

Liberty Demanded: The Combative Nature of the Nigerian Press in a Dominant Military World 1985-1997

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Abstract

With the military coup of December 31, 1983, which brought on board the military regime of Major General Muhammadu Buhari, the press of Nigeria (print media) came under strident harassment by the military junta. This attack rather than cower the print media, emboldened them making them more assertive in the discharge of their social responsibilities.

The print media rose to the epicentre of Nigeria's re-democratization efforts by offering a viable alternative public sphere not only for the new media, but also for the civil society organisations that dealt with human rights and political governance issues.

To validate this claim, a careful examination and discussion of the activities and content of some selected news magazines is done. The paper also gives close attention to the profile of the editors of the news magazines, the regulatory environment, exactitude of prognosis and other challenges they faced .

The main argument is that since the reintroduction of military rule in Nigeria in December 1983, the public sphere for free expression and political debates seemingly disappeared in the media and civil society. However, the struggle for free expression re-invented and found expression through the new print media, who, despite the spate of harassment and intimidation, grew stronger. This was evident by the seemingly unprecedented mushrooming of opposition press houses and their activities since 1991.

Introduction

The unique character of the press and the contradiction of military governments in Nigeria have attracted considerable study. Little attention has, however, been focused on the Nigerian opposition press in terms of its rise and role in the complex political relationship between it and successive military governments.

With the emergence of the military administration of Major General Muhammadu Buhari, the press in Nigeria (print media) came under several attacks in different forms This ranged from the promulgation of draconian

decrees to curb so called excesses of press men, to detention of press men and outright closure of press houses.

This combative posture of the military regimes changed the nature and outlook of the Nigerian press which had hitherto engaged itself with mere news and events reporting to one of journalism with a militant posture ready to checkmate the military's stance. This invariably led to the development of a section of the press that jettisoned the traditional approaches to news gathering and reporting leading to the rise of a new core of so called "Guerrilla press" essentially anti military in nature and based on investigative journalism, critical analysis of news reports and sometimes sensationalism.

Of course this also had its immediate consequences; the suppressive apparatus of the state became more repressive leading in turn to the opposition press becoming more daring. This ultimately resulted in cohesive underground press which consistently did not renege on the principle of authentic and objective information dissemination irrespective of whose ox was gored.

In essence two distinct types of mass communication structures evolved in Nigeria after 1984. On one hand was the press as a coordinated agency of the centralized military government and part of its extensive communication network. On the other hand was another press system independent of government influence; privately owned and as a matter of general principle believed its independence to be a necessary pre-requisite for its functioning.

The differences between these two structures (of government press and opposition press) were fundamental as it reflected, in some measure, the existing division within the Nigerian society in terms of their basic orientations, audiences and intentions. This was clearly evidenced in the style and content of the two press groups. Thus there is a need for the study of the opposition press in Nigeria and factors that engendered its rise.

The Opposition Press

From 1985 a new ferocity inflamed the Nigerian newspaper\magazine press in matters of governance and politics. The combative posture of the different military regimes with their unpopular policies and the general deteriorating condition of the socio-political and economic life of the people necessitated this new ferocity. Various government policies, at least during the previous decade had attracted some censorious reactions. These were muted rumblings compared with the torrent of agitation by this new press system which threatened to overwhelm the successive military government.

The independent private press that emerged after 1985 evolved to probe the activities of government, attack government secrecy, crusade for justice and insist that the nation be served before self. They refused to be cowed by the military regimes that were willing to beat all to submission even in the light of its own shortcomings.

Tell, *The News* and *Tempo* magazines as at 1993 were the youngest arrivals to Nigeria press scene. There was something in their ardour and

candour, their impatience with Nigeria's millennial lassitude's, their strident call against corruption and misgovernance that shot up tension and pressure in the military government circles. These magazines were alarmingly frank¹ and suicidally insistent on publishing the truth.² This duty they performed with all the erudition, eloquence and poetic irony which all their writers, through good training in combined fields of Political Science and Mass communication had. These writers working were well read, young, and energetic. These attributes help to explain, in part, why their writings appealed to the country's intelligentsia.

The military government oftentimes reacted by harassing the Editors of these magazines, seizing entire editions in trying to ensure that they do not see the light of the day. The magazines and their editors in turn developed a coping mechanism, the best exemplification of what has come to be regarded as "Guerrilla journalism".

