Pragmatics of 'garrison *demoncrazy*' as a metaphor in Nigerian media political discourse

Chris Uchenna Agbedo
Department of Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Enugu State, Nigeria

Abstract

In this paper, our focus is on the concept of garrison demoncrazy and its recurrent metaphorical manifestations in media political discourse in relation to the regimented character of our contemporary democratic dispensation. Our intention is to subject the concept of garrison demoncrazy to analysis within the theoretical spectrum of pragmatics and possibly explore the applicability of pragmatics and discourse theory in analyzing media political discourse. The database derives from a number of illustrative texts, which reflect media political discourse relating to the recurrence of garrison demoncrazy metaphor in the democratic practices of contemporary Nigerian nation. In this regard, we shall focus on media discourse on the subject matter and examine the dimensions it has assumed as a standing metaphor for the recurring acts of commission or omission, which tend to negate the basic tenets of democracy. In specific terms, we have chosen for analysis the flawed impeachment procedure that precipitated the removal of Chief Rashidi Ladoja as Governor of Oyo State in January 2006. In this particular political event, we shall seek to demonstrate the metaphorical manifestations of garrison demoncrazy, which violate such tenets of democracy as rule of law, due process, and constitutionalism. The premise of this paper is anchored on our theoretical conviction that the print media offer limitless opportunities for consummating self-expression and self-disclosure as well as fulfilling the 'transactional/interactional', 'representative/expressive', 'referential/emotive', 'ideational/interpersonal', and 'descriptive/social-expressive' functions of language.

1.0 Introduction

Politics, in the words of Kaye Whiteman[1] "is like love and war - everybody does it." It is so synonymous with human essence that Aristotle in his best-known dictum described man as 'a political animal'. Given the universality and permeation of such fundamental human activity, politics and politicians, notes Whiteman "...do have terribly bad names, especially political parties, even if there is no doing about without them, as a people, who have tried to abolish them have found." The negative connotation, which politics has tended to assume through the

ages and climes, has drawn an effluvium of derisive allusions from both demagogues of serious dialectical discourses as well as mavericks of revolutionary and iconoclastic tendencies. The late President Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal represents the former category through his cerebral political discourses in which he used to deplore what he called *la politique politicienne*, a pejorative term suggesting that 'while it might sometimes be impossible to go into politics and not get your hands dirty, there was still something higher that could motivate people in politics'. The allusions of Peter McIntosh and Fela Anikulapo Kuti (two 'maverick musicians') provide pertinent examples of the latter category. Late Peter McIntosh used to sing of *politricks*, an ingenious neologism that came very close to Late Fela's *democrazy* both of which feature prominently in their respective lyrics to mock and vilify the ludicrous conceptualization and practice of politics and democracy. By this term, Fela referred to our own brand of democracy as '*demonstration of craze*' or perhaps '*craze of demons*' to capture in satirical terms the political dispensation characterized by an orgy of reckless appropriation of executive powers, subversion of rule of law, crude arbitrariness and other reprehensible actions, which tended to denigrate the Constitution. In the present democratic dispensation, Fela's *Democrazy* (which Eedris Abdulkareem, a Nigerian R&B musician referred to as *Nigeria Jagajaga*) had gained a pronominal modifier, *garrison* in recent times, which we refer to, in this paper, as *Garrison Demoncrazy*. This followed the controversial impeachment of the former Oyo State Governor, Chief Rashidi Ladoja by 18 out of the 32 members of the State House of Assembly. Amidst the ensuing controversy and roiling conflict triggered by the impeachment brouhaha, the then National Chairman of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Col. Ahmadu Ali, referred to Oyo State as a 'garrison' and instructed the 'impeached' Governor, Chief Ladoja to take instructions from Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, whom he described as the political "Garrison Commander' of Ibadan. Col. Ali's garrison analogical creation, considered against the backdrop of the current democratic dispensation, easily passes for a metaphorical extension of Fela's *democrazy*.

