

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

**NATIONAL INTEREST
EXALTETH A NATION**

Valedictory Lecture

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PROGRAMME

- 1. GUESTS ARE SEATED**
- 2. INTRODUCTION**
- 3. THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S OPENING REMARKS**
- 4. CITATION**
- 5. THE VALEDICTORY LECTURE**

The lecturer shall remain standing during the citation. He shall step on the rostrum, and deliver his Valedictory Lecture. After the lecture, he shall step towards the Vice-Chancellor, and deliver a copy of the Valedictory Lecture and return to his seat. The Vice-Chancellor shall present the document to the Registrar.

- 6. CLOSING REMARKS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR**
- 7. VOTE OF THANKS**
- 8. DEPARTURE**

PROTOCOL

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Ladies and Gentlemen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The strength to give this last talk to the university community to mark my seventieth birthday and my departure was given to me by the NAMELESS ONE, SUGMAD (Almighty God), The ECK (The Holy Spirit), and the Mahanta, The Living ECK Master (The Godman). Clocking 70 today was not an easy journey and hence I have dedicated the rest of the journey to work in the lords vine yard and not for man.

The 8th Vice-Chancellor of the University of Port Harcourt, our amiable Prof. Onwunari Georgewill for given the opportunity to deliver my Valedictory Lecture is very highly appreciated.

My parents who cared for me from the cradle are highly appreciated. They resisted all attempts to abort my chances of reaching adulthood. But the hand of divine spirit was always in my life as I charted my way in this journey with all the stubbornness you can imagine.

Let me at this juncture acknowledge the enormous help I received from my mentors and colleagues namely Prof. Edet Bassey Akpakpan, of blessed memory, Professors G. S. Angaye, W. J. Okowa, T.J.Agiobenebo, O. Onuchuku, I.E. Kalu, and others. Let me particularly thank Prof. Okey Onuchuku for supporting the publication: **DILEMMAS OF NIGERIA'S DEVELOPMENT**. This wonderful book came out of my taught about our dear country and is edited by Professors O. Onuchuku, I.E. Kalu, T. Okomoko and Dr. Alwell Nteegah whom I owe a lot of gratitude.

Last but not the least, I express my gratitude to my wives Mrs. Edna Ohale (Late), and Ann Ohale for always being there for me, and my children, Chidiebere, Oluchi, Kelechi, Chukwuemeka and Okolie Patrick Chuks (My Son-in-law), and my daughter in-law Dr (Mrs) Sandra Ohale. This birthday is being coincidentally celebrated with my granddaughter Kosisochukwu Okolie who is in attendance here with my two other grandchildren Harold Okolie and Chidinma Ohale.

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1. Background Citations

*“The highest truth is not written in any book.
It’s written in your heart”*

Sri Harold Klemp

*And ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth
shall make ye free*

John 8:32.

*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a
reproach to any people.*

Proverb 14:34.

*Choose you this day whom ye will serve, but
as for me and my house, we will serve the
Lord.*

Joshua 24:15.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Mathew 6:24.

2. Preamble

This Valedictory Lecture is a continuum. It takes off from where my inaugural lecture ended. You may recall my bemoaning the failure of the country I told the world that this is a failed country. Permit me to quote my conclusion then for it provides the pad for the take-off of this lecture.

“Vice Chancellor Sir, if we are to overcome this paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty, we have to change our ways of life, and the ways of doing government business. Government

has to show serious commitment to the development of the economy. If we do not get the economy right, nothing else can work in this country. What we are suggesting here goes beyond the so-called Washington Consensus solution of getting certain things right. According to their claim, our economy will develop and poverty eradicated if we;

‘get the prices right’

‘get the property rights right’

‘get the institutions right’

‘get the governance right’

‘get the competitiveness right’

‘get the innovations right’

‘get the entrepreneurship right’

‘get the education right’

‘get the climate right’

‘get the diseases right’. (Reinert, 2007, p.216)

Permit me to say that, it is not a matter of getting these things right. To my mind what we need to get right first is the economy so that we can put money in the pockets of our people. This will make them to worry less about how to meet their existential needs. Their attention will now be shifted to which sports to choose to while away their time having taken basic needs for granted. We cannot tell a hungry man not to steal or sabotage government efforts and institution if that will put money in his pocket to save his sick child or take his old sick father to the hospital because ours is a society that does not care for anybody. Our motto is “Everyone for himself, God for us all”. It is because of our failure in the economic arena that everything is wobbling in our society including our

policies and democracy. That is why many people, including myself, have given up on Nigeria because we believe strongly that it is a failed country.”