The Complexities of Guerrilla Journalism in an Atmosphere Dominated by the military

The period since the beginning of the 1980's was marked by a steady deepening of economic crisis, with adverse and far reaching consequences on various sectors of the Nigeria economy and the living standard of most Nigerians. Many scholars have argued that this recession has been the worst since the creation of the Nigeria state.³ This crisis provided the immediate domestic context for the adoption of an orthodox program of Structural Adjustment sponsored by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.⁴ After the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1986, it became part and parcel of the dynamics of Nigeria's economic crisis exacerbating existing pre-adjustment problem whilst creating new ones, specific to its own internal contradictions⁵. Good as the intentions of SAP were, they had dire consequences for the Nigerian society, politics and economy.⁶

An inherent implication of SAP's implementation was the mass retrenchment of workers in the public sector and the adoption of appropriate pricing policies for public enterprises.⁷ That in turn made citizens pay more for essential services rendered by these public enterprises. The cumulative effect of all these was to lead to some economic crisis that translated at the political level to increased public contestation on the one hand and massive state repression on the other.⁸ On the whole, the Babangida administration had to constantly contend with articulate organised opposition to its policies with consequences for the implementation of the reforms.

Babangida's administrative high handedness in executing SAP provoked widespread opposition from a cross section of pressure groups, which he sought to suppress as part of its crisis management strategy. It alienated the press by enacting a decree that sought to prevent the press from criticizing the

government and its functionaries. It also alienated the media barons by starving them of newsprint and hiking its price.⁹

This government restraint and authoritarian attitude angered the Nigerian press and the worsening economic situation angered the civil society. Furthermore, the reading public, more sophisticated as the years went by, preferred an anti-government press not necessarily because they awaited a sudden violent change but because that was the only avenue through which to express their sincere views on government policies and to know the truth. During this period most media houses were, save for isolated few, either government owned or owned by newspaper proprietors who were government contractors. The search for the truth about the goings-on in government by the civil society challenged the press and led to the rise and encouragement of the Nigerian private press whose ownership character had challenged the radical credentials of most journalists.

The economic crisis notwithstanding, the number and vigour of Nigeria's media establishments increased during the period under review. In 1980 Nigeria had 23 dailies 39 weeklies, 9 vernacular news papers and 54 magazines. Since then, many more have sprung up to constitute a formidable challenge to arbitrary military rule.¹⁰ We now turn to examine the real reasons for the emergence of the opposition press.

The Press and Public Articulation

The introduction of SAP in 1986 was not solely responsible for the radicalization or militarization of the press and professional associations in Nigeria. However SAP certainly reinforced and intensified that process, especially after its full effects began to be felt by the majority of the people.

The dynamism of trade, professional and students unions in Nigeria was one of the clearest signs of the democratic drive embedded in its civil society. Professionals, who were generally petty bourgeois, with fantastic aspirations and inclinations found that the introduction of market reforms, far from restoring their economic and social fortunes, actually diminished them further and associations such as Nigerian Bar Association (NBA). Academic staff union of universities (ASUU) and Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) became increasingly restive.¹¹ Hence SAP came under attack from all angles with unions and associations leading the agitations for lifting of wage freeze, a review of service conditions and the scrapping of adjustment.

On its part, the government grew weary of these agitations and became increasingly intolerant of opposition and branded every critic "an extremist" and suppressed the agitations through authoritarian tactics. This ranged from intimidation to harassment and proscription of associations, media houses and detention of people.¹² Subsequently, there was a cacophony of voices from these various bodies, as there was no independent press to properly articulate their wishes and desires. The conservative, traditional and government press houses could not fulfil this role. The opposition press stepped in effectively to

fill this void by fearlessly articulating and giving strength to the voice of the oppressed civil societies and masses. They show-cased the true picture of events and happenings in Nigeria during military rule. Inevitably the relentless efforts of the opposition press accelerated government response to the plight of the people.

The Press and Human Rights

Nigeria had a judicial machine that came under increased pressure to reorientate itself to serve uniquely the interests of the state rather than protect the civil liberties of citizens. The principles of rule of law were threatened by the state and the consequent arbitrariness openly justified.

