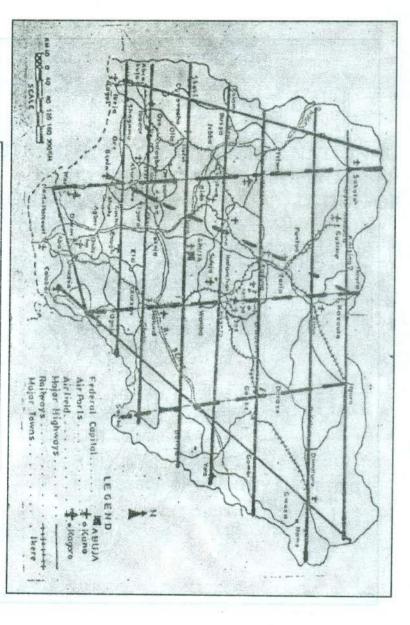


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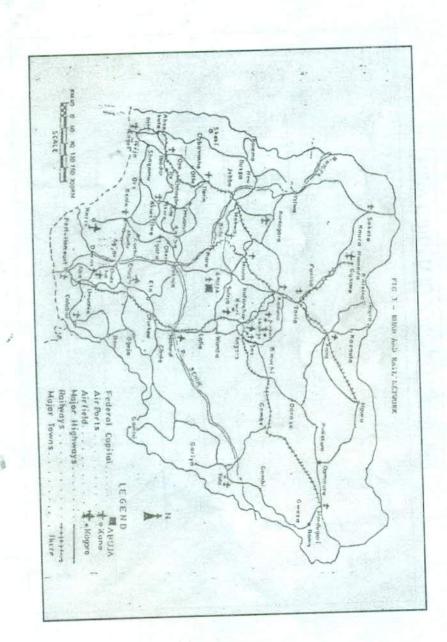
## CONSTRUCTION AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION:

BY
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**INAUGURAL LECTURE SERIES 3** 



# NEW GRIDED RAIL/ROAD NETWORK



### CONSTRUCTION AND COMMON TO THE PROPERTY OF T

STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING NATIONAL UNITY THROUGH THE REDESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND PRIVATIZATION OF NEW ROAD AND RAIL NETWORKS IN NIGERIA.

BY

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### 1.00 ABSTRACT

This paper defined construction and aligned that definition to its use as a veritable tool for national integration. National integration was reviewed from historical perspectives linking poor and inadequate communication to the divisive tendencies which impacted negatively on national cohesion. Two principal means of communication, namely: the road and the rail systems were spotlighted as subjects that deserve urgent national attention for the achievement of unity through infrastructural provisions. It was argued that the failure of the public road and rail systems to satisfy the expectations of the Nigerian public was an outcome of the administrative inefficiencies prevalent in the colonial-oriented Nigerian Public Service system and also due to the non-availability of adequate public finance. Therefore, a call was made for a radical and a revolutionary re-design, construction and privatization of new integrated road and the rail systems. The concepts of privatization were discussed which pointed out that there is a need for Nigerian to realign with the new world capitalist and open market mechanisms where Nigerians and foreigners could participate to provide viable private road and rail systems. A suggested plan was presented for new national grided and integrated road and rail systems that could enhance the speedy achievement of national unity.

KEYWORDS: road, rail, finance, debt, competition, inefficiency, economy, land.

### 2.00 INTRODUCTION

The Chairman, Mr. Vice Chancellor, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, we have assembled here today to discuss some ways and means of moving Nigeria forward as an indivisible nation. We have lived together as a country for almost one hundred years and we hope to continue living together in order to be a light and a sign of hope to black people all over the world. The unity of Nigeria is of political, economic and social significance to the African continent. Actually, it may be claimed that the success story recorded in Nigeria (in its *unity-in-diversity* framework) gave birth to the formation of the erstwhile Organisation For African Unity, OAU, ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, AU.

In order to solidify the unity existing in Nigeria, the academic community is bound to beam a searchlight through its own theory-based approaches in order that the entire Nigerian nation may establish some sound basis for evolving some practical solutions to Nigeria's problems. Universities, sometimes, called the "Ivory Tower", should tower above all ambiguous assumptions, unfounded beliefs, falsehood, miracles, and, suspicion, in order to resurrect and launch the society to a path of continuous progress.

This Federal University of Technology, Minna located in the North Central Geo-political zone of Nigeria, and which was set up over 20 years ago, has been a centre of academic excellence and a place where all Nigerians meet, unite, learn and research together. Today we shall focus on how to use an applied construction technology philosophy to achieve effective national integration. It is well to note that Niger State is best positioned for holding serious discussions on the national integration of Nigeria. Going back to history, it should be noted that Bishop Adjai Crowther anchored his ship at Baro, Niger State by 1840 to preach Christianity and to introduce modern education. Bishop Adjai's exploit of about 160 years ago taught us that one might not be an indigene of an area before serving that area. Niger State was the place where the famous Scottish Explorer, Mungo Park, paid the supreme sacrifice in the quest for locating River Niger a river that gloriously, naturally and longitudinally integrated a large part of is now known as the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Thus, his missionary and educational services were integrative in nature. It was in Niger State that Lord Lugard sojourned to solidify the formation of the erstwhile "Protectorate of Northern Nigeria" with its capital at Zungeru. After administratively and militarily integrating the former Northern Nigeria, he stayed back at Zungeru

to resurrect the concept of the Amalgamation of the Protectorate of Northern and Southern Nigeria. After perfecting that concept at Zungeru, he then moved down to Lokoja. Zungeru later turned to be the birthplace of Nnamdi Azikiwe who though born of igbo parents, became an apostle of Nigerian independence and unity. Zungeru was also the birthplace of Odumegwu Ojukwu who later on, primarily questioned through armed conflict, the existence of the Nigerian Federation. Niger State also gave birth to General Abdulsalami Abubakar who magnanimously and successfully ended military governance in Nigeria and gloriously enthroned democracy to Nigeria. By assembling here today, we are celebrating democracy for it is only in democratic societies that open debates can be conducted on matters pertaining to national development.