We intend to subject the concept of *garrison demoncrazy* to analysis within the theoretical spectrum of pragmatics and possibly distill the discernible themes, which are antithetical to democratic ideals. The premise of this paper is anchored on the theoretical assumption that the varied manifestations of the democratic absurdities and inanities, which have tended to characterize our political system border on the rule of law, due judicial process, and constitutionalism. In pursuance of this objective, we shall rely on the various political discourses, as reflected in the Nigerian print media as our database. We are emboldened in this regard in the light of the intrinsic instrumentality of the print media (as typified by the Nigerian newspapers and news magazines) in advancing socio-cultural and political

consciousness. Closely linked to this is the ample opportunity, which the print media offers for the consummation of audience appeal (Fairclough, 1995; Nwoye and Uhunmwangho, 2004; Uhunmwangho and Omo-Ojugo, 2005) and the fulfillment of three major functions of 'inspirational, informative, and integrative' (Pounds, 2005:58). The reason for this, as Uhunmwangho, 2005:2) observes "...is that the discourse of the press exhibits the signs of formalized self-expression (rhetorical and literary tendency) combining features from traditional written registers (bureaucratic and affected) and offers considerable potentials for individual style and genuine self-disclosure."

2.0 Framework

The Encyclopedia Americana (1994:514) traces the word, 'pragmatics' to Charles Morris (1938) who sees it as an aspect of language study, which combines with syntax to form the major theoretical props of semiotics. In the light of its Greek origin[2], Kempson (1975:56) sees Pragmatics as "...the study of the general principles involved in the retrieval of information from an utterance..." In essence, the goals of pragmatic theories[3] should be to explain how utterances convey meaning in contexts and how meaning is decoded from utterances in contexts and how people respond to meaning. In this regard, we shall, for the purpose of this paper adopt the speech act theory in analyzing the metaphorical manifestations of 'garrison democrazy' in the Nigerian political discourses. As I had argued elsewhere[4], speech act theory, which is often associated with J.L. Austin (1962), has been a subject of various modifications, extensions, and classifications[5]. Simply put, the speech act theory states that while sentences can often be used to report states of affairs, the utterance of some sentences must, in specified circumstances be treated as the performance of an act. Such act could be stating a fact, an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction or request, asking a question, issuing an order, giving a permission, a piece of advice, making an offer, promise etc. In Pragmatics, the analyst seeks to determine the functions, which language serves in the expression of 'content' or what Brown and Yule (1983) refer to as *transactional* and the functions which language serves in expressing social relations and personal attitudes, which they term *interactional*. The 'transactional/interactional' distinction corresponds to the functional dichotomies – 'representative/expressive' of Buhler (1934), 'referential/emotive' of Jakobson (1960), 'ideational/interpersonal' of Halliday (1970) and 'descriptive/social-expressive' of Lyons (1977). Besides, although the differences which characterize the theoretical approaches adopted in accounting for speech act types obviously show a lack of consensus among scholars[6] (for instance, some scholars, notably Austin (1962); Searle (1969); Allan (1986) have equally differed remarkably[8]), three main types[7] have been identified.

Given that political discourse as reflected in the media represents only an instance of the multifarious public sphere disciplines, the choice of a suitable framework for the analysis of media political discourse presents almost an intractable problem. Nonetheless, we shall not be deterred from taking a leap of faith and carving out a propitious angle of vision that best suits our analysis. In this regard, we shall adopt an aspect of the speech act theory whose speech act types are distinguished based on structure. Such distinction yields two types of speech act: direct speech act and indirect speech act[9]. Perhaps, it is pertinent to state from the onset that all interaction is inherently ideological because individuals are in the habitual process of constituting and maintaining ideologies, while interacting with one another. As Arundale (1999) in Uhunmwangho (3) observes, "...people communicate through ideologies of communication that underlie language structure, (words, phrases, clauses, sentences), as conveying meanings, ideas, concepts, knowledge, or other psychological states, or transferring information from one person to another, with the assumption that the words or sentences themselves serve as the carriers, vehicles, transmitters, or conduits for the meanings or information...." Our framework, that is, speech act theory explores the speaker's/writer's main communicative purpose in the expression of opinions and the nature of the opinion so expressed given that it is the function in context (that is, the pragmatic aspect) that informs the choice of the variables investigated and the interpretation of the material. As Pounds (2005:53) in Uhunmwangho (2005:3) notes, "...speakers and writers can express their attitude to propositions, people, events and objects in the real world through a variety of linguistic resources..." Halliday (1994: 37) expresses a similar view thus: "Writers and speakers rely on a wide range of linguistic resources to establish and maintain a relationship with their interlocutors or readers."

