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'Guardian'

"WHOSE PEACE, AND WHICH STABILITY?"

BEING

THE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

OF

CHIEF GANI FAWEHINMI

ON THE CONFERMENT ON HIM

OF THE AWARD OF SENIOR ADVOCATE OF THE

NIGERIAN STUDENTS (SANS)

BY THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN STUDENTS' UNION

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With all the happenings in this country for 28 years and particularly in the last three years and three months, I have come to the clear conclusion that praying for 'their' Peace and Stability is to pray that the politically repressed, socially persecuted and economically suppressed masses of this country should continue to be in the suffocating shackles and humiliating manacles of the governing elites and the jetsam and floatsam of this wicked system.

I do not belong to the group of those Nigerians who now pray for peace and stability under the kind of government we have been having since 1960 and up to date. Why should I pray for the peace and stability of various governments.

- (1) That put the gear of our vehicle of progress into the reverse?
- (2) That legitimize corruption in all strata and in all facets, structures, machineries, institutions and all public platforms of our country?
- (3) That preach one thing and do another?
- (4) That take sadistic and Hitlerite pleasure in rigging traditional stools?

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- (5) That establish all sorts of spurious associations and assemblies like better life for rural women without the men, youth assemblies without the adults, and all sorts of superlative balderdash?
- (6) That stifle the dissent of the workers against a plummeting economy?
- (7) That squander our resources on worthless and totally unproductive projects specially designed for their personal aggrandisement?
- (8) That over-fill the detention camps in most of our prisons with leaders of workers, pressure groups and anti-government 'extremists' and journalists going about their duties?
- (9) That massacred our students in our institutions of higher learning?
- (10) That sell by way of privatisation and commercialisation our vital public institutions to foreigners and to some Nigerians who stole and are still stealing the people's money?
- (11) That trivialise our past, ridicule our present and corrode our future?
- (12) That pride themselves in blackmailing institutions of higher learning - or how else do you explain the recent theatrical display at the Yaba College of Technology just last week?

13. That stupidly put crooked and cooked profit of a few so called elites before the interests of the people it is supposed to serve?;
14. That stand accused for the extermination of one of the best journalists of our time - Dele Giwa?

WHAT DO WE PRAY FOR NOW?

I pray to God to stop our National rot and to usher in a New Nigeria as quickly as possible.

We need a government which is imbued with:

1. A set of visionary and revolutionary leaders ready to serve and not served;
2. Leaders who are honest with the people and dedicated to the solution of the people's problems and are hardworking in all facets of our national life;
3. Leaders with a clear-cut and masses-oriented socio-economic ideology, totally different from the stone-age capitalism now in vogue;
4. Leaders with a genuine programme for the abolition of poverty.

We want a nation where corruption and fraud will be ruthlessly and purposefully combated and eradicated from the public and private life of Nigeria.

We desire a government that will transform our economy from that of a developing nation to that of an advanced, highly developed, aggressive and assertive nation.

We demand a government free from frivolities, vanities, ostentations and intoxicated pride.

We yearn for a government that puts people before profit in all its economic, social and political decisions.

WHAT THEIR PEACE AND THEIR STABILITY HAVE PRODUCED FOR THIS COUNTRY

1. Their peace and stability have made millionaires and in some cases billionaires of leaders who before becoming leaders could hardly make both ends meet.
2. Their peace and stability have made leaders both in uniform, and in Babanriga and Agbada bank owners, ship owners, vast estate owners, Newspaper barons and Hotel proprietors.
3. Their peace and stability have allowed these leaders to train their children in the best institutions outside Nigeria in Europe and America, far, far away from the under-fed, starved, rickety, dilapidating and collapsing educational system in Nigeria.
4. Their peace and stability have produced the most heinous corruption in Nigeria.
5. Their peace and stability have allowed the friends of the leaders to be so 'suffused in wealth' that they find it so easy to donate millions to the building of mosques and churches and to expend millions on chieftaincy celebrations.
6. Their peace and stability now ensure that only 10% of all graduates produced from our Universities earn a livelihood and only 15% of the employable able-bodied Nigerians are employed.

7. Their peace and stability allow a whole nation of over 100 million people to go through their so-called representatives cap in hand to Europe, to the Paris club, German club, London club and to America, to the Washington club, begging for ₦2.5 billion as loans when many of those who have governed this country have more than that amount stashed away in spurious company names and 'fronts' in overseas banks and vaults.

8. Their peace and stability have produced bus drivers with M.A., M.Sc. degrees in Lagos State whilst many West Africa School Certificate holders sit over the formulation of our policies in the most sensitive institutions in our society.

9. Their peace and stability have removed all the differences between a civilian regime and a military regime in all facets of governmental activities to the extent that the common people of this country have now come to the conclusion that a military regime as at today is a civilian regime in military uniform and that we have never really had a military rule in this country.

10. Their peace and stability have made the lives of the generality of the people miserable, brutish, short, hypertensive, distorted disgusted, frustrating, diabolical, unsafe, hopeless and mindlessly sheepish.

11. So many young boys have gone mad after roaming the streets for jobs that are not obtainable and so many able-bodied men with wives and children and extended family have committed suicide consequent upon their retrenchment and closure of several factories.

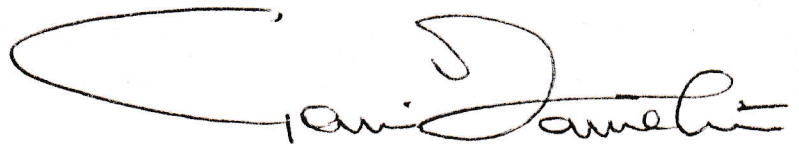
12. Their peace and stability have destroyed all the people's democratic institutions for the ventilation of their grievances against bad governance and for the realisation of their hopes and aspirations - NLC has been disbanded, ASUU has been proscribed, NANS has been destabilised whilst their Island club, Metropolitan club, some pepper soup joints (Military Officers' Messes, Police Officers' Messes) and Employers' Consultative Body are allowed to hold sway and hold the people to ransom and grind their faces in poverty.

I now ask you Ladies and Gentlemen - why should any progressive radical who is not a member of the political, social and economic group of oppressors pray for "their" Peace and Stability?

I do not need their peace and stability and I do not pray for their peace and stability.

CONCLUSION - THE REAL PEACE AND STABILITY

For twenty-eight agonising years, we have had the false peace and stability of all sorts of oppressing Governments. Now let us have the true, just and everlasting peace and stability of the oppressed people i.e. the masses.



CHIEF GANI FAWEHINMI

19TH NOVEMBER, 1988