As a quantity surveyor, I wish to discuss how to use construction for achieving national integration in our contemporary times, given the limited financial resources at our disposal. There are some on-going debates in Nigeria on the privatization of infrastructural works in Nigeria. The Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN) in its 12<sup>th</sup> Engineering Assembly held in Abuja, July 2003, discussed at length on that topic area. However, it focused strictly on the privatization of engineering infrastructure in Nigeria:- The role of the engineering family". On the other hand, this paper focuses on how to use revolutionary construction concepts and the privatization of infrastructural works to achieve national unity. It is a welcome development that privatization is now being discussed not purely from the eyes of the Bureau of Public Enterprises which hitherto had concentrated on the sale of public property but from the eyes of engineers, construction economists, architects and other construction scientists, the University community, and the general public.

The discussions to be held will briefly focus on:- (1) construction, (2) national integration, (3) land transportation and national integration, (4) politics, communication and national integration, (5) the Nigerian Public Service sector,(6) the motor road network system, (7) the Nigerian rail system, (8) privatization, (9) participation in business and construction, and, (10) some tactics and strategies for privatizing constructional works in order

to achieve national integration.

### 3.00 CONSTRUCTION

As construction is being used to control the economies of nations, it is always strongly related to politics, economics, sociology and the legal

framework. Political participation in construction planning is obligatory in the modern world democracies. Construction cannot progress in a weak and docile economy. Construction cannot feature where there is social distress and social instability, (Allison, 1973; Mogbo, 1998).

The importance of construction in any national economy stems from three characteristics: firstly, its size, secondly, that it provides predominantly investment goods and thirdly, that government is the client for a large part of its work. The government, in managing the economy, attempts to achieve four main objectives: (i) solvency, that is the ability to pay its way abroad by balancing the payments made for goods and services, (ii) to maintain an acceptable level of the employment of resources, particularly manpower, (iii) the stimulation of growth i.e. the increase in the amount of goods and services which a country produces and which it is able to consume in absolute terms, and, (iv) to effectively control inflation, (Hillebrandt, 1974).

Generally, the term "Construction" refers to the provision of infrastructural facilities like roads and railways, harbours and ports, airfields, dams and power stations, fresh water supply, drainage and buildings. Infrastructural works directly and indirectly impact on human lives at local, national and international levels. Construction works and construction costs take into consideration, the physical resources needed for construction:—money, market, materials, men machines and management. The consideration of those six factors cannot be divorced from a good knowledge of politics, economics, and sociology, (Mogbo, 1976;Holmes, 1983; Mogbo, 1998.)

### 4.0 NATIONAL INTEGRATION

Although construction is a very important factor for the progress of any nation, to us in Nigeria, what is of primary importance is the survival of Nigeria as a viable nation state. A popular Igbo word, "Igwebuike" means when translated to English, "unity is strength". Once we are united, we shall be capable to strengthen our social, economic, and political aspects of life. On the other hand once we are divided, we cannot achieve much. The post civil war Nigeria has given birth to a strong united black African nation. It was through our unity that we were able to influence some significant political trends that left the emancipation of our African brothers in Southern Africa. It was from our internal unity that we were able to work along with other neighboring states to establish the ECOWAS, which is being transformed into a strong West African political entity. The unity we have in Nigeria

emboldened us to enforce national unity in Sierra Leone when that country was trying to disintegrate. Currently, we are playing key diplomatic roles towards the integration of the Sudan, Liberia and Cote Delver which are

being torn apart by the forces of ethnicity.

The constitution of Nigeria (1979) departs from that of the 1963. That of 1979 has explicit provisions aimed at national integration. In section 14(3), the 1979 constitution stipulates that: "The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall, be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies", (Okongwu, 1984; Okigbo, 1986).

In order to achieve national integration, we need to have easy access to all nooks and corners of the Federation. Before the advent of the white man to the west coast of Africa, we all lived in different tribal enclaves or nationalities. (Dike, 1956). In contemporary times, It is only through the provision of good and sufficient quantum of roads and railway networks as well as other interlinking infrastructure that sustainable national integration may be speedily achieved. In recent times, the world is becoming a global village, principally, through the provision of modern telecommunications facilities. In our own case, our priority will be to struggle to develop some significant infrastructural works that would turn Nigeria to be a "village".

The concept of modern national integration could be traceable to the famous Lord Durham's Report of the 1800s. Lord Durham's Report which was later regarded as The Magna Carta of the British Empire, in essence, provided the framework for the amalgamation of the French Canada (Quebec Provinces) and the English speaking Canada (Ontario Provinces) to form the present day Canada. The Federal constitutions of Australia, India, and Nigeria were modeled to that of Canada. At various stages, the various constitutions of Nigeria have been emphasizing on unity in diversity. (Anene

et al, 1966).

National integration is now the order of the day. By the middle of the eighteenth century, The English, the Welsh and the Scott integrated to form the United Kingdom. The United States of America is an amalgamation comprising mainly groups of old England colonies. The Russian Federation is also a union of some previously independent East European nations. Both the Republics of India and China are unions that have formed federations with vast areas of land and with populations which are over 1 billion people in

each case. (See Figs 1 & 2, which show how the US and India are physically integrated by large network of roads and railways). The new European Union is metamorphosing to a United States of Europe with a common parliament and currency. In the UK, China and India, there are wide networks of motor roads, railways and waterways that facilitate the integration of the various federating units. A recent example is the construction of the Euro Tunnel connecting the British Isles with mainland Europe. That tunnel facilitates the interaction between Great Britain and mainland Europe. The construction of roads and the establishment of viable railway routes is therefore of primary relevance to the integration of various peoples of Nigeria, (Mogbo 1998b).

