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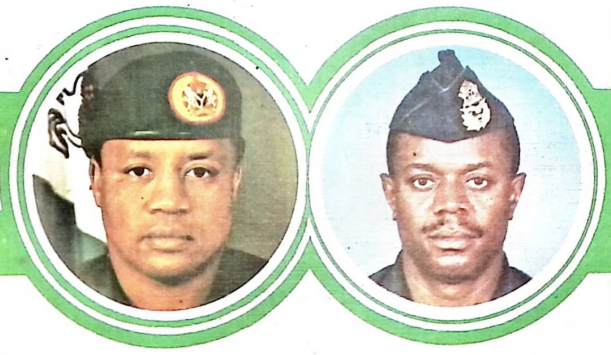


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AKWA IBOM STATE OF NIGERIA

MAJOR SPEECHES



A collection of speeches delivered during the State Visit
of General Ibrahim B. Babangida, CFR, fss, mni
to Akwa Ibom State.

April 23rd--26th, 1991



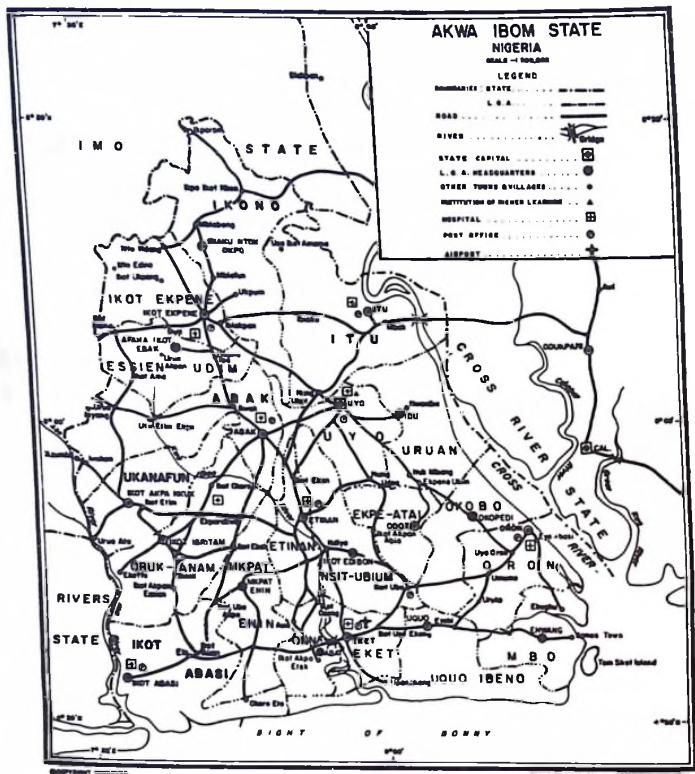
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MAJOR SPEECHES

A collection of speeches delivered
at different occasions during the official visit of
General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, CFR, fss, mni
to Akwa Ibom State

April 23rd – 26th, 1991

A Publication of the Ministry of Information and Culture, Uyo





GENERAL

IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA CFR fss mni

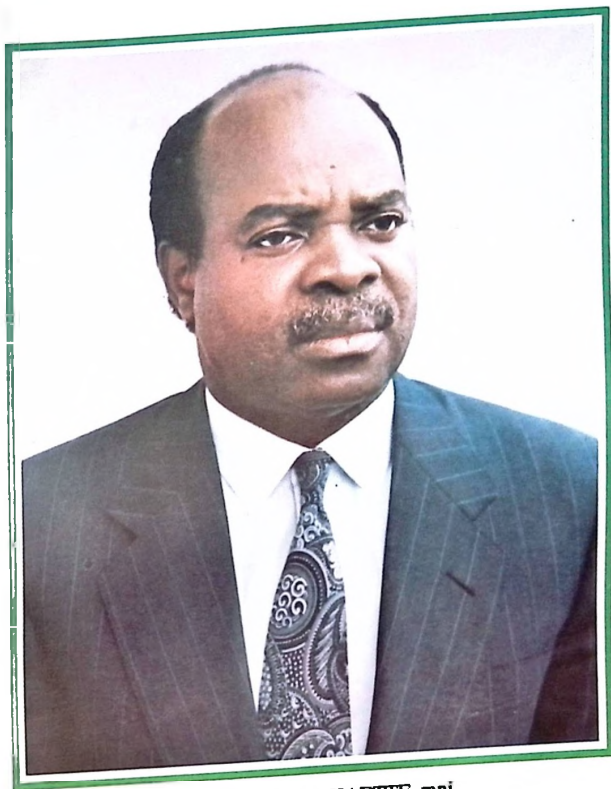
PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA





WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O. NKANGA, fss, psc(+)
MILITARY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE OF NIGERIA





OBONG UFOT J. EKAETTE, mni
Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria





DR JACKSON D. ETUK
Hon. Commissioner for Information & Culture



CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1
Courtesy call on the Paramount Ruler of Uyo	3-6
Commissioning of Akwa Ibom Hall, Cutting of tape to open Ring Road 1 and Inspection of the State Secretariat	7-17
Commissioning of AKBC-TV - Ntak Inyang:	
(i) Address	18-20
(ii) Vote of Thanks	21-22
Civic Reception at Uyo Sports Stadium	23-28
Response to the Address at Civic Reception by Mr President	29-40
Commissioning of General Hospital, Ibiaku Ntok Okpo, Ikono	41-44
Inspection of Federal Government College, Ikot Ekpene ..	45-47
Inspection of Sunshine Battery Factory, Essien Udim ..	48-50
Commissioning of Abak Water-side Bridge	51-52
Inspection of Peacock Paint Factory, Ikot Ekan, Etinan ..	53-56
Inspection of College of Education, Afaha Nsit	57-59
Commissioning of Nsit Ubium Local Government Secretariat, Ikot Edibon	60-61
Commissioning of Rural Electrification Project at Odot, Ekpe Atai	62-64
Command Performance	65-68
(i) Opening Remarks	
(ii) Vote of Thanks	
Laying of Foundation Stone of Specialist Hospital, Uyo ..	69-72

Inspection of Qua Steel Products, Eket	..	..	..	73—76
Laying of Foundation Stone of State House of Assembly, Uyo	..	..	..	77—79
State Banquet:				
(i) Address by the Military Governor	..	..	..	80—86
(ii) Response to the Address at State Banquet by Mr President	..	..	..	87—98
(iii) Vote of Thanks by the Deputy Governor	..	..	..	99—101
Summary of Mr President's Official Engagements during the visit.	..	..	..	102—103

INTRODUCTION

The joy and splendour which greeted the creation of Akwa Ibom State on 23rd September, 1987 reached a crescendo on 23rd April, 1991 when the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim B. Babangida paid his first official visit to the State.

For six decades the people of this part of Nigeria yearned and made series of agitations and representations for the creation of their own separate political entity. The creation of Akwa Ibom State three and a half years ago was, therefore, a fulfilment of this life-long dream and aspirations of the people.

When, on 23rd April, 1991, the man and creator of this unique political domain set his foot on the Land of Promise, Akwa Ibom leaped for joy and jubilation.

General Ibrahim Babangida came, saw and appraised the developmental efforts of the young State.

This collection of speeches is an attempt to bring into focus major policy decisions and pronouncements by Mr President as they affect Akwa Ibom State and its people.

It is our fervent hope that the reading public will find this historical document useful.



AN ADDRESS
OF WELCOME PRESENTED BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
OBONG MICHAEL UDO EKA, THE NSOBOM OF UYO, TO
GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni
THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED
FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA ON THE
OCCASION OF HIS COURTESY CALL ON THE NSOBOM
OF UYO THIS 23rd DAY OF APRIL, 1991

Your Excellency Mr President,

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Honourable Ministers,

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of the State Executive Council,

The Chairmen and Councillors of Uyo, Uruan and
Ekpe Atai Local Government Councils,

Members of Nsobom's Council,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Members of the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, to Akwa Ibom State. I believe that my greetings sent through members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council and Honourable Ministers who had visited this State had been delivered to you. I now want to thank you most sincerely, in person, for your historic act of creating Akwa Ibom State — the State we had yearned for, but were ignored by successive administrations of this Federation. Thank you, Mr President. We now have a sense of belonging

which has generated untinted loyalty to you and your administration by the men and women of this State.

I also want to thank you for creating more Local Government Areas in the Federation. This bold act is the manifestation of your intention to bring development to the grass-roots. These newly created Local Government Councils are bound, through their activities of governance, to block the perennial emigration of the youths from the rural areas to the over congested urban centres in search of non existing jobs. The siting of the Aluminium Smelting Plant in this State must also be acknowledged. There is no doubt that when this multi-billion naira project is completed, the State which has a weak economic base will become stronger. We are grateful. Nevertheless our people should be given the chance to enjoy the benefits of your siting the project in this State. As for the funding of the project, I hope that your administration will fund it in such a way that the project will be completed on schedule.

Mr President, the one major problem which has starved Akwa Ibom State of revenue is the off-shore on-shore oil dichotomy. You had in one of your addresses stated that your administration would abolish the oil dichotomy. This promise has not been effected, and we continue to lose the much needed revenue for the development of this 'young baby' of yours — Akwa Ibom State. I most sincerely appeal to you to help the growth of this State by ensuring that a decree is promulgated abolishing the off-shore on-shore oil dichotomy before your administration hands over the baton of power to the civilians.

It is common knowledge that this part of the Federation had been suffering from serious neglect for a long time. Your administration has tried to correct this imbalance through State creation. Yet the Federal presence has not been felt in this State. Many Federal Establishments found in other States of the Federation are not here, examples are: a Federal University, a Federal Polytechnic, the Central Bank, the Nigerian Television Authority, the Federal Secretariat, Dual Carriage Express Roads, nor a Railway Line to link the State with its brother States of the Federation. Please ensure that these infrastructures are also built here in Akwa Ibom

State. This would go a long way into making Akwa Ibom State the model State that we were promised.

Before concluding, I would also like to mention the continuous harassment, torture and murder of our fishermen by Cameroun Gendarmes within our territorial waters. This unpleasant event has continued for many years now. I appeal to you as Commander-in-Chief of our Armed Forces, which is the strongest in Black Africa, to make the presence of our Navy felt along this boarder so that our fishermen can fish in our water without fear of molestation or death.

Finally, Your Excellency, I believe that you have come to Akwa Ibom State to see things for yourself. Comparing Akwa Ibom State to other States of the Federation will reveal how backward the young State is. Please help 'your baby' to grow and become strong. You know how to do this.

On behalf of the people of Uyo, I pledge our full loyalty to your administration. May God guide and protect you throughout your stay in the State. May He take you and your entourage safely back home and may He always watch over you and your family. Please accept this token from us which we hope will always remind you of the people of Uyo.



General Ibrahim Babangida is received by Nsobom M. U. Eka into his palace.

**AN ADDRESS
PRESENTED BY THE MILITARY GOVERNOR
WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O. NKANGA, fss, psc (+)
ON THE OCCASION OF:—**

- (a) COMMISSIONING OF AKWA IBOM HALL
- (b) COMMISSIONING OF RING ROAD I
- (c) COMMISSIONING OF RING ROAD ROUND-ABOUT
- (d) INSPECTION OF STATE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX

**BY THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED
FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni
ON TUESDAY 23rd APRIL, 1991**

**The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed
Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Honourable Ministers,

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

My Lord, the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of the State Executive Council,

Secretary to the Akwa Ibom State Government,

Directors-General,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, I have the singular pleasure and honour to welcome the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim B. Babangida, CFR, fss, mni, Members of the AFRC, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Citizens of Nigeria and Traditional Fathers, the good people of Akwa Ibom State, our friends and well-wishers, to this epoch making occasion. Within the next one hour we will be witnessing the commissioning of Akwa Ibom Hall, Ring Road I, Ring Road Roundabout and inspection of work at the State Secretariat Project. These projects are very significant to the people of this State and it is elating that we have Mr President in our midst today.

AKWA IBOM HALL

We are assembled here to witness the commissioning of Akwa Ibom Hall. The ceremony is as historic as it is symbolic. The edifice, which Mr President is about to commission, symbolizes the singleness of heart and purpose of the people of Akwa Ibom State. Historically, the structure is a permanent reminder of the spontaneous acceptance and joy, with which the people of Akwa Ibom State received the news of their being given their own identity in the political constellation of the Nigerian nation. I am here referring to the creation of Akwa Ibom State. It is also historic that our very most beloved President who, about three and a half years ago, brought into materialization the political yearnings of the people of Akwa Ibom, and created Akwa Ibom State, is this moment on Akwa Ibom soil, to commission and declare open this symbolic edifice. I am, indeed, happy to welcome Mr President to this ceremony, on behalf of the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State.

Permit me, Mr President, Sir, to give a brief background as to the origin of Akwa Ibom Hall. On excision of what was known as the mainland part of the former Cross River State from the latter, and creation of same into Akwa Ibom State on September 23, 1987, the people of this geographical entity were completely overwhelmed with joy. Not only were the people happy that their political yearnings, which had spanned several decades, had, at last, been fulfilled, they were also happy that they had been given an opportunity to take their socio-economic destiny, within the context of the Nigerian nation, in their own hands.

Following the announcement of the creation of this State, many indigenes of the State surrendered their houses, rent-free, for use as Government offices, while some donated money to enable the young State take off. At the end of the day, Government took stock and realized that about ₦2 million, in cash, had come into its kitty, through unsolicited individual donations. Two million naira was quite a handsome amount of money for the young State to have channelled into solving some of its numerous teething administrative problems.

Government, however, preferred to utilize the money for a project that would epitomize the joy, enthusiasm, interest, and spontaneous public spiritedness of the people of Akwa Ibom State. To guide its decision, an Executive Council Committee was set up on 14th November, 1988 to recommend suitable projects that could benefit from the fund. The Committee started deliberations and narrowed the options for consideration to the following:

- (i) Recreation Centre/Park
- (ii) A Library
- (iii) Model Primary School, and
- (iv) A Civic Hall.

After some brainstorming sessions, it finally recommended that it would be best to use the fund to put up a People's Hall to be named "Akwa Ibom Hall". In making the recommendation, the Committee took into consideration the need for relevance and accessibility of the Hall to all citizens of the State. It was considered that the Hall could be hired out, for social events, to individuals, groups and Government. Thought was also given to the modalities of implementation of the project. Citizens of the State, from relevant professions, were to carry out all aspects of the project, from the design stage to actual construction of the project. The Committee submitted its Report on 17th November, 1988.

After exhaustive consideration of the merits and demerits of the Committee's proposals the State Executive Council decided that an all-purpose Hall to be named "Akwa Ibom Hall" and to be dedicated to the creation

of the State, be built. It was agreed that the building should be very imposing, ethical and artistically designed and be located at a strategic position at Uyo, the State Capital. Government also decided to augment the people's donation by ₦3 million, making the total sum of ₦5 million available for the project.

In accordance with Council decision, five indigenous Architects, namely:

- (i) Intellect Associates
- (ii) Mesan Associates
- (iii) Design Projects Nigeria
- (iv) PACS Associates, and
- (v) Inter Design Partnership

were invited to submit sketches within the ambit of the target cost of ₦5 million and based on design briefs produced by the State Ministry of Lands and Housing, Four of the invitees responded, and in each case the design scope exceeded the ₦5 million available. After a careful consideration of the presentations by the invited Architects, the design by PACS Associates was the most preferred, because of its concept (Akwa Ibom State on the wheels of progress) and its reliance on natural ventilation. Accordingly, PACS Associates was selected to produce the design for Akwa Ibom Hall, with a capacity to seat 2,000 persons.

Contract for the construction of the building was awarded in October 1989 to Messrs John Andy and Sons Limited (an Akwa Ibom indigenous Contractor) at the cost of ₦6.6 million. The contractor was expected to deliver the job within eight months of signing of the Contract Agreement. Due to logistics problems, this deadline could not be achieved. It has, however, turned out to be a pleasant delay as it has afforded the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State the honour and opportunity to have Mr President, personally, commission this visible symbol of the patriotic contributions of the citizens of Akwa Ibom State.

Mr President, Sir, we are indeed very happy to welcome you to this historic occasion. Without you, it is doubtful, if this geographical entity,

known as Akwa Ibom State, might have been. And, of course, without Akwa Ibom State, Akwa Ibom Hall would not have been. I, on behalf of the Government and the people of Akwa Ibom State, therefore, extend our heart-felt appreciation to you for bringing this State into existence. We, once again, thank you for that well thought-out decision to create Akwa Ibom State and for all of the tremendous support you have given to this young State, to ensure that it does not too far lag behind in the political and socio-economic programmes of this administration.

I also want to use this occasion to thank my Deputy Governor, the Commissioner for Lands and Housing and all others, who have worked relentlessly, to ensure the completion of this project.

