

PAN AFRICAN CHILDREN
ADVOCACY WATCH
(PACAW), INC. PROJECTS

DEDICATION OF THE NEW

LIBRARIES IN THE
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

AND SECONDARY
SCHOOL, AND

COMPUTER CENTER IN
THE PRIMARY

SCHOOL, KORO - EKITI,
KWARA STATE
NIGERIA.

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ADDRESS BY:
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*Acknowledgement of Palace Representative, Guests,
Committee for the Projects, the Press, Ladies and
Gentlemen.*

The title of my address is:

“THE RESUSCITATION OF THE CRUMBLLED
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF THIS REPUBLIC.”

- Why should man and woman who the creator made in his image be educated?
- What are the AIMS of Education?
- What is the role of education in the development and progress of a civil society?
- What is the role of education in the training of rulers, the leaders, statesmen and states women of tomorrow?

These questions have been asked by the greatest thinkers since antiquity and they are just as relevant today as when they were first asked thousands of years ago.

- *Why should man and woman be educated?*
- *Who shall be educated, all or only some?*

Arguably, apart from the Cosmos, the crown jewel of creation and evolution is the human brain. The output of the human brain is responsible for a human being's fruitfulness and by extension for the fruitfulness of any community and any nation. It is what separates us from other members of the animal kingdom.

From epoch to epoch, it would appear that the great thinkers agree that "education should seek to develop the characteristic excellence of which all men and women are capable and that its ultimate ends are human happiness and the welfare of society."

- *What are the AIMS, the purpose of*

Education?

The great 18th century French philosopher Rousseau states “The object of public education is to assure that the citizens are earlier accustomed to regard their individuality only in it’s relation to the body of the State, and to be aware, so to speak of their own existence and merely as a part of the that State i.e. that country. When educated in this way, Rousseau claims the citizens and in our setting this morning, our children “might at length come to identify themselves (now and when they become leaders) in some degree with this greater whole (the greater society), to feel themselves members of their country and to LOVE IT with the exquisite feeling which no isolated person has saved for himself.”

This philosophy of identification of self with the good of the “whole” (the larger society) is sadly, lacking in our nation today. This philosophy must be taught to the children.

- What is the role of education of the development and progress of a civil society?

Many people have made the distinction between moral education and intellectual education? “Can you tell me Socrates, Meno asks in the Platonic dialogue “MENO” whether virtue is acquired by teaching, or by practice or if neither by teaching nor practice, then whether it comes to man by nature or in what other way?

Socrates responds:

“A man cannot be made courageous, just, temperate (or wise) in the same way that he can be taught geometry” (or for instance in our day, molecular biology). So how do we fortify against tripartite malady of the curse of inordinate pursuit of power, the curse of avarice and the curse of total absence of altruism and sense of nationhood that has eaten deep into the fabric of our society? By inculcating strong moral education into a strong intellectual Universal Basic Education. By the amalgamation of strong moral direction at home, in the schools, in our churches and in our mosques.

We have no choice. The further we delay, the closer we get to calamity.

- *What is the role of education in the training of rulers, leaders, statesmen and stateswomen of power?*

From March 5th - 9th, 1990 the World Bank (WB), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) organized the World Conference on Education for ALL in Jomtien, Thailand. They produced a document entitled “World Declaration on Education for All and framework for Action to meet Basic Learning Needs.”

This document was used by countries all over the world, including Nigeria as a template for the establishment of policies and goals for Universal Basic Education. Unfortunately, for several reasons, including

inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, inadequate staffing and teacher training and irregular payment of teachers, the ideals of UBE in Nigeria have become a mirage.

Of all things, says Aristotle “That which contributes most to the permanence of constitutions is the adaptation of education to the form of government.” He continues “The best laws though sanctioned by every citizen of the state will be of no avail unless the YOUNG are trained by habit and education in the “Spirit” of the constitution. In other words, those laws in the books, the policies of the federal, state and local government have to be implemented; otherwise they are of no avail. The money allocated for education of the children have to be honestly and I repeat honestly disbursed and used for its intended purpose, otherwise our children and the future of this nation are in peril and are condemned to a state of hopelessness.

Sadly, honesty is in short supply at all levels of this society.