3.0 Analysis of media political discourse

In this paper, our database derives from a number of illustrative texts from a defined corpus, which reflect media political discourse relating to the recurrence of *garrison democrazy* metaphor in the democratic practices of contemporary Nigerian nation. To this effect, we shall focus on media discourses which reflect the concept of garrison *democrazy* and examine the dimensions it has assumed as a standing metaphor for the recurring instances of acts of commission and omission, that tend to negate the basic tenets of democracy. Democracy, according to Oyebode (2001:48) "...is a process, which envisages a creative role for law in the democratic process." Therefore, if by the democratic process is meant the framework by which an informed electorate makes politically correct choices among contending public office seekers, and monitors the performance of electoral officials with a view to ensuring public probity, accountability, and good

governance, as Oyebode opines, then it is hardly debatable that law should be able to exercise considerable influence. In essence, the extent to which law is recognized as a moderator goes a long way in determining the legitimacy of the political choices made, hence, Oyebode's position that "the rule of law constitutes the most effective bulwark for a democratic life." In spite of Oyebode's dialectical enunciations, the realities of Nigeria's evolving democratic culture have tended to ground its universal appeal. As the former Vice President of Nigeria, Alhaji Abubakar Atiku observed[10], "...we are realizing today that the most daunting challenges have been, abiding by the rule of law, keeping to the letter and spirit of the Constitution and providing internal democracy within our political parties and the wider politics." The Vice President came very close to singing a requiem for democracy in Nigeria, when he declared: "Today, democracy in Nigeria is at cross-roads again, and its future seems to be hinged on our ability to keep faith with the supremacy of the rule of law, respect for the Constitution, and entrenching due process and internal democracy in our political parties." This statement coming from such a key actor in the democratic dispensation of Nigeria provides a veritable foregrounding for the varied opinions in the media political discourse, which formed the corpus of our analysis.

In our analysis, we shall examine the media political discourse, which impinge on the garrison *demoncrazy* metaphor as reflected in the impeachment saga of Chief Ladoja as Governor of Oyo State. The events that preceded the impeachment in the early hours of Thursday 12 January 2006 at the legislative chambers of the Oyo State House of Assembly took on the colouration of a well-coordinated military siege. This followed the massing of over 500 battle-ready mobile policemen around the State secretariat, which also houses the State House of Assembly. The gun-totting policemen backed by a full complement of armoured tanks, sealed off the entrance into the Assembly Complex and took over strategic locations in Ibadan. In a convoluted legislative 'masturbation' that lasted for less than thirty minutes, the 18-member lawmakers had completed the impeachment process on the account of which Governor Ladoja was pronounced impeached. Thereafter, the Acting Chief Judge of the State, Justice Afolabi Adeniran was called in to swear in the Deputy Governor Otunba Adebayo Alao-Akala as the new Governor, thereby giving judicial credence to the legislators' action in spite of the obvious irregularities in the impeachment process. Even as the pro-democracy groups and human rights activists were unrelenting in their voluble condemnations of the constitutional rascality, the then National Chairman of the ruling PDP, Col. Ahmadu Ali gave an arrogant tweak to the unfolding bizarre drama when he referred to Oyo State as a garrison and instructed the 'impeached' Governor to take instructions from Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, whom he described as the 'garrison commander': Such metaphorical depiction of a state as a garrison, deriving from the regimented

barrack mentality of the former PDP Chairman, not only drew the ire of notable Nigerians but also added extra verve to the iron resolve of the coalition of pro-democracy groups to embark on mass action to protest the illegal impeachment of Chief Ladoja. However, the civil protest, which took place at Ibadan on 23 January 2006, was crushed with all the imprimaturs of a Mongolian invasion as a group of policemen stormed Agodi/Gate Bus Stop (venue of the mass protest) and arrested the President, 'Campaign for Democracy', Moshood Erubami while addressing the rally and took him to the Iyaganku Police Station where he was detained. Also, Dada Osasona, a photojournalist with *The Sun* newspapers, and three students were beaten up by Adedibu's thugs with reckless impunity. The next day, Erubami was arraigned before an Ibadan magistrate's court and charged with an attempt to illegally release prisoners from the Federal Prisons, Agodi.