This conclusion did not sink well with some people in the audience. I particularly remember the comments of the then DVC who chaired over the inaugural lecture. She said I was pessimistic and too harsh and that I should have left some room for hope. But I was not worried rather it gave me another task and that was to discover why this country failed and I stumbled on the reason and that reason is what gave birth to the theme of this Valedictory Lecture. I searched through the force(s) that was behind the wonderful performance of the developed countries that led to the dichotomization of the globe into developed and less developed countries (DCs and LDCs). I stumbled on the secret behind their progress and that secret is the supremacy of national interests above all other interests/considerations. That was the driver of their progress/development. Personal interest stifles the development of a nation. This has been the major factor that has hindered the development of the LDCs.

3. Development and National Interest Defined

There is no universal definition of development that I know of in the literature. But Ake’s (1996) conceptualization appears very apt and appealing. According to him, development is a process by which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values.

Development or civilization (I think both terms can be used interchangeably) has always involved a sustained improvements in the living conditions of the people that yield the highest possible level of satisfaction and fulfillment. There is development where there is space for the flowering of human creativity and the right to invent ones own future. The supreme God endowed human beings with imagination and creativity. This means that man can imagine and create whatever he wants to make its life comfortable and all the things we see around us today and enjoy came out of this gift from God – creative imagination. It is not peculiar to any particular human race. The ability of any race to fabricate required tools and equipment to harness the forces of nature account for the variations in development among the countries of the world. One of the forces propelling national development is national interest. Do leaders put the interest of their nation first or their own interest? If the national interest comes first, the development of that country will be very rapid than if self-interest guides leader’s actions and decisions.

3.1 What is National Interest?

The Encarta World English Dictionary defined it as “whatever will benefit a nation or a nation’s concern for its own survival and prosperity. It also refers to nation’s goals and ambitions, whether economic, military, cultural, or otherwise. It encompasses the strategic interests that a nation seeks to protect and promote in order to ensure its survival, security, and well-being. Government often formulate foreign and domestic policies based on how they align with their national interests and well-being.

The dimensions of national interests include economic prosperity, political stability, security and cultural values.

- Economic Prosperity involves pursuing policies that enhance the nation's economic growth, trade relations, and access to resources.
- Political Stability centres on ensuring a stable political environment domestically and in the region.
- Security centres on protecting the nation's territory and its citizens from threats like terrorism, banditry, kidnapping and military aggression.
- Cultural Values deals with promoting and protecting national identity, culture and values.

3.2 Benefits of National Interest

National interest promote national development and it is the major force that drove the development of all the nations that are wearing this toga – Developed Countries. Illustrations will be made but first, let us look at how it promotes national development. National interest promotes national development in several ways namely, through supporting economic development, political stability, social welfare, security and defense and international relations with the following benefits:

- (a) Pursuing national interest ensures long-term development (sustainable development).
- (b) Protecting national interest enhances global competitiveness
- (c) Promoting national interest foster national pride and unity.

But how does national interest promote economic development, political stability, social welfare etc. protecting national interest attract investments – domestic and foreign which create employment opportunities (reduce unemployment) and can break the monocultural tendency of most LDCs economies. Export diversification boost the resiliency of the nation to internally and externally induced shocks.

In the political arena, defending national interest helped to protect its sovereignty, self esteem and the country cannot be used by other countries as a stooge to achieve their own ends. This can raise its global influence and at the regional level foster cooperation.

National interests in education, healthcare, energy/electricity and infrastructural development leads to improved standard of living and if same is extended to environmental protection will lead to sustainable development. With the national interest in the heart of the leader, he will be committed to build the defense capabilities to safeguard the nation's sovereignty and security, stability in the country and the region. It will also foster diplomatic leverage, strategic partnership and promote the global governance.

4. Historical Antecedents

Improvement in human existence came very slowly until the beginning of industrial revolution in Britain. This revolution made Britain the industrial hub of the globe and the only supplier of industrial goods/products to all the continents of the

world. It made the country to be swollen headed as it began to pride itself as a place where the “sun never set”. Its orthodox thinkers began to extol capitalism as the only path to human progress and modernization (monoeconomics).