### 5.00 LAND TRANSPORTATION AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION

In 1914, what must have propelled Lord Lugard, the then Governor of Nigeria, to amalgamate the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria with the Colony of Lagos to form a single British Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria must have been chiefly due to :- (i) creating a single and large market that could better serve the British interest, and, (ii) to reduce the cost of British administration. Lord Lugard must have been aware that Nigeria had over 300 tribes and about 600 language groups. His Amalgamation Act was, perhaps, really not directed toward achieving social and political integration of the present Nigerian nation; probably, it was to serve the British economic interest of the formation of a karge colonial market outpost. The *amalgamation* led to the construction of the north-south railway system, (Anene *et al.*, 1966)

The railway system constructed by the British in Nigeria was mainly designed for the carrying of goods (groundnut, cotton, palmoil and coal) from the hinterland to Lagos and Port Harcourt seaports for export to Great Britain the then colonising authority. The railway system also served the purpose of enhancing traveling for government officials round the country. A civil servant transferred from Port Harcourt to Lagos had to travel first, from Port Harcourt to Kaduna, and, secondly, from Kaduna Junction down to Lagos. It used to take four days for such long journeys! There was no East-West rail route neither was there any (North-West) to (North East) route (say from Sokoto to Maiduguri). (See Fig. No 1)

In Southern Nigeria, the British constructed circuitous roads that ran from Asaba through the hinterland of the former Western region (Asaba, Benin, Akure, Ilesha, Ibadan, to Lagos). There was no bridge linking the former Eastern Region with the former Western Region. Pontoon services

were, however, used to ferry passengers and goods across the River Niger from Onitsha to the Asaba end. The untared motor road that linked the former Eastern Region with the North passed through hills and steep valleys. The colonial road network did not facilitate the social and economic

integration of Nigeria.

The inland waterways along Rivers Niger and Benue appeared not to have been given a boost by the British. However, it was through those waterways (particularly the Niger River route), which was explored by the Clapperton and Lander brothers as well as Mungo Park that Lord Lugard and other British colonizers, particularly, The Royal Niger Company, used to penetrate the hinterland for the purpose of business and administration. Bishop Adjai Crowther in the 1800s also used the Niger waterways to spread education and christianity to Baro, Lokoja, Onitsha, and, later, down to some parts of the then Oil Rivers Protectorate (Dike, 1956).

### 6.00 POLITICS, COMMUNICATION AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION.

Due to the underdeveloped communication system prevalent at the turn of the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, tribal enclaves were living almost in isolation. Few tribes knew little about others. Many did not know that there was a country called Nigeria. Some of those that knew about the existence of Nigeria simply regarded it as a mere British possession, (Anene. et al,

1966).

The late Herbert Macaulay and other early fighters for the independence of Nigeria were based in Lagos and initially concentrated their political activities around Lagos. The commencement of the first nominated Legislative Council had representatives mainly from Calabar, Lagos and Ibadan. Regrettably, the North was not well represented in that Council, perhaps because of lack of easy means of traveling down to Lagos for Council meetings. Due to pressure from Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Lagos independence political movement decided to enlarge its political influence to the hinterland and eventually, a national political movement was formed, and, was called, *The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons.* (NCNC) The light was thus lit for the political independence of a united Nigeria.

Communication became a hindrance towards the passing of the message for a case for national independence and integration. Traveling round the country was not easy. Railway travel was tedious and time-consuming. In order to hasten the speed of public enlightenment through the

press, Nnamdi Azikiwe the well known journalist, nationalist and Africanist, set up local newspaper depots located at:- Lagos, Ibadan, Onitsha, Port Harcourt, Kano, Warri and Enugu. His prominent news papers were:- (i) The West African Pilot based at Lagos, The Southern Nigeria Defender based at Ibadan, The Comet based in Kano, and The Sentinel based at Enugu. It is some other papers were established at Onitsha, Port-Harcourt and Warri. Nnamdi Azikiwe established those press outposts because of the lack of interconnecting roads and reliable motor vehicles that could have facilitated newspaper printing and distribution from a central location. Those local newspapers served the purpose of political enlightenment for independence. However, while nearly each community was getting enlightened for political independence and national unity, not much was achieved in social and economic spheres because of lack of adequate basic integrating facilities like the railway and road network.

The lack of social and economic unity directly and indirectly influenced the pre-colonial political scene in Nigeria. While some nationalists were on the vanguard for national independence, the unexposed citizens were more concerned with tribal unity since the Nigerian experiment was strange to them. It led to the formation of tribal parties, and, in the words of Azikiwe, to the "Pakistanisation" of Nigeria into three Federal regions with Southern Cameroons splitting from the former Eastern Region to become the fourth region within the Nigerian Federation.

The poor road connections that existed between Nigeria and its fourth region, the Southern Cameroons, largely contributed to the political, social, and, economic alienation that propelled Hon. John Foncha and other Southern Cameroons legislators to opt out of the Nigerian nation and to later amalgamate with their kit and kin in the Cameroun Republic. If the then Southern Cameroons had remained in Nigeria, perhaps, the present "Bakassi" tormenting and unfortunate issues could not have surfaced and we could have had a larger federation.

The inadequate social and economic cohesion brought about by the lack of insufficient communication infrastructure may have contributed largely to the misunderstanding and mistrust which manifested themselves in the emergence of political tumult that catapulted itself to the January 1966 military coup and the resultant 30 month civil war. General Gowon who realized that fact, in 1973, (i.e. after three years after the war), established the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in order to integrate future leaders with communities other than their own. Significantly, also at the end of the civil war, General Gowon declared, "No Victor, No Vanquished". He then

launched the 3Rs Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction. As well, in order to improve social and economic interaction, the Federal Government mounted an ambitious road project that spanned across the country. As expected, the administration of the monumental construction works involved was undertaken by the Nigerian public service. (See Fig. No. 3 for Federal Roads and rail routes.)

### 7.00 THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR

Nigeria inherited a straight-jacketed bureaucratic British Colonial Public Service which has remained dormant despite the various overhauls that were injected into it since independence. Because it is taken as the white man's job, it is not operated in a business-like manner. The inherent weakness in the operation of the Nigerian Public Service has provided the inevitable inefficiency prevalent in the government's method of handling of the public sector infrastructural development works. The present downsizing exercise of the public service is an outcome of it embarrassing position in the scheme of things.

The modern public service in Nigeria is not run as businesses. In actual fact, it should be run in a businesslike manner in the sense of conserving and utilizing available resources for the achievement of the best possible results. The public service should eliminate red tape; being fully and readily responsive to the needs of the public, who constitutes their 'customer' and employers. Also, it should be expeditious in the dispatch of its functions. Essentially, the service is expected to do away with all the stigma usually associated with government service bureaucracy. Those in charge can be seen as managers in the business sense of the term. Public institutions tend by nature to be more wasteful of resources than private business institutions, (Adebayo, 1981, Akpan, 1982).