Over the years, Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu (now late), the acclaimed 'strongman of Ibadan politics' and political godfather of Chief Ladoja had been trying in vain to foist his politics of *amala* and prebendalism on Oyo State since he successfully sponsored the election of his 'godson' as the Governor. Frustrated, the godfather rooted for his godson's removal, accusing him of ingratitude. In the end, he succeeded in masterminding the impeachment of Chief Ladoja as Oyo State Governor. Not only did he see to the swearing in of his former personal aide and Deputy Governor, Otunba Adebayo Alao-Akala as the substantive Governor of Oyo State, he also handpicked Hazeem Gbolarunmi for the position of Deputy Governor. This, by implication justifies Col. Ali's *garrison* metaphor, which has tended to characterize the democratic dispensation of Nigeria's Fourth Republic. In the discussion that follows presently, we shall sift through the varied political discourses of Nigerians as presented in the print media to distill the varying manifestations of the 'garrison' metaphor as replicated in our contemporary democratic practices.

For convenience sake, Prof. Wole Soyinka's acerbic press statement[11], offers us a good starting-point. As Uhunmwangho (2005:4) observes, "it is a trite claim that a writer's main claim may be literally stated in an inferable or implied mode in the text and can be summarized in one or more respect super-ordinate propositions. The writer's claim, continues Uhunmwangho, "can either be basically epistemic (when the writer takes position in respect of truth validity) or deontic (when the writer takes position in respect of normative rightness). The odium of verbal venom that laced Soyinka's diatribe was fleshed out in a number of speech acts, which fall within the sub categorization we refer to as declarative, interrogative, and jussive imperative propositions. In taking both positions of truth validity and normative rightness, Soyinka combines epistemic and deontic reasoning to deconstruct causal relationships of contradictions and awful imageries. From 1 (i) to (iv), the writer employs direct speech acts analyzable in terms of mood system as indicative

declarative utterances to provide a valid premise for actions contradictory to the spirit of constitutional democracy to thrive. The logical import is that since President Obasanjo has brazenly encouraged acts, which tend to negate the spirit of the constitution, it becomes only logical to aver, "we are moving towards a total mockery of constitutionalism." As if to demonstrate further the relationship of contradiction, the writer mobilizes what Allan (1986:173) calls explicit performative verbs often used in indicative declarative utterances to warn about Nigeria's gradual but steady descent into a crude and primitive level of existence where only extreme despotic notions of dominance hold sway. In providing further emotive comparison, the writer burrows through his linguistic arsenal to assemble *weapons of metaphorical deconstruction* to generate awe-inspiring imageries, which reeks of narcissistic tendencies. Note the pun on the Baba accolade and the metaphorical depiction of President Obasanjo, which cast him in the Mephistophelean mould of a Mafia godfather, whose bloated presidential ego Nigerians must either massage with the ridiculous and slavish servitude of minions and fawning pawns or get sissified by the mortal kiss of death[12]. The writer's disenchantment with the autocratic proclivity of President Obasanjo finds further expression in (v) where he enlists declaratory assertives to weave an intricate web of thematic relationship, which binds Ngige, Dariye, Ogbeh, Atiku, and Ladoja together as quintuplet victims of political rascality, brigandage, and showmanship of an imperial presidency.

In 1(vi), the effusive use of serial interrogatives paints a high degree of commitment to the truth-value of the writer's claim, which points unwaveringly to the 'unpresidential' complicity of the imperious President in fanning the embers of the insidious trend towards executive rascality and lawlessness. By effectively deploying the rich linguistic resources of direct speech acts denominated in non-WH interrogatives to present high certainty of perception and cognition, the writer draws attention to the reprehensible statement of the then PDP Chairman as well as the worrying recrudescence of illegalities perpetrated by the police, all of which bear the ignoble imprimatur of an egoistic President, whose warped sense of judgment nudges him on to enthrone anarchy in Oyo State and imperil democracy. This type of conclusion, as Uhunmwangho posits, derives from Connor and Lauer's notion of 'the structure of reality' (1998:146). Leaning heavily on the background propositions from which he summons massive support for his critical evaluation of President Obasanjo's leadership style, the writer managed to tuck his umbrage under the veil of politeness by offering an advice[13] using a combination of jussive imperatives and declaratory authoritatives. To avoid unleashing further collateral damage on the sovereign image of Nigeria and spare democracy the undiluted battering from his buccaneering approach to the art of governance, Soyinka appealed to his avowed Christianity, which Mr. President is wont to profess at his

convenient intervals, and advised him to quit office immediately. In doing this, the writer proposed an affirmative course of action, which would ease him out of office like a bull in a Chinese shop with his integrity intact; and without leaving behind a roundly traumatized nation with indelible lacerating memories. "Leave today; right now" Soyinka concluded, thus throwing a challenge that is not only rooted in hellish imprecations and repugnant recriminations but almost certainly rankled Mr. President's legendary filthy temperament further worsened by a regimented zombie mentality.