My commendation goes also to the Project Consultant, PACS Associates, and the Contractors, for their commitment to deliver this project according to specification. It is a complex design. But I assure you that they have done us proud. I must also not forget to thank the people of Aka Offot, on whose land this edifice stands. I sincerely thank the people of this State, particularly the donors of the funds, with which this project was started. No doubt, the cost of the structure you see here far exceeds the ₦2 million donation by the people. However, it is important to note that, without that initial act of unsolicited donations the idea of this Hall might not have come to mind.

RING ROAD PROJECT

When the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, announced the creation of Akwa Ibom State, Uyo was suddenly transformed from a Local Government Headquarters to a State Capital. That "quantum leap" in status brought, in its wake, serious planning problems within the State Capital. To avoid the siting of projects like Akwa Ibom Hall, Secretariat Complex, Specialist Hospital, etc. on an *ad hoc* basis, Government, in 1988, Commissioned a firm of Consultants, Messrs Inter-Design Partnership, to produce a Masterplan for the Capital City. Based on the Consultant's recommendations, a Capital City with a radius of 10 km was created.

The Masterplan of Uyo Capital City is based on a series of dual-carriage ring roads covering a total of over 100 km. In 1989, Government approved the opening of the right of way for the first 28 km of the ring roads. As a consequence of this exercise, more than 150 residential buildings were demolished and compensations of over ₦7 million was paid to the affected persons.

RING ROAD I, PHASE I

After assumption of duty in August 1990, I ordered the construction of the first 2.5 km of the innermost ring road. My choice was based on the fact that it is potentially the most important road in the Capital City. It opens the way to important State facilities like Akwa Ibom Hall, Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation Headquarters, Akwa Ibom Newspapers Company Limited Offices, the Better Life Mansion, the House of Assembly Complex, the State Secretariat Complex, the Judiciary Headquarters, among others. It is also the dividing line between OLD UYO and NEW UYO.

Built at a cost of ₦20 million (complete with Street lights), this first phase of Ring Road I ushers into this City, the hope for a greater tomorrow. Anybody, having something to do with Government in Uyo, will not be able to avoid it. It also provides a bye-pass for all visitors to Akwa Ibom State who have nothing to do with the old part of the City.

This phase of the Ring Road was constructed by Reynolds Construction Company Limited (RCC) and I want to thank them, the Commissioner for Works and Transport and his Engineers, for a job well done.

The Government and people of this State have decided that this Ring Road I will, henceforth, be called IBRAHIM BABANGIDA AVENUE. Just as this Road separates the "old" from the "new", we want to say that President Babangida changed the fortunes of the people of this State. Future generations cannot ignore this fact. Visitors will see it and ask what happened. Then shall generations of Akwa Ibomites, yet unborn, say: our forefathers used to go to Enugu and then to Calabar before Ibrahim Babangida gave us this resting place. That is why we cannot and must not forget him.

Mr President, Sir, it will shortly be my pleasure to invite you to commission IBRAHIM BABANGIDA AVENUE.

THE ROUNDABOUT

At the end of the first phase of IBRAHIM BABANGIDA AVENUE is a roundabout. With a diameter of 60 metres, it is easily the largest we have got and are likely to get in this City. It is also the most strategically located — right there in front of the State Secretariat Complex. It is also the link to all other parts of the State, using the network of ring and arterial roads.

When in November 1990, Mr President visited this State, the Roundabout was not there. Today, it stands out with majesty and a lot of meaning. At the centre of it is a 13 metre structure. Those with artistic eyes will observe, that it is, basically, an AK sign with a human being climbing towards the summit. The State Executive Council has christened the structure "THE AKWA IBOMITE". The Government and people of this State have also directed that this Roundabout be named the BABANGIDA CIRCLE. Thus the AKWA IBOMITE stands at the centre of BABANGIDA CIRCLE. This arrangement is susceptible to many interpretations. But we will only bother you with these two:

- (i) that the Akwa Ibomite is a creation of Ibrahim Babangida;
- (ii) the fact that the Circle surrounds the Akwa Ibomite is a reflection of our confidence in the support and protection President Babangida will always give this State.

Mr President, Sir, the Akwa Ibomite was designed by Architect Ibanga Ema, and constructed by Engineer Nsikanabasi Ibanga, both indigenes of Akwa Ibom State. The associated external works were executed by Reynolds Construction Company Limited (RCC). I am, personally, grateful to the Architects and Contractors for a job well done. I want also to congratulate the Ministries of Lands and Housing and Works and Transport for their dedication on this project. In a few minutes, it will be my great privilege and pleasure to invite Mr President to commission the BABANGIDA CIRCLE.

THE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX

When in August 1990, Mr President appointed and assigned me to duty in this State, one area that attracted my attention was the lack of accommodation for residential and other purposes. During my tour of Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments, I noticed that most of the offices were accommodated in rented quarters, which had, hitherto, been used as residential accommodation. To alleviate the suffering of the people and make for easier administration of the State, I directed the Ministry of Lands and Housing to complete arrangements for the construction of the first phase of the State Secretariat Complex.

Contracts for ten blocks of the Complex were awarded at the end of October 1990 to two expatriate firms and six indigenous contractors. Six months after the commencement of work on the project, it is my pleasure to inform Mr President, that most of the blocks are being roofed now. We are confident that all the blocks will be ready for occupation, within the next few months.

When completed, the ten blocks will provide accommodation for most of the Departments of our Ministries. It will also release to the public hundreds of residential flats, thus helping to reduce accommodation problems in the State Capital. Let me, at this juncture, on behalf of the people of this State, inform Your Excellency that you will be invited to commission this first phase of the Complex within the next few months.

The contractors on the project have introduced a new equation into the history of this State. Their welcome banner has the equation;

$$IBB + SEP. 23 = AK$$

Where IBB = His Excellency, the President,
Commander-in-Chief of the Armed
Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, CFR, fss, mni;

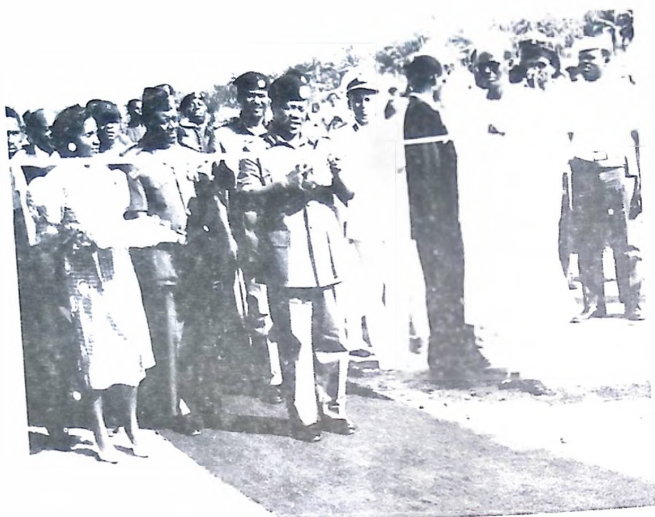
SEP. 23 = The date this State was created in 1987;

AK = The one and only Akwa Ibom State.

Mr President, Sir, that equation says it all. In some minutes to come, it will be my pleasure to conduct Your Excellency round the Secretariat Construction Site.

Your Excellency, Sir, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I have been speaking for sometime now. On this 23rd day of April 1991, it is my privilege to invite Mr President to proceed to commission the AKWA IBOM HALL, THE IBRAHIM BABANGIDA AVENUE, THE BABANGIDA CIRCLE and also inspect AKWA IBOM STATE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX on IBRAHIM BABANGIDA AVENUE.

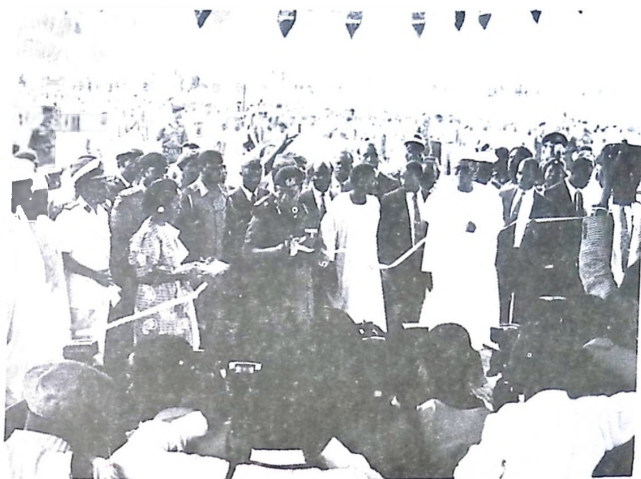
Thank you, Sir.



President Babangida commissions Akwa Ibom Hall



Akwa Ibom Hall during the commissioning ceremony



General Ibrahim Babangida cuts the tape to open Ring Road I — renamed after him — Ibrahim Babangida Avenue



**The scene at the inspection of the Secretariat Buildings
by General Babangida**

AN ADDRESS PRESENTED BY THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE, WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT NKANGA TO THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA, GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS COMMISSIONING OF THE AKWA IBOM BROADCASTING CORPORATION - TELEVISION SERVICE ON 23rd APRIL, 1991

Mr President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, Service Chiefs and Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council (here present),

Honourable Ministers and Members of the Federal Executive Council (here present),

Military Governors and Members of the National Council of States (here present),

My Lord, the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,

Honourable Commissioners and Members of Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,

Your Royal Highnesses, the Paramount Rulers and Chiefs

Chief Executives of Federal and State Media Establishments,

My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of myself, the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State, I have the singular honour and privilege to welcome you - Mr President and your entourage to this important and historic occasion - the official commissioning of the Television Service of Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation.

It is no longer contestable that when properly applied, communication can work together with a nexus of other societal variables to facilitate social changes that include rural development. It is in

recognition of this important fact that at its inception, Akwa Ibom State Government took steps to urgently re-direct and re-activate its strategies and mechanism of communication for effective public enlightenment and mobilisation, services needed for its various developmental objectives. To this end, Akwa Ibom Government has embarked on a number of important projects to boost information delivery in the State. One of such projects is the Television Service of AKBC (Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation).

When the State was created on 23rd September, 1987, the people were wild with jubilation. Their expectations were high. The great task of State Government has been that of setting up a machinery of public information dissemination that would not only inform the people of the various activities of Government but that would also enlighten them on the various issues involved in matters of public concern. The machinery would also seek to mobilise the people towards self-reliance as well as to mirror the demands and support of the people to the Government to enable the latter establish and sustain good governance.

The year 1987 was spent largely in planning for the envisaged public information dissemination machinery. Contracts were awarded for the improvement of the AM Radio Station at Abak as well as establishment of an FM Radio Station at Ntak Inyang. In addition, we resuscitated the contract awarded to Messrs Kings Engineering Limited by the Government of the erstwhile Cross River State in 1984 for the establishment of a Television Station in Uyo.

At its inception, the State Government inherited a 1 Kilowatt Television Station in Uyo from the then Cross River Television Authority. Arising from the inadequacy of that Television Station, the entire project was reviewed by Government with a view to establishing a modern and powerful Television Station that would effectively cover all parts of the State and beyond. For this reason, instead of 10 KW transmitter we opted for 30 kilowatt transmitter for the Television Station now located

at Ntak Inyang, the venue where this ceremony is held. Test transmission for this Station started in August, 1989. The AKBC Television Station is received throughout Akwa Ibom State, in Cross River, Imo, Rivers States as well as Equatorial Guinea and parts of the Republic of Camerouns. Here at Ntak Inyang we have both the Television and the FM Radio transmitter house co-located. The FM antenna is hooked on to the 1000 metre TV mast as a cost saving measure.

Mr President, public information dissemination in a third world polity generally is crucial for rapid development. In a situation where the people look up to Government for all their needs, those engaged in public information must go beyond the stereotypes of the advanced economies to fashioning a machinery for information dissemination that accommodates not just the conventional pre-requisites but more importantly the peculiar needs of that political environment. This is where Akwa Ibom comes in. Akwa Ibom State is a very young State created three years ago. Because it is in a hurry to develop and catch up with older States of the Federation, we consider the Radio, the Television and other mass media as veritable weapons for the rapid transformation of our State and the nation. In our great task to inform, educate or entertain we uphold the truth and objectivity. The current transition to civil rule programme, the need for political education, socialisation and mobilisation of the masses makes it mandatory for government to improve on its information dissemination machinery. It was for these basic reasons that Akwa Ibom State Government decided to embark on this project.

Mr President Sir, we are greatly overwhelmed with joy to have such a great personality as you to commission our new broadcasting station.

Thank you Mr President for accepting to visit Akwa Ibom State and for commissioning the Ntak Inyang Transmitting Station.

God bless.

VOTE OF THANKS
BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR INFORMATION, DR JACKSON D. ETUK
AT THE COMMISSIONING OF THE AKBC TELEVISION
NTAK INYANG BY MR PRESIDENT — 23rd APRIL, 1991

The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council here present,
The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,
The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,
Members of the State Executive Council,
Our Royal fathers and Traditional Rulers,
My Lords Temporal and Spiritual,
Distinguished Invitees,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Words cannot adequately describe our feelings today in having in our midst the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and creator of Akwa Ibom State not only as a guest in Akwa Ibom but for graciously granting us the privilege of having him to commission the AKBC Television Service today. For this, we are immensely grateful to Mr President and say, "Etubom nyin, sosongo!"

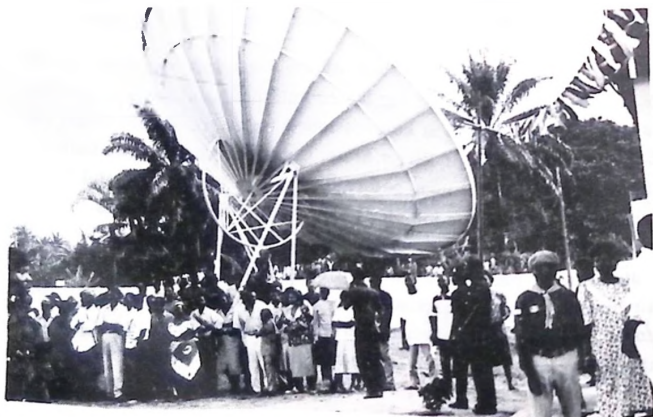
We are also grateful to members of the President's entourage; to the Military Governor of the State for his commitment and personal sacrifice in ensuring that this station is commissioned today. We cannot forget the present Military Governor of Rivers State, Col. Godwin Abbe who initiated this project and saw it through before he left. We are also grateful to all those who have directly or indirectly contributed to the progress of this Television project and to its successful commissioning. Among these, we will like to mention in particular, the contractor that handled the project — Kings Engineering Nigeria Limited. We are particularly grateful to the chairman of this company — Prince (Engr) Arthur Eze, whose personal commitment and support contributed to the success story we have today.

Once again, we thank our Chief Guest, the President of the Federal Republic. We wish you a happy stay in Akwa Ibom State and when you eventually return, we pray that God will grant you his journey mercies and take you safely back to Lagos.

Thank you and God bless.



President Babangida is being received by the Hon. Commissioner for Information and Culture, Dr Jackson D. Etuk for the commissioning ceremony of AKTV at Ntak Inyang



AKTV — Ntak Inyang during its commissioning by President Ibrahim Babangida

AN ADDRESS
PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF
THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, ON
HIS STATE VISIT TO AKWA IBOM STATE, BY THE MILITARY
GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE, WING COMMANDER
IDONGESIT O. NKANGA, fss, psc (+) FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE
GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF AKWA IBOM STATE AT A CIVIC
RECEPTION ON TUESDAY 23rd APRIL, 1991

Mr President,

I am particularly delighted at this opportunity to welcome you Mr President to Akwa Ibom — a State you created on that unique day — September 23, the autumnal equinox which is known scientifically to be the only day in any given year when the length of day and night are equal. Reflecting on the significance of September 23, the day of equality, and this memorable week of your august visit remind us of 1928, some 63 years ago when our forbears met in Uyo to launch their identity as a people and to reaffirm their commitment to the ideals of equality. The end of that meeting witnessed the inauguration of Ibibio Union the membership of which comprised the Annang, Ibibio and Oron people — all of whom today form the component units of Akwa Ibom State. It is a happy coincidence that this week of your visit to Akwa Ibom State is the anniversary week of the 63rd year of the foundation of that Union.

Its concern with the promotion of inter-ethnic understanding and co-operation on the basis of equality led to the proposal in 1948 that Nigeria should be organised based on States as the federating units. It is a historical fact that the Ibibio State Union predates the formation of all ethnic organisations in Nigeria. To that extent, it is not an overstatement that the birth of social movements that eventually led to the decolonization of Nigeria is traceable to the foresight of the founding fathers of that Union.

Permit me Mr President to remember here most solemnly, men of vision of blessed memory, men like Chief Nyong Essien of Uyo, Chief Sampson Udo Etuk of Etinan, Chief Ibanga Udo Akpabio of Ikot Ekpene, Chief John Ama and Chief John Orok all of Eket and Chief John Esin of Oron, Chief Robert Umo Inyang, Chief John Ito and Chief Ekukinam Bassey all of Ikot Ekpene. By the special grace of God, some of the pioneers are still alive; they include Obong Sampson Udo Idiong of Ukanafun, Obong E. A. Arthur of Abak and Sir Udo Udoma, CFR, of Ikot Abasi.