When its domestic economy could no longer support its industries, the British Empire took to conquer other lands in furtherance of its national interest. The purpose was to expand its market and secure a better source of raw materials for the industries. National Interest is the root of colonialism. It is the contention of this lecture that National Interest as opposed to self (or selfish) interest exalteth a nation.

Other countries that came after felt that they must protect their national interest by severing their dependence on British goods. The first American secretary of treasury, Alexander Hamilton formulated the industrial policy that led to the American goods competing with the British goods by putting America first. Other countries such as Germany, Japan, Soviet Union, China and later the Asian Tigers etc countered western imperialism by putting their national interest first.

4.1 Case Studies

To buttress our position that putting the nation first (national interest) exalteth it and promote its progress, it suffices at the juncture to give a few illustrations starting`` with the United States of America (USA).

4.1.1 United States of America (USA)

A little excursion into its history will suffice. The depletion of nutritional values in Western Europe contributed to the era of exploration and discovering. Remember Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Mungo Park etc. Their journeys marked the beginning of centuries of transatlantic colonization. Vasco da Gama was noted to have discovered the sea route to India which opened the way for an age of global imperialism that resulted in the establishment of a long lasting colonial empires. History has it that America was colonized by the Britain.

The history of United States has the greatest economic relevance to Nigerian and LDCs. The first modern war of national liberalization against British imperialism was waged by USA. The economic theorist of the American Revolution was its first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton who formulated its industrial policy after the Northern Unionists overcame the Southern Confederacy. That policy helped the US economy to rapidly industrialize in the last third of the nineteenth century and eventually to become the World's leading economy in the twentieth century. National Interest was the force behind its success. Other countries followed suit.

4.1.2 Japan

The transformation era of Japan occurred when Meiji, its 122nd emperor was at the helms of affairs hence the name Meiji Restoration. The word Meiji means "Enlightened Rule". Meiji Restoration was a coup d' état that resulted in the dissolution of

Japan's feudal system of government and during his reign, Japan was dramatically transformed from feudal country into one of the great powers including the restoration of the imperial system.

With national interest utmost in his mind, he implemented great reforms that brought great changes both within Japan and in Japan's place in World affairs. The country straightened itself enough to become a powerful colonial power with the most modern institutions and was able to develop into a modern industrial nation-state that rivaled European nations in both military and economic powers. (For more on Japan, see Ohale, 2018)

With the success of the DCs, the Western Scholars went wild to announce to the world that they have discovered the secret to development. The secret was capitalism. It is the best path to development for all countries. This path centres on capital accumulation to enhance investment, non-government interference and free trade. Countries can source for capital from within or from without.

4.1.3 Russia

In 1917, the Bolshevik revolutionaries under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin seized key government buildings and stormed the Winter Palace, the seat of new government in Russia's capital, Petrograd (now St Petersburg) destroyed the tradition of Czarist and adopted socialism as the alternative route to development. The era of monoeconomies was gone. (For more on Russia, see Ohale 2018).

The rapid progress achieved by the Russians attracted other countries. The globe witnessed the “Cold War”, “Detente”. The LDCs went hay-wire with cap in hand begging foreign investment, aids, grants etc from the West and East to facilitate their development. As Moyo (2009) argued aid has been and continues to be, an unmitigated political, economic, and humanitarian disaster for most parts of the developing world.

4.1.4 China

The People’s Republic (PRC) is a country in East Asia with a population of over 1.4 billion people which represents about 17.4% of the world population. It is another very interesting case that demonstrates how national interest drives progress and development of a country. China ignored global politics and concentrated on how to build its nation to play an active role in the world economy; it avoided the consumption of other country’s goods and services, but encouraged its people to consume made in China goods. It realized that its economy cannot at that time indulge in free trade, and that government was necessary to build an economy. You can say that it indulged in protectionism which the West preached against, and it was not also interested in becoming a world power or engage in the cold war between the capitalist countries and Russia (Soviet Union). In China then, you could see the people using forks made from sticks and riding their bicycle with joy. They resisted all temptations to alter their consumption pattern. After building their productive capacity and their economy, they joined the West to sing the song of globalization. They are also now telling the world that they are also part of world powers (watch this clip). That is what national interest can do.

