

MISTRUST IN IWOLAND AND WAY FORWARD

BEING TEXT OF LECTURE DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR ALAGBE WASIU
GBOLAGADE ON THE OCCASION OF SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF IWOLAND
DEVELOPMENT COALITION, ON SATURDAY 17TH, SEPTEMBER, 2016.

Protocols

I want to formally congratulate the executive officers and members of Iwoland Development Coalition for putting up this arrangement. Everything you are doing for the upliftment and progress of Iwoland attest to the fact that you are all hardworking, tenacious and patriotic.

It is worthy to note that the larger percentage of this work was lifted from Hon. Justice Falola's lecture that was delivered at Obafemi Awolowo University Ile Ife(OAU) on Saturday 5th March, 2016 during the occasion of 2016 "Eko/Eki" day of Federation of Iwoland Students Union.

Ile-Ife is the home to Iwo indigenes as claimed by Rev. Johnson and Prince Adelegan Adegbola FCPA in their separate publications.

“Prince Adekola Telu, the founder of the Ruling Dynasty in Iwo was the last son of Queen Luwo, the 16th Ooni of Ife. Because of his spirit of adventure, Prince Telu admonished his mother to break from her apron – spring to go on adventure. His mother granted this request and thereafter willed a beaded crown to him as a mark to distinguish him as a Crown Prince. Telu left Ile-Ife with his two brothers and a host of attendants. He headed for the unknown. However, one of his settlement was a place called Ogundigbaro which was a place located at the confluence of River Oba and River Osun.”

He and his followers were at this settlement for a number of years. Descendants of Prince Telu and his followers moved out in search of (the) new site which was at the southern part of the present site of Iwo.

This site Igbo Orita, was at a distance of about 6 kilometers from the center of the present Iwo, presumably at where the new Ibadan-Iwo Garage now situates. At Igbo Orita, Prince Ogunfenumodi who had eventually been made the ruler after the death of his father, Prince Telu. The present Iwo is ringed by a galaxy of adjoining towns such as Ile-Ogbo, Ikire-Ile, Telemu, Ogbaagba, Iwo-Oke, Bode-Osi, Oba Moro, Oluponna, Kuta , Agberire and many more. All these communities formed Iwo Local Authority District Council and later, Iwo Local Government Council. They jointly elected councilors to the Local Government Council, and Legislators to State and National Assemblies. Iwo Local Government Council was later dissolved and then emerged Iwo North, Iwo East and Iwo Central Local Governments. Again in 1988 , Iwo Local Government was divided into three local governments viz: Iwo Local Government, Ayedire Local Government and

Ola-Oluwa Local Government. It is instructive to note that, most of the adjoining communities emerged consequently upon the Yoruba internecine wars where many old communities were destroyed and internally displaced persons dispersed across wide land to and form new alliances and new settlements. For example R. A. Nafiu (1997) *Ile-Ogbo Town :Original and Development* (Joda publisher, Ibadan) reported that Lakale, the founder of Ile-Ogbo was the son of Bashorun Yau Yamba, the Bashorun of Oyo during the reign of Alaafin Ojigi who reigned sometimes between 1698- 1732. Kuta, Ile-Mowu and Ogbaagba are Owus. Johoson Samuel (1921) (first printing). The History of TheYoruba From The Earliest Time To The Beginning of the British Protectorate (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London) gave graphic details of these wars movement of people. See also Alli Ibrahim: The Making of Ile-ogbo Kingdom (1700-2015)(Global Image Printing and Publishing 2015 page 3). Iwo Town itself was a military camp during the Yoruba internecine wars. Ibadan army created a battalion at Iwo, from where devastating wars were launched to expand influence and to protect areas already liberated. Iwo then became quite influential and many army generals turned it their home during and after wars. Little wonder, at the height of her influence, Iwo produced two Olubadans of Ibadan, including Ali-iwo. Her suzerainty, extended to the present Iyana Offa, the present headquarters of Lagelu Local Government Council, Oyo State. Now, they are struggling to take away Ogburo and restrict the western boundary of Iwo to Odo Oba.

Distinguished guests, I went into these details in order to discover where the spirit of **“patriotism” was lost and mistrust started**. Wars have brought together different fellows and politics, rather than unite us has divided us all.

Therefore to build a sense of patriotism which, **Oxford Advance Learner Dictionary (International Students Edition) (New 8th Edition)** defines as : **“love of one’s country (town) and willingness to defend it “** there is bound to be a new thinking, a new approach and a new set of goals.