I have taken your time, Mr President to make this brief historical survey of the role of our people in the search for equal treatment of equals within the Nigerian family not because I want to celebrate or romanticise ethnic solidarity in any of its primitive manifestations, but to drive home the often forgotten point in Nigeria that claims to ethnic exclusiveness can last only when it is used as a pragmatic instrument to foster inter-group understanding, unity and goodwill. We regard the creation of States as a memorable and historic legacy of our people and indeed all true Nigerians as it represents important milestones in the continuing advancement of our people towards freedom and self-realization. It is, however, a paradox of history that a people who first introduced the idea of 'State' into the grammar of Nigerian politics were unable to have one twenty years after the first state creation exercise. This is why we are most thankful to you Mr President for making the dreams of our people, dreams that have almost, after more than half a century, turned into a nightmare, a reality. For us and our posterity, the creation of Akwa Ibom State has meant the beginning of contemporary history, a rebirth.

Mr President, you will now appreciate the basis of our joy in your visit, the basis of our hope in your continuing care for a baby that you very skilfully delivered. Permit me, therefore, to say, Sir, that on behalf of our forbears of blessed memory, who lit the torch that we follow today, on behalf of those alive, and on behalf of ourselves and the generations yet to come, we heartily welcome you to Akwa Ibom State — the Land of Promise.

Mr President, Sir, you are aware that before the creation of Akwa Ibom State in 1987, Uyo was little more than an outgrown village. With the pioneering efforts of my two predecessors, much face-lift has been

effected particularly in the area of roads, water and housing. I laid the foundation stone of the Secretariat complex some four months ago and I am happy to report that the work will be completed and commissioned this year. We have provided an impressive network of roads here in Uyo; principal feeder roads in the local government areas are being constructed.

Our people have, for the first time in their history, felt the positive impact of government in most rural areas. Not long ago, this State benefited from the Federal Government's decision to create more local government areas. This has brought development to many rural areas in the State. We thank Mr President for these singular acts of bringing government nearer to our people.

Naturally one would not expect that the teething problems facing the State should be solved after only three years of State Administration. These problems have, however, acquired crisis dimension as a result of the on-going transition programme and our lean financial resources. For instance, we must have a House of Assembly, a Secretariat, adequate power supply, housing to ease congestion in the State, and a fairly good transportation network. If the demand for the basic infrastructure was not cumulative, it would have been possible to arrange the projects in order of priority. As of now, every problem needs priority attention. We will not saddle you Mr President with a list of such projects but permit me to identify a few.

TRANSPORTATION

The State has no good access to it either by road, rail, water or by air. The link with Imo State, for example, is through a narrow road designed 50 years ago. The establishment of the Aluminium Smelter Plant at Ikot Abasi and the proposed OSSO project in Eket-Uquo Ibena area, call for the expansion of the Aba-Oron road to a dual carriage status. Along with this, Sir, is the need to complete the East-West coastal road with the bridge over the Imo River not only to provide an outlet to a railway terminus at Port Harcourt for easy railway transportation, but as a means of reducing traffic and therefore accident along the Aba-Oron road. The two access roads to the Smelter Plant: Eket-Ikot Abasi and Ekparakwa-Ikot Abasi

roads require complete reconstruction to meet the demands of heavy traffic to the Plant.

There is a Mobil Air Strip at Eket which provides limited facilities for their small aircraft. We appeal to the President to consider the necessity for the Federal Government to develop the airport. The strategic importance of the airport in the area cannot be over-emphasized given its nearness and exposure to the Atlantic.

EDUCATION

In the field of Education the State has recently opened a Collège of Education. With the shared State-owned University, this forms the only tertiary institution in Akwa Ibom State. It is this reality that makes it rather inexplicable the classification of Akwa Ibom State as an educationally advantaged State, a status which was awarded us when the only higher institution in the State was a shared University. The State feels a sharp need for a higher institution of technology, the need of which can be satisfied by a Federal University of Technology to complement the two State Institutions. We have recently launched a State Education Trust Fund for the promotion of Education generally.

ON-SHORE OFF-SHORE OIL DICHOTOMY

The basis of the wealth of Akwa Ibom people has always been oil. During the heydays of palm oil trade, we contributed immensely to the development of international trade and therefore to the wealth of our dear country. With the discovery of petroleum products in our territory, we have the opportunity again not only to contribute to the overall wealth of the nation, but also the opportunity for our people to benefit from that natural endowment. Unfortunately, Akwa Ibom State, like other off-shore oil producing territories, has marginally benefitted from such blessings as a result of the policy on oil revenue sharing. Again, it is on record, Mr President, that your administration is the one that abolished this policy. We thank Your Excellency for that statesmanly act, since the dichotomy essentially implied that the off-shore territories are part of Nigeria and not part of any State. Such an argument is strange and has always made the

Federal Government's equivocation on the issue a very baffling decision indeed. We are however, disturbed at the delay in promulgating the necessary decree to give effect to the abolition. We appeal to you to exercise your usual courage in ensuring the speedy implementation of your government's decision.

Along with the abolition of the dichotomy we strongly appeal for the establishment of an export-oriented petroleum refinery in the State. Mr President would recall that this refinery was slated for the then Cross River State as an oil producing State. Now that Akwa Ibom State which is the oil producing area of the former Cross River State is on its own, it is only logical that the refinery be located in Akwa Ibom State.

BOUNDARY PROBLEMS

Mr President, Sir, you have constantly called on all Nigerians to live in peace with one another, eschew ethnic bitterness and unhealthy rivalry. You are aware of some unhealthy relationships on some border areas of the States where there have been constant border conflicts. We plead that the Boundary Commission expedite action demarcating the correct boundaries in the border areas in order to re-assure the people of these areas of the Federal Military Government's concern for their peace, orderly development and welfare.

SPORTING FACILITIES

The grounds where we are receiving you today is all that we have as a sports ground. We have, however, selected a new site and designed a modern stadium for the State Capital. A Sports Appeal Fund was recently launched in the State. Even with much self-sacrifice by all and sundry in the State, including school children what we raised is grossly inadequate to start the project. We appeal to Mr President to graciously locate in Akwa Ibom State, one of the five new stadia planned by the Federal Military Government.

Finally, Mr President, we applaud your maturity and genuine interest to promote lasting peace and unity for our fatherland. These and more,

single you out as Nigeria's prime soldier and statesman. We love you. We pledge our unalloyed loyalty and constant support to you and your Administration.

May the Good Lord grant you His travelling mercies all the way as you visit some of the Local Government Areas and a pleasant stay in this Land of Promise.

LONG LIVE AKWA IBOM STATE !

LONG LIVE THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA !!



**Governor Nkanga delivers his welcome address to
Mr President at the Civic Reception at Uyo Sports Stadium**

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF
THE ARMED FORCES, GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI
BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, AT THE CIVIC RECEPTION AT THE
UYO SPORTS STADIUM, ON TUESDAY 23rd APRIL, 1991 ON
THE OCCASION OF HIS STATE VISIT TO AKWA IBOM STATE**

**The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,
Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,
Honourable Ministers,
The Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,
Members of the State Executive Council,
Chairman of the Council of Chiefs,
Your Royal Highnesses, the Chiefs,
My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal,
Senior Citizens of Akwa Ibom State,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

INTROUDCTION

I wish to thank the entire populace of Akwa Ibom State for the very warm welcome accorded me and my entourage on this occasion of my visit to your State. Akwa Ibom State is indeed very close to my heart and I have kept in close touch with the State through the successive Military Governors who have, on a continuing basis, kept me informed of the wishes and expectations of the people of the State. May I, therefore, in a special way, acknowledge here with a high degree of satisfaction, the unflinching support and co-operation of the people of Akwa Ibom State for this Administration.

The sheer numbers, the enthusiasm, the joy of the people, which I

have already seen this morning are most exhilarating. I thank you very sincerely for this warm reception and show of solidarity with the Federal Military Government.

THE CREATION OF AKWA IBOM STATE

The creation of Akwa Ibom State was the realisation of your long-cherished dreams. The demand was genuine, consistent and lawfully pursued with zeal, patience and commitment. The positive nature of your demand for a State considerably assisted the Armed Forces Ruling Council to examine the request objectively and arrive at the historic decision to create the State on 23rd September, 1987. The level of development attained so far and the resulting improvement in the general well-being of the people have justified and vindicated our decision to create Akwa Ibom State. Those of you charged with the continuing responsibility to nurture this State to maturity, be you Military or Civilian, have a sacred duty to ensure that this is done purposefully and with dedication. I tremble to think of what would have happened if, after 60 years of vision, dream, and agitation, you still did not have a State of your own in the 1987 exercise!

That I should rate myself as one of you, should not come as a surprise. First, I have excellent associations with so many citizens of this State; Secondly, my profession as a soldier in the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, more than the members of any other professional group, provides me with a unique opportunity to get to know the territory of the nation and its various peoples in a wider and deeper sense. My relations with you people is that of immediate feeling which arose out of an appreciation of the grace; the very captivating and hospitable disposition, and the generally amiable and crucial nature at the root of the character of all the citizens that inhabit the different geographical and local areas of this State. Not surprisingly, I have over the years built up a formidably large base of associates from every conceivable walk, circumstance and station in life from among you. Such has been the depth and extent of these associations, that I have come to treat those involved with the same freedom and affection normally reserved for the kith and kin.

This visit is my second to Akwa Ibom. The first was on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the National Aluminium Smelting Company at Ikot Abasi when I travelled to the site by helicopter and then travelled from the site across this State by road up to the border. During that visit to Ikot Abasi, I was highly impressed by the degree to which Uyo had changed and expanded. I am even more impressed to note how far the State Government has been able to sustain the pace of implementation of the master plan for Uyo since then. Today, your capital stands out as one of the finest planned cities in this country and, indeed, in the West African region. Of course, with the coming of the State most of the component segments of Akwa Ibom are experiencing less dramatic but pronounced changes; particularly since the streamlining of the local government system as a means of spreading development and the climate of freedom to all parts of your State, in an even and regulated fashion. I shall be looking forward during this visit to seeing more evidence of the rapid advances you have made since 1987.

THE LAUDABLE ANTECEDENTS OF THE PEOPLE OF AKWA IBOM STATE

Indeed, observers of our national history and peoples would have no hesitation at all in saying that Akwa Ibom State can make the best of its creation. The compact size of your State, your large population, your traditional ingenuity, your dynamism, resilience, honesty and forthrightness, your high sense of justice, the lessons and inspiration of your history, the endowments of nature in men and materials in this area — all these and many others are the apparent conditions and attributes abundantly available to make Akwa Ibom State second to none.

You cannot afford to dishonour the memory of your forbears like Chief Sampson Etuk, Chief Nyong Essien, Chief E. O. Eyo, Chief Jackson Amah, Chief John Esin, Chief Ibanga Akpabio, Chief Robert Umoinyang, Chief John Ito. Nor can you afford to disappoint the Sampson Idiongs, the Udo Udomas, the Effiong Arthurs and others whom God has preserved to see the fulfilment of a long dream. You cannot afford to let down those heroic women who defied British Colonial gunfire to exhibit the stuff with which the Akwa Ibomite is made in the fight against injustice. Indeed, the

present day generation of Akwa Ibom State leaders and followers dare not declare that they are not the true heirs of those men and women who, in the most inauspicious times and circumstances, changed the cause of the history of the Nigerian nation. You have a duty, you have the ability, you have the materials to make a great success of this State for yourselves and for posterity.

You have, among you, many more earth-shaking Parliamentarians than the Nyong Essiens and Effiong Eyos of old. You have many more sagacious administrators than the N. U. Akpans of Eastern Nigeria Civil Service fame; there must still be more renowned Finance experts than the Clement Isongs of Central Bank repute and many more adroit diplomats than the Ekukinam Basseys of blessed memory. There must be many more legal luminaries in the pipeline than the celebrated former Chief Justice of Uganda and retired Justice of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, Sir Egbert Udo Udoma. My Dear Friends of Akwa Ibom State, God has blessed you with a galaxy of talented men and women in almost all fields of human endeavour. He has given you wealth in food, and in mineral resources, and other riches in the womb of your soil and in the depths of your waters. My conviction is that you will not allow anything at all to hinder you in the full mobilization of these endowments, to face and overcome the challenges of State building for the benefit of your State and of our great country. I wish to assure you that we will do our very best to enable you achieve your goals of development and progress.

SOME CAVEATS AND ADVICE

Even as I congratulate you all and feel rightly proud of the progress so far, I am aware that there are outstanding issues which still require some attention. The boundary disputes involving your State with Imo and Cross River States is the subject of a Committee set up by this Administration. While its report and recommendations are awaited, I think we should all remind ourselves that whenever the State boundary is eventually fixed, no one should feel in any sense that they have lost face or suffered defeat. In the first place, nothing but the most painstaking application of the principles of justice, fair-play and respect for evidence and the facts of history will guide the committee.

The Federal Military Government, no less than the committee, will examine the report and recommendations with the same sense of rectitude and with all due responsibility. Let me state, however, that it is time more mature counsel than the temptations of territorial aggrandisement should determine our attitudes to boundary issues.

Currently, a National Boundary Delimitation Committee is at work to examine all boundary disputes in such areas and communities that have border problems. Those affected should patiently await the decision of the Federal Government on these issues. It is necessary for all Nigerians to realise that boundary lines are merely administrative lines to show the limit between the administrative responsibility of one State and another; they are not meant to divide people or separate them from their kith and kin. Let it not be forgotten that we are still talking in the context of a single nation, in which the freedom of movement and of ownerships of property in all parts of the Federation is guaranteed to all individuals by law. Let us also not forget that, sooner rather than later in our history, developments will make irrelevant and redundant most of those issues which raise passion in some of our communities.

In this respect, you have by now probably begun to appreciate the reason why I chose to utilize the privilege of Kinsmen to speak freely.

The movement for the creation of this State predates all States creation movements. Indeed the entire question of new States in Nigeria began here even before the formal inauguration of the Ibibio State Union in 1928. At that time, indeed throughout the struggle for Akwa Ibom State and in the intervening years, this area was unanimously adjudged as comprising the land of the various peoples of the present Akwa Ibom State. Yours is the one State which has every reason and every factor inherent within it to make it succeed in cementing itself into a single indivisible entity.

State Governments, of course, will always need frameworks such as wards, districts and local government areas which make for rationality in distributing amenities and implementing programmes. However, for the ordinary person as for community leaders, for the State as a community

and most notably for the Federal Government and the nation at large, sight must always be fixed at the not so distant goal and horizon when all of us should feel as one. For we must never forget that mankind has never made progress through the elevation of primordial notions, or of identity into a religious precept. On the contrary, mankind has been able to grow into greatness only when he surrendered the chains that bound him and leapt free to glory. Akwa Ibom State blazed the trail for Nigeria through the great illustrious sons of 1928 whose private wisdom has led to the new Nigeria of the 1989 Constitution. It should not and does not lie beyond the wisdom of the successors to the men of 1928 to know that leadership that is true, dedicated and good is that which seeks to integrate — not to divide, to unite and motivate to higher activity and not pull apart and manipulate in a squabble for temporary and transient gains.

It is your duty to ensure that the great new social order and the brand new democracy does not find your State speaking with eight, six, three or two voices but one. Nigeria is big and vast, its public affairs are conducted at a very fast, aggressive and sophisticated pace; thus, if the divisiveness of dialectic differences persists among you up to the unfolding and full inauguration of the Third Republic, you may have cause to lament.

I have taken some time to speak along these lines mainly for the good of this State, but also because we should dispel any idea that the Presidency and the Armed Forces Ruling Council can have any interest other than the unity, peace and progress of your State.

THE TRANSITION PROGRAMME

Our commitment to the transition programme has been repeated again and again. Today, I wish only to reiterate my original observations when I announced the political programme and on the occasion of the inauguration of MAMSER. Its cardinal aim is to give our political fortunes as a nation a new lease of life through the inauguration of a new social order backed with unique experiments in social and political engineering. All the various programmes such as SAP which sought to rationalise and revitalise our economy; DFRRRI which went a long way towards inaugurating our rural

and sub-urban sectors; the Directorate for Employment and the Peoples Bank which expanded opportunity to all sectors of our population; and MAMSER which pursued greater enlightenment — all had an inherent bent towards serious re-orientation for greater and more assured results. The political programme, more than all others has had to adopt the learning approach. Let me emphasise that the ordinary citizen here, as elsewhere in Nigeria, is on the threshold of a new dawn. The new open ballot voting system which fits in well with the two parties, their mode of formation, their control and management, should cumulatively place greater freedom and opportunity in the path of the populace and thereby positively affect their future, as never before. At the appropriate time, you must make use of this opportunity.