4.1.5 Singapore

The “Benevolent Dictator” of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew (LKY) was among them. He strongly refused to be caught in the ideological argument. As a stern advocate of pragmatism, he argued that he “was not enamored with ideology but instead with what works. For LKY, the ultimate test of the value of a political system was whether it helps that society to establish conditions which improve the standard of living for the majority of its people. He sought to encourage prosperity through ensuring a dominant role for the state.

Singapore experience is also very interesting. It was national interest that helped to move it from third world to first (see Lee (2000) and Ohale (2018)). Despite its precarious economy, Lee and his cohorts put the nation’s interest upper most in conducting all their affairs that resulted in the deliverance of the country from a state of hopelessness to be numbered among the four Asian Tigers. The story of Singapore is today told with admiration all over the world (see appendix 1 titled “Letter from the grave”). We need to understand the scenario painted above as we look at our country, Nigeria now.

4.1.6 Nigeria

Permit me to re-title the lecture at this juncture as “Selfishness destroyeth a nation to capture why Nigeria has remained a staunch member of the Third World which is what made me to conclude in my inaugural lecture that it is a failed country.

The UNDP's Human Development Report (2008/2009) portrayed Nigeria thus:

Now, at the threshold of the golden jubilee of Nigeria's political independence, the country surely has a scorecard; but is an unimpressive one relative to its contemporaries in the 1960s and 1970s. What is different about Nigeria is that its poverty and poor human development performance are avoidable. Forty-nine years of managing its own affairs has shown that the country has immense potential, is blessed with human and natural resources, yet exhibiting significant deprivation in the midst of plenty....it is a country of extremes- extreme wealth on the one hand and extreme want on the other which makes it possible for some 20 percent of the population to own 65 percent of its national wealth.

The situation has worsened because of lack of national interest in our consciousness. Self (selfishness) interest which has gripped us from the beginning continues as we continue to prey on the national wealth. If a family leader puts his interest first, that family will not prosper. The same thing will happen to the village, town, local government, state, nation and any system. We are talking about man. Man can build and he can also destroy. He builds when he puts the collective interest of the whole above his own and destroys if the reverse is the case.

Let us not go back too far. The post-independence will serve our purpose. Nigeria gained its independence on October 1, 1960 and became a Republic in 1963, with Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe as President and Tafawa Belewa as Prime Minister. The country started with three regions – North, East and West and later the Mid-West was carved out of the West to make it four. These regions were noted for their agricultural products. The groundnut pyramid and hides and skin from the North, palm oil and palm kernel from the East, cocoa from the West and Mid-West, rubber. These products were exported in their primary state to our trading partners such as United Kingdom, USA etc.

The revenues derived from the sale of these products accrued to the regions who paid some percentage to the central government. While the West extended free education to their citizens, the East extorted a huge sum from the poor peasants who were living from hand to mouth. The Western leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo¹ recognized that progress begins with a grasp of Western education and hence he had the interest of the West – a factor that put this region above the other regions, literacy wise. For the North, the pursuit of Islamic/Arabic education did not help them much. The leaders at the centre were more interested in how to butcher the so-called “National Cake” rather pursuing national interest.

¹ Remember that Chief Obafemi Awolowo was described as “the best President that Nigeria never had” at death by Chief Odumegwu Ojukwu (late)

Indeed, the spirit of “nationalism” waned and in its stead, the rat race for materialism took over and has continued till this day. Rather than sit down in a round table to chat a direction to develop the country (National Interest), they were busy looking up to West and East to bring development to them and to dictate the way forward. The Western scholars were handy. They advised them to adopt free trade or globalization as it is called today and that government should steer clear from the economy (the doctrine of Laissez faire), but can come in from time to time only if there is crisis (Keynesianism). Once the crisis is over, you must leave the economy alone.

This is contrary to their experience (as enumerated) above. Our leaders swallowed this so-called “expert” advice, hook, line and sinker. Markets have two sides (the seller and the buyer). The seller has the productive ability which the buyer does not have. A nation that does not have the productive strength remains a consumerist society and cannot compete or grow. It will also remain dependent and exploited.