At this stage, I want to pay glowing tribute to the various generations of elites of Iwo and adjoining communities and towns, for bringing the various communities at par with their peers in the recent past in the area of modernity. I plead to be excused from mentioning names of our patriotic heroes, past for fear of omissions and contradictions. When Chief (Barrister) Gbadegesin Adedeji was the Chairman Iwo Local Government, he convened several meetings of notable individuals, including Chief Adeagbo Odeniyi, Chief Ben Adigun both of Oluponna, Chief R.A. Nafiu, Dr. Pade Aderibigbe, Dr. Ben Ogunkanmi all of Ile-Ogbo among others from the districts together with notable and highly respected personalities including Dr. Oluremi Atanda, Chief Seeni Olatokun and very many more, to fashion out how to provoke the spirit of patriotism and forge common agenda to move the communities forward. Due to certain inexplicable reasons people from the districts were edge out in subsequent deliberations. What emerged thereafter were institutions such as Iwo Board of Trustees (IBOT) , Iwo Development Council (IDC), Iwo Action Council (IWAC) and the like.

Apparently, that was one of the reasons the elites in the adjoining communities recoiled to their shells and rediscovered that they were treated as people that did not matter except during elections or rather , outsiders. Iwo land then transformed to Iwo, Ola-Oluwa, and Ayedire (AYIWOLA) based on sectional and emotive revolt. Professor Jaunice E. Olawoye in his compilation under the auspices of MacArthur Foundation title “**Ile-Ogbo Town and The University of Ibadan : A case Study of Community University Collaborate Development.** 2014 (Bukshi Prints and Publishing at pages 50-57) acknowledged the yeoman’s efforts of one Chief E. Adebayo Adegoke who almost single handedly brought Faculty of Agriculture Demonstration Farm of University of Ibadan to Ile-Ogbo. S.G. Laosebikan in his autobiography ‘**My Life** ‘ 2007 (Inter Press Limited at page 141)wrote of how himself , Hon. Katayeyanjue and Hon. Opakanmi as members of Water Resources Committee of the House asked for and received approval from Ogun and Osun River Basin Development Authority to site a project in their constituency. Going by Hon. Laosebikan’s account, he hijacked the project from his two colleagues who fought for it and took the project to his Obamoro Village. Individualism has led us to where we are and from here we can see the level of mistrust in our people.

Take another instance: when the State Headquarters of Osun State Agriculture Development Programme was located at Iwo, The State Government relocated the Zonal Headquarters to Ile-ogbo. Some people in Iwo rose against it and never to allow the Iwo Zonal Office relocated to Ile-Igbo. The problem is there till date. There is this Iwo Zone District Customary Court sited at Ogbaagba. Up till today some people are still

grumbling that the Institution should not be located in the district, but must be moved to Iwo. I am aware too that at a time, Ile-Igbo people were addressing their letters as “Ile-Igbo via Ibadan”. To me, that was going too far! Up till now, there is no acceptable protocol list of Iwo Traditional Council.

The lesson that can be drawn from all these is that while the adjourning Communities should refrain from indices of mistrust and suspicion of sabotage, there is need to reassure them too that nobody will pursue Machiavelli’s policy of “**Live and lets Live**”.

Again, when we talk of what Chinua Achebe referred to as “War of Blame” in his epic “**NO Longer At Ease**” Our people can be counted upon. Politics has been used to weaken our sense of patriotism, socio economic development and caused mistrust among our people. Let us hear from S.G. Laosebikan (Supra) again at page 144-145;

“Bola Ige lost the election, the result of which was announced on 16th August (1979). Before the controversial results were announced he had called the people of Oyo State to revolt if he was not announced the winner.

Early that fateful morning, I saw hundreds of angry school children and party stalwarts, some carrying used motor tyres and weapons running towards my house.

Their movement was not for peace. When they got to my house, they released missiles of stones at my house. I did not know they were roasting people with their tyres. Later I learnt Mr. K.O Akande was roasted to death in front of his house that morning. Chief Olumoye Ajao’s House was burnt. Chief J.A. Akinbami’s house at Water Works Area

was razed. Mrs. Lamuye's house near the General Hospital was badly damaged and Lawyer Aremu's house by the General Hospital was destroyed."