I am happy to report that every penny that was provided by PACAW Inc. for these projects reached this village and was judiciously spent by the organizing committee on the projects. I can attest to that. I witnessed their transparency, their commitment, their devotion, their sacrifice for the education of our children, the future of this nation. Once again, we salute them.

Unless the leaders of this nation adopt the this ethos, our educational system from primary level to tertiary level will remain in shambles.

Remember all the challenges educators face here in

Koro - Ekiti, Kwara State are not peculiar to this community. This is not the exception. The situation is the same in thousands of villages across this potentially great land. Earlier this week, I visited University Teaching hospital with my sister as my guide. I spoke with one of the consultants in the department of Radiology. In response to my questions, she stated that the hospital has one CAT Scan machine and one Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine. A four slice CAT scan machine and a 0.2 Tesla MRI machine in a hospital that was opened less than 10 years ago!!! Who approved the purchase of these machines that have such inferior and outdated technology? There is no way the Radiologists and Clinicians can obtain detailed satisfactory images to make accurate Radiological diagnosis in complex and complicated cases. A situation which undoubtedly results in unnecessary and avoidable morbidity and mortality for the citizens.

How can we expect the medical students to have any training even close to the quality of education of medical students in Asia, Europe, and even South African when they are trained with inferior and discarded technology and in several instances without the necessary tools and equipments?

This situation as we all know is not confined to the Health Care System. It repeats itself across all disciplines in our tertiary education system.

There are 7.1 billion people on this planet. In his book, *The Bottom Billion*, Prof. Collier of Oxford University, (By the way the Finance Minister of this country was a protege

of Prof. Collier for a brief period at Oxford in the mid 1990's) adds to the plethora of the whys and what should be done literature on the fate of the Nations which constitute the Bottom Billion. The majority of these nations including Nigeria are in Africa.

In the 2014 Edition of "Center for World University Rankings" of the Top one thousand Universities in the World, apart from Egypt and South Africa, in the whole of Africa, only Makerere University in Uganda is ranked and comes in at number 891. No mention of any university from the "Giant of Africa", not even the once mighty University of Ibadan.

The tragedy of this situation is that these are self inflicted wounds. Things do not have to be like this. Whither girth are all this money? Where does all the money from this Republic generates go?

How can we demonstrate such lack of love for ourselves including our children so much that we do not care to provide them the best education How can we have public primary schools without computers in one of the most endowed nations on this pant? How can you establish modern educational institutions without clean running water, with back to pre-historic age digging of bur holes and with pathetic energy supply?

As the great Roman Statesman and Orator Marcus Tillius Cicero saw that Ancient Rome's kneaders had come to believe that their privates lives had nothing to do with the public good, he anticipated the decline of the Republic and warned about "THE ENEMY WITHIN."

Ladies and gentlemen, our problem is the enemy

within. The crumbling educational system, infrastructure, health care system is not caused by any foe outside our gates, the foes are within the gates of this Republic.

In August 1965, when tiny Singapore a city-state of 2 million people declared full independence from Malaysia nobody in the world gave her any chance of survival. How is it that today, Singapore with zero natural resources except air, water and fish and about 5 million people has the number 3 airline in the world, one of the highest GDP per capital in the world and two universities in the top one thousand universities in the world. The National University of Singapore comes in at number 74 i.e. top one hundred and Nanyang Technological University at number 148.

The answer on pages 7 & 8 of his book "From Third World to First" the Singapore story: 1965 - 2000. The founding father of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew writes: our greatest asset was the trust and confidence of the people. The other valuable asset we have was our people: hardworking, thrifty, eager to learn.

We must instill this type of ethos in our children, the future leaders of this nation. If we are to emerge from the Bottom Billion, the future leaders of this nation must be taught that the most important asset and resource of the nation is not oil or other natural resources. The greatest and most important asset of a Nation is the people.

To the parents of our children, I beg of you, please release them to go to school, Monday to Friday, except public holidays. Encourage them to study at home, to complete their homework.

To our children in the primary schools, young men

and women in JSS and SSS take as many subjects as you can. Do not skip any class. No human being can ever have too much education.

In conclusion, Can we rise from the Bottom Billion to the Middle Billion or even the Top Billion? Absolutely we can. However, there must be a complete transformation of our mind set. *"I and Me must be replaced by We"*. We have to be the captain who redirect this drifting ship of state. We can not continue to go hat in hand to USA, Europe, China, India and Australia.