AKWA IBOM STATE AS AN OIL PRODUCING STATE

Your State occupies an enviable position in the nation's economy as a major contributor to the national crude oil reserve and production. This must give the people of your State a sense of pride, and it accounts for the determination of this Administration to see that all the benefits accruable from crude oil exploitation are extended to Akwa Ibomites. For example, feasibility studies for an additional oil refinery in the country has been completed and Government is closely studying the final site of the refinery. The case for Akwa Ibom State as a site for this industry in view of its oil production status will be accorded adequate weighting.

AKWA IBOM AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

I have noted your various requests for certain Federal projects in the State, including financial assistance to enable you build necessary infrastructures such as the State Secretariat Complex, and House of Assembly, and to provide dependable power and water supply which are basic necessities of life. In fact, it is precisely the need to establish a sound infrastructure in this young State that necessitated the decision to start the numerous on-going Federal Capital Projects in the State, and I can assure you that Government will not be unmindful of your request for further assistance.

Suffice it to say that this Administration embraces the philosophy of

even development. Hence, it is our policy to see that all the component units of this nation are provided with necessary Federal projects in order to offer the people a sense of belonging. It was in keeping with this policy that the Federal Military Government constructed the MBO RIVER BRIDGE at a total contract sum of about ₦29 million and the ORON—EBUGHU ROAD at a cost of about ₦17 million. To further boost the transport sector in the State, this Administration embarked on the rehabilitation of roads such as the IKOT EKPENE—IKOT UMO ESSIEN ROAD, the IKOT UMO ESSIEN—ABA ROAD and an access road to the Federal Fishing Terminal in the State, to mention a few. All these projects have been duly completed and they have gone a long way to ease transportation difficulties as well as stimulate economic activities in the State.

Other significant projects being undertaken include the construction of the EKPARAKWA—IKOT UBO ROAD and the rehabilitation of the ORON—OKOPEDI ROAD as well as the Uyo Township roads. These are at various stages of completion.

Government is aware that for quite some time, erosion has been a major problem in this State. To arrest this menace, Government rehabilitated the erosion control works at ORON and awarded a contract for another erosion control works at MKPANG UTONG. These two and some others underway, are to complement the erosion control works commenced earlier on by the Federal Government.

Your appeal for the full restoration of postal and telephone facilities especially to old Local Government Areas and their extension to new Local Government Headquarters, has been fully noted. The Federal Government, in realisation of the problems being encountered in Akwa Ibom State with regard to telecommunication facilities, has embarked on a number of telecommunication projects in the State to redress this deficiency. In the case of ORON, for instance, the building and transmission projects are now 30% and 50% completed respectively and efforts are being made to ensure that the total completion is attained in good time. Similarly, the transmission equipment for the NWANIBA Exchange has been procured and the building to house the Exchange is 95% completed.

At present, a plan for the expansion of telecommunications services in the State, through the introduction of digital technology, is being drawn up. When implemented, it will cover the economically viable locations in the State as well as Local Government Headquarters not yet provided with telecommunication services.

In the health sector, this Administration is fully committed to the provision of a comprehensive health-care delivery system throughout the nation. Efforts in this respect are being directed to improving the health services of Akwa Ibom State at all levels; primary, secondary and tertiary. To this end, the Federal Military Government is pursuing with vigour the Primary Health Care Programme in the State. Grants have already been made available to those Local Government Areas in the State selected as Model Health Primary Care areas. With regard to Secondary Care, the sum of ₦25 million has been ear-marked for the rehabilitation and renovation of relevant facilities. This project will take off later in the year.

The establishment of the Food and Drug Administration and Control Inspectorate and Registration Offices in the State in 1990, underscored the importance the Federal Government attaches to the effective monitoring and control of foods and drugs use and services in the State. I am sure the State Government has found the services so offered most beneficial.

Agriculture will continue to receive special attention in our effort to diversify the economy. Akwa Ibom State is blessed with vast agricultural resources which the Federal Government would want to see fully harnessed, not only for the benefit of the State but also for the nation as a whole. This is why over the years, this Administration has been giving consistent support to the development of fisheries and communal forestry development projects in Akwa Ibom State. The objectives of these projects are essentially to significantly improve the economic productivity of the State as well as enhance the well-being of the producers — the fishermen and the farmers in the rural communities whose livelihood depends on small scale fishing and farming. This is better appreciated when it is recalled that you have over 30,000 hectares of oil palm plantation established with the aid of the Federal Department of Agriculture. This is apart from fisheries and timber

production which you have benefited and will continue to benefit from Federal assistance.

The development of our rural areas will continue to be accorded priority status by this Administration. There is no way the rural economy and populace can be mobilised without providing our rural areas with the relevant infrastructural facilities. This explains Government's anxiety to complete the rural electrification projects at EBUGHU, URUA AKPAN AND IDONG INIANG. These projects are largely township distribution net-works that will provide dependable power supply to a number of towns and villages.

In keeping with Government's commitment to the electrification of all Local Government Headquarters by 1992, efforts are being intensified to ensure that those Local Government Headquarters not yet electrified in the State are fully electrified within the life-span of this Administration. Proposals have also been made for improving power supply to UYO and environs and these are being considered with a view to implementing them as soon as possible. These proposals will involve electrical projects ranging from reconstructing all the 11 KV Primary distribution feeders, so as to increase their current carrying capacities, to constructing a 330 KV line and sub-stations in various locations in the State.

I have noted your concern for the speedy commencement of operations by the Currency Centre of the Central Bank in Akwa Ibom. The importance of the Central Bank in the enhancement of economic activities of any State cannot be over-emphasised, and for this reason Government will look into the issue to avoid any further delay.

Meanwhile, I wish to emphasise that, I am fully briefed on some of the key questions being raised for the consideration of the Federal Government by citizens of Akwa Ibom State. Many feel that we should recognise your status as the third largest oil producer State with the location of an oil related industry. We are also aware that Akwa Ibom feels the need for a tertiary institution to be established here by the Federal Government. We also have full awareness of the promotion of the idea of extending the railway line to this State. Though these have not been the subject of intense

pressure of any kind, we are aware of them because we have taken a keen interest in the progress of the newly created States, in addition to other considerations.

As far as the railway issue is concerned, I appreciate the logic and the need. However, any such decision must be based upon a proper reconsideration of the modernisation of the railway system to make it suitable for service in an industrialised Nigeria, dominated by iron and steel. If and when the Armed Forces Ruling Council reviews the question of the modernisation of the Railway System, an extension of the line to Akwa Ibom State shall form part of the package, to be considered for implementation.

As far as the two other questions are concerned, I shall hold discussions with your State Government and appropriate agencies of the Federal Government and before I bid you farewell, you shall hear the final decision of the Armed Forces Ruling Council. I have no reason to doubt at this stage that what you deserve you shall surely get.

EXHORTATION AND CONCLUSION

My dear great people of Akwa Ibom, my entourage and I are delighted to be here; we feel that we are home, away from home, and we look forward to an exciting visit full of evidence that Akwa Ibom has fully justified its creation.

We must appreciate, however, that peace is a pre-requisite for progress and an indispensable condition for the successful implementation of our political transition programmes. I therefore appeal to all communities in this State and, indeed, all Nigerians to co-exist in peace and concord.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I have endeavoured, in this response, to re-state our commitment to the people of Akwa Ibom State. Akwa Ibom State people are peace loving Nigerians, found in almost all corners of the Federation living and contributing to the progress of the nation. I urge them to continue to be good citizens of one Nigeria. On our part, we will continue to support this young State within the limits of available resources. On your part, I urge you to continue to make your State a model for other States to emulate.

I thank you most sincerely for this warm reception which will long be remembered by me. I thank you for your loyalty, steadfastness and enterprise and wish you and your State continued progress and development.

Long live Akwa Ibom State.

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I thank you all for your attention.



The Obom of Akwa Ibom — General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida after his initiation and installation at Uyo

AN ADDRESS

**BY WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O. NKANGA, fss, psc (+)
MILITARY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE, ON THE OCCASION
OF THE COMMISSIONING OF THE GENERAL HOSPITAL, IBIAKU
NTOK OKPO, IKONO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA BY GENERAL
IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, PRESIDENT
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA ON THURSDAY
24th APRIL, 1991**

**The President, Commander-in-Chief of the
Armed Forces of Nigeria,**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Service Commanders,

Military Governors,

**Honourable Ministers and Members of the National
Council of Ministers,**

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

**Honourable Commissioners and Members of Akwa
Ibom State Executive Council,**

Your Excellencies,

Chairman of Ikono Local Government Council,

Paramount Ruler of Ikono Local Government Area,

Traditional Rulers/Chiefs,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**On behalf of the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State, I
hereby welcome the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces**

of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim B. Babangida and members of his entourage to Ibiaku Ntok Okpo in Ikono Local Government Area. As you can see, this place is packed to full capacity by people drawn together by a feeling of love and gratitude which the people of the State nurse for you.

This Local Government Area was created when we were still part of the former Cross River State. Apart from being a rural community, it was, up till this moment, one of the Local Government Areas without a General Hospital. Recognising the strategic position of this Local Government Area as the gateway to our neighbouring Imo State, and because of the increase in population arising from the influx of people into it, the need for a General Hospital became imperative.

Consequently, contract for the first phase of the project was awarded by the former Cross River State Government in 1980 at a contract sum of ₦909,327.90. Over the years, the initial contract price had to be reviewed to keep pace with inflation and the resultant high cost of building materials. Eventually, when the main building of the hospital complex was finally completed in 1989, the final contract value stood at ₦2,243,166.87. It is pertinent to mention that of the total contract value of ₦31,033,941.37 for the entire complex, only about ₦1,000,000.00 was actually put in by the former Cross River State Government, while the remaining, ₦30,033,941.37, representing 97%, was paid by the Government of Akwa Ibom State.

The hospital is sited at the headquarters of Ikono Local Government Area to provide medical services, not only to the population of Akwa Ibom State, but also to the people of neighbouring Imo State. Again, as a secondary health care institution, this hospital will also handle referrals from the surrounding Primary Health Care facilities which constitute the feeder system for the hospital. The State is proud of this edifice which, apart from portraying its princely architectural masterpiece, is also indicative of the high priority which the State and Federal Governments attach to health care services.

This hospital complex, is about the best equipped secondary health care facility in the State. The State Government has invested quite substantially in the project because of our belief that only well organised health care units at the primary and other levels would guarantee the success of health-for-all by the year 2000 A.D. and beyond. The standard of what we are witnessing here today attests to our own level of commitment and support for health programmes and services.

May I please use this occasion to express deep appreciation to the Federal Government for its own financial support, a significant portion of which was committed to this project. This apart, the physical presence of Mr President, to commission this project, is another testimony to the support, which we have been receiving from him personally, and the Federal Military Government. May I, on behalf of the State Government and the good people of Akwa Ibom State, say thank you, Sir!

We are also thankful to the former Military Governors of the State, who contributed to the successful completion of the project; to the people of Ikono for donating land for the project; to the contractors and officials for contributing, in one way or the other, towards the success of this project.

Mr President, Sir, once again, I welcome you and your entourage to this community and thank you for kindly accepting to commission this project. May God guide your efforts and bless your stay in Akwa Ibom throughout the period of your visit.

On this note, I call on Mr President to commission this project. Thank you.



Dr. Aqua-Don E. Umoren, Commissioner for Health explains to General Babangida the functions and responsibilities of each Department/Unit of the General Hospital, Ibiaku Ntok Nkpo during the commissioning ceremony of the hospital

**A WELCOME ADDRESS
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, BY
THE PRINCIPAL, FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, IKOT
EKPENE, MR OLUSOLA A. OYETOLA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
PRESIDENT'S HISTORIC MAIDEN VISIT TO THE COLLEGE
ON 24th APRIL, 1991**

The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
General Ibrahim Babangida, CFR, fss, mni,

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State
Wing Commander Idongesit Nkanga, fss, psc (+),

Other Military Governors (here present),

The Honourable Minister of Education
Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa,

Other Members of the Federal Executive Council,

Service Commanders,

Senior Army and Police Officers,

Members of Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,

The Chairman of Ikot Ekpene Local Government Council,

Respected Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,

My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal,

Media Representatives,

Staff and Students of Federal Government
College, Ikot Ekpene,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel highly elated to welcome the Number One Citizen of Nigeria, President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, on behalf of the entire students' body, both past, present and future, and the teaching and non-teaching staff, to this Unity School. Today is indeed a red-letter day in the annals of this Unity College. I assert that today's visit by Mr President will be a turning point in the history of this School. We are all very delighted to see you, Sir.

General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida has been described as a leader who knows Nigeria well. He is also aware of most of Nigeria's problems. Do we talk of his appreciation of the fact that nothing is more doubtful of success than to initiate a new order of things, or his conviction about the existence of diverse feelings and re-actions to the inherent opportunities and benefits which accompany changes, or his insistence not to serve his people with yesterday's menu in glittering new dishes, or the encouragements he gives to dissent and open expressions, or his nationalistic conviction about grave matters that go beyond ideological preferences or political sentiments, or his policy of grass root participation in national development, or his belief in rural development? Can we also forget his determination to handover power to civilians in 1992 and his definite transition programme? Can we also forget his leadership role in Africa in particular and the world at large?

Mr President, Sir, while I am not eulogising, I welcome you once again to Federal Government College, Ikot Ekpene.

Federal Government College, Ikot Ekpene was founded in September, 1973 at a temporary site, and moved to the present uncompleted site in September, 1981. The College has achieved a high standard of academic performance over the years. It has not been found wanting, too, in co-curricular activities. However, it has not got adequate physical infrastructures.

At this juncture, I hereby acknowledge with thanks the special effort the Federal Ministry of Education under the Honourable Minister of Education, Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa, has made recently in improving our physical infrastructures. This is in spite of the Ministry's limited

financial resources *vis-a-vis* its vast responsibilities. I also mention with gratitude the concern shown by all arms of Akwa Ibom State Government, and also the role of our own Parents-Teachers' Association and the contribution of our Advisory Council. The Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) and Ikot Ekpene Local Government have helped in unquantifiable ways, too.

But in spite of it all, a lot still has to be done as Mr President will observe shortly. The on-going renovation work is yet to be extended to our Administration block, classroom blocks, science block, dining hall/kitchen complex, lecture theatres, Library complex and College Clinic. Water problem has been a source of misery to us. Uncompleted projects that require urgent attention also abound. These include Assembly hall, Internal roads, Games complex, Solid block fencing, Agricultural complex, Home Economics complex, Street lighting and landscaping. We also require adequate equipment for our offices, Laboratories, kitchen/dining hall and the hostels.

The need for a tractor with relevant implement and mowers for agricultural purposes and for beating back our surging bush cannot be over-emphasised. Most of our vehicles have broken down and we need a 56-seater bus, a 30-seater bus, a water tanker and a 504 station wagon. All these will enable us to cater better for our students considering that they come from all the States of the Federation.

Finally, I will like to draw Mr President's attention to the miserable condition of the three-kilometre access road to the College. It requires permanent resurfacing or reconstruction.

Once again, I most sincerely thank Mr President and all those who have come in the President's entourage. I wish you a safe journey. Goodbye and may this your historic visit ever remain positively indelible in our memory.

Thank you, Sir.

O. A. OYETOLA, ESTAN: MNIM
Principal

**AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME
PRESENTED BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SUNSHINE
BATTERIES LIMITED, ENGR. EDET U. ESSIEN, TO THE
PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES
GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni
DURING HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO SUNSHINE BATTERIES LIMITED
ESSIEN UDIM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON 24th APRIL, 1991**

**The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed
Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria
General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, CFR, fss, mni**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Honourable Ministers and Service Commanders,

Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Protocol,

BACKGROUND

This Company started production on 1st February, 1985 and is jointly owned by the Akwa Ibom State Government, some Nigerian Investors, and Sonnenschein International of West Germany as Technical Partners.

We source 75% of our raw materials locally, and manufacture top-dry charged batteries of various sizes for all brands of cars, heavy duty trucks, agricultural tractors and machines, and provide reliable power for communication equipment and standby security and military systems.

Our current capacity utilization is 20% of installed capacity due to acute shortage of working capital. Even at this level, we provide direct employment to over two hundred Nigerians. We have potentials for direct employment of 1,200 people on a two shift operation, at full capacity utilization, if we have enough funds to provide adequate spare parts and

raw materials. The spill-over effect would be tremendous, and would contribute immensely to the economic growth of this country.

APPRECIATION

The President Sir, on 28th October, 1988, Admiral Augustus Aikhomu, the then Chief of General Staff visited Sunshine Batteries Limited and promised to give NEPA power. We hereby express our sincere thanks and appreciation to both the Federal and State Governments for fulfilling that promise.

Today, Sunshine Batteries Limited enjoys NEPA power supply, which has resulted in a substantial reduction in our overhead cost. We are very grateful to you Sir.