After destroying our houses for the children of other communities to live, what did we gain in return? Nothing. The highest government owned institution in Iwo Land or Iwo, Ayedire and Ola-Oluwa Local Government Areas are Secondary Schools. No Government University. No Government Polytechnic. No School of Nursing. The Federal Medical Centre that is being packaged for Osun State has been taken elsewhere. Some people are complaining that the impact of Bowen University, Iwo is not being felt as much on the socio-economic life of our communities. **The question now is what has been our gain from our vociferous noise in political arena and blind loyalty to political parties?** It took tremendous efforts before one of our sons could be made a Permanent Secretary recently when some communities have up to four of such. Virtually every family in Ode Omu, which is just three electoral Wards in Ayedaade Local Government Area of Osun State has produced either a Senator or a Federal Minister. Ife-Ijesa Senatorial District might have lost count of number of Ministers, Governors, and Deputy Governors they have produced. What empowerment and physical development have we benefitted from our near monopoly of the Office of Secretary to the State Government since the beginning of the Republic? A story was told of an event during Bisi Akande's era. Then our people reportedly challenged the government, they were reportedly replied that when people of other competing communities forward the names of their 'first eleven' with sterling curriculum vitae, we rather bring the dregs of the

populace to the table. The logic is harsh but sound. How can you expect people who have no other pedigree than being a Councilor or Ward Party executive member to be the Chairman where you have Engineers, retired Permanent Secretaries and Professors on seat. Although things later improved , our electoral investment virtually went with the winds

A few years ago, electronic and print media were awarded with a #50 Million naira worth of medical equipment launched by Boripe Local Government in Osun State. I was also present at a State Function in Ifetedo Town recently where, Mr. Governor praised the Chairman of the Local Government to high heavens over road construction. Also in the course of an Official Assignment, I had course to visit Ipetumodu in Ife North Local Government Area. The level of physical development at a particular market place was just massive. The question now is, where do these other communities get their own connection, their own fund and their own wisdom? On the other hand, why are we fixated, only to ruminate on past glory? There was a time that in the Old Oyo State, after Ibadan and Ogbomosho came Iwo before other towns. No one is actually sure of where we stand presently. I want to recall an episode again. When it was discovered that government officials at Local, State, and Federal levels were falling over one another to construct boreholes all over the places, and these boreholes dry up a day after commissioning, the Mogaji Idris Fasasi Family (RABSIH IMEC Ltd.) Iwo decided to construct one borehole at a strategic public place to serve as template for public service. Several years after (2003-till date) while the borehole donated by Mogaji 's Family to

public is still functioning till date, deepwells, motorized boreholes, solar powered boreholes, culverts, road etc are still in use.

We lost each time when we could not produce strong leadership at the centre any longer. We lost each time when we can no longer speak with one voice but speak with three voices.

Mistrust blew up in 1976 when 35 Councillors were elected to run the affairs of Iwo Local Council with the headquarters at the present City Hall. There were two factions among the then Councillors.

One faction was led by Late Chief Eniola Atanda and the other faction was led by Late Honourable Dairo and Chief Abiola Ogundokun. The faction of Late Chief Eniola Atanda was able to produce the Management Committee of the Council. Chief Eniola Atanda was elected as the Chairman by Other Councillors to be assisted by Late Oluwo of Iwo land Oba Asiru Tadese as Vice-Chairman and Supervisory Councillor for Education. The Dairo|Ogundokun Camp that lost out in the election now constituted themselves as opposition camp in the management of the Council. Thus, shortly after the election of **Chief Eniola Atanda** as Chairman of the Council, he was alleged and prosecuted for the purchase of stolen Volvo Car. He was eventually sentenced to prison. **This was the beginning of mistrust among political Class in Iwo land** because **Dairo|Ogundokun** camp was alleged to have masterminded the stolen vehicle problem of Chief Eniola Atanda. In 1981, when we had UPN and NPN as the prominent political parties in Iwo, the two camps were agitating for the merging of Iwo land to two different

States, the Atanda Camp were committed to be in the new Oyo State, while Dairo|Ogundokun Camp was interested to be in Osun State and **since then the level of political mistrust in Iwo had grown to a high level that two brothers in the same political party now find it difficult to share intimate relationship as the result of mistrust.**

In 1981, Hon. Dairo and Chief Abiola Ogundokun were in different political parties. Hon. Dairo was then an elected member of Oyo State House of Assembly on the platform of UPN while Chief Abiola Ogundokun was one of the notable leaders of NPN. In fact, he was then a Director at Daily Times. Chief Eniola Atanda was in UPN despite these , Hon. Dairo and Chief Abiola Ogundokun were together against Chief Eniola Atanda. The political mistrust has negative effect on the traditional institution of Iwo. In fact, it actually contributed to Iwo not having an Oba for a period of ten years. When the Politics of still birth third republic commenced, Iwoland started the era with mistrust.

