtaining the application forms

(b) ____ Receiving the final decision on the application

(c) ____ Other(s).

13. How would you rate the admission procedures of the University you attended?

(a) ____ Excellent

(b) ____ Good

(c) ____ Fair

(d) ____ Poor

14. Where did you reside while in the University?

(a) ___ University Hall of Residence

(b) ___ Rented Apartment outside the University

(c) ___ With friends outside the University

(d) ___ With relatives on campus

(e) ___ Other

15. Which of these items represent your reason(s) for your choice of place of residence?

(a) __ Required by the University

(b) __ It is inexpensive

(c) __ Preferred to live with friends

(d) __ Married and the University does not provide accommodation for married students.

(e) __ Provided social contacts that I could not get elsewhere

(f) __ No other alternative

(g) __ University does not require one to stay in university residence

(h) __ Other.

16. How satisfactory was your place of residence in relation to your studies?

(a) __ Very Satisfactory

(b) __ Satisfactory

(c) __ Fairly satisfactory

(d) __ Not satisfactory.

17. How much study facilities were provided at your place of residence?

(a) __ Adequate

(b) __ Fair

(c) __ Poor

(d) __ None.

18. How would you describe the diet in the university dining Halls, assuming you ate in any of the Dinning Halls while in the university?

(a) -- Excellent, (b) -- Good, (c) -- Fair (d) -- Poor.

19. Were you satisfied with the quality as well as the quantity of food provided by the university Catering Department?

(a) -- Yes

(b) -- No.

20. Who was responsible for the payment of your School fees?

(a) -- Government (b) -- Private Agency/Organisation

(c) -- Parents (d) -- Relatives (e) -- Other.

21. Did you experience any difficulty in paying your School fees?

(a) -- Yes (b) -- No

22. How well did you adjust to university life?

(a) -- Very well adjusted

(b) -- Fairly well adjusted

(c) -- Poorly adjusted

(d) -- Unadjusted

23. To what extent, in your opinion, were the administrative and academic staff acquanted with your problems?

(a) -- Very much, (b) -- Much (c) -- Fairly much,

(d) -- Not at all.

24. How helpful were the administrative staff as regards solving your problems?

(a) -- Very helpful, (b) - Helpful, (c) - Fairly helpful (d) Not at all.

25. Were you a member of any Club or Society within the university?

(a) -- Yes (b) -- No.

26. Did you approve of the existence of the Students Union?

(a) -- Yes (b) -- No.

27. Did you think the students were better off without the Student Union?

(a) -- Yes (b) -- No.

28. Which of the following university officials was of greatest assistance in helping students resolve their problems?

(a) -- Academic staff, (b) -- Administrative staff

29. Did you ever sought any help or information from any university official?

(a) -- Yes (b) -- No.

30. If 'yes' which of these helped you?

(a) - Academic Staff, (b) -- Administrative staff.

31. If 'no' which of these reasons were responsible?

(a) -- Afraid of university officials

(b) -- University officials not interested in helping students

(c) -- No designated university officials to whom one can go to for help.

(d) -- Other.

32. Do you think the university should help students with their problems?

(a) -- Yes (b) -- No.

33. Did you ever take part in any students protest?

(a) -- Yes (b) -- No.

34. If 'yes' give the reasons for your taking part in such protest

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35. If 'no' give the reasons for your not taking part

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36. What were the causes of that particular protest in which you were involved?

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37. What in your opinion, do you think is responsible for the frequent students disturbances/protests that this country has witnessed so far?

38. How satisfactory do the university authorities handle students protest generally?

(a) -- Very satisfactory, (b) -- Satisfactory

(c) -- Fairly satisfactory (d) -- Not satisfactory

39. How would you rate the efficiency and competence of university authorities in relation to resolving students protests?

(a) -- Very efficient and highly competent

(b) -- Efficient and competent

(c) -- Fairly efficient and competent

(d) -- Inefficient and incompetent

40. If there are any other items or explanations you would like to add, please indicate them here.

41. In your own words give a brief summary of the problems which were of main concern to you while you were in the university.

42. In your own opinion, in which areas would you say that your university had been successful regarding student welfare in general?