SELF HELP INITIATIVE

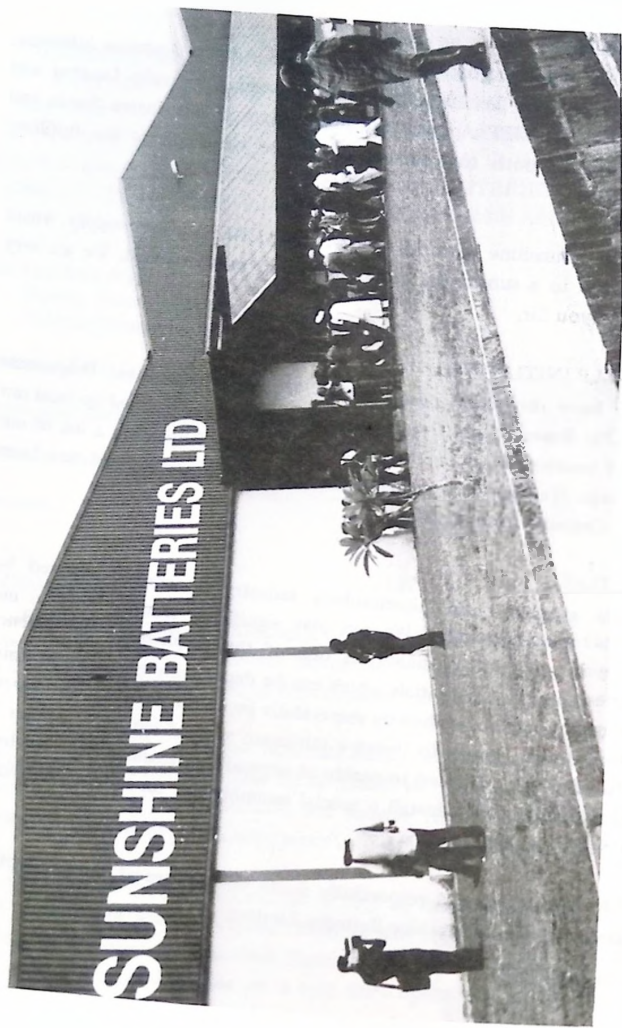
We have responded positively to Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). Our Research and Development Department has stepped up local raw materials sourcing, and our Machine Shop is now fabricating a lot of our spare parts. We have also gained from the ADB Export Stimulation Loan through Century Merchant Bank.

POTENTIALS

This strategic and hitechnology industry is wholly manned by Nigerians — Mr President. We can play significant security roles to our country, if government makes us one of the suppliers to the Defence industries. We have potentials which can be dependably harnessed in times of emergency and so, we hereby respectfully invite the Federal Government and the Armed Forces to invest a minimum sum of ten million naira in Sunshine Batteries Limited to enable us expand the Research and Development Department, and install a special assembly line for military batteries as per NATO specification.

Mr President Sir, I respectfully invite you to inspect the production facilities available in Sunshine Batteries Limited.

Thank you.



The scene at the inspection of Sunshine Batteries Factory,
Easien Udlim by Mr President

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY
WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O. NKANGA, fss, psc(+)
MILITARY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE ON THE
OCCASION OF THE COMMISSIONING OF ABAK WATERSIDE
BRIDGE BY GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA,
CFR, fss, mni, PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE
ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA
ON WEDNESDAY 24th APRIL, 1991

The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces,
Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,
Honourable Ministers and Members of the National Council of
Ministers,
Members of Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,
My Lord, the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,
Chairmen of Local Government Councils,
Traditional Rulers,
My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the State Government and people of Akwa Ibom State, I have the pleasure to welcome Mr President and his entourage to this occasion. Access into Abak from Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom State was, for many years interrupted by a narrow bailey bridge. In 1981, contract was awarded to Messrs Solomon and Solomon (Nigeria) Limited for the construction of a befitting bridge, to replace the old bailey bridge at a contract sum of N1.8 million. The contract was later determined,

because of the contractor's poor performance. In 1987 a fresh contract for the completion of this bridge and its approaches was awarded to Messrs Osmat Construction (Nigeria) Limited at a contract sum of N3.7 million. Again, the contract was determined because the contractor did not perform to satisfy the specifications of the contract. A third attempt at the execution of this bridge construction was made in January, 1990, when contract was awarded to Messrs RCC (Nigeria) Limited to complete the bridge and its approaches. The contract sum for the completion of work already started was N5.9 million.

This third contractor mobilised fast and commenced the execution of the works before the commencement of the 1990 rainy season. Despite poor weather during 1990, the work progressed satisfactorily and, by the end of November that year, the works were substantially completed, except for surfacing of the bridge approaches and some miscellaneous works.

From the brief history, the determination of the present and previous Governments, to properly bridge the Abak stream, is very clear. I am thankful to the Almighty God that what appeared insurmountable, has been accomplished in our time. I am, therefore, delighted to invite Mr President to commission this project.

Mr President Sir

**AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, GENERAL IBRAHIM
BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, BY OBONG T. A. OBOT, CHAIRMAN,
PEACOCK PAINTS LIMITED, IKOT EKAN ON THE OCCASION OF
THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO THE COMPANY
ON WEDNESDAY, 24th APRIL, 1991**

The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
General Ibrahim Babangida, CFR, fss, mni,
Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,
Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,
Commissioner and Members of the State Executive Council,
Chairman of Etinan Local Government Area,
Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I, on behalf of the Board of Directors Management and Staff of Peacock Paints Limited, the people of Ikot Ekan and the entire Etinan Community welcome you, Mr President to this fact today. We are particularly grateful to our Military Governor, Wing Commander Idongesit Nkanga and his State Executive, for planning your maiden visit to Akwa Ibom State to include a visit to Peacock Paints Limited.

1. HISTORY AND BUSINESS OF THE COMPANY

Peacock Paints Limited (formerly known as Cross River Paints Limited) was incorporated in 1979 to produce various types of Paints and Varnishes. The Company is jointly owned by Akwa Ibom State Government, S. Dyrup of Denmark Industrialization Fund for Developing Countries, also of Denmark and Nigerian Businessmen. The Company was commissioned on April 11, 1986 and has been making steady progress inspite of the very harsh economic climate in which it has been operating from the outset.

The Company has the capacity for production of three million litres of various Paints and Varnishes yearly, but it has hardly produced more than

23% of this capacity due to factors ranging from Import Licence Restrictions to the effects of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

In spite of all our limitations, I am extremely happy to inform Mr President that Peacock Paints Limited in Akwa Ibom State produces the best quality Paints and Varnishes in the country. It is comforting that the giants in the industry which would have viewed us with contempt rather regard us as threats.

2. PRODUCT PROFILE

In addition to the decorative paints, our Company produces high quality textured wall finish, car paints and varnishes, roofing sheet coatings, road marking paints, wood finishes and thinners, and wood preservatives. Our products are made under licence from S. Dyrup of Denmark, one of the finest paint producers in Europe and are produced under the most exacting conditions to ensure high quality performance under varying weather conditions in the country. Our Car Paints are rated higher than most imported Car Paints in terms of drying time and glossiness.

3. LOCAL RAW MATERIALS

In response to the Federal Government's call for substitution of imported raw materials with local inputs, the Company has successfully fabricated machines that crush raw limestone, koaline (China clay) to paint extenders. These extenders are widely used by other paint and asbestos companies in the Eastern States.

4. To further increase the local contents of our raw materials, the Company is planning to establish an Alkyd Resin Plant which will utilise the local vegetable oil for production of Alkyd Resin. The establishment of Alkyd Plant will clearly reduce the import contents of raw materials to about 40% and the completion of the second phase of the petrochemical plants in the country would further reduce our import contents to about 20%.

5. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Peacock Paints Limited has fully identified itself with the Federal and State Government's Policy of Rural Development. It has fully identified itself with the development problems of its community right from its inception. The Company has financed laying of water pipes to Ikot Ekan village

for supply of water to the village; has provided equipment for school laboratory; has renovated, supplied drugs and commissioned the Health Centre in Ikot Ekan. It has supplied Electricity to the Community.

6. STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME

Mr President, Sir, I would not comfortably end this address without commenting on your bold efforts to restructure the Nigerian economy. Painful as Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) may be, it is clear that SAP has removed most of the irksome constraints on the manufacturing sector such as import licence and price control. SAP has realigned the aggregate domestic expenditure and production patterns so as to minimise dependence on imports and enhance non-oil exports.

Under SAP, there has been easier access to foreign exchange which has resulted in increased capacity utilization unlike the import licensing era when those who obtained Import Licences could not even utilise because of lack of foreign exchange backing.

Mr President, Sir, all your efforts to reduce the adverse effects of SAP are very commendable.

7. However, we wish to draw Mr President's attention to the adverse tariff structure for some important paint raw materials, e.g. Alkyd Resin. Alkyd Resin for manufacture of industrial paints is not produced in this country, so that the imposition of Import Duty of 45% with 7% surcharge on this raw material while the Import Duty on finished paint is only 50%, clearly enhances dumping of foreign paints in Nigerian market. We would add that the existing paint companies can adequately meet the paint needs of the country. We are therefore taking this opportunity to appeal to Mr President to save paint manufacturers from this awkward situation by:

- (a) either banning importation of finished paints,
- (b) or reducing Import Duty on Alkyd Resin to about 20% and repealing Excise Duty on locally made paints,
- (c) or increasing Import Duty on finished paints to about 80%.

8. Finally Sir, we sincerely thank you for giving us a State. We appreciate your economic programmes, and especially commend your Industrial Policy which provides an attractive industrial climate for the country.

We are sincerely happy to have you in our State today. Ours is a young State that must be nurtured to maturity. The efforts of the State Government in revitalising industries have been enormous and very commendable.

We sincerely pray for your mass support to the State Government by providing special grants for industrial take-off.

*Long live the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
General Ibrahim Babangida,*

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria,

Long live Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria,

Long live Peacock Paints Limited.

**AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME
PRESENTED BY THE PROVOST, AKWA IBOM STATE COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION, AFAHA NSIT, DR MBONG A. UDOFOT ON THE
OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO THE COLLEGE BY THE PRESIDENT
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI
BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, ON 24th APRIL, 1991**

**The President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed
Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Honourable Ministers,

The Commanding Officer, 41 Amphibious Battalion, Abak,

The Akwa Ibom State Commissioner of Police,

My Lord the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,

**Honourable Commissioners and Members of the State
Executive Council,**

The Secretary to the State Government,

**The Chairman and Members of the Governing
Council of the College,**

Directors-General,

Chairmen of Local Government Councils,

Traditional Rulers,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished citizens of Akwa Ibom State,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with deep appreciation and delight that I, on behalf of the Governing Council, staff and students welcome Mr President and his entourage to this College. Our hearts are full of joy as we have this rare privilege of seeing Mr President in person. For many of us here, it is a first and lifetime opportunity. History has been made today in this College and indeed the small community of Afaha Nsit that has been blessed with a Presidential visit. We physically feel the warmth of Mr President's love, the manifestation of which is evident in every part of this country and will live to remember it for ever in our march towards the improvement of the socio-economic and political life of our people, the base of which is the level of our education.

The Akwa Ibom State College of Education is only four months old. It is established as part of the apparatus for the improvement of the socio-economic life of our people through education as the basis of the growth and development of every nation. The establishment of this College is also in pursuance of the demands of the National Policy on Education which require the supply of adequate number of qualified teachers to our schools and make the NCE, the minimum teaching qualification for teachers in the near future. The satisfaction of the peculiar needs of our schools has guided the philosophy and orientation of the training in this institution.

I am delighted to inform Mr President that the Motto of this institution is "Education for Excellence". Excellence is therefore our guiding principle in our effort to improve the Science and Technology base of this country. I want to assure Mr President that the College of Education, Afaha Nsit, being founded on excellence, will not compromise it for any other thing.

Once again, Mr President, we welcome you to Akwa Ibom State College of Education and pray that your visit to the State and this College brings us the goodies that always accompany a Presidential visit such as yours to

enable us cope with the problems of this young prospective and promising institution, eventhough we have not considered it necessary to bother you with the details of those problems.

May we finally wish Mr President and his entourage a happy and rewarding stay in the State and a safe journey back to Lagos as we invite Mr President to spare a few minutes and inspect our facilities.

Thank you.

AN ADDRESS
PRESENTED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF NSIT UBIUM LOCAL
GOVERNMENT, BARRISTER IMEH ETIM UMANAH, ON
BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF NSIT UBIUM LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA, TO THE PRESIDENT
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, GENERAL IBRAHIM
BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, DURING HIS VISIT
TO NSIT UBIUM LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ON
WEDNESDAY 24th APRIL, 1991

Mr President,

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Members of the National Council of States,

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Respected Traditional Rulers,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I, on behalf of myself and the entire people of Nsit Ubium Local Government Area most heartily welcome Mr President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, CFR, fss, mni, to this area.

We are, particularly, thankful to you for the creation of Nsit Ubium Local Government Area on 3rd May, 1989. Your decision to create additional Local Governments in the country, earlier mentioned, was a very wise one. This has earnestly brought development closer to the grassroots. This Local

Government has embarked upon and completed several development projects in the interest of the citizenry. Some of them include roads, water and electricity supply.

We have also put in place an effective and functioning administrative structure. The Council Secretariat, which you will soon commission, is intended to provide a conducive working environment for the staff. It was completed at an estimated cost of ₦2 million. All the Council offices are conveniently accommodated. We have also provided hired accommodation for some Federal and State Ministries, Parastatals and Departments.

In fact, the situation here is that of a harmonious working relationship between all the tiers of Government.

Mr President, we do not intend to bore you with our problems, though these exist. We love you and what you stand for and pledge our unalloyed support to your administration.

We pray to the Almighty God to guide and guard you as you strive to provide direction for our dear country, Nigeria.

Once again, thank you for your presence here to commission this project.

AN ADDRESS

**PRESENTED BY WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O.
NKANGA, fss, psc (+), MILITARY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM
STATE ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMMISSIONING OF
ELECTRICITY PROJECT AT ODOT, EKPE ATAI LOCAL
GOVERNMENT HEADQUARTERS BY GENERAL IBRAHIM
B. BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-
IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NIGERIA, ON
WEDNESDAY 24th APRIL, 1991**

**The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed
Forces of Nigeria,**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Service Chiefs,

**Honourable Ministers and Members of the National
Council of Ministers,**

Military Governors,

Members of Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,

My Lord the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,

Chairmen of Local Government Councils,

Traditional Rulers,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, we are gathered here to witness yet another mile-stone in the history of Akwa Ibom State since its creation in 1987. It is for the commissioning of the electricity project at Odot, the Headquarters of Ekpe Atai Local Government Area.

In fulfilment of its avowed commitment to provide basic infrastructures such as electricity to our rural communities, particularly so at the Headquarters of every Local Government Area, the State Government awarded contract for the electrification of Ekpe Atai Local Government Headquarters at the sum of ₦5,136,600.00. Government had awarded contracts for the electrification of the Headquarters of all the other newly-created Local Government Areas.

I wish to recognise the contribution of the Local Government Council in planting 365 High Tension and 40 Low Tension poles for this project. May I at this point also express my thanks to NEPA and the Federal Ministry of Mines, Power and Steel officials for their assistance in making this project a reality.

It is a great privilege for this State and the people of Ekpe Atai Local Government Area to have our most respected visitor in Odot to commission this project. With the commissioning of the project today, the system will be handed over to NEPA for operation.

May I, most respectfully, invite Mr President to commission the project.

Mr President, Sir.



**Mr President commissions the Rural Electrification Project
at Odot, Ekpe Atai Local Government Area**

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF AKWA
IBOM STATE, OBONG UFOT EKAETTE, mni, AT A COMMAND
PERFORMANCE FOR PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF
THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
GENERAL IBRAHIM BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, ON APRIL 24, 1991**

Mr President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida,

Service Chiefs and Members of the Armed Forces
Ruling Council,

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of the National Council of Ministers,

My Lord, the Chief Judge,

Members of Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Your Highnesses, Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a privilege for me to welcome our dear President and his entourage on behalf of the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State to Ibom Hall commissioned yesterday by Mr President for this Command Performance. We are delighted that you are here this evening to share with us in a cultural setting our joys which we are unable to match with adequate words in expressing our gratitude to Mr President for the creation of Akwa Ibom State and for the support which his presence in our midst has guaranteed to ensure its steady growth to maturity.

Mr President, Sir, Akwa Ibom State, your baby is developing not only as an economic and political entity but also as an embodiment of arts and

culture. Since your arrival yesterday, you have seen some aspects of our physical development in the form of infrastructure and projects. This night, we will introduce to you aspects of our rich cultural heritage. It is indeed an occasion for us to express in songs and dances, in drama and folklores our gratitude to you and the Federal Military Government for responding to the yearnings of our people. If our presentation could help to re-affirm our determination to contribute effectively to the development of this State and the greater Nigerian polity, it would justify the dual mandate of drama: entertainment and enlightenment.