Before the SDP(Social Democratic Party) and National Republican Convention (NRC) were decreed by Babangida Government, there were three major political movements. They were PF(Peoples Front) led by Yaradua, there was PSP (Peoples Solidarity Party) lead by leaders of defunct UPN and Republican Party (RP) lead by the then Council Chairmen and Councillors across the Federation. “Egbe Legbe Councillors ao ma wo ise won”. When eventually SDP and NRC were imposed, there was serious in-fighting within each of the two parties, for example, PSP and PF found themselves in SDP instead of working together at least at our community level, they operated as enemies within the

same political party, ditto for NRC. The situation was not different during zero party of Abacha era that produced Late Prince Fatai Adegbite as the Chairman of Iwo Local Government. We are all living witnesses to the conduct of our political leaders in Iwo since 1999 to date. **The level of mistrust is usually more prominent among members of the same political party. Most especially the party in government at the State level.** This has contributed to the total neglect of our Community by the successive governments in the State since 1999.

We lost it when professionals, academics and seasoned Administrators were displaced by Politicians in the psyche of our people.

There is however, a new beginning with the return of new Oluwo into Office. His Royal Majesty Oba Abdulrasheed Adewale Akanbi Telu I, is known to be energetic , dynamic, urbane , well connected widely travelled and citizen of the world. His Majesty should embark on mobilization of our people in the three Local Government Areas to queue behind him . Although everybody is needed, he should listen less to those who display arrogant disposition which is making a lot of people to lose interest in working for the group goal. Our politicians should be thoroughly screened to see how deep they are intellectually and what changes they can bear on our society before they are put up to represent us.

I was once a guest to Emir of Zauzau at his palace in Zaria, in Kaduna State. He stated on that occasion that his emirate spanned five. Local Government Areas. And that it was in his palace that each Local Government Officials present their development agenda for

the people. The people will then discuss and approve good ones, amend or reject others. Can we have such template at Iwo traditional council? Through this there will be even development. And government will serve the people rather than government officials.

We should take stock on the constituency projects allocated to us through Local, State and Federal Legislators and see which ones are working and which one exists only on paper. Hon. Justice Yinka Afolabi in his paper delivered at Ife Zenith Club 2016 Colloquium titled “**Ife Youth , Catalyst for change**” on Saturday January, 30, 2016 postulated on contemporary society at page 18-19 thus.

“There is the need for a forum to be created where our politicians will render account of their stewardship at least two times in a year. And a commensurate occasion should be organized annually to reward deserving politicians and other Ifes (other people) who have contributed to enhancing the fortunes of our youths.

It is time our politicians in all political parties come together and map out strategies to raise (Ife) youths above the poverty level they are presently battling.”

Recently a thinker observed that we have a couple of Generals in the Army and many more of their ilk in the Police and other forces and paramilitary services including Custom and Immigration in these areas referred to here as Iwo Land. We have at least three Vice Chancellors, several Professors. If we look closely, in banking we have our people. So also in the oil industry. Many Lawyers, Many Honourables, Judges, several Engineers. Young but big time entrepreneurs. Now how far have we mobilized these high

grade citizens to exhibit their sense of patriotism by showing that we love and need them. Have we been showcasing them so that they can come round to contribute their quota to development of our homeland?

I wish to passionately plead with His Majesty, the Oluwo of Iwo Land and indeed Iwo Traditional Council to seek out these people and organize something like “Royal Dinner” or “Colloquium” for them once a year, and through that , pass message across to them.

Human beings are capable of differentiating good from bad. Man is always capable and willing to do good. They only need a leader they can trust and a little push. Our people will display patriotism, stop supporting outsiders against their own kit and kin for selfish interest and petty jealousy, if they see good leadership that can re-orientate them. There will be excited socio economic development when our politicians copy the Musi shoes, the Aremu Motors, the Omo Odo Oba Hotels, the Princadaz Farms, Engineer Oriolowo Agric Ventures, See Bee Hotel and Event Center, RABSIH IMEC Aluminum Factory the SODAMUS Brother Investments e.t.c. by bringing home their investments, and stop funding Okada riders for the purpose of using them as political thugs to enhance electoral fortune.