43. In your opinion, in which areas would you say your university had been weak regarding student welfare?

44. What suggestions would you give on how the university can better meet students problem?

45. Give a brief summary of the attitudes and behaviour of Nigerian university students in general.

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING

APPENDIX III

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA, PUBLIC NOTICE

APPENDIX III

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

Our Ref: Reg. 150

PUBLIC NOTICE

Re-opening of the University and Re-admission of Students.

1. As a result of the student disturbances of 11th and 12th May, 1976, the university of Benin was closed down on 13th May, 1976. Following the closure, a Committee of Enquiry was set up to investigate, among other things the remote as well as the immediate causes of the unrest and make appropriate recommendations to Senate and Council.

2. The unrest consisted mainly in the disruption of classes, barricading of entry and exit of the Ekewan Road campus; commandeering and deflation of vehicles; damage to vehicles and student cafeteria; seizing and damage of other property. There was one case of personal injury to a driver. There was general disobedience to authority. The Vice-Chancellor was booed and stoned, and the Military Governor was treated with disrespect.

3. With regard to the conduct of the students, the Committee summed up the position as follows:

"The Committee recognises the right of students to demonstrate against authority. But we are satisfied that they did not exhaust all avenues open to them before embarking on the precipitate action of May 11, 1976. We have established that on that day, there

was a failure to transport some of the students to lectures. Even when we have made allowances for this, we cannot find any justification for the subsequent action. We regret that the students failed to heed the advice of University authorities. They became very irrational by setting the price for the resolution of the crisis too high. The students overplayed their hands".

4. Senate and Council having carefully considered and accepted the findings and recommendations of the Committee, have directed, with the consent of the Federal Military Government, that the University be re-opened. Accordingly, it is hereby notified for the information of staff, students, parents, guardians and the general public that the University will re-open on Monday 16th August, 1976.

5. Before re-admission to the university all students are required to sign an undertaking to be of good conduct, obey all rules and regulations of the university and not to resort to disorder or violence in pursuing their grievances. Parents, guardians or sponsors will be required to countersign the undertaking and guarantee the good behaviour of their wards.

6. The University would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the warning of the Federal Military Government that in future any act of lawlessness and indiscipline will be strictly dealt with.

7. As indicated above, the Committee of Inquiry found that students did damage to property. The university has therefore decided to levy

a fine of ₦10.00 each on all students. This will be used in part to offset the cost of the damages. No student will be re-admitted unless he/she has paid this fine.

8. Copies of the application for re-admission have been mailed individually to all students and if as at Monday 9 August, 1976, these have not been received, students are advised to call personally at the Registry (Academic Division) where copies of the application forms could be obtained.

9. Students are required to come into residence from 8.00 a.m. on Saturday 14th August 1976. Normal lectures will begin on Monday 16th August, 1976.

10. The University has accepted the findings and recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry that some students be rusticated for the role they played in the disturbances. Such students are being notified accordingly.

11. In line also with the recommendations of the Orakusi Committee, the university is taking all necessary steps to expedite developments at its permanent site as well as improving existing Cafeteria and other facilities as will minimize the problems arising from the university having to operate from three campuses. These improvements should also minimize the need for students to travel frequently between campuses as the university is not in a position to provide vehicles to transport students to and from their normal classes. Students will accordingly have to make their own arrangements in

this regard. I. AMADI-EMINA REGISTRAR 19th July, 1976.

*This sort of publication has become a fashionable preoccupation of university authorities all over the country; it nearly always takes the same format. One significant point worth noting in this publication is the question of the university not being in a position to provide vehicles to transport students to and from their normal classes. The distance between the various campuses of the university located in Benin is so significant that it would be totally impossible for the students to undertake the daily trip to and from these campuses without further tension. It is the fact that transport provided originally by the university was not regular and that the drivers came and went when they liked, that made the students to resort to the action which precipitated this disburbances. The decision of the university authority not to provide transport for the students will not help to reduce the threshold of crises at all; to my mind this is yet another glaring example of the lack of administrative forsight and the unpreparedness of the university administration to face the issues involved with reality. I do believe the nation will be hearing from the students of the university of Benin in terms of unrest pretty soon!