A number of reasons can be adduced for the inefficiency of the public service: - (i) the Public Service is in a sense, everybody's business, because every member of the public has a share in it. In private business, shareholders are selective, limited, and individually identifiable,; their share contributions are voluntary and also selective, (ii) in public business, the share contributors i.e. the taxpayers make their contributions as a matter of duty, and continue to do so to maintain the services without bothering about what returns they have as individuals within a polity, (iii) there is an erroneous belief among people that public funds can be unlimited, because, government can always raise whatever money it needs for its services, (iv)

Government's main source of funds is the taxpayers, who can only contribute to a limited extent. That is why even the wealthiest of government frequently resort to loans for the financing of major projects and even for short-terms needs, (Akpan, 1982).

As discussed above, the inefficiency inherent in the Nigerian public service system makes it imperative for us to relieve that sector of the burdensome work of administering construction works of national importance particularly the road and railway systems.

### 8.0 THE MOTOR ROAD NETWORK SYSTEM IN NIGERIA.

### 8.01 The General Trend of the Motor Road Systems

The efficiency and equity of the production, exchange and distribution systems within a nation-state have their roots in the socio-economic and political environment of that country. More specifically, the institutionalized organization of the production and redistribution process in any economic system influences significantly, the pattern of economic development, the distribution of the fruits of economic development between the component spatial units and populace, and the spatial organization of socio-economic activities. In most developing countries today, some major internal development problems relate to the lopsided and inequitable distribution of whatever meager resources they have among the various segments of the societies and the perpetuation of some in egalitarian institutions and policies, which in turn, further compound the problems of development, (Bolade and Adelamo, 1986).

Many poor countries lack the physical infrastructure to facilitate the adequate distribution of food and other goods. In Nigeria for example, many of the villages and farm settlements where most of the food consumed in the country are produced can hardly be reached by motor vehicle during the rainy season. The Mambilla Plateau areas in Taraba and Adamawa states are supposed to be among the most fertile lands in Africa with the most suitable climatic conditions for the production of such crops as tea, wheat, Irish potatoes, malt and a variety of vegetables. Regrettably, most of that area are to this day, inaccessible by road. The riverine areas are so poorly connected with the rest of the country that Nigerians are unable to benefit from the enormous resources available in such places. It was noted worldwide, that thousands of people have continued to die of starvation in Ethiopia during the drought that devastated that country. Unfortunately, such

incidences continued long after the arrival of relief, because the necessary infrastructures for effective distribution were not in place. Thus, there might be enough food to go round the masses in the poor countries, and even in times of disaster, if only it can be distributed properly through the availability of good network of roads (Ehusani, 1993).

8.02 Nigerian Roads

Total road length increased from 59, 082km in 1958 to 95,374 km in 1972, an increase of 61%, which gives and annual growth rate of 4%. Tarred road length increased from 6,283km in 1958 to 18,109 in 1972, an increase of 188%, which gives an average annual growth rate of 13%. Whereas tarred road length was about 11.1% of total road length in 1958, by 1972, the percentage was almost 19. Vehicular traffic has similarly grown over that period. Also that period witnessed average annual registrations of 6586 of commercial vehicles, 12,043 of private cars and taxis, (14.06%), commercial vehicles (4.62%) and tractors and trailers (1.53%). From a situation where the road system was designed for export produce evacuation and administrative purposes, it has now progressed through greater integration, to provide support for a rapidly expanding economy. In spite of this shift of emphasis, the roads have also come to play a dominant role in export produce and import goods movement. The increasing importance of the road network is likely to continue unless there are major structural/organizational changes in the railways, (Idachaba; 1976).

The lengths of the Federal trunk roads have continued to grow for another period 1973-2002. The construction of the Nigeria's portion of the Inter-Africa Highways considerably aided the expansion of road network. The construction of Asaba Onitsha bridge and other bridges located at places such as Makurdi and Lokoja, has assisted in remarkable social and economic interaction. However, over the years, that road network which is government-owned, faced some major problems: (i) the inability of Government to satisfy all parts of the country with adequate road network, (ii) the inability of government in carrying out acceptable qualitative maintenance operations on the existing road network, (Mogbo, 2000) The second factor led to recent publication of an Editorial in a National Daily heralding the unfortunate scene, as follows:-

Apparently in response to scathing criticisms against its perceived insensitivity to the plight of road users, government came up with the claim

that it spent N300 billion on road construction and rehabilitation nationwide, between 1999 and 2002, distributed as follows: North East, N63 billion; North West, N32 billion; North Central, N74 billion; South South, N61 billion; south East, N50 billion and South West, N55 billion. But while officials bandy about the huge sums purportedly spent on road maintenance, the state of the nation's highways has steadily worsened. What used to be potholes about a year ago has turned gullies or craters, owing to lack of maintenance. The government should hasten up steps to repair the nation's bad roads. And since the ministry of Works appears overwhelmed in this regard, government should hasten the take-off of Road Maintenance, Agency (RMA), whose bill was passed recently. The RMA must not just be another outpost of a redundant bureaucracy, but an agency out to wrest our roads from further ruin. Besides, the nation's prostrate railway system needs resuscitation through private sector participation. It is yet unclear why the ill-maintained road network is preferred to the more efficient and cost-effective rail system in heavy-duty haulage. Reviving the rail system is, therefore, a major step; towards freeing the nation's roads from the wear and tear inflicted by heavy haulage trucks. (The Punch Editorial, 2003)

### 9.00 THE NIGERIAN RAIL SYSTEM

The railways started as a government department in 1898, and, later became a commercial outfit in 1955. Apart from some few post independent extensions, the existing railway network was constructed between 1898 and 1965. It comprises 3,505km of single-track route, all of 1.067 metric gauge. The railways serve the two major parts, Lagos and Port Harcourt and there are railheads at Kaura Namoda, Nguru, Jos and Maiduguri and other rail lines of less importance at Baro and Idogo. The system provides long hand traffic, a kind of traffic in which the railway has an inherent competitive advantage over other modes of transport. Axle load is limited by several stretches of lightweight rail, and operating speeds are restricted by extensive distances of curved tracts as well as steeps and grades in parts of the system, (Idachaba, 1976; Philips, 1986).