Iwo is generally referred to as home to Muslim Ummah.

Today, there is no much respect for our Muslim Leaders in our town and state because there is no acceptable leader.

There are some Christians in Iwoland. Most of these Christians are neither strangers nor convertees. Mistrust in Christianity arises because of leadership tussle for CAN President. Over ambition among the top Pastors and Reverends can also cause mistrust among members. The past records of leaders must not be left behind.

Contradictory doctrine also aid mistrust in the Church. Example of this is the Baptist Church that did not allow some of the worshippers to be saying Halelluya in the Church. Eventually, some of the worshippers established their own Churches and called it Halelluya Baptist Church; Establishment of Penticostal Churches like Redeemer, Covenant, Deeper Life, Mountain of Fire and Miracles, Christ Resurrected, Behold, Christian International among others also caused mistrust. Indiscipline among members is also one of the major factors that causes mistrust in the church. Example is the establishment of Gospel Baptist Church.

Now, how many of our Ustas do we hear of as international and national preachers after late Sheikh Abubakre Baaki? Do we have Christian Clerics in the mould of Prophet S.K. Abiara, Daddy G.O. Adebayo, Reverend Ashimolowo , Bishop David O. Oyedepo etc. In our midst. If not, we need to do more. We must seek for excellence in all human endeavors.

Mistrust among the Traditional people in Iwoland is not all that pronounced. The only area of their differences is for the “Onisegun”, “Eleegun” and “Babalawo” to come together as one so that they can be worshipping together in Oke-Fa, Ile Isese on weekly basis. The superiority problems among these three sets of people should be looked into

and also settle for the sake of moving Iwoland forward. The leadership tussles among “Onisegun” should also be addressed for the sake of unity and progress.

This lecture will not be complete without seriously looking at the mistrust among our traders in Iwoland. It is very obvious that there is no 100% unity among Butchers, Odori Market traders e.t.c.. The reason behind this is nothing but leadership tussle and over ambition. The NURTW (National Union of Road Transport Workers) and all others segments should be united. The Artisian do not have trust in themselves.

Further on, encouraging patriotism, the Olowu of Kuta, Oba Hammed Adekunle Oyelude Tegbosun III has it as a policy that before he can install anybody as a Chief, such must erect a building in Kuta community. The incumbent Oluwo of Iwo too once made a public statement that anybody that is seeking to be given Chieftaincy title must show evidence of his or her physical development of a public or private institution in the city. No doubt, these are well thought out policies that will improve the land scape of our communities if all our Obas adopt them.

Our patriotic zeal will grow when politics and politicians are positively inclined to our overall community development. When our Obas, industrialists, public servants and professional elites take charge, show unity of purpose and exhibit honest leadership, and encourage us to see ourselves as one people, things will change.

More importantly new cancaus of young leaders including students who are less concerned with sectional orientation, who will do away with the archetypal and mundane

superiority complex of the past emerge to form central , intercity and inter Local Government Unions.

Way Forward

In addition to some of the way forward that I have mentioned in this lecture, the following can also be of immense benefit

1. We need experienced , well established and educated people to come and join political movement for the sole purpose of moving Iwoland forward
2. Our religious leaders need to provide a platform for politicians to come together under their spiritual guidance.
3. Different associations in Iwo like IWAC, IBOT, IDC (Iwo Development Council) Should maintain political neutrality in essence, those that are interested in any of these associations should stay away from politics so that the bodies will have the power and authority to call politicians to order once they are politically neutral.
4. Oba should also be seen to be politically neutral.
5. Political Class should be discouraged from do or die politics. Party in government should be tolerant to the party in opposition and members of the ruling party should not victimize their opponents.
6. Isokan Muslimu must be empowered and programed to serve all Muslim. Ditto for CAN at our community level. CAN must be well positioned for all Christian in our community.

7. All Muslims in Iwo must give respect to Iwo Central Mosque. Because the central mosque belongs to Iwo Community.
8. In order to overcome all these problems, Kabiyesi Oluwo of Iwoland must organize a peace and reconciliatory meeting(s) between league of Imams and other Islamic societies.
9. Peace and reconciliatory meeting should also be extended to “Awon Onisese”.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the mistrust among the Chiefs and Iwo Traditional Council must also be addressed because the palace is the image of Iwoland. Kabiyesi should work on palace Secretariat, so that the Chiefs will have a defined roles and functions that befit their respective offices.

Thank you very much for listening.

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