Let us look at two attempts to build the productive strength of the economy to enable us “become a great economic power and one of the top 20 economies in the world by the year 2020 or 2030 (the so-called Nigeria Vision 20:2020-2030). Note that the concept of technological development entered Nigeria’s development lexicon 21 years after independence, precisely with the Fourth National Development plan, 1981 – 1985, (again see Ohale, 2018). To summarize that effort, I said, “Nigeria’s understanding of what technology means is very naive and its attempt to acquire it very shabby”.

The country changed gear in 1993 in its technological pursuit to technology incubation – an approach that served most DCs very well.

The expectation was fueled by the positive experiences of some of the highly industrialized countries such as USA and South Korea. In America, we have the Silicon Valley while for South Korea, we have the Pangyo Techno Valley. These incubation centres helped to drive up the exports from their respective countries.

Nigeria has established thirty four Technology incubation Centres in the six geopolitical zones of the country from 1993 to 2019. The aim is to stimulate entrepreneurship and industrialization to reduce unemployment and poverty. This strategy which was hailed as an appropriate and bold approach has failed colossally unlike what obtains in the DCs. You will lament for this country if you know the amount sunk into this laudable strategy for the interest of the nation. Everything went down the drain-private pockets of your fellow citizens to promote their selfish interest.

Let's move away from industrialization to infrastructure such as energy, transport and communication. Is it not unimaginable that your so-called Minister conception of how to revive the moribund Nigeria Airways was to repaint one of Ethiopian Airways plane to look like a Nigerian Airways plane? But she forgot to also delete Ethiopian Airways emboldened everywhere inside. In more matured climes, this Minister would have been sent to the gallows. The President only

aborted the fanfare to stop the press from seeing more. Is that how to promote National Interest? To cover up criminality enhances selfish interest and endanger the progress or development of the nation. Your country stinks to high heavens. We need everybody to assimilate and internalize National Interest in their psyche and not pay a lip service to it.

Consider also the huge sum sunk in the East-West road and how all those involved in the execution of this project diverted a large chunk of the money to their private pockets and endangered the life of people living along this route. It is a trauma to pass through the road when it collapses from time to time. Your testimonies are as good as mine. Is it National interest or self-interest? Answer that.

Let's take another blunder of your country, the Health scenario. Health tourism is an integral part of our consumption pattern that is systematically destroying the county, and it is because we are not encouraging our traditional health practices that are today recognized worldwide as Alternative Medical Practice in line with Acupuncture from China and others from India, Honduras etc. These countries respected their traditional medicine in the interest of their nation. If your country has done that, health tourism will not have been gulping the huge sum of our national wealth. No wonder Putin was credited to have said that.

Truth!!!



RUSSIA PRESIDENT, Vladimir Putin Says: Africa Is A Cemetery For Africans

"When an African becomes rich, his bank accounts are in Switzerland. He travels to France for Medical treatment.

He invests in Germany. He buys from Dubai. He consumes Chinese. He prays in Rome or Mecca. His children study in Europe. He travels to Canada, USA, Europe for tourism.

If he die, he will be buried in his native country of Africa.

Africa is just a cemetery for Africans. How could a cemetery be developed?"

5. Why is Nigeria still a staunch Member of the Third World?

I have emphasized in this lecture that the major driver of development is national interest. A country that allows it to guide its actions and decisions experiences development. Those who put self-interest first remained trapped in their state of backwardness and underdeveloped. That is the major factor why the globe is polarized into DCs and LDCs.

I agree with Okowa (2022) in to-to that theft is one of the greatest burdens of this Nation but I want to go beyond appearances to the root. An entrenched disease is best uprooted if you go beyond the symptoms to the root. The three factors I have identified that will enable us rise above selfish-interest are:

- Maya (illusion)
- Ignorance
- Zombiesm

5.1 Maya (illusion)

Many Nigerians have a misconception of who they are. They have an exaggerated view of themselves and want everybody to see them as demigods. That is why praise singing is a serious business which nets in a lot of money to the professional praise singers. But the holy Bible tells us “*let the world see thy good works and give glory to thy Father who is in Heaven*” not to you. Those who covet praises are actually non-performers. They are gripped by Maya. Envy them not.

5.2 Ignorance

The truth lies in the fact that before unfolding any faculty or powers which man has within himself and doesn't know about, he must acquire and learn about faculties and powers which he never uses. This is the missing link and the most important point in the spiritual evolution of man. It is that point which has always been made-that man does know himself. This is the crux of the nature of man.