The groups which will soon be entertaining Mr President and his entourage are among the best in our cultural arsenal. Some of them had performed at national festivals and excelled at various times.

The choral group from Union Secondary School, Ibiaku in Itu for instance which will soon be on stage, performed during the 5th Annual Concert of Choral Music for Schools and Colleges nation-wide at Ibadan last year and won the second position.

Akwa Ibom State Council for Arts and Culture, on its part, led the State contingent to the 7th National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFEST '88) in Lagos and also won the second position. These successes lend credence to the fact that Akwa Ibom State is a treasure house of cultural attractions. We are also delighted to have in our midst, our Lady of Songs, Christie Essien-Igbokwe, an Akwaibomite to entertain us. I have no doubt that this evening's show will meet our expectations.

Mr President, Sir, we do appreciate your presence here with us. I sincerely hope that you will enjoy the package we have for you tonight. Since the proof of the pudding is in the eating, let me now invite the Director of the State Council for Arts and Culture to lead us into the world of cultural rebirth.

Thank you, Mr President.

**VOTE OF THANKS DELIVERED BY THE SECRETARY TO
THE STATE GOVERNMENT, DR PIUS N. BASSEY AT
THE END OF COMMAND PERFORMANCE IN HONOUR OF
GENERAL IBRAHIM B. BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni
ON WEDNESDAY, 24th APRIL, 1991**

**The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed
Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

All other Protocols observed,

It is a great privilege and joy for me to be requested to move a Vote of Thanks on this very special occasion. Mr President, Sir, I have the singular duty of conveying the thanks of all actors on stage and all dancers and performers across the State, alongside with the crowd, to you, for this Akwa Ibom Hall. It is you who gave us Akwa Ibom State and, out of sentiments and jubilation of having Akwa Ibom State, voluntary donations, which led to the idea of Akwa Ibom Hall, were made. I wish to thank you, not only on behalf of the people enumerated above, but also on behalf of the masses of Akwa Ibomites, who have not been chanced to come out to see you during your visit.

It is not only the people of Akwa Ibom State, but also all the elements that are jubilating because of your visit. You came in sunshine and you have had sunny weather from arrival until later today. This is explained by the German saying: "When angels travel, the heavens smile". Earlier this evening, you also saw a little bit of sunny weather. This would also be explained by another German saying: "When angels travel, the heavens weep". But this time around, it was not the heavens weeping, the heavens were first smiling,

then they started giggling and bursted in open laughter, until tears ran down their rosy cheeks, all of which happened because it is out of joy that the President is in Akwa Ibom State. Even the rains were a part of the joyous welcome.

Mr President, Sir, I wish to once again convey the thanks of all the performers and artistes on stage to you, for the opportunity your visit has afforded them to perform. I do also wish to convey the thanks of the contractors, suppliers and all others who, in one way or the other, contributed towards the construction of Akwa Ibom Hall, for the opportunity the creation of Akwa Ibom State afforded them to be called upon to make their contributions. I wish to thank you, on behalf of all and sundry in Akwa Ibom State, who have contributed towards your visit and others who have had no opportunity to contribute towards your visit.

We all say, God bless you. Thank you, Sir.

AN ADDRESS BY WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O.
NKANGA, fss, psc (+) MILITARY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM
STATE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FOUNDATION STONE
LAYING CEREMONY OF THE SPECIALIST HOSPITAL IN UYO
BY GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss,
mni, PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED
FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
ON 25th APRIL, 1991

The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria,
Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,
Service Commanders,

Military Governors

Honourable Ministers and Members of the National Council
of Ministers,

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Honourable Commissioners and Members of Akwa Ibom
State Executive Council

Your Excellencies,

Paramount Rulers of Uyo,

Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,

My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State, I
am very pleased to welcome you and other dignitaries to the site of the
Specialist Hospital in Uyo.

Mr President may recall that I did mention a parable in my address presented during the Foundation Stone Laying ceremony of the Aluminium Smelter Company at Ikot Abasi on 20th November, 1990, that "when God creates, He gives the means of sustenance". By performing that epoch-making ceremony, Mr President gave Akwa Ibom State, which he created, the foundation for its economic growth. Today, he is in the State to lay the Foundation Stone of yet another gigantic project.

This time, it is in the health sector and the project is expected to provide the much-needed specialist medical services to our teeming population. I must thank the President for his concern and determination to assist the state, which is in a hurry to develop to catch up with the older States, of the Federation.

Permit me, Sir, at this juncture, to highlight some of the compelling reasons for deciding to establish a Specialist Hospital in Akwa Ibom State. Firstly, the National Health Care System in the country is developed at three levels, namely, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Health Care. In order to ensure that Primary Health Care Services are adequately supported by an efficient referral system, there should be facilities at the Secondary and Tertiary levels of care provided by General and Specialist or Teaching Hospitals respectively. Since only two of the systems-Primary and Secondary-are available in Akwa Ibom State, there is therefore the need for the tertiary System-a Specialist Hospital to complete this referral chain. Secondly, the projected population of Uyo, the State Capital which, before the State creation in 1987, was about 355,124 has now grown to over 600,000. This dramatic increase in the population of Uyo calls for an urgent review of the

health care facilities in the State Capital, with a view to providing a tertiary health facility at the apex of the health care system in the State. Thirdly, Uyo Local Government Area has no General Hospital as an apex of its health care system. The existing medical institutions around are located at long distances from the city. And finally, with the establishment of the Aluminium Smelter Company at Ikot Abasi, with an expected work force of about 1,500, it is envisaged that the services of a Specialist Hospital will be in great demand.

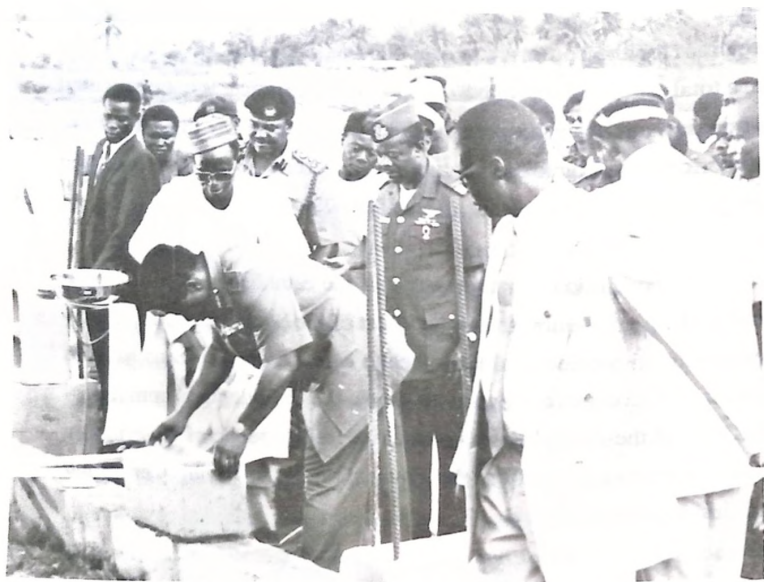
On the basis of the foregoing, the State Government awarded contract for the construction of a 400-bed Specialist Hospital in Uyo at a total estimated cost of N87,486,570.00. The project is to be executed in phases and we are extremely delighted to have Mr President here to perform the Foundation Stone Laying ceremony of Phase I of the project, which is estimated at N24,502,678.00.

In conclusion, I want to say that the establishment of this Specialist Hospital demonstrates the effort of the State and Federal Governments to provide qualitative health care to the citizens of this country. Once more, I want to thank the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for kindly accepting to perform the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of this important project.

May I use this opportunity to call on the Federal Military Government to, please, assist in the provision of adequate support to enable us complete this project on schedule.

On this note, I call on Mr President to lay the foundation Stone
of this Hospital.

Thank you and God bless.



Laying of Foundation Stone of Specialist Hospital, Uyo
by General Ibrahim Babangida

**AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME AND BRIEF
BY DR U. J. IBOK, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, TO
THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES, GENERAL
IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, ON THE
OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO QUA STEEL PRODUCTS
LIMITED, EKET ON 25th APRIL, 1991**

**The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces,
General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida,**

Members of the President's Entourage,

**The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,
Wing Commander Idongesit O. Nkanga,**

Members of the Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,

**The Chairman and Councillors, Eket Local
Government Council,**

Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

With profound pleasure and gratitude to God I wish, on behalf of the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of Qua Steel Products Limited, to welcome you most heartily to our factory today. And present herewith a brief report on Qua Steel Products Limited to enrich your knowledge of our organisation and acquaint you with our operations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Established on 29th May, 1978 as a joint venture between the former Cross River State holding 66% Equity Shares, and Messrs Danieli and

Company SPA of Udine, Italy as Technical Partners holding 14% shares, 20% shares held by Private Nigerians, Qua Steel Products Limited is a Private Limited Liability Company with authorised Share Capital of ₦10 million.

The Company was financed with an external loan provided by a consortium of banks lead managed by Messrs Samuel Montagu and Company Limited. The project funds, DM 73.08 million (which converts at 1981 exchange rate to only ₦20 million) was guaranteed by the former Cross River State.

PLANT PROFILE

The Plant has an installed capacity of 60,000 tonnes of hot rolled building rods; angles and flat bars; coils and drawn wires per annum in addition to 5,000 tonnes per annum of welded mesh plant. Commissioned in September 1983, commercial production began in January 1984 using as major raw materials, steel billets obtainable by importation or locally from Delta Steel Company Limited, Aladja in Bendel State.

BUSINESS OUTLOOK

Apart from the 28% plant utilisation attained in 1985 business year the Plant has consistently operated below 10% utilisation far below our break-even point. This has been due to inadequate working capital funding since inception leading to insufficient supply of raw materials; yet the demand for the Company's products has been high and on the increase.

Market research has shown that the products of this Company can be absorbed completely by the local market which comprises the five Eastern States; namely Anambra, Imo, Cross River, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States.

Enquiries from some West African Countries indicate that our products have great export potential as well.

The company's products are of very high quality. This explains why the company became the proud winner of the Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) Certificate for good quality awarded by the Standards Organisation

of Nigeria (SON) for three consecutive years, 1986, 1987 and 1988. This high quality promotes high demand for the Company's products.

EMPLOYMENT/INDUSTRIALISATION

Qua Steel now employs 145 staff (100 technical and 45 support staff). Up to 300 workers could be employed if the business outlook improves. It is sad that the great socio-economic potentials (gold mine) envisaged by the founders of Qua Steel have not/cannot be attained in the present mode of operating the company which engenders apathy and thus high labour turn-over of highly trained staff who have been owed backlogs of salaries and are yet to enjoy the various SAP relief measures introduced by the Federal Government since 1988.

The expected level of contributions to industrialisation and commercialisation or indeed the uplifting of the general lifestyle of the people that Qua Steel was to make in the locality and the State at large is still a mirage, eight years after inception. The massive investments on Plant and Machineries are lying waste as the plant continues to age exponentially in using it for sporadic production.

PROBLEM AREAS

Of the many infrastructural facilities lacking in Qua Steel Products Limited; the NEPA LINK-UP project, Water supply and Access Road are the most pressing. Qua Steel continues to generate its own power from 3 x 4000 KVA diesel generators with prohibitive costs to maintenance, spares and production thus making our means of production the most uneconomic amongst other rolling mills in the country. Water has continued to be derived from a seasonal stream 1½ km away, thus constituting a veritable means of frequent production downtime. Yet a propitious gift of ₦20 million could salvage the operations by providing the needed working capital in addition to the infrastructures.

Qua Steel's foreign loan liability at present stands at over ₦742.00 million, converting DM 73.08 million plus accrued interest at present day exchange rates. If repaid at pre-SFEM rates (September, 1986) the loan would stand at not more than ₦52.20 million but such instrument has

not been put into place before SFEM. The existence of this loan liability makes the Company's Balance Sheet unattractive to would be lenders and consequently makes borrowing of operational funds by the Company impossible.

REQUEST FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

It would be a great relief if the Federal Government would intervene on our behalf to write-off the foreign debt of ₦742.00 million so that the Company may concentrate on the re-scheduling of its local debt amounting to ₦11 million, restructuring of the Company's capital base and privatisation of the Company in line with the Federal Government Policy. Mr President's intervention in this regard or by ordering repayment of the foreign loan at pre-SFEM rates, would give life to the Company.

The Federal Government is further prayed to direct Delta Steel Company, Warri to include Qua Steel Products Limited in her billet supply allocation in order that our yearly billet requirement can be met locally.

CONCLUSION

For brevity, we have given only the highlights on the information and problems facing the Company in this address. We wish to express our appreciation and profound happiness to you and your entourage for including our Company in the schedule of your visit to Akwa Ibom State despite your crowded activities.

As a loving father who cares for his children when in need, we are hopeful you will give favourable consideration to our request for we have the wish, but lack the means to walk the hard but promising way of self-reliant industrialisation.

We wish you and your entourage a happy and successful stay in Akwa Ibom State and a safe journey back to Lagos.

**AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME BY THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF
AKWA IBOM STATE, WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O.
NKANGA, fss, psc (+) DURING THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION
STONE OF AKWA IBOM STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY BY THE
PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES
OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
ON THURSDAY 25th APRIL, 1991**

**His Excellency, the President, Commander-in-Chief
of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,**

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Honourable Ministers,

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

My Lord the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of the State Executive Council,

Secretary to the Akwa Ibom State Government,

Directors-General,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the creation of Akwa Ibom State, the various machineries and infrastructures of Government have been gradually but steadily set up. Today, another significant step is being taken on this slow journey. The ceremony we are about to witness becomes even more auspicious in view of the great relevance it bears to the present administration's Transition to Civil Rule Programme.

As the country moves towards Civil Rule in 1992, it becomes extremely necessary to put all the paraphernalia of a democratic government in place. Wherefore are we all gathered here today to witness the Foundation

Stone Laying Ceremony for the State House of Assembly, which is to be constructed at a cost of about ₦60.0 million. When completed, the State House of Assembly will have the following facilities: Public Ceremonial/VIP Lounge, House in Debate, Administrative Block, Committee Rooms, Legislators' Lounge, Library, Restaurant and a Maintenance Department. It is my hope that these facilities will provide a sound and conducive atmosphere for our future legislators to make laws for the good governance of our people.

May I, at this juncture, recall that all State Houses of Assembly were expected to be ready by December 1990. But, due to our lean finances, this target could not be met. In view of the numerous projects the State had to execute, it was not possible to set aside such a big sum of money for the project then. It is in the light of this reality that I call on the Federal Military Government to extend financial assistance to Akwa Ibom State, to enable us construct and complete the State House of Assembly.

Meanwhile, as construction of this permanent edifice is going on, Government had earlier awarded contract for the renovation of the old Provincial Hall, because of the need to have a temporary functional place ready for use by our legislators. It is Government's intention that, since the 1989 Constitution provides for a State Council of Chiefs, the renovated Provincial Building would become the meeting hall for the Chiefs in due course, after the completion of the permanent complex for the House of Assembly.

It is pertinent to observe here that, by creating the two grass-root political parties, the Federal Government has an abiding faith in our citizens' ability to engage in politics, without any recourse to rancour and violence. Our new-breed politicians should be truly "New Breed", not only in name but in orientation, performance and disposition.

Given the enthusiasm displayed by all indigenes of this State on the creation of Akwa Ibom State, I wish to assure the President that this State and its citizens are prepared to do everything possible to ensure

the success of the Transition Programmes, set in motion by the Federal Government, towards the installation of a democratically elected administration, come 1992.

As part of today's ceremony, I will be inviting His Excellency, the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to plant a coconut seedling. The coconut seedling has been selected, because it is one of the most resourceful of all our economic trees. The roots are very strong and useful as fibres. The trunk can be used for fuel and construction of buildings and bridges, the seeds provide food, fibre, oil and medicinal juices, while the leaves are useful as fencing material and fuel. It is our prayer and fervent hope that, by planting this coconut seedling, His Excellency is bequeathing to present and future generations of Akwa Ibomites a legacy of peace, strength, good health, shelter and economic prosperity.

Mr President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I have the pleasure and honour of inviting you to perform the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony on Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly.

Mr President, Sir.

AN ADDRESS
BY THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE
WING COMMANDER IDONGESIT O. NKANGA, fss, psc (+)
AT THE STATE BANQUET GIVEN ON 25th APRIL, 1991
IN HONOUR OF THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF
THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF
NIGERIA, GENERAL IBRAHIM B. BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni

Mr President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council, here present,

The GOC, 82 Division, Nigerian Army,

Honourable Ministers,

Senior Military Officers,

Commissioners and Members of the State
Executive Council,

Secretary to the State Government,

Paramount Rulers and Chiefs,

Chief Executives of Local Government Councils,

My Lords, Spiritual and Temporal,

Senior Citizens of Akwa Ibom State,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Three days ago, we were specially honoured to welcome Mr President at the start of his first official visit to Akwa Ibom State. We recall that Mr President had in fact been here before but on that earlier occasion he came specifically to perform the single task of launching a Federal Government Project at Ikot Abasi. This time however, he has come to visit us the

people of Akwa Ibom State. That is why we can say that this is his first official visit to our State.