In his speech to the 1989 conference of the NBA the then Chief Justice of the Nigerian federation, Muhammed Bello, argued that:

The so called crisis in the rule of law in Nigeria, lies in the resolution of the conflict between traditional constitutionalism and the supremacy of the decrees of the federal military government. ...During a military regime some elements of constitutionalism have to be sacrificed in the interest of security and public order.

This submission in a profound manner sacrificed civil liberties and the rule of law on the alter of security and public order.¹³

Thus, it followed that for society to protect its civil liberties recourse had to be made to human right bodies and the opposition press. With the new development of the supremacy of military decrees, human rights organisations and opposition press houses sprang up spontaneously since the state had shown that it could no longer protect or guarantee the citizens' rights.

The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), under the strong leadership of Mr Alao Aka Bashorun, a lawyer and human rights activist, became more assertive in its commitment to the rule of law. In addition human rights groups such as National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADL) led the pack in 1985. In 1989 the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR) under the chairmanship of Dr. Beko Ransome Kuti was created to broaden the struggle for human rights beyond the legal arena.¹⁴ it was supported by the Civil Liberties ORGANISATION (CLO) which was formed in 1987.¹⁵

By and large these human rights groups and the opposition press rose to checkmate the excesses of the military dictatorship. Some media houses were closed for their stance and new military decrees were promulgated to stop them. However the opposition press became more adamant and even went underground to publish when the atmosphere was not conducive. This was termed "Guerrilla Publishing" *Tell*, *Tempo* and *The News* engaged much in this aspect of publishing.

The Press in a Shadow Transition

The abuse of human rights went hand in hand with the articulation and subsequent inauguration of major reforms in Nigeria. The Babangida regime embarked on a political transition programme which was clearly aimed at shrinking the political space and consequently restricting democratic and popular participation.

A whole host of first and second republic politicians, described as old breed, were banned from participating in the new political process.¹⁶ At the end the government proceeded to register two political parties it created and named them National Republican Convention (NRC) and Social Democratic Party (SDP)¹⁷. For the first time in Nigerian history a constitution limited the number of political parties to be registered to two.

This attempt by the Babangida regime at restricting the political arena and writing the manifestoes for the two parties was aimed at breaking the democratic drive embedded in the Nigerian civil society. The civil societies' resistance to this political arrangement and struggle heightened national tension.¹⁸ These were evident in the battles the press engaged the Babaginda regime in:

- its unnecessary postponement of military disengagement dates;
- the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential elections;
- the formation of the ill-fated interim national government; and
- the enthronement of the Sani Abacha regime through a military coup in November 1993.²¹

The opposition press did not relent with the inception of General Sani Abacha's regime. Instead they became more ferocious and combative against the regime having realized the General's ploy to extend his stay in office. This combative posture led to the imposition of far reaching sanctions on the Nigerian government by the international community especially with the exposé of the killing of the Ogoni nine.²²

The Nigerian Opposition Press in Retrospect:

The *Tell Magazine* came into existence in 1991 during the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida. The five editors that made up the Tell Magazine Directors came out from the *Newswatch* editorial team where they had worked for some years.

The five editors were:

Mr. Nosa Igiebor	-	Editor in Chief
Mr. Onome Osifo Whisky	-	Managing Editor
Mr. Kolawole Illori	-	Executive Editor
Mr. Dele Omotunde	-	Deputy Editor in Chief
Mr. Dare Babarinsa	-	Executive Editor ²³

The five directors, while initially lacking the financial capability, had in abundance the zeal and determination to make the magazine a reference point in the political, economic and social agenda of the Nigerian nation.²⁴

In its first two years on the news stands, it was left alone by the Babangida regime. This was not due to any act of benevolence on the part of the regime but because of the contents. Right from its first edition titled “The presidency North versus South” it had set out to inform, educate, analyse and interpret the Nigerian nation and its sectoral and divisive nature. The magazine devoted itself to closely monitor the Ibrahim Babangida (IBB) regime and the transition to civil rule programme. In fact some cover stories in 1992 predicted that the transition programme might end in a fiasco.