The Shariyat KI Sugmad, Books one & two, Pg.293

“It is because man does not know himself that he carries a lot of baggages such as fear of tomorrow, which pushes him to acquire unlimited wealth for himself and future generations yet unborn. But then, you must go one day and those you live behind will become scavengers and some of them totally useless, because they did not struggle for that wealth. Also wealth wrongly acquired can inflict some harm on your physical body because the lower worlds operate on the law of balance”.

5.3 Zombiesm

Follow follow. You want to be like others. You don't want them to leave you behind. You become a desperado and can do anything to be like them.

6. Conclusion

This valedictory lecture is a food for thought for all of us. Should we promote national interest or selfishness and continue to be kleptomaniacs? The choice is ours. Any choice we make is good, after all the Holy Bible told us that “*God saw everything that he has made, and behold, it was good*” (Gen 1:31). We are also told by the same Holy book that God regretted when he made man.

But listen to Sri Harold Klemp, “*when you come to that school in the first heaven, the Astral Plane, between lives and go over the ledger with your instructor, this whole world and all its aims will seem so petty. The accumulation of power at all costs-it's not worth it. The gathering of money, of a good reputation as a top financier, or some such thing-it's not worth it. Not if you sell your soul, if you will, to the devil. And many people do. Practice love. Look at life straightforward*”.

KLEMP 2001; How to Survive Spiritually in our Times,
Mahanta Transcripts, Book 16, Copyright @2001
ECKANKAR.

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8. Appendix

Letter From The Grave

Lee Kuan Yew's open letter to the Malaysian Leaders

Dear Malaysian leaders, I want to appreciate your condolence messages to Singaporeans since my death on Sunday, March 22. Having died at the age of 91, I would not say I died young.

In fact, life expectancy in Singapore, which I led as prime minister for 31 years, is 80 years for men and 85 for women.

You may even say I spent an overtime of 11 years. I would say I lived a good life which I devoted to the progress of my country.

I can confidently say that everything I did — including that for which I was heavily criticized for being “highhanded” — was for the benefit of my people, not for personal gain. I died a fulfilled man with no regrets whatsoever.

May I briefly tell you the story of Singapore so that you can understand why it is often told with admiration all over the world. We were a small, hopeless Island.

We thought we were so poor it was impossible to survive on our own. We decided to go into a union with other countries to form Malaysia in 1963.

But because of ethnic riots, we were expelled from the union in 1965, and I broke down in tears because I did not see how

we were going to survive as a country. It was so bad we had no potable water. We relied on other countries for water to drink!

We had no natural resources. No oil, no gold, no solid minerals, nothing. All we had were human beings — and ports.

Dear Malaysian leaders, we did not give up. We decided to pick the pieces of our lives. We resolved to turn our fortune around.

Today, our story has changed completely. So you know, we are no longer a Third World country.

We are one of the four Asian Tigers — so-called because of our incredible development story.

Singapore is the only Asian country with the top AAA rating by all credit rating agencies. We are the fourth largest financial centre in the world. We have one of the five busiest ports in the world.

Manufacturing accounts for around 30% of our GDP. And Singapore has the third highest per capita income in the world.

Permit me some more immodesty. Unlike Malaysia, we don't have a single drop of crude oil on our land.

But also unlike Malaysia, we are one of the biggest exporters, not importers, of petroleum products.

Our country is in the top three of oil-refining centres in the world, yet we don't have oil! We have some of the biggest refineries in the world.

Meanwhile, Malaysia, with all the oil you produce, has been importing petrol, diesel, kerosene, engine oil and other petroleum products for decades!

Let me shock you: we are the largest oil-rig producers in the world! The World Bank ranks us as the easiest place to do business in the world. I'm blushing, even in death!

Let me explain how we attained these feats. We are no magicians. We are no angels.

We are human beings like you, dear Malaysian leaders.

The first thing we recognised is that quality leadership is non-negotiable!

I understand that ordinary Malaysians get all the blame for Malaysia's problems under the pretext that if the followers are bad, then leaders will be bad. I disagree.

THE LANGUAGE OF MAD MALAYSIAN – IMBECILE

If the leaders are good, the followers will be good.

The leaders take the critical decisions and show direction. That is why they are called leaders.

It is the dog that should be wagging the tail, not the tail wagging the dog.

Don't blame passengers for bad driving. Countries are transformed by good leadership.