The railway system of any economy is expected to play a very significant role in national economic development. Apart from giving direct employment to several thousands, several thousands more depend on the rail system for sustenance by supplying various goods and services. In a critical period in our economic life when the costs of petroleum products and bad roads have contributed to the high cost of goods, the railways should

have played significant role were they on their feet. The Nigerian Railway is an example of government business that has everything it takes to be self-sustaining and the possibility of creating wealth for the people, but it is far from doing just that. The only reason why it is not performing is because it is government-owned. In an era when majority of Nigerians are experiencing severe poverty, it has become totally unacceptable for the peoples' investments that the government is holding in trust to continue to be wasted. If these investments are put into judicious use, Nigerians will be amazed at the way the beleaguered economy will once again revive. Actually, we do not need external loans, which our government collect to execute frivolous projects that don't benefit the people. What is prudent is for government to hand over the Railway Corporation to the private sector who will turn it around. Will government sell the railways along with other businesses, which she is still holding on the people's behalf? (Da Silva, 2003)

Discussions so far held on the Nigerian Public Service, the Nigerian motor road system and the rail system suggested that some workable alternatives be devised that would ameliorate the situation. A suitable alternative is a totally new design, construction and privatization of an integrated road and railway system.

### 10.00 PRIVATIZATION

In the United States of America, most of the development projects are owned by the private sector. Although there are state and federal roads in the U.S., the existing private roads have helped to solve the road problems The U.S. railway system is not owned by the U.S. of that country. government but rather by large companies. Perhaps, the background of Nigeria's dependence on the government for the construction of roads and railways must have stemmed from its colonial ties with the U.K. The UK, a former world colonizing power, had for many years, accumulated much wealth from nearly all parts of the world. The UK government, therefore, had enough funds to finance the various highways, canals and "tubes", namely, the State owned, British Rail, British Steel, etc. However, with the independence of most of her colonial possessions, Great Britain gradually lost its enviable and easy means of funds. As a result, the United Kingdom has recently looked inwards and introduced the concept of privatization of her infrastructural works. In particular, Britain has been succeeding with the privatization of the road and rail sectors, (Mogbo, 2000).

In the 1980s when the British Government embarked on its

privatization programme which is considered as one of the most extensive and successful, little did people imagine that privatization would eventually become a worldwide phenomenon cutting across the developed and developing economies. Since that time, the wave of privatization has spread to Asia, the Americas and Africa. The programme has also cut across several sectors such as power, telecommunications, water, banking, hotels, airways and railways. (Oladimeji, 2000).

Nigeria can be able to solve the problem inherent in her communication system by going private with government as a collector of taxation and a general guardian and interpreter of national policies and legislation. If not that the private sector rose up to provide some suitable alternatives to *The Nigerian Airways*, perhaps, in recent times, we could not have been enjoying air travels in Nigeria. If not that some foreign private telecommunication companies came to establish themselves in Nigeria, the outstanding success in wireless communication could not have been achieved through the dependence on state-owned NITEL, (Mousalli, 2000; Akinsanya, 2000)

El Rufai (2002) had pointed out that *Privatization* has become a major element of economic reform as well as an important instrument for advancing the competitiveness of nations. He also summarized the essentials of privatization for Nigeria:- (i) focus of the privatization programme is on monopoly sectors leave competitive markets alone for now. (ii)Steering Committees Oversee Policy reform in monopoly sectors (iii) Undertake sector restructuring e.g. NEPA, NRC, NPA (iv) publish clear, transparent licensing and competition rules. (v) government should legislate, regulate and tax businesses, not be an operator, competing with its citizens, (vi) government should forge partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders in policy formulation, reform and implementation, (vii) the economic sectors requiring focused reform, investment and competition are:-

- (a.) Electric Power the lowest per capita consumption on earth,
- (b.) Telecommunications the third lowest tele-density on earth,
- (c.) Oil and Gas-9thlargest producer faces queues often, and
- (d.) Transportation rail, ports and aviation which are virtually liabilities.

The major socio-political problems that have arisen from the first attempt at our privatization and commercialization process must be properly resolved to ensure that the programme is not derailed so that its many possible benefits could be harnessed for the Nigerian economy and people. The following factors should be seriously considered in devising any form of

privatization policy in Nigeria: (a) strong ideological opposition to the programme, which is perceived as a dictation of the West, and hence, a new, form of economic and political imperialism to be resisted and opposed at *All* cost, (b) fear of massive unemployment from the expected significant improvements in efficiencies in the privatized sectors, especially in view of the existing large cadre of unskilled or poorly skilled that may be ill equipped for employment in a modern and efficient economy. The economics and politics of privatization and commercialization should also be considered.:(i) opposition from politicians and Government officials, (ii) the fear of marginalization by ethnicities in the Nigerian society which feel they are not currently well placed to secure for themselves, a fair or equitable portion of the national assets being re-distributed via privatization, and, (iii) the fear of domination of privatized entities by large institution or corporate (core) investors, (Price WaterHouse, Cooper, 2002; Akinsanya, 2002; Oladimeji, 2002).

There is a need for a workable legal frame work to be established for both privatization and commercialization. The legal framework for privatization and commercialization is pertinent to the success of any privatization programme because the means of translating Government policy of privatization into action and the transfer of assets or proprietary interest is through appropriate legal framework and strong institutional arrangement for the transfer of assets or proprietary interest. An unsatisfactory legal structure with weak institutional arrangement, will not encourage investors. A good legal framework provides certainty and transparency as rules are set out clearly and concisely at the outset. Privatization is both a process and a transaction. It thus requires a clear institutional authority for policymaking and implementation, (Chigbue, 2002)

Having devised a privatization policy for infrastructural works, it will be necessary to examine the *dramatis personae* for the execution of those projects. Whom shall we involve, Nigerians or foreigners, foreigners and Nigerians? It should be noted that Nigerians have so far not participated as sole contractors for gigantic works.