A P P E N D I X IV

AN OPEN LETTER TO A VICE-CHANCELLOR

APPENDIX IV

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR[1]

4th May, 1976

The Vice-Chancellor
University of Lagos
Akoka
Lagos

Sir

During your absence in February this year I drew the attention of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to "Anarchy in University of Lagos". Once more, we are exposed to the stark realities of our time and situation. Today as in February, the situation has not changed. Some functionaries of this university continue to display blatant incompetence and mismanagement.

It might interest you to know Sir, that on 3rd May 1976, the scheduled interview of final year students by the Federal Public Service Commission did not hold. Reason - Unilag could not afford an interview venue!!

Rather, to be precise, they were able to provide a dilapidated, unkept and unswept venue. The tables were rickety. The interview panel were enraged by this arrangement, and went. The same day, the Bendel State Public Service was in University of Lagos. It took the concerted effort of students from that state to arrange the interview venue and the entertainment of the panel. The Student Affairs Office

later that day came up with a shameless defence. Hear them, "as a result of series of interviews that have been going on in the campus for the past two weeks and that are still going on, even today, Monday 3rd May, it was difficult to secure the necessary rooms that will accommodate the Federal Public Service Commission interviewing team." This clumsy excuse, we all know is an afterthought. The truth is that students of this university are underdogs, their welfare in several areas does not border anybody. We know that several conference rooms, seminar rooms, staff common rooms and even empty classrooms exist in the Arts Block. There was the library basement and the Senate Chambers among other places. Nobody thought seriously of where to hold that interview, this is much that we know. For once, government functionaries have witnessed first hand a part of the shabby treatment that has been our lot the years. They complained openly to our staff including the Acting Registrar of their disappointment.

Sir, we have never for once doubted your sincerity of purpose and dedication to duty as an individual, but we have through several media drawn your attention to the very bad work some staff of this university are doing. The Bookshop exploitation is continuing. The bossy attitude of the Accounts Department is unabetted. The Maintenance Department that maintains nothing, with its high level truant workers is there. Sir, make a surprise visit to the Arts Block classrooms and see some of them unswept, cobwebs everywhere. Yet an army of cleaners, paid by the university loiter daily doing nothing. The degree of

deliquency and absentism is increasing. A lot of deadwoods still exist in the administration of this university, the last retirement exercise notwithstanding.

Finally Sir, I need to STRESS that consistent and persistent disregard and ignoring of genuine complaints does not do any organisation any good. Instead it erodes its foundations.

Through this medium once more, I appeal to you to use your good offices to make this university function effectively like its counterparts the world over.

I have the honour to be Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Mike Ebgunike Obiora
Psychology III

COMMENTS BY THE STUDENTS' AFFAIRS OFFICE

Mr. Mike Obiora is entitled fully to his opinions. However we will want to explain some points that appear clumsy in Mr. Obiora's release.

In the first place, it was wrong for Mr. Obiora to have categorically asserted that "it took the concerted effort of students from that state (i.e. Bendel) to arrange the interview venue and the entertainment of the Panel". The Students' Affairs Office did arrange both the place for interview and the reception for the members of

the Bendel State Public Service.

On the issue of the Federal Public Service Commission, while one will not want to commit on paper the full facts of the matter, one can say that "It is all well that ends well" -- the interviews have come and gone successfully. Rivers State, Kwara State and Several organisations have sent us letters of commendation.

All students are requested to talk their minds out on issues affecting their interests. In this regard we in the Students' Affairs Office praise Mr. Obiora for these comments. We can fashion out this type of method in achieving our objectives rather than resort to vandalism and violence.

Mr. Obiora is a final year student of the University. He was a successful Chairman of El-Kanemis Hall for 1974/75 session.

EBENEZER BABATOPE
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR (STUDENTS)

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1. Students Newsletter, University of Lagos, Vol. I No. 3 May, 1976 This is highly recommended for use by all the Nigerian universities, as a means of informing students on important matters that concern them. This will no doubt reduce the oft-repeated issue of lack of flow of information between the university authorities and students.

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