Why does a country need competent and exemplary leaders? Development starts from visioning.

No country develops by accident or co-incidence. Development is planned.

The leader, who must understand the critical issues, puts together a team, shares his vision with them, assigns them responsibilities and leads them from the front.

That is where it starts. It is when you have a vision of society that you will know that education is key, electricity is key, health is key, infrastructure is non-negotiable. It is when you have this vision that you know where to direct your energy and resources. You know the kind of people to put in charge of key ministries and agencies.

Furthermore, leaders must not be obsessed with instant gratification and personal comfort. That is one of the biggest problems you, Malaysian leaders, have.

You are too obsessed with the perks of office that you have forgotten why you were elected in the first instance.

I understand that aside the presidential jets in town, you are more comfortable with chattered jets. What a waste. I will share a story with you, which you can read in my book, From Third World to First.

The story is on pages 363-364 and it had to do my trip to Ottawa, Canada, for the Commonwealth meeting in 1973.

The Bangladeshi Prime Minister, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, arrived in style in his own aircraft.

When I landed, I saw a parked Boeing 707 with “Bangladesh” emblazoned on it. When I left, it was still standing on the same spot, idle for eight days, getting obsolescent without earning anything.

As I left the hotel for the airport, two huge vans were being loaded with packages for the Bangladeshi aircraft. At the conference, Mujibur Rahman had made a pitch for aid to his country.

Any public relations firm would have advised him not to leave his special aircraft standing for eight whole days on the parking apron. You want aid but you are showing opulence to the world.

Presidents of Kenya and Nigeria also arrived in jets. I wondered why they did not set out to impress the world that they were poor and in dire need of assistance.

Our permanent representative at the UN explained that the poorer the country, the bigger the Cadillacs they hired for their leaders.

So I made a virtue of arriving by ordinary commercial aircraft and thus helped preserve Singapore's Third World status for many years.

However, by the mid-1990s, the World Bank refused to heed our pleas not to reclassify us as a "High Income Developing Country"— giving no Brownie points for my frugal travel habits. We lost all the concessions that were given to developing countries.

Dear Malaysian leaders, I understand that you are very, very religious.

The Muslims among you pray five times day, go for hajj so often, fast during Ramadan and mention the name of Allah as punctuation for every word and every sentence. The Christians among you are always speaking in tongues or eating communion, paying fat tithes and heavy offerings and holding prayer sessions at home every morning.

Yet, I am told you loot your state treasury without compassion or compunction, inflate contracts recklessly, operate killer squads, and watch — without conscience — as your citizens struggle without clean water and good hospitals.

Unfortunately, I died an agnostic. I neither denied nor accepted that there was a God.

Though two of my younger brothers, Freddy Lee and Lee Suan Yew, are members of the Anglican and Methodist churches

respectively, I was not a churchgoer. Don't misunderstand me: I am not saying you should not believe in God.

But I only wonder: how can you say you believe in God and fail so woefully in what the Holy Bible and Holy Qu'ran teach about loving your neighbour, caring for the needy and showing responsibility as a leader? I cannot understand it.

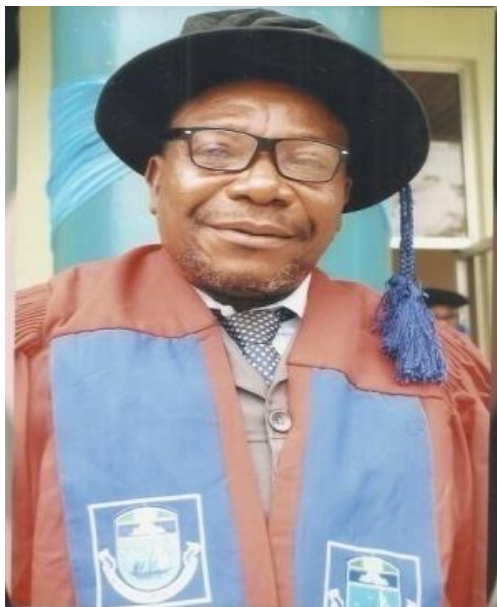
You guys never cease to amaze with how you can conveniently combine religion with greed.

On a final note, I appreciate that you are mourning my death and describing me as great. Thank you very much.

But I want you to know that you too can become great by putting the welfare of your citizens above your personal comfort.