### 11.00 NIGERIAN AND FOREIGN PARTICIPATION IN BUSINESS AND CONSTRUCTION

It is envisaged that the construction of a proposed private highway and railway systems will eventually be executed partly by: Nigerians alone, or foreigners alone, or through the combined teams of Nigerians and foreigners. There is a need for a shift of emphasis by Nigerians from the distributive trades and fronting for foreigners for contracts to evolving a new attitude by Nigerians towards the participation in the provision of infrastructural works that would enhance national unity.

In the twentieth century, capitalism underwent some radical changes. Individual entrepreneurs gave way to large corporations with bureaucratic management structures. To some extent, competition between firms in product markets has been replaced by the semi peaceful coexistence of oligopolies. Pressures for growth under capitalism formed a major part of the analysis made by Karl Marx a century ago. He saw perpetual growth of wealth as the basic law of a system with separate classes of capitalists and wageworkers, (Edel, 1973).

Expert analysis of the Nigerian business economy, identified a triangular relationship existing between multinational corporations, the local middlemen and state compradors. The local middlemen find it much more profitable to act as agents and distributors for foreign firms than to engage in real production. Productive entrepreneurship is discouraged by the preemptive concentration of foreign firms and the availability of more profitable alternatives. The common explanation is 'lack of the appropriate technical skills and managerial know-how', but this fails to take into account the fact that Nigerians with these qualities become middlemen. They find little incentive to produce when middelmanship requires little capital, and also, offers easy profits. (Akeredolu-Ale, 1974; Turner, 1976)

The political economy of Nigeria is profoundly influenced by the dynamics of the triangular relationships existing between the multinationals, local middlemen and state officials. These relationships are often characterized by intense competition and immense corruption. The colossal struggle for access to influence, power and profits is a fundamental source of political instability in Nigeria. It is often so easy to blame the multinationals that introduced the intense competition in the first place, but, actually, a high percentage of the blame should go to local middlemen seeking easy profits for little or no work. Effective solutions must be found to a situation in which favourably placed individuals make millions of naira for doing next to nothing. For Nigeria to progress, we have to embrace the tenents of 21st century capitalism and open market mechanism, (Gana, 1986).

Nigerian wealthy businessmen will be unpatriotic if they continue to engage primarily in retail trade; instead, they should form large consortia that will meaningfully venture into private construction works. Although construction is heavy-finance demanding, there are some available methods

for raising the necessary funds. The three major methods are :- (i) The Private Finance Initiative, (ii) The international finance system, and, (iii) government finance

### 12.0 FINANCING PRIVATE INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS

### 12.01 The Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

A brief review will now be undertaken of how the British has made a success story of its private highway system. That success was achieved through the systems of "Private Finance Initiative", DBFO,(Design, Build, Finance, and, Operate) and, the BOOT (Build Own, Operate and Transfer). Lessons to be derived from it may be useful for the proposed Nigerian experiment.

The sources of finance for the costs of DBFO projects are equity and debt. To date, all pure equity contribution have come from project sponsors. Equity may also come form investment funds, which have been set up to provide equity for PFI projects. So far, the nature of the commercial arrangement (particularly restriction on the transfer of equity) has either not required, or has not been suitable for third party equity. Debt finance has been raised through commercial bank debt, funding from the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the issue of bond. As funding costs are built into the unitary payment as a project cost, there are healthy competitions amongst funders to reduce funding costs. The bank facilities provide a repayment period ranging from 15 to 20 years. Under a PFI contract, the private sector will generally be asked to take the following risks: (a) construction and operational cost overruns: (b) delay in delivery of service; and, (c) changes of law, including tax law changes, which impose addition or increased costs on the operator (other than changes of law which discriminates against private sector operator). DBFO contracts are structured to have this risk with DBFO contractors. The allocation of risks, which may be unique to DBFO contracts includes: traffic risk, protestor risk and latent defect risk, (Highways Agency, 1997).

### 12.02 The International finance System

A World Bank Report (2003) highlighted the use of her well-devised finance action plan for the provision of private sector based infrastructure works. In July, 2003, the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank

Group approved a new Infrastructure Action Plan, signaling a reinvigorated embrace of infrastructure development by that institution. The Action Plan was developed in response to strong client country demand for infrastructure and it encompasses some innovative ways of financing infrastructure projects. Under the Action Plan, the Bank Group will apply new and/or existing instruments more effectively, including a spectrum of public-private partnerships, and project financing at regional, national and sub-national levels. The Plan will also strengthen the knowledge base and country analytic work in infrastructure in order to provide a better framework for policy dialogue. The Action Plan is an important step in the right direction. It will play a key role for the Bank Group in helping to meet the global needs for infrastructure-related financing and policy advice. The Infrastructure Action Plan highlights linkages between infrastructure and the Millennium Development Goals agreed to by the World leaders in 2000. Infrastructure development is one of the key pillars of growth, along with microeconomic stability, good governance and, the existence of a business friendly regulatory environment.

There is now a strong recognition in the development community of the key role that infrastructure plays in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. During the 1990s, the Bank Group moved towards relying more on the private sector to handle infrastructure investment. However, private financing for infrastructure plummeted to \$58 billion in 2002 from \$128 billion in 1997. Reliance on private sector financing would not be sufficient for large scale development projects. The Infrastructure Action Plan will help on infrastructure service delivery along the entire spectrum of public and private involvement. The Bank Group expects to take on more infrastructure projects like the Pamir Power project in Tajikistan, where International Development Association (IDA) financing helped reduce average tariffs and provided a subsidy for lifeline electricity tariffs for the poor. The International Financing Corporation (IFC) helped a private foundation to build large-scale electricity generation capacity. The Bank Group has several output-based aid projects, which combine private sector participation with public subsidies for the poor. Output-based aid is the delivery of services by contracting out their provision and linking payment of subsidies to the actual delivery of services to target groups. One of the innovative tools developed as part of the Infrastructure Action Plan is an infrastructure assessment termed, Recent Economic Developments in the Infrastructure' 'REDI'. REDI will be used to analyze infrastructure performance and needs in Bank Group client countries, and these assessments will be piloted in a number of

countries, building the institution's knowledge base and infrastructure operations in the medium term, (World Bank Report, 2003).