From 2-8, the writers/speakers performed similar speech acts, using both direct and indirect speech acts to express their personal and group perceptions of Chief Ladoja's impeachment brouhaha based on their own general understanding of reality and values. The foregoing underlines the embedding of common sense cultural values, which signpost shared views of right and wrong as explicitly adumbrated in Toulmin et al (1979). In (2) and (3) respectively, the Committee of Intellectuals for Public Purposes (CIPP)[14] and Oyo Students Union made ample use of signals to undermine the adversary claimant with blatant criticism addressed pointedly to Mr. President, the 18 legislators and the Nigeria Police, who constitute the population supporting the adversary claim. In this regard, the two coalitions of eggheads and students question the constitutionality of the legislators' action as well as level allegations of complicity and connivance against Mr. President, the PDP Chairman and the Nigeria Police. Against the backdrop of these weighty propositions, the coalitions reached for the adversary's jugular by opting for a cause of opposition strewn along the anarchistic line of civil disobedience and passive resistance until the flawed impeachment procedure quite inconsistent with the explicit provisions of the 1999 Constitution was voided and declared a nullity. These groups underscored the imperativeness implicit in their indirect speech act through the effective use of advisories (warn) of the interpersonal authoritative sub-categorization: This refrain of stout defiance equally echoed in the 'riot act' read by the Moshood Erubami-led pro-democracy with a tinge of legalism in (4). By citing constitutional provisions and legal authorities, Erubami in his logical reasoning provided a valid premise, the resolution of which he mobilized in the next strand of thought by declaring Otunba Alao-Akala persona non grata unless and until an appellant court reverses the judicial pronouncement. The same ring of legalese informed the submission of Prof. Ben Nwabueze, (SAN) in (5). By faulting the legislative procedure, (which led to the removal of Chief Ladoja as Governor) for contravening the impeachment clause as stipulated in Section 188 of the Constitution; the legal luminary is drawing attention to the constitutional enactment, which is the ultimate guide in matters of controversy[15]. In (6), the first speech act (which combines constative verdicts, retrodictives and suppositives of the constative performative verb sub-categorization) betrayed the writer's[16]

frustrations at the frightening manifestations of what he calls 'gunboat democracy' and which easily passes as a prefatory remarks for the three propositions of the syllogistic pugilism that ensued thereafter. In the remaining part of (6), we discern the writer's main claim about Nigeria's strange brand of democracy, the logical grounds used to substantiate such claim, and the linguistic resources deployed to realize each strand of thought. Relying on the propelling propensities of performatives, he started on the verbal wings of assertives, veering to a cruising level before rallying pragmatic presuppositions, which bear out his earlier assertion that Ladoja's impeachment was a premeditated constitutional rascality. In the end, we are invited to a logical chronicling of events, which demonstrates relationships of cause and effect with entailment, all driven home in three declarative propositions[17].

In (7), the writer[18] deployed retroductive verbs to draw a nauseating parallelism between former Governor Chris Ngige's abduction saga and Ladoja's impeachment hullabaloo and offered the reader a syntactic frame from which to infer his declaratory illocutionary act (verdictive act) about the ignoble role of government in perpetrating acts of brigandage. In no nebulous tone dripping with angst and trepidation, he rammed home his argumentation with the metaphorical depiction of Chief Chris Uba and Alhaji Adedibu as twin storm troopers and foot soldiers who owe their overweening heroic exploits in political violence to the presidential delinquency of their godfather, General Obasanjo. The writer's angst was pushed to antipodal degrees when he decried the pristine 'area boy' instinct of President Obasanjo, whose government he accused of shrieking its statutory responsibility of maintaining law and order. The fact that President Obasanjo sanctioned the criminal antecedents of his thug, Chief Adedibu by referring to him as 'a force to reckon with in Oyo State politics' instead of ordering his immediate arrest and prosecution for acts of lawlessness, provides a contradiction of the obligation of government to its citizens in a democratic dispensation. A President, who by constitutional provisions, ought to defend the rule of law is seen cavorting in his warped judgment to subvert the rule of law, the very engine room of constitutional democracy.