MALAYSIA too can produce a Lee Kuan Yew. I go to my grave a happy man. Ask yourself: will you go to yours fulfilled? Adieu!

CITATION



PROFESSOR LAWRENCE OHALE

B.Sc, M.Sc, Ph.D (UPH), MNES

Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences

Professor Lawrence Ohale was born in Ezikpe, Isu Etche in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State, on Saturday 29th January, 1955 to the family of Mr. James and Mrs. Esther Ohale. He received his primary education at St. James Primary School, Isu Etche and Christ the King Primary School, Ozuzu Etche, and obtained the First School Leaving Certificate in 1970, due to the disruption of the Nigerian civil war. His secondary education transversed three schools, namely, St Joseph's Secondary School, Umuaturu Etche, Ascension High School, Nchia Eleme and Birabi Memorial Grammar School,

Bori where he obtained the West African School Certificate in good standing in 1976. He was given appointment as auxiliary teacher, Master Grade II by the Rivers State Schools Management Board in 1976, and was posted to the famous Country Grammar School, Ikwerre Etche where a former governor of Rivers State, Chief (Barrister) Celestine Omehia was one of his students. In 1977, he enrolled in the University of Port Harcourt as one of the pioneer students and graduated in 1981 and thereafter participated in the mandatory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme in 1981/82.

In 1982, he was offered employment in the Rivers State Civil Service and posted to the Ministry of Trade and Industry as Assistant Registrar of Co-operative in charge of Old Ikwerre-Etche Local Government Area. Not satisfied with the boredom of office work, in 1983, he sought for employment with the then Rivers State College of Education (RSCOE) and was employed as a graduate assistant. He was posted to Ndele Campus and made the co-ordinator of the Department of Economics.

In 1983, he joined the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) under the leadership of the late Sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo. His prowess earned him a member of his party state executive council. His urge to serve human kind made him to contest election to the Federal House of Representative but lost due to the “landslide” victory of the ruling party, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). When the election was over, he returned back to RSCOE due to his zeal to impact knowledge. While in the College, Professor Ohale became the Vice Chairman of

College of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU) where with others, they fought to stop the multilation of their pay slip.

His quest for knowledge made him to return back to the University of Port Harcourt for his M.Sc degree in 1987/88 session, under the sponsorship of the College, ignoring the invitation of the former governor of Rivers State, Sir Dr. Peter Odili to join him in his govership quest. In 1990, he got his Master of Science (M.Sc) Degree in Development Economics and Doctor of Philosophy (P.h.D) Degree in 2000 from the same University.

Professor Lawrence Ohale participates actively in community activities. He was one time the president of the Society for Awareness and Growth in Etche (SAGE). He, in conjunction with other patriotic sons and daughters of Etcheland and with help of Etche socio-cultural organization, OGBAKO ETCHE, under the able leadership of Dr. Shedrack O. Nweke (late) fought shell to a standstill and stopped this multinational organization from turning Etcheland into a dumping ground for all industrial wastes from all over the world.

He has served, at various times, as a consultant to the World Bank/Federal Government of Nigeria National FADAMA project on the survey of the performance of the scheme as well as in the FADAMA midline and midline surveys in Rivers State in 2011 and 2013 respectively.

He has served and is still serving as external examiner to many institutions including the now Rivers State University, the Rivers State University of Education, University of Uyo etc. In University of Port Harcourt, he has served in various capacities such as Vice Chairman, P.T.A, UDSS, University of Port Harcourt, 2004-2006, head of department, 2008 – 2010, Associate Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, 2010 – 2014, member, University of Port Harcourt Examination Malpractice Committee, 2003 – 2007, Chairman, Department of Economics Graduate Committee, and Director, Institute of International Trade and Development , he has supervised several undergraduate and post graduate students, among others.

Professor Ohale has published many articles in national and international journals as well as published books in his discipline. Also, he has presented many conference papers at national and international levels.

Professor Ohale is a life time member of Nigerian Economic Society (NES) and the Nigerian sociological society (NES). He is a priest and member of ECKANKAR church and is the Local Director of Etche ECKANKAR centre.

In brief, he is an erudite scholar, a father, a grandfather, a husband, a brother, a friend, a Politician, a mentor, and above all, a Priest.

Professor Owunari Abraham Georgewill
Vice-Chancellor