Insinuating that IBB had a hidden agenda some of the publications of *Tell* exposed the intrigues and antics of the General’s regime as one such publication was entitled “Why IBB gave N500 million car gift to military men” (1996). The former president had to react to that particular publication in question by saying that the gift was to ease transportation problems of military officers who could not afford to buy their own cars because of the downturn in the nation’s economy. But the *Tell* expose revealed that IBB’s aim was to buy the loyalty of members of the armed forces with a view to extending his stay in power.²⁵

Eventually, words were reaching the editors of *Tell* as to the junta’s restlessness regarding the magazines incisive stories, yet security agents largely kept their distance. What seemed like the official position of the General Babangida’s junta to *Tell’s* courage to hold it accountable to Nigerians was a comment credited to Professor Sam Oyovbaire, a former minister of information. At a meeting with top management of *Daily Times* of Nigeria, the minister was asked why government had not called *Tell* to order, whereas it had dealt with publications that were less provocative? Oyovbaire replied that, “Its creditors will soon deal with it, it is owing all over the place. So it can’t last, it would soon collapse”.²⁶ Ironically the magazine did not collapse but grew from strength to strength. One reason for its strength was that the magazine kept faith with its abiding principle of keeping the government on its toes and reminded the military that Nigerians deserved a better deal than what they were getting.

In the third week of April 1993, the magazines edition dated April 26 hit the newsstands with the cover story an incisive interview with General Olusegun Obasanjo (Rtd) a former military Head of State. Within hours of the release of the publication, 50,000 copies of the magazine were seized. Security agents also stormed the Ikeja Office of the magazine inviting its Editors for “a chat” with the police²⁷, a foreboding euphemism signalling the arrest and detention that the journalists were to be conversant with henceforth.

The editors of *Tell* went underground and transformed it into a tabloid and continued publishing despite security harassment.²⁸ Thus was born the

first of Nigeria's Guerrilla tabloids of contemporary times. With the forced exit of IBB from the presidency, on August 23 1993 after his annulment of the June 12 presidential election which was adjudged free and fair and the contraption of the Interim National Government headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan which came into existence in August 1993, the battle was not over. Several editions of *Tell* in 1993 pointed at the truth and possible cataclysmic reactions that would erupt if the issue of June 12 1993 presidential elections was ignored. Some of the cover stories predicted the fall of Ernest Shonekan and the rise of General Sani Abacha via a coup plot. The cover stories were titled "ING will fail-Gani"²⁹ "June 12, Rumbles in the military."³⁰ "Coups threats against Shonekan"³¹ and "Shonekan must Go".³² In some of these stories, *Tell* showed that General Sani Abacha, the Secretary of Defence under Ernest Shonekan was planning to overthrow Shonekan. Reactions to some of these were virulent as the editors were termed alarmists. Evidently they were proved right when Abacha sacked the Ernest Shonekan Interim National Government on the 17th of November 1993.³³ With the seizure of state power by General Sani Abacha, the magazine also suffered colossal losses in the hands of the new junta. Whole editions for a week were seized by the security agents. For instance the first edition for the year 1994 of about 50,000 copies titled "Return of Tyranny: Abacha bares his fangs" were seized at the printer's place.³⁴

Curiously, however, the regimes number one legal officer, the Information Minister and Mr. David Attah, the Chief Press secretary to General Abacha, all apologised and later denounced the seizure of the magazine's copies.³⁵

Tell management refused to be taken in by the pronouncements of these government officials and gathered that security agents had a mandate to take care of both the opposition and the vocal press. *Tell* read the signal very well especially after the proscription ban was clamped down on three media houses: the *Concord*, *Punch* and *The Guardian* in 1994.³⁶ *Tell* reasoned that it was only a matter of time before the sledge hammer fell on it due to its opposition stance. Thus *Dateline* a subsidiary title was introduced by *Tell* communications limited. It was published on Thursday and hit the news stands on November 10, 1994.³⁷ The tabloid and its senior stable mate were thus on top with the first of the controversial coup plot stories which broke out in February 1993.

Tell Communications seemingly stepped on some powerful toes when *Dateline* in its May 11th 1995 edition published the controversy surrounding Major Oni Sunday's death.³⁸ It was treated as part of the fall out of the alleged coup plot. A day after the tabloid carrying that particular news item appeared on the newsstand, operatives from the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) invaded the premises of the company looking for its editors and George Mbah, an assistant editor who just offered to assist the security operatives was abducted. He was subsequently arraigned before the military

tribunal set up by Abacha to try alleged coup plotters for being “an accessory after the fact of treason”. He was given a fifteen year jail term and sent to Biu Prisons.³⁹

However, the popularity of the magazine soared in leaps and bounds. The paper is known for its objectivity and authenticity in news reporting and analysis. Its existence and rise derived from the failure of the government media to live up to their responsibilities to both the people and the government, a failure so palpable in the reporting of the reality of the Nigerian nation.