I realized, when I presented the Address of Welcome three days ago that Mr President's visit to our State was in fact a visit of appraisal. Akwa Ibom State is one of the two special projects sponsored by the Armed Forces Ruling Council three and a half years ago. Like a good project promoter, Mr President finds it necessary to occasionally visit, inspect, and appraise such special projects in person, notwithstanding that progress reports on them may routinely continue to be filed by schedule officers. On your arrival Mr President, I attempted to produce for you through that Welcome Address a brief situation report on Akwa Ibom State. While doing so, I knew that you would want to go round the State and personally see things for yourself. And so for the past three days you have done us the added honour of travelling extensively through the entire State for a first-hand appraisal of those things we said we had done. In the process, you have afforded our people the privilege of seeing or meeting you in person. You have yourself been able to see how and where our people live. Throughout your tour of the Local Government Areas, you would have observed the large crowds that turned up at every event, or just lined the routes. These were specially happy citizens that turned out to greet this particular Head of State who gave them that which they prayed for these many years. A compact homogeneous State of their own, the idea of which was conceived by our fathers 63 years ago, became a reality in your time, Mr President. So why would not the people of this State be satisfied with themselves and be happy with the Government that has realized for them that dream of so many years ago?

During this tour Mr President, you will have observed certain unique features and peculiar characteristics of Akwa Ibom State and its people. To have covered so many Local Government Areas in the brief time of the visit suggests, and it is true, that ours is a very compact State. This characteristic of compactness of mass makes it a potentially easy area to administer. For no part of the State is farther away from the State Capital than one hour by road. The State is rich in the natural resources of the sea and the

land and is blessed with a sizeable and active population. Our people are of one stock, a fact which is easily seen in the similarity of our cultures as expressed in the various dances that entertained you during the civic reception here in Uyo. Above all, this is one of the lucky States in the Federation where the means of communication is no barrier to mutual understanding and co-operation between its various communities. I believe Sir, that it must have been these features and characteristics that helped our forebears to perceive that we in these parts share a common destiny. And it is that perception of a common destiny that has guided us of Akwa Ibom State today to do all that is necessary, in the shortest possible time, so that we may achieve a take-off as a viable State Administration alongside our older sister States.

Some of the specific achievements of this Administration will now be mentioned, for they are achievements that you Mr President have observed in part. When we became a State from the Cross River State the joy was so great that we did not give much thought to anything else. We certainly did not much care that we were going to start a new State on a non-existing infrastructure. The truth is indeed that there was next to nothing to start with. So permit me Mr President at this juncture to express on behalf of the people of this State a word of sincere appreciation of the two pioneer Military Governors of this State — Brigadier Tunde Ogbeha and Col. Godwin Abbe, who had to lay the foundation for this State Administration with nothing. Since that time we have taken on hand the erection of offices, Secretariat and Quarters for the principal officers and Departments of Government. The State Secretariat Offices are expected to be commissioned in the life of this State Administration. A temporary Legislative House has been provided, while the foundation stone for the permanent House of Assembly has been laid. These are major projects designed to provide the necessary administrative infrastructure for Government.

Much investment has been made in the development of Uyo Capital Territory in the area of roads and drainage to reflect the new status of the town. Concerning roads generally, much work has been done to provide asphalt-surfaced roads inter-connecting with existing federal roads. In the area of communications the State has built a brand new Television Station,

a new FM Radio Station and a refurbished and strengthened AM Radio Station. Plans are in an advanced stage to link all the 20 Local Government headquarters by telephone.

In the area of food production and agriculture generally we have achieved a large measure of success in changing the cultural attitudes of our farmers as regards the use of fertilizers. The people have been effectively mobilized to boost food production in view of the sudden increase of the population attending the status of a new State. Unfortunately the effort invested in the production of staple food and cash crops has been largely ruined by the outbreak of plant diseases. This is a serious problem that affects not only Akwa Ibom but other States in this ecological zone and therefore calls for intervention at the Federal level since the State's Department of Agriculture cannot effectively contend with it.

Located where we are in the south-eastern corner of Nigeria, in the rain belt, near the ocean and on alluvial soil, we are lucky and unlucky. We are lucky because we have rain virtually all the year round. We are blessed because we have water nearby. We thank God because our sub-soil contains mineral oil. But we are unlucky, very unluckily Mr President. Our very location, geography and geology have made us prone, to the ever widening and devastating menace of soil and marine erosions. You will be surprised to know, Sir, that less than 5% of the grounds that served as stadium when we received our Compatriot, General Gowon in 1972, exist today in Uyo. The entire land and the stadium structures have disappeared into the belly of the ravine, which as I am speaking is less than 200 metres away. As you probably observed during the inspection this morning, erosion menace is very real in the entire State. Real and menacing, the rectification or stoppage of the landward march of this monster is beyond our means. We therefore plead with Mr President to declare total war on erosion in Akwa Ibom State and wash our faces off this ill-luck.

Since Akwa Ibom State is entirely rural, we have bought whole-heartedly the Federal Military Government Policy on the development of the rural areas based on the local government headquarters as growth centres. Consequently, a lot of work has been done on the supply of water to, and the

electrification of rural communities. Under the electrification programme, for example, we have taken on schemes to supply electricity to about 1,000 villages, many of which have been commissioned already including the headquarters of the ten new Local Governments. This last is a responsibility which properly belongs to the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) and which has cost the State Government about ₦50 million.

In the area of Health Care, we intend that every Local Government Area will be served by at least one secondary-care facility and we have within the life span of the State completed and equipped one such hospital which you commissioned. A foundation stone has now been laid for a Specialist Hospital facility in the State Capital.

The economy of this State depends as elsewhere on the Banking system. Now the commercial banking services in Akwa Ibom State are often unsatisfactory, not because of the fault of the Commercial Banks but because of unsatisfactory back-up service by the Central Bank Office in the Cross River State. It is most urgent that there should be a direct Central Bank Service here in Uyo to ensure regular supply of funds to the Commercial Banks. The Central Bank of Nigeria, should be able to ameliorate the unsatisfactory situation here, three and a half years after the creation of the State. We request Sir, that the Presidency should lend its weight to this request.

Mr President, allow me Sir, to thank you and the Federal Military Government for the decision to site the Aluminium Smelter Plant in this State. The project will undoubtedly provide the much needed blood transfusion for the economy of the State. It is such Federal Government Policy decisions that will greatly help the implementation of this project called "Akwa Ibom State". But Sir, please further allow me to urge federal action in certain areas which will greatly complement our local effort to get this State fully started, so that we too can join the march to achieve a greater Nigeria.

We are doing all we can in the area of road building, but all we can achieve here should empty into the Federal road network providing links

with our sister States. The Oron—Aba road seriously stands in need of dualization in order to be able to handle the traffic being generated by our internal system of improved roads.

For purposes of dissemination of Federal News to the State the NTA Channel 12 Station started about three years ago should be completed to complement the service of the local TV Station.

One of the ways in which we in this State can contribute meaningfully to the promotion of the national image is in the area of sports, an area where our young men and women have often excelled. I think it is now common knowledge that he who wants to talk to a Nigerian Weight-lifter has to come to Akwa Ibom State. Mr President Sir, we have recently launched a stadium development fund for the building of a modern stadium at the State Capital. I am aware also that it is the intention of the Federal Military Government to build five world-class stadia in various locations in the country. Might we urge Sir, that this is a good area of co-operation with Akwa Ibom State?

Mr President Sir, I started out with the full intent of merely telling you who we are, what we have been able to do since we got our State, what we have been unable to achieve yet, and what we hope to achieve in the near future. I have tried not to make a single direct request, trusting that after listening to this report, Mr President will in his characteristic style do that which needs be done. But Sir, there is one direct request which with your permission, I will like to make.

Many thousand years ago, what our people called the Island of Bioko was part and parcel of the land mass called Nigeria and indeed Akwa Ibom State. Then the erosion which still haunts us today came. It washed the land, the hills and the plateaus into the Atlantic Ocean. The land sank and the sea rose and a greater part of farmlands and homestead of our forebears disappeared under the sea. Under the sea, micro-organisms or diatoms formed and behold mineral oil, natural gas and oil condensate. Then the oil companies came and planted oil rigs and started drawing out the petroleum products amidst fume and contaminants to the environment and inhabitants. The products were valuable and brought fortunes to the

country. The financial gurus of our nation said all the proceeds should go to the Federal Government. Many whose lives and sustenance have been ruined by this march of time and history said no. Give us some of the fortunes from the products of our backyards. Many monetary gurus have supported this plea. Mr President's Administration in the Political Bureau White Paper, agreed. All other reports and memoranda thereafter, have accepted this view. Still the matter lingers.

Mr President, the above is the geological and political story of on-shore/off-shore oil dichotomy. It is a familiar one to you, although we have told it today with a slant and a difference. If we in this State sometimes seem to show unusual anxiety about this matter it is not that we are unaware of the Federal Government statement on the issue. Rather it is that the delay in giving effect to the policy position of the Federal Government is making it that much more difficult for the State to do as much as it could do and wants to do in developing its economy. But I know Sir, that the present Federal Government is a government of its word. Therefore I know that the stated government policy position on this subject will be translated into practical action. All that I can add now is the prayer that the practical action may be soon, once and for all.

And now Mr President Sir, allow me to thank you most sincerely, on behalf of the government and people of Akwa Ibom State for undertaking this visit to us. The destinies of men and nations quite often are determined by the singular act of courage of one man. As long as our people remember the date September 23, 1987, so long will the name of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida be remembered and kept alive in Akwa Ibom State.

Finally Sir, in the time-honoured tradition of our people we are happy to make this token presentation to you, to remind you in future of these very happy but brief moments that you have spent with us.

Thank you, Mr President.

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF
THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
GENERAL IBRAHIM BADAMASI BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni
AT THE STATE BANQUET ON 25th APRIL, 1991 ON THE
OCCASION OF HIS STATE VISIT TO AKWA IBOM STATE**

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Mrs Nkanga, the wife of the Military Governor
of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

Honourable Ministers,

The Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

The Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of the State Executive Council,

Chairman of the Council of Chiefs,

Your Royal Highnesses,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

My dear Citizens of Akwa Ibom State,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

INTRODUCTION

It is my immense pleasure to be in your midst tonight. After three days of an extensive tour of various parts of Akwa Ibom State, I am delighted to meet again a cross section of Traditional Rulers and Chiefs, men and women of this dynamic State, under one roof.

This gives me the opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the people of Akwa Ibom State for the very warm and rousing welcome which I and

my entourage have received throughout the tour. As I indicated upon arrival here a few days ago, my visit to Akwa Ibom State is to see things for myself and to assess the extent to which this young State is grappling with the problems of establishing a sound administration, providing social and physical infrastructures to cater for the various needs of the millions of citizens of Nigeria living in this part of our great country.

I have also, within the last 72 hours, seen the good, hard working and patriotic people of Akwa Ibom State at work. I have also seen you at play and tonight, I am seeing you extend your traditional hospitality to me and my entourage.

Indeed, judging by the various contexts in which I have observed the people of Akwa Ibom State, I am more convinced than ever before that the decision of the Armed Forces Ruling Council to create Akwa Ibom State in September 1987 was a very wise and correct one. This makes me extremely happy. Within my short stay here, I am satisfied that new centres of development and growth, economically, politically, culturally and industrially, have been established.

For me and for you, I am convinced that this is what State-creation is essentially about — an effort to re-order our administrative machinery and bring Government and development closer to the grassroots. I wish, therefore, to utilize this opportunity to commend you all for justifying the action of the Armed Forces Ruling Council in creating this State. You have lived up to and indeed beyond our expectations.

You have organised yourselves productively and have made impressive developmental progress and has built fraternal links with other States of the federation. In short, it is evident that Akwa Ibom State has taken its rightful and well deserved place of prominence in the scheme of things and among its sister States, as it continues, with others, in the exciting and challenging march towards peace, order, progress, development and self-reliance. I congratulate you most heartily.

When I spoke to you at the civic reception, I claimed the right to feel free to speak as I wished, because my relationship with you entitled me to

be part of you. At the risk of repeating myself, let me say that such has been the warmth of the reception given to me everywhere, so open and generous has been the hospitality and so honest and affectionate the friendliness and welcome accorded to us here that I am content with the judgement that I am, indeed, one of you. More to the point, I am impressed not only with the response of your citizens to all federal initiatives on the economy and the transition programme, but also by the rapid progress your State has made since its creation.

Your qualities as a generally law-abiding, peaceful, open-minded, dutiful, and generally self-reliant people is legendary. These qualities have enabled you to dominate so many fields of service which many others have shunned. There is hardly any part of our vast and great nation where you have not left an indelible mark in high executive positions of our public and private sectors.

I do not exaggerate when I say that all the states of the federation owe a huge historical debt to the peoples of Akwa Ibom State because, as I observed on an earlier occasion, the cradle for the movement for the creation of states in Nigeria lies here. In this sense it can be said that you are the founders of modern Nigeria. That it took you as long as six decades to 1987 to achieve the creation of your own state says a great deal for your patience, single-mindedness and tenacity.

Let me pursue this theme a little bit further, if only to emphasize your contribution to our great country. Great and illustrious names echo through the history of those years up to the present day. Any society would be proud of men such as His Highness OBONG SAMPSON UDO-IDIONG, Paramount Ruler of UKANAFUN and ORUK-ANAM, First President of the Ibibio State Union who was among those who saw the wisdom of unity among all Ibibio groups and sub-groups. He and his colleagues had the foresight to promote and subsequently to execute as early as 1938, the scheme for community funding of one young person each from the six Ibibio communities comprising the present day Akwa Ibom State, to study abroad. Nigeria, more than these parts, has been the chief beneficiary of the brilliance, commitment to duty and service and the excellence deployed by a significant number of the men produced by this scheme.

One cannot also forget to mention the late OBONG NYONG ESSIEN, the first NSOM OF URUAN who was the first of your forbears to be nominated by yourselves and to be approved by government to sit in the Legislative Council as spokesman of Mainland Territory or Ibibio Division in 1938; which is our Akwa Ibom State of 1987. He served with merit and distinction and was nominated by the Governor to become the first President of the House of Chiefs of the whole of the former Eastern Region of Nigeria in 1960. It is also known that the first Nigerian to obtain a post-graduate degree in Agriculture was from this State. I am referring here to CHIEF BASSEY U. ATTAH, of blessed memory. Similarly, in the military profession, the first Nigerian Commissioned Officer with Number N/1, Retired BRIGADIER WELLINGTON BASSEY is from Akwa Ibom State. In recognition of his historical achievement and service, the Army Barracks in Abak is henceforth to be known as "WELLINGTON BASSEY BARRACKS". I must also mention CHIEF ETIM INYANG, the former Inspector-General of Police. He is from Akwa Ibom and was known to have had an impeccable record of service in the Nigeria Police Force.

Among more contemporary figures who have done you credit and the nation proud, must be mentioned His Highness, DOMINIC CARDINAL EKANDEM, first Catholic Bishop of Nigeria and our first Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. By no means less significant, despite later events, it was out of your ranks that Nigeria acquired its war-time national field manager in the most critical years of the privations and financial shortfalls of the civil war when CHIEF (DR) CLEMENT ISONG served the nation as Governor of the Central Bank.

But perhaps the greatest tribute to Akwa Ibom has been exemplified most in the person and career of the Honourable JUSTICE (DR) UDO UDOMA, Justice of the Supreme Court of Nigeria; one-time sponsored Ibibio community student abroad; one-time President, Cambridge University Philosophical Society; distinguished jurist of world renown; an acclaimed orator; an activist in the campaign for minority rights and the creation of more states; constitution-maker; adjudicator and mediator in numerous national disputes, an elder statesman; a personality of exemplary character and a national property of inestimable value.

I am absolutely certain that whenever he might have gone and served in the world other than these parts, Justice (Dr) Udo Udoma would still stand out as a man of towering significance and quality.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I have listened with keen interest to the brilliant and moving address of the State Military Governor. The problems and progress of the State have been intelligently highlighted. The Federal Military Government is not insensitive to the yearnings of the people of this State. It is quite favourably disposed to attending to the issues raised in the address presented.

I acknowledge the assiduity and committed leadership demonstrated by your past Military Governors and the present Military Governor, Wing Commander Idongesit Nkanga, and of course, your co-operation in this task of political and socio-economic transformation of the State. I commend you all most sincerely for this. I have noted, with pride, that the Government of this State has, within its limited resources, addressed the areas of agriculture, education, health, potable water, housing, information, roads and rural electrification. The thrust has been to improve the quality of life of the citizenry. I am particularly impressed by its effort to mobilise the masses through education and communication, of which Radio and Television are handy agents. The road to self-realisation has never been a smooth one. But through dint of hardwork, honest and loyal service, you all will succeed in building a model and enviable State.