### 12.03 Government finance / assistance

As in most developing countries, it will be very difficult for the private sector to be assisted by government in the proposed private infrastructural works. Although the government has established some specialized banks like the *Urban Development Bank*, *The Construction Bank* and the *Federal Mortgage Bank*, the finance bases of those banks are not really sound due to the poor financial standing of government as amplified by its level of indebtedness, (McQueen, 1973; Prest 1976).

An example of the above assertion can be explained via reports about the load of government indebtedness. As observed, the 36 states in the country need not less than US\$1.13 billion to service their foreign debts to *The London Club, The Paris Club* and other multilateral in 2003. As well, the Federal Government needs US\$3.754 billion to service its foreign debt in 2003. The analysis of the Nation's foreign debts by the Debt Management Office (DMO) shows that the debt service requirement of the country to both the *London and Paris Clubs* would not be less than \$4,884,950, 832.20 in 2003.Nigeria is already in the default of \$22 billion worth of *Paris Club* debt owed to sovereign lenders, and is struggling to service its \$3.5 billion *London Club* obligation which include 42 billion in Brandy bonds- debt restructured under plans devised by Nicholas Brandy, the former US Treasury Secretary. Most of these are held by hedge funds (funds to be geared against uncertainties) and dedicated emerging market inventors, (Olaleye, 2003).

A similar report specifically noted that the country is passing through severe development finance constraints: public debt of N 4.95 trillion, domestic debt of N1.66 trillion, external debt of N 4.4, pension and salary arrears of another N3.0 trillion. Meanwhile, the total projected revenue is about N2.1trillion. Government functionaries in the legislature and the executive say it without compunction that after meeting the recurrent needs with the revenue, there is not much left to implement capital projects. Consequently, infrastructural decay and the deafening complaints everywhere: the roads and expressways are terrible, electricity supply is unreliable, unemployment soars, government owes its contractors and suppliers which owes their employees etc. The governmental waste is most unacceptable because the mainly nominal private sector is not buoyant to provide the infrastructural facilities and service, which the government failed

to deliver. The handful of successful operators outside the commerce sector are the exception. Undoubtedly, multi-national companies transfer technology, capital, expertise and train local staff. The stack reality is that they are not in Nigeria to develop the country. Multi-nationals invest for profit, (Kpor, 2003).

### 13.0 SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

13.01 Summary

Rail and road works constitute some of the infrastructural facilities needed for physically integrating widely differing communities. For us in Nigeria, the unity of Nigeria is sacrosanct. National integration is now the order of the day. The UK, USA, India, China, and, Russia have succeeded in the experimentation of federalism. Their successes were expedited through the construction of large networks of road and railway systems. The old colonial rail routes as well as the present government-constructed Nigerian road and railway systems have not provided viable transportation system for effective communication between communities living in various parts of the Federation. Regrettably, the failure of the road and rail system in Nigeria could be attributable to the administration of those systems by the Nigerian Public Service System. The ailing Nigerian economy and the government debt standing with the international finance systems make it imperative that government cannot effectively fund the proposed vibrant road and rail network needed for the realisation of Nigerian unity. Therefore, Nigeria will have no alternative other than privatizing its infrastructural works with due emphasis on the road and rail systems. The financing of privatized infrastructural works can be executed using the British modeled

(i) Private Finance Initiative, (ii) BOOT (Build, Own, Operate, and Transfer) (iii) and the DBFO (Design, Build, Finance, and, Operate). In addition, the Infrastructure Action Plan recently devised by the World Bank Group can be effectively used to finance private infrastructural projects. Under the Action Plan, the Bank Group will apply new and or existing instruments more efficiently, including a spectrum of public private partnerships and project financing at regional, national and sub-national levels.

### 13.02 OVERVIEW

The new free-market based capitalist economy makes it mandatory for Nigeria to face the realities of the new World's economic, social and political order. We must enter into serious dialogue on how to privately fund and resurrect the ailing road and railway systems. Nigerian businessmen and the technocrats can pool their human and material resources if there is a sufficient political *WILL*. In addition, for the proposals being put up to materialize, the government has to provide the right social, economic and political environment.

Part I of the Chapter 1 of the 1999 constitution still defines the states as the federating units of one indissoluble and indivisible Sovereign state. The geo-political organizations articulate what they perceive as the interests of their various zones. The truth is that in Nigeria, the ruling class in all its manifestations has simply failed to fulfill what should be one of the historic tasks. If it cannot carry out a social transformation, it has" national democratic revolution". That is to forge a Nigerian consciousness among diverse ethnic and regional groups making up the nation. Nations were created in the older liberal democracies when elements of the ruling class became conscious of the need to build a nation first before any other political project. Members of the ruling class whether as politicians, businessmen technocrats or ideologue should be able to do this consciously. An example is often found in Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore where ethnic Chinese, Malays and others have been able to pursue a national project (Komolafe, 2003).

Nigeria has been able to build many kilometers of roads to reasonable international standards. However, in terms of inter-model developments, the achievement has been lopsided and have been limited largely to inter state and intercity development. The roads did not necessarily link the various state capitals with the hinterland, (Philips, 1986). A case has thus been established for initiating the construction of girded and integrated networks of roads and railways that would enhance national integration. Private sector participation is the answer:

As noted by the World's leading adviser on privatization and infrastructure finance (PrinceWaterhouse Coopers 2002):- (i) Africa has placed itself firmly on the map as far as privatization is concerned, (ii) Nigeria, an earlier starter, has lost ground, (iii) however, there is a need to show political commitment than has been lacking, (iv) most important to Nigeria is the privatization of its utilities and infrastructure which is not an easy task, (v) Nigeria has the key advantage of market size, so the private sector interest is there, (vi) the challenge will be to get the best deal for Nigeria and its people.

In parts of Africa, continued civil strife has placed a heavy toll on development. In Liberia and also in Cote d'Ivoire, recent armed conflicts have caused heavy human sacrifice, and its economic impact has stretched well beyond the countries immediately affected. No effort from International Financial Institutions can compensate for these economic, social, and humanitarian setbacks. President Mbeki in his address to AU meeting in Durban in 2002, said, "There can be no sustainable development without peace, without security and without stability." The African Union must provide critical momentum to end armed conflicts in Africa. Africa needs investments and a climate in which the private sector can develop and prosper. As shown by the work of the Investors' Council that the IMF and the World Bank are supporting in Ghana, Senegal, and Tanzania, there is a lot that governments can do to improve the investment climate: in public administration, legal and judicial systems, and, more generally,-enforce the rule of law. The legal definition and use of land title would boost private sector activity and job creation in many African countries. Land title can play a crucial role; at the at the very least, as collateral for financing of investments. Government also plays an important role as well, especially in providing the necessary infrastructure for private investment and development. In this vein, it is expected that NEPAD (in cooperation with World bank and other regional development banks) will stimulate needed infrastructure investments, (Kohler, 2003).

In Nigeria it appears that government lacks the political commitment to actually liberalize some key sectors of the economy. The last that was heard of private initiative was the licensing of 18 refinery firms, which till date are yet to commence operations because of bureaucratic bottlenecks. For now, there seem to be no solution in sight because the nation's leadership appears to be simply bereft of ideas, (Wabara, 2003).

For us in Africa, the rapid development of the continent is long overdue. Professor Ali Muzrui aptly described as African paradox of development and habitability-defined as one in which the desire to achieve development had remained the most consistently articulated single national objective of African states, while underdevelopment had remained the most spectacular single concept which described, most vividly, the African condition today. Professor Mazrui wondered why Africa which is believed to be the first habitat of man, has evolved today as the last to be made truly habitable in the world. It is known that most African states have become largely inhabitable because of the mounting problems of disease, difficulties

in physical transportation and communication as well as socio-economic and political instability and uncertainties, (Agulanna, 2004).

### 14.00 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Examining the spread and nature of the various road and railway systems of various other federations, it would appear that those of Nigeria have not reached a satisfying level for the facilitation of national integration. As the public sector (faced with many other competing demands) cannot effectively fund a virile new and integrated road and rail framework, the urgent intervention of the public sector is strongly advocated.

Fig.4 Shows a suggested framework for integrated national but privatized road/rail framework. The girded routes run in parallel to the equatorial axis horizontally and then, vertically in parallel with the Greenwich longitudinal line. At a micro level, taking Niger state as a sample area, Fig.5 illustrates the routes of a suggested integrated rail / road system. The girded routes can easily facilitate national integration through the quick transit of people, goods and services throughout the Federation.

Government can facilitate the realization of the proposals by assisting towards land acquisition, and perhaps, undertake the construction of bridges along some strategic river crossings. The construction works shall be executed in phases and could be completed in twenty years time. The expected massive construction works to be involved, would generate employment for all classes of workers and the rate of armed robbery will be drastically reduced. The rail and road routes should be constructed parallel to each other throughout the new grid lines. There will be a need to convene conferences of investors to map out the tactics and strategies for a quick realisation of the project. In the case of the rail, separate companies can construct, own and maintain only the tracks while individuals or other establishments can purchase their own coaches and then pay for using the tracks. A separate management outfit can be formed to harmonise traffic movement. The existing rail and road networks should be left alone for the government who is advised to hand over their maintenance and management to the private sector. Successive governments in Nigeria are required to provide political leadership towards the realisation of that worthwhile project. Nigerian businessmen should do less of merchandizing and fronting for overseas conglomerates and concentrate more on forming viable consortia for the execution of the envisaged road and rail projects. Social, economic and political harmony must be assured so that construction works of the magnitude envisaged will thrive.

Political will is very important for that dream to materialize. The political ruling class should be involved on a vanguard for "national democratic revolution" starting with the construction of the proposed nation's networks of motor roads and railways. The financing methodology can be devised through the BOOT, MOOT, DBFO systems. As well, there should be concerted appeals and approaches to the new World Bank Group Initiative On Intrastructural Development. Toll collection arrangements, the availability of stocks and shares, individual finance, and some syndicated financial systems can be used. Financial experts- local and international, can provide acceptable and workable financial and technical frameworks. The proposals may sound a novelty, and, perhaps, an impossible task. A theoretical framework is hereby being made available and it is hoped that a practical framework will later be realized if we are sincerely determined.

Importantly, while designing the new integrated road and rail networks, proper surveys of various types should be undertaken in other to produce durable communication systems devoid of narrow gauges, bends etc. Perhaps, the suggestion by Shakespeare will remind us of the importance of surveys:-

When we mean to build. We first survey the plot, then draw the model, And when we see the figure of the house, Then must we rate the cost of the erection, Which if we found outweighs ability, What do we do then, but draw anew the model, In fewer offices? Or at least, desist To build at all? Much more, in this great work, Which is almost to pluck a kingdom down, And set another up, should we survey, The plot of situation and the model, Consent upon a sure foundation; Ouestion surveyors, know our own estate, How able such a work to undergo, To weigh against his opposite. Or else We fortify in paper, and in figures Using the names of men, instead of men; Like one that draws the model of a house, Beyond his power to build it; who, half through, Giver o'er, and leaves his part-created cost

A naked subject to the weeping clouds,
A waste for churlish winter's tyranny
( William Shakespeare, King Henry IV: Part Two, Act I Scene III.)

It may have surprised some readers to discover that Shakespeare was clearly familiar some 400 years ago with cost considerations. Realistic cost surveys and cost predictions should be undertaken and effective cost blue prints should be produced by professionals.

It would be helpful if the suggestions put forward in this paper be subjected to academic and professional research to be undertaken by combined teams from various disciplines:-(environmental technology, engineering, land surveying, law, finance, geology, and politics). Such experts will be able to provide a concretized blue-print for national policy on a new integrated road and rail construction. This must be done quickly, because, we should be in a hurry like our political contemporaries in the South East Asia (Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia) in order to reinvigorate our social, political and economic environment, which, since independence in 1960, has remained, relatively conservative.

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The Chairman, Mr. Vice Chancellor, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen; I sincerely hope that we should all earnestly work towards national integration. A privatized and a revolutionary-designed integrated rail and road system will surely be one of the veritable tools for achieving national unity. Thanks for listening.

### LONG LIVE THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA!

### LONG LIVE THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY MINNA.!

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