About the *Tell* Editor-in-Chief, Nosa Igiebor – he was born on December 25 1952. He attended the Ghana Institute of Journalism and graduated with distinction in Diploma in Journalism. He started his working career with the Nigerian Television Authority Benin, now Edo State. There he rose to become the senior News editor from where he moved to the *National Concord Group* and became the group’s news editor. He left the *National Concord* again for the *NewWatch* Magazine, Nigeria’s premier news magazine as the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the magazine.⁴⁰ Igiebor broke away from *Newswatch* with some of his colleagues in 1991 to form the Tell Communications Limited of which he is the Editor in Chief.⁴¹

In November 1993, Nosa Igiebor was among the five international journalists honored in New York for reporting stories of repression. They were recognized by the Committee for Protection of Journalists (CPJ) for their courage in defending press freedom.

Bill Orme, CPJ’s editor said of Nosa Igiebor, “What distinguished Nosa is that he is still producing and his organisation (Tell) is still reporting the news in a very lively and combative way”.⁴²

The News Magazine *and the Nigerian Media*,

A good news medium must always fight for progress and reform, never tolerate injustice or corruption always fight demagogues of all parties, never belong to any party, always oppose the privileged class and plunderers, never lack sympathy with the poor, always remain devoted to public welfare, never be satisfied with merely printing news. Always be dramatically independent, never be afraid to attack wrong predatory leaders, plutocracy and predatory poverty.⁴³

This dictum, once declared by Joseph Pulitzer, could be taken as constituting *The News Magazines’* editorial outlook and orientation.

While several media houses became muted in their criticism of military regimes in the heydays of military rule, the *African Concord* pursued a well beaten opposition path. Later, after a face-off with the IBB regime the *African Concord* had its press house sealed by the military and its radical journalists left in droves having refused to apologize to General Ibrahim Babangida, the then Nigerian head of State⁴⁴. A team of break a-ways under the leadership of Bayo Onanuga, African Concord's former editor subsequently founded *The News Magazine* and *Tempo Magazine* under the aegis of Independent Communications Network Limited (ICNL). These two weeklies rapidly became the object of terrible suppressive moves by the military regime.

The News Magazine came into existence in January 1993 but debuted on February 8 1993⁴⁵ under the auspices of veterans such as Bayo Onanuga (Editor-in-Chief) Dapo Olorunyomi, Babafemi Ojudu, Kunle Ajibade and Seye Kehinde. All of them sacrificed personal convenience on the altar of principle as depicted above.⁴⁶

This magazine has in the last thirteen years boldly paraded itself on the political landscape of Nigeria. In the process of keeping its vow it suffered the fate of all vocal and critical magazines in the country's press history. The maiden edition was entitled "My case" the story of Justice Moshood Olugbani who had drawn tremendous flak worldwide for passing a death sentence on eleven under-aged kid robbers.⁴⁷ *The News* fearlessly and graphically detailed what went into the passing of that judgement. The Justice felt so scandalized by *The News* account of the case that he ordered the arrest of the editors of the magazines.⁴⁸

Watchers of the media industry predicted that it was only a matter of time before the magazine, with its vibrant journalism, ran into trouble with the repressive ruling cabal. *The News* magazine was proscribed after its 21st edition in July 1993⁴⁹ and was snuffed out of the streets. At first, its owners chose to ignore the decree of the military regime proscribing the magazine and continued publishing for five weeks against all odds. When the military regime turned a greater heat and declared its editors wanted by the police and security agencies, the magazine was withdrawn from circulation and a week later the publishers launched the *Tempo* to carry on the struggle.⁵⁰

It was named "The baby of circumstance" promising to provide the missing threads in journalism practice in Nigeria which are courage, vibrancy and a rigorously probing tradition⁵¹ *Tempo's* first issue with a glossy cover page was seized by security men.⁵² It was clear that the new magazine would not be allowed to survive. And so its owners took it to the underground cellars from where it was published for several months as a tabloid.⁵³

The News actually held a special attraction for government because of its no holds barred journalism, particularly in exposing General Ibrahim Babangida's unreadiness to relinquish power. Government orders restraining it from further seizures of the magazine copies and harassment of the editors were never honoured by the government.⁵⁴ By October 1993, a couple of

months after General Ibrahim Babangida stepped aside, *The News* reappeared on the news stands bigger and stronger. *Tempo* was retained and published on Thursdays.