Your State is certainly not without its fair share of natural resources. The ecological zone in which the State is located offers good potential for the development of agriculture. The continental shelf of the State, including river creeks and swamps, has the highest concentration of fishes in this country. Various mineral resources such as limestone, clay, natural gas, silver nitrate abound in your State. It is worthy of note that the State ranks as Nigeria's third largest producer of crude oil and natural gas. Having been so blessed with resources, both human and material, Akwa Ibom has only the sky as the limit of its political, social and economic advancement.

Indeed, there is no human community without its peculiar problems. Indications of development and growth are usually made manifest when

each community is committed to solving its problems, and succeeds in doing so. Akwa Ibom State cannot allow its growth to be marred by ethnic sentiments. Citizens of this great State should hold on to those values that unite them rather than to those that tend to divide. They must live and work together and ensure that the State distinguishes itself in greatness in consonance with the name "AKWA IBOM"

Since my arrival here, I have been apprised of expectations from the Federal Government by some citizens of Akwa Ibom. Issues such as the request for a reconsideration of the dichotomy between on-shore and off-shore sources of oil fields for purposes of reckoning rents and royalties seem very simple at first. They are, however, very difficult and complex matters defined only after prolonged and thorough-going analysis. The considerations involved in this case are weighty and will involve redressing virtually the entire range of indicators and factors utilized in the revenue allocation exercise.

The people of Akwa Ibom State no doubt greeted the decision of the Armed Forces Ruling Council to abandon the on-shore/off-shore oil dichotomy in order that communities may benefit from the mineral resources in their states. The Federal Military Government, I assure you, will see to the full implementation of that decision before it hands over power.

Although the Federal Government may not be in a position to come forward with a new oil-based industrial initiative here in the immediate future, it has however great faith, belief and confidence in Akwa Ibom sufficiently to pour more funds and effort to sustain the Oku Iboku Paper Mill.

We have gone further and inaugurated the project for the National Aluminium Smelting Company at its site in Ikot Abasi where I laid the foundation stone for the complex last year. No single investment compares with that easily in size, scope, capital involvement and ultimate impact here or in any part of our continent.

I am also touched by the State's moves to ensure that education is brought within the reach of everyone in the society through the establishment of the Akwa Ibom State Education Trust Fund, recently launched in Lagos. You were informed by my representative at that occasion, that my donation would be announced during this visit.

The Federal Military Government shares in your concern for the educational advancement of this State. We appreciate the philosophy of your State Education Trust Fund and will closely follow its progress especially in the area of the production of educational materials. To encourage the State Government in this pursuit, it is my pleasure to make, on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria, a donation of Fifteen Million Naira (₦15 million) towards this most worthy cause.

Your prayer for a tertiary institution owned by the Federal Government has been answered. Accordingly Federal University of Technology shall be established in Akwa Ibom State. The Federal Ministry of Education will be so directed to work out appropriate details in consultation with your State Government, to enable this University to take off before 1992.

I have also directed the Honourable Minister of Works and Housing to submit practical proposals with a view to rehabilitating those federal roads which are of crucial importance to the economic well-being of Akwa Ibom State. In particular, this administration will, as already announced, complete and commission the Imo River Bridge.

Similarly, Government has realised the strategic importance of Eket Airstrip and has decided to improve it, in order to meet our strategic and long-term national objectives.

Equally pertinent, is the interest of Government in the development of sports. The recent launching of the State's Appeal Fund was indicative of this concern. The Federal Military Government appreciates the efforts of the State in this direction and will look into your demand for assistance in building a new modern stadium. Towards this end, the National Policy on stadia will be re-examined in order to accommodate this request.

I am aware of your efforts to provide a befitting House of Assembly Complex and of a Specialist Hospital in this State both of which I laid the foundation stones. No doubt, your State does deserve a lending hand in its spirited effort to put in place these democratic and health institutions. The Federal Government, as a symbolic of its appreciation of the problems of the newest states, hereby donates the sum of ₦25 million as a grant

towards the construction of the Specialist Hospital, and another grant of ₦30 million for the construction of the State House of Assembly.

In the face of such display of solidarity with your aspirations and confidence in your future as a community, you must rise to the occasion and match our confidence with your own. Towards enhancing the quality of education to meet our national objectives, Government will provide all the necessary infra-structure needed for a conducive learning atmosphere at the Federal Government College, Ikot Ekpene.

As a Chief in Akwa Ibom State, I shall not have done you proud if I concluded my after-dinner speech without drawing attention to something which struck me in my overview of your State and its economy. I have noted that of the fairly decent range of industries engaged in manufacturing in Akwa Ibom State, each and every one is owned by government and that private initiative and enterprise seems to play very little or no part in industrial development. This I find curious, because it does not reflect the very large number of Akwa Ibomites who have made a big impact in the private sector. Nor does it square with your well-known and recognised achievement-oriented capabilities. The climate for private enterprise initiatives has never been better. Many of you have more than adequate means and more than the requisite capacity to attain great heights in this regard.

THE TRANSITION PROGRAMME

As you are aware, this Administration has set in motion a comprehensive transition programme, designed to ensure the emergence of an enduring democratic political system and culture. The two political parties put in place and based on accountability and equal participation by all, constitute in a way, a sure antidote to bitterness and discord generated by the numerous political associations which saw the light of day following the lifting of the ban on politics. The fruits of our political ingenuity, of our national maturity, and our ability to adapt to change, were made manifest during the last December 8 Local Government Election. It is on record that Akwa Ibom State not only conducted that election peacefully, but also ensured that her election results were among the first to be released in the country.

These are clear indications of your political maturity and consciousness, fair play and total commitment to the task of effacing the poor self image of which the black man is often a victim. I have no doubt that in subsequent elections, Akwa Ibom State will continue to demonstrate this level of awareness and understanding of the wind of change blowing across our continent. Fortunately, the State is blessed with abundant ingenuity bestowed upon its people by providence and by the forces of history.

The Federal Military Government is conscious of the need to bring about a new socio-political order and *ipso facto*, a relevant political class. It is against this background that we can better appreciate the ban placed on certain categories of persons, from participation in partisan politics. I feel particularly happy to note the peace and tranquillity in Akwa Ibom State, without which the transition programme cannot be implemented. I wish to appeal to the people of Akwa Ibom State and the entire Nigerian populace to co-operate with the Federal Military Government in implementing the residual part of the transition programme so that this Administration can hand over peacefully and smoothly to a democratically elected Administration in 1992.

By the same token, let me reassure you that we shall not leave any stone unturned in prosecuting the transition programme to its logical end. We are determined to protect the enormous social and economic investment we have made. We are also determined to ensure the sanctity of the electoral process and consolidate on the confidence which has been generated particularly in the voting process. We shall continue to take measures that will generate participatory democracy. I exhort the party leadership and their followership to live above board and to be guided always by their party constitutions. The parties must be institutionalised and allowed to be firmly rooted at the grassroots. This is the exciting challenge for the leadership of the parties.

Let me also seize this opportunity to warn those affected by the participation in Politics and Elections (Prohibition) Decree 1987 and as amended, to stay away from partisan party politics. The full weight of the law will be brought to bear on them if they contravene this decree. A word is enough for the wise! Their surrogates should also take note.

Of equal concern to this Administration is the issue of the forth-coming national census. We cannot over-emphasize the value of an acceptable head count in any country for purposeful planning and development. We are aware of its importance if a meaningful economic and social planning of our nation is to be a reality. I am delighted to observe that during the last Trial Census Exercise, your State, as usual, demonstrated a high level of enlightenment which resulted in that exercise being hitch-free here. I therefore have no doubt that the soil in Akwa Ibom State has been made sufficiently fertile for the 1991 national census. This is as it should be.

Fellow citizens of Nigeria, as we implement the Transition Programme, let the spirit of love, unity, commitment to the national cause, be our guiding light. Since the roots of our present socio-political history were formed by events of the past, we, today, as enlightened partners in the task of making Nigeria a peaceful and comfortable place to live in, must participate meaningfully in determining and influencing tomorrow's history.

Akwa Ibom State is a land of promise. I first noticed aspects of this promise as I drove into the State Capital on my arrival. The sign post demarcating planning limits of the Capital City drew my attention to "The Land of Promise". Rising structures within the city indicate hopes realised. This evening, "The Land of Promise" is also the theme of a drama piece staged for our entertainment. I have come, I have seen and I can confirm that the State is a land of hope and of promise which cannot but be fulfilled. Akwa Ibom is not only a land of promise. It is also a land of scenic beauty. Its natural beauty is refreshing and salubrious. Its flora and fauna are delightful to view and appreciate. For this reason, I recommend to all Nigerians to come here and spend their vacation. I am sure you will welcome them with your customary and famed hospitality. Yours is indeed a potential tourist industry to develop.

May I, however, make an important request. I want to urge you to continue to be good Nigerians, living in amity with your neighbours and in total support of the efforts of the Federal Military Government in transforming the economy of this nation in such a way that all of us will be proud to be Nigerians. As a State, you need a positive and collective will to progress.

To make and sustain a distinctive impact on the solution of your problems, your State needs and deserves a fusion of the talents and endowments of all its ethnic groups. Your strength lies in your unity.

I thank you most sincerely for all the care and attention that you, individually and collectively, have shown to me and members of my entourage to make our tour of your State successful, comfortable and rewarding.

Distinguished sons and daughters of Akwa Ibom State, this visit has been for me a satisfactory sojourn among friends, kinsmen, compatriots and kindred spirits with whom I have felt most decidedly at home. By the same token it has been, at times, a hectic and demanding one. You, like me, probably feel the need to rest; to digest the excellent food and beverages you have so generously been served; and to revel a little in the satisfaction with the numerous pleasant encounters we have all had in the hospitable care of the Akwa Ibom State administration. If so, I say a very hearty, thank you to one and to all, for being here to join in entertaining me and my entourage and for listening so intently.

Finally, I wish to thank the people of this State for coming *en masse* to welcome me and for supporting the Federal Military Government in its effort to improve the lot of Nigerians. My entourage and I are departing Akwa Ibom State with pleasant memories of your kindness and wonderful hospitality, which we shall relish for a long time to come.

I wish to once more recognise the efforts of your Military Governor for his brilliant performances so far. I am the least surprised as I have known Wing Commander Idongesit Nkanga since his Cadet days as a performer and achiever of results. As one of the best Pilots in the Nigerian Air Force, he has equally applied his skill and capabilities to pilot the affairs of Akwa Ibom State to the admiration of all. I should only urge you, citizens of Akwa Ibom, to co-operate with him for his continued success and in the overall best interest of your State.

The Military Governor, on your own part, I implore you to continue to put up your best in the service of mankind and especially in nurturing Akwa Ibom State to greater heights.

May I also congratulate Mrs Nkanga for supporting her husband in his demanding assignment.

VOTE OF THANKS BY THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF AKWA IBOM STATE OBONG UFOT EKAETTE, mni, AT THE STATE BANQUET ORGANISED FOR THE PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA GENERAL IBRAHIM BABANGIDA, CFR, fss, mni, ON APRIL 25, 1991

The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida,

Service Chiefs and Members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council,

The Military Governor of Akwa Ibom State,

Members of the National Council of Ministers,

My Lord, the Chief Judge,

Members of Akwa Ibom State Executive Council,

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

Your Highnesses, Traditional Rulers and Chiefs,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel highly honoured and privileged to have this opportunity to propose a Vote of Thanks to our dear President on behalf of the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State. We are overwhelmed with joy and lack words to express our deep gratitude to the President for his historic act of creating Akwa Ibom State on 23rd September, 1987 and for your generosity to this State as declared tonight. Every citizen of Akwa Ibom State and indeed the children yet unborn will always remember that memorable day and will forever be grateful to you, Mr President and the Federal Military Government. For giving us Akwa Ibom State, we say, *sosono-o*.

Mr President Sir, you did not only create Akwa Ibom State, you also did provide us with the wherewithal to run it. You made available the funds to prosecute the various programmes and projects in the State, even though like Oliver Twist, we have always tended to ask for more. It is noteworthy that you have always taken pains to send energetic and purposeful Military

Governors, to manage the affairs of this young but promising State. Last August, you thought it wise and timely to make yet another history for this State by appointing two indigenes as the Military Governor and Deputy Governor respectively. For these clear demonstrations of your love for and the special attention you have given to this State, we say once again *so sono-o*.

Furthermore, you have chosen a most opportune moment to come and see in person how Akwa Ibom State, your baby is growing and responding to the wind of change blowing across our nation. The visit has, no doubt given you an opportunity to make an objective assessment of our teething problems and our prospects. We sincerely hope that from what you have seen of your 3½ year old baby, the confidence you reposed in this State and its citizens has been amply justified and that you will return home on Friday satisfied that your baby is successfully grappling with the realities of existence.

Now, coming to your short but most memorable visit, you have given the cross section of this State, an opportunity to physically see, feel and even dine with their respected President for the first time. It is indeed a rare honour and privilege which we will cherish for a very long time. We are grateful to you for giving us this opportunity to express our appreciation for all you have done for us.

As a loving and understanding Father which Mr President is to this State, and conscious of our needs as one of your two youngest children, you have tonight assured us of additional resources to meet our pressing demands. You have announced a ₦25 million grant to us to enable the State Government to complete its ₦87 million Specialist Hospital. Mr President, you have also generously announced donations of ₦30 million towards the completion of Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly and ₦15 million towards the State Education Trust Fund.

In addition, Sir, you have also assured us that you will include Akwa Ibom State in the building of one of the new stadia planned by the Federal Military Government for some parts of the country as well as the expansion of the airstrip at Eket to accommodate more aircraft. Mr President has also announced the siting of a Federal University of Technology in the State. In particular you have graciously assured us that the decision to abolish on-shore/off-shore dichotomy in oil revenue sharing will be implemented.

Akwa Ibom State indigenes owe you a debt of gratitude for this bold decision. For all your kindness and love for us, we say a big Thank You.

The least that is expected of every Akwa Ibomite in return for your kindness, is for us to pledge our continued loyalty to you and the Federal Military Government and to assure you of our determination to work for the peace, progress and stability of this State and the nation at large.

Finally, I wish to thank Mr President's entourage for being such wonderful guests. Now that you have seen our problems and have witnessed the modest strides taken by this State, I am confident that you will not hesitate to put in a word or two on our behalf to Mr President whenever occasion demands.

To all our people who turned out in large numbers wherever we went, to show their appreciation to Mr President, and all those who contributed in one way or the other to the success of this memorable visit, I say thank you all.

Once again, I thank Mr President for making the people of Akwa Ibom State to realise their age-long dream and for your expressed delight with our modest efforts at welcoming you and your entourage.

I wish Mr President and his entourage God's journeying mercies as you return to Lagos tomorrow.

Thank you and God bless.

**SUMMARY OF MR PRESIDENT'S OFFICIAL ENGAGEMENTS
DURING HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO AKWA IBOM STATE
(APRIL 23 – 26, 1991)**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Nature of Engagement</i>
23/4/91	Briefing at Government House Banquet Hall, Uyo	Briefing
23/4/91	Courtesy Call on Paramount Ruler of Uyo	Courtesy Call
23/4/91	Akwa Ibom Hall	Commissioning
	Ring Road I	Cutting of Tape to open the Road
23/4/91	State Secretariat	Inspection
23/4/91	AKBC-TV – Ntak Inyang	Commissioning
23/4/91	Uyo Sports Stadium	Civic Reception
24/4/91	General Hospital, Ibiaku Ntok Okpo	Commissioning
24/4/91	Federal Government College, Ikot Ekpene	Inspection
24/4/91	Sunshine Battery Factory	Inspection
24/4/91	Abak Water-side Bridge	Commissioning
24/4/91	College of Education, Afaha Nsit	Inspection
24/4/91	Peacock Paints Factory, Ikot Ekan	Inspection
24/4/91	Local Government Secretariat, Ikot Edibon	Commissioning
24/4/91	Local Government Guest House, Ikot Edibon	Lunch

24/4/91	Odot, Ekpe Atai Local Government Area	Commissioning of Rural Electrification Project
24/4/91	Akwa Ibom Hall, Uyo	Command Performance
25/4/91	Specialist Hospital, Uyo	Laying of Foundation Stone
25/4/91	Qua Steel Products Factory, Eket	Inspection
25/4/91	Mbo River Bridge	Commissioning
25/4/91	James Town	Inspection of Naval Base
25/4/91	Maritime Academy of Nigeria, Oron	Inspection
25/4/91	Site of State House of Assembly	Laying of Foundation Stone
25/4/91	New Government Lodge	Inspection
25/4/91	Military Governor's Office Annex, Uyo	State Banquet
26/4/91	Press Conference at Officers Mess, 41 Motorized Battalion (<i>now Wellington Basse Barracks</i>) Nigerian Army, Ibagwa, Abak	Press Conference



Mbo Bridge during the inspection visit by Mr President

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