

# Trajectory of neo-fascism

By Edwin Madunagu

leftist, set up to draft a White paper on the report. *Newswatch* magazine closed down for prematurely publishing the Report (April); Political Bureau's report submitted to government (March); White paper on the Political Bureau's Report published. In it the government rejected the core of the report, including the recommendation for socialist transformation and the holding of a national referendum.

● The ban on 11 labour leaders including Imoudu, Goodluck and S.U. Bassey, lifted (May)

● Setting up of: MAMSER (Directorate for Mass Mobilisation), headed by Jerry Gana, a leftist; NEC (National Electoral Commission) headed by Professor Eme Awa, a leftist;

● State Appointments given to almost all the people who served on the Political Bureau.

● Appointment of the Transition to Civil Rule Tribunal with Justice Fred Anyaegbunam as chairman.

● The Transition Programme announced; handover date shifted from October 1990 to October 1992. 1988:

● The Delegates Conference of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) aborted, (Benin, February): Interest of the Nigerian state suspected.

● Government' take-over of NLC (March, 1988)

● Constituent Assembly set-up (inundated with state appointees and supporters) to deliberate on the conservative draft prepared by the CRC

● Proscription of ASUU (Academic Staff of Universities) (June) for going on strike.

● Attack on "extremists" and "radicals" initiated.

● Nation-wide worker-student riots against increases in the prices of petroleum products, brutally suppressed.

and leftists; October 1, 1990 indicated as the day power would be handed over to democratically elected government; Lifting of the ban imposed by the Buhari-Iidiagbon regime on the National Association for Nigerian Students (NANS) and Nigerian Medical Association (NMA).

● Execution of General Vasta and others (March): The trial panel was headed by General C.B. Ndiomu and the execution was announced by General Domkat Bali.

● Student-Worker uprising across the universities; Killing of four students of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria; proscription of NANS and de-affiliation of ASUU from the NLC (June); The Commission of Inquiry that investigated the crisis was headed by Justice Mustapha Akanbi.

● Inauguration of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and the Second Tier Exchange Market (SFEM), (July). SAP was introduced as a means of solving the nation's economic crisis but within the context of the economic system that was backward, imperialist-dominated and internally exploitative. SAP does not intend to reverse these three dominant features of the Nigerian economy.

● Removal of Navy Commodore Ebitu Ukiwe as Chief of General Staff and his replacement by Rear Admiral Augustus Aikhomu for *allegedly* insisting that he was the *Number Two* in the military government, (October).

● Some categories of former public officers and politicians banned from the transition politics.

1987:●

● Appointment of a 13-member National Question Implementation Panel headed by Professor J. E. Inikari.

● Report of the Political Bureau (March 1987); A 9-member panel headed by General Paul Omu and including Professor Ikenna Nzimiro, a

IN this instalment on the neo-fascist transformation of the Nigerian state we try to trace the political trajectory of this regime indicating the landmark events. In doing this, we are bound to come upon sensitive issues which some people would wish that we forget. But if we insist on recalling them it is not because we wish to re-open old wounds but because the present cannot be understood without our doing so.

1985

● The Coup (August 27) led by General Ibrahim Babangida; assumed the title of president and issued a proclamation on Human Rights; Repeal of Decree 4; Release of detained politicians and journalists.

● Indicative appointments: General Domkat Bali (Minister of Defence); Colonel John Shagaya (Minister of Internal Affairs); but Col Anthony Ukpo (Minister of Information); Prince Bola Ajibola (Minister of Justice).

● Dissolution of the Nigerian Security organisation (NSO) and the building of the State Security Service (SSS).

● National debates on IMF and Counter-Trade initiated by the government (September-December); The result was the popular rejection of the IMF loan; but this was later construed as public approval for the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

● Discovery of a coup plan said to have been inspired and coordinated by Major-General Mamma Vatsa, a member of the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC), and junior army officers.

● Announcement of the discovery was made by General Domkat Bali, and the press briefing was directed by Colonel Anthony Ukpo.

1986

● Inauguration of the National Political Debate under a 17-member Political Bureau dominated by liberals

● Formation of the National Guard stepped up.

1991:

● Creation of states and local government areas bringing their numbers in the country to 30 and 589 respectively (August).

● Arrest and detention of 13 former public officers and leading politicians for contravening the terms of the ban placed on them (November).

1992:

● Re-organisation of the transition time-table, putting the National Assembly elections before the presidential elections.

● SAP relief for workers and de-regulation of exchange rates (March).

● Country-wide riots against economic hardship, ethnic domination and the transition programme (May).

● A ban placed on regional political organisations, including the Middle-Belt Forum, Northern Elders' Forum and Council for Unity and Understanding (CUU) (May).

● Shifting of the end of the Transition from January 2, 1993 to August 27, 1993 and disqualification of presidential aspirants (November).

● Nigeria Labour Congress delegates' conference (Abuja, December 1-2); Interest of the state indicated.

● Inauguration of the National Assembly in Abuja (December 5). 1993:

● Dissolution of AFRC and its replacement by NSDC.

● Swearing-in of chairman and members of the Transition Council.

Indicative designations: General Sani Abacha (Defence); Abdulrahman Okene (Internal Affairs); but Clement Akpangbo (Justice); Comrade Uche Chukwumerije (Information).

● The Zango-Kataf trial and judgment.

● A new leadership elected for the NLC: The interest of the Nigerian state suspected (December). 1989:

● The AFRC dissolved, and another reconstituted, by the President (February).

● Professor Eme Awa removed as chairman of NEC and replaced by Professor Nwosu.

● NLC workshop on the Transition (Calabar, April 2-6); The interest of the state indicated.

● The ban on open political activities lifted, and simultaneously impossible conditions for registering political parties announced (May 5).

● Proclamation of Labour Party (Art Theatre, Lagos) (May 20): The interest of the state indicated.

● *Alternative to SAP* conference prevented from taking place in Lagos and its convener, Gani Fawehinmi, detained (June 17).

● The 13 political parties proscribed and the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) set up by the government (October 7).

● People's Bank set up with Tai Solarin as chairman, weeks after the veteran radical was humiliated by the state.

1990:

● Major changes, in the structure and composition of the Federal Government announced: General Bali's retirement from the Armed Forces and the Government, raising the National Question debate, Coup attempt followed by arrests and harassment in April.

● Trials and executions of coup plotters: Trial was presided over by General Ike Nwachukwu.

● The inauguration and First National Conventions of the SDP and NRC (Abuja, July): The interest of the state indicated.