As at the end of 1997 *The News* had published 247 editions⁵⁵ all bristling with public oriented and in-depth news revelations especially on the state of the Nigerian nation. For their effrontery, *The News* and *Tempo* remained at the receiving end of perennial harassment.

In 1995 one of the editors of *The News*, Kule Ajibade was implicated in an alleged coup plot. He was jailed for fifteen years for accessory after the fact of treason.⁵⁶

In fact the *National Concord* of May 5th 1996 mentioned it that Kunle Ajibade had ceased to be the editor of *The News* when the coup story, for which he was arrested and jailed, for was published. He could have won his freedom by pointing out this and naming the person who edited that particular issue of the magazine. He did not, instead, from his place of captivity, he sent a message urging his colleagues to flee.⁵⁷ This singular act demonstrated the commitment of the editors of *The News* and *Tempo* to selflessness showing the calibre of its staff.

About The Editor in Chief – Bayo Onanuga Mr Bayo Onauga attended the federal government College Odogbolu, Ogun State. He won the esteemed regional J.F. Kennedy essay Award in 1975. He graduated from University of Lagos in 1980 as the best graduating student in his class. He did a B.Sc in Mass Communication. Onanuga started his working career at the Ogun State Broadcasting Corporation from where he moved to the *Guardian Newspaper* and subsequently to *National Concord*.

His superiors referred to him as a hardworking and brilliant man. He later took up the editorship of *African Concord* in 1990.

In a society where high morality, principled values and consistency have been ossified, it is understandable that Onanuga had come to be better known for his 1992 dramatic exit from the editor's position of *African Concord*. The Concord Press was shut by the military on account of an allegedly offending article. The publisher, Chief M.K.O. Abiola sought an apology from Mr. Onanuga to the Head of State. Instead, the young idealistic threw in his letter of resignation and walked into the cold.

By February 1993, he was back on the panels confounding *The News* with some former friends and colleagues. Through competent supervision, a stallion's capacity for work and an incredibly imaginative and professional outlook, Onanuga guided the team that started to publish *Tempo* and *The News*.⁵⁸

In 1994 Bayo Onanuga was nominated for the prestigious Lord Astor, Award, anchoring the offer on his outstanding contribution to the cause of Press freedom and his distinguished service to the commonwealth of newspaper industry. He was the first African to win the award⁵⁹ and his paper too won an award for excellence from the Canadian Committee for Protection

of Journalists. Bayo Onanuga went into self exile when the Abacha junta declared him wanted.⁶⁰

Conclusion

It is noteworthy to infer from this work that a new spirit and fervour infiltrated the Nigerian press from 1985 which was more reactive and combative to government action. The new professionals who engaged in guerrilla journalism, and well bred journalists who as the danger of the profession crystallised were bloodied but unbowed. Their critical journalism was a function of age and orientation. Other notable features of the opposition press were that their ownership and control structures were unique. They are all privately owned and their proprietors were not contractors hustling for government patronage. This variant of the Nigerian press proved to be a barometer for gauging the mood of the nation and peoples at various times.

The opposition press have continued to rise with more vigour from their funeral pyre.⁶¹ The guerrilla press are market leaders that survived all odds because of their commitment to the truth, objectivity and their vision of what a truly dynamic developing country like Nigeria should be in the 21st century. In the increasingly anti civil society environment that Nigeria came to find herself, the opposition magazines with their pro-democracy stance catered for the urgent needs and yearnings of the citizenry at large. On a final note it is interesting that these magazines namely *Tell*, *The News* and *Tempo* all belong to the Lagos – Ibadan Axis. This has in the past been seized upon by the northern dominated military regimes bent on a “divide and rule” strategy to insinuate that the guerrilla press is an ethnically based press. Of course in terms of basic indices of social mobilization, it is the Yoruba west that one expects to be most receptive to the kind of message the opposition press expresses. After all, the south west region has had the highest score regarding. (A) Rate of urbanization (B) Per capital income (C) level of education (D) exposure to communication (E) level of political culture and organisation.

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50. Ibid p. 42
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