By deploying a set of verbal routines and strategies, which "...are used to enhance co-operative interaction by establishing a state of equilibrium between individuals of a social group during ongoing process of interaction..." (Watts 1992:50), the labour union[19] in (8) politely signaled its unwillingness to recognize Otunba Alao-Akala as Governor of Oyo State until the court order, which gave legal backing to the flawed impeachment process is set aside by an appellant court. It expresses umbrage at the unprofessional conduct of the Acting Chief Judge and the regrettable way he has lent his office to abuse.

In summary, the varied opinions expressed justify the fundamental role, which the print media plays in providing avenue for information dissemination and

communication of ideas and points of view with plenty of opportunity for the expression of varying opinions, judgments, beliefs and attitudes. In this communicative enterprise, interlocutors, notes Ponds (2005) express their attitudes to propositions, people, events, and objects in the real world through a variety of linguistic resources. In the media discourse so far examined, we discern varied utilization of performatives either cast within the humorous frames of politeness, which concern writers' volitional or discernment strategies (Okamoto, 1999; Hill et. al. 1986; Ide, 1989) or expressed pungently. In spite of the obvious differences in communicative strategies, the writers coalesce into the melting pot of angst, which they express about the fate of democracy that has continued to assume the dull colour of uncertainty in the combustion chambers of political hawks in Nigeria.

4.0 Conclusion

In this paper, we have tried to examine the communicative role of the print media and the limitless opportunities it offers speakers/writers to engage in varied discourses, which are of social and political relevance. In this connection, we adopted a pragmatic perspective of language to explore the use of various linguistic devices in this all-important self-expression enterprise, which forms a unique cognitive aspect of man. This predisposed us to probe into the general cognitive principles underlying the derivation of meaning from a stretch of utterance; which transcends the lexical and syntactic levels of language. In so doing, we investigated the communicative techniques, which speakers/writers adopted in expressing their opinions about Nigeria's current democratic practices considered as falling short of meeting the minimum requirements of relatively popular democracies in the world. The picture that emerges from our analysis tends to suggest that speakers/writers make profuse use of what Allan (1986) calls interpersonal and declaratory acts in performing speech acts. Within this broad spectrum of speech acts classification; a preference for constative assertives, informatives, retroductives, dissentives, verdictives, and authoritative advisories is discernible: Structurally speaking, our defined corpus, which reflected media political discourse relating to the *garrison democrazy* metaphor in Nigerian democratic practices, brims over with direct speech acts, which are mainly declarative, with a spice of interrogatives and imperatives. Such speech acts that exuded a great smoke of pungency and trenchancy came from the likes of Professor Wole Soyinka, Chief Gani Fawehinmi and Col. Abubakar Umar, whose uncanny knack for combative criticisms of unpopular government policies and actions has become a trademark. Although Professor Soyinka made some frank efforts to sound polite and less pungent by resorting to advisory performative verbs in his comment on the perceived serial failings of an Obasanjo presidency, he nevertheless came out smoking when he accused the President of complicity in the Ngige abduction saga and the

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Appendix

1(i) "President Obasanjo has openly endorsed violence as a means of governance, embraced and empowered individuals whose avowed declarations; confessions, and acts are cynically contrary to the democratic mandate, that alone upholds the legitimacy and dignity of his office..."

(ii) "The contempt of President Obasanjo for a democratic self-realisation by the electorate is no longer in doubt and can be proved, chapter and verse- from Anambra to Oyo, hence our movement towards a total mockery of constitutionalism. First with Anambra, and now with Oyo, the President has crossed the line of political tolerance. You failed in Anambra, but you felt you had learnt certain lessons in the use of state coercion, hence the armed takeover of Bayelsa's state radio by federal might during the Bayelsa impeachment saga, an illegal and unnecessary act that merely pandered to the presidential ego and lust for domination."

(iii) "President Obasanjo has mangled the Constitution and turned its polluted pulp into a weapon of offence against the rights and legitimate expectations of the people. We are confronted by a mind that has gone awry, a mind that is subject to no order except that of the crudest, most despotic notions of dominance in a primitive society."

(iv) "The respectable 'Baba' accolade has turned to be yet another Baabuism, mimics the culture of the 'dons', literally actualized by President Obasanjo as that of a Mafia godfather whose hand you either bow and kiss or receive the kiss of death."

(v)) "From Ngige to Darye, Alamiesiegha to Ogbeh to Atiku and now to Ladoja, the role of the President, to say the least has been quite vindictive, highhanded and provoking. Due process has not been observed as usual and the undue deployment of the 'Federal Might' using police against the civil populace calls for serious concern and portend danger to the nascent democracy in Nigeria. The violation and brazen disregard for court order and judicial process by Obasanjo-Adedibu faction leaves much to be desired about our current democratic experiment. The Gestapo manner in which the impeachment procedure of Governor Ladoja was carried out and the swearing-in ceremony of the Deputy Governor depicted gangsterism and conspiracy against the Oyo State electorates, akin to the Bayelsa charade."

(vi) "When the Chairman of your political party insults the Nigerian people by referring to a State as a garrison, and instructs elected representatives to obey court orders, do you voice any disapproval? And was Col. Ali's pronouncement merely the arrogant advance notice of the well-laid conspiracy to destabilize that state? Has the police, by its actions, not flagrantly set itself above and against the judiciary, whose decisions it is lawfully bound too to enforce?"

(vii) "In the name of that very God whom you thank for yanking you back from the abyss, I implore you- go! Go, while it is still possible to forgive you for robbing us all of our earned retirement. Go! Just go! Leave quietly, peacefully; take your quiet considerable successes in governance with you. Do not leave the nation with such lacerating memories, with such a bad taste in the mouth that the people dismiss even your successes as a mere accident, as flashes in the pan or work of others. Leave now, pleading governance exhaustion, age, betrayal, resentment at ingratitude of the governed, anything at all but leave. Leave today, right now."

2. "We condemn President Obasanjo's clear partisan support to those who impeached Ladoja as well as the culture of warlord and godfatherism being foisted on the people of Ibadan. We warn those enemies of the Nigerian people who think that Nigeria is a 'garrison' to know that we shall not surrender and hereby call on the Nigeria Police to behave responsibly by not giving effect to the illegal removal of Governor Ladoja."

3. "We have resolved to fight this open slap on the Constitution of our country until democracy prevailed and the democratically elected Governor of Oyo State, Chief Rashidi Ladoja regained his mandate as stipulated by the Constitution."

4. "For the pro-democracy groups in the country, Chief Ladoja remains the Governor of Oyo State given that Oyo High Court has declared the process through which the Governor was removed as illegal and a nullity as it contravened an earlier undertaking by the Acting Chief Judge, Justice Adeniran not to raise the seven-man panel of investigation against Governor Ladoja. Unless and until the judicial pronouncement is reversed,

members of our coalition will not recognize Otunba Alao-Akala as the Governor who was sworn in through a back-door process."

5. "The removal of Governor Ladoja constitutes an outright rape of the Constitution, a trivialization of the impeachment clause, given that the constitutional stipulation of two-third majority was not followed."

6. "The purported removal from office of Oyo State Governor, Chief Ladoja, coming about two months after Chief D.S.P. Alamiesiegha of Bayelsa State was similarly removed shows that the kind of democracy we practise is a democracy of illegality, of intimidation, gunboat democracy. For one, the process leading to the purported removal was manipulated to achieve a desired result. Firstly, Chief Ladoja was not given a fair hearing despite his willingness to defend himself. Secondly, some of the allegations against him were not backed by documentary evidence. Thirdly, the 18 legislators that voted for his removal did not constitute a two-third majority of the 32-member House of Assembly as stipulated by the impeachment clause, enshrined in Section 188 of the Constitution."

7. "The President has become a good practitioner of constitutional breaches and authoritarian actions. The government (Federal Government) has been variously implicated in supporting political brigandage...A script similar to the Ngige abduction saga organized and executed by the President's storm trooper and enforcer, Chief Chris Uba, was played out again in Oyo State, where the Governor was tormented by a renowned Abacha political thug turned Obasanjo thug, Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu. A government that is truly concerned about establishing law and order should have immediately ordered the arrest of Adedibu and his foot soldiers but instead the President sanctioned his criminal acts by identifying him as a force to reckon with in Oyo State politics while the Chairman of the ruling party, Col. Ahmadu Ali advised the Governor to take instructions from Alhaji Adedibu, whom he described as the political garrison commander of Ibadan."

8. "Given the clear pronouncement of a competent court voiding the impeachment process, the Congress is unable to recognize Otunba Alao-Akala as governor unless and until the court order is set aside by a superior court and hereby calls on the Inspector General of Police to take the necessary steps urgently to restore order in Oyo State and provide security for Governor Ladoja in compliance with the court order. This impunity and subversion of the rule of law has ironically featured the Acting Chief Judge, who by his position should ordinarily be pre-eminent custodian of the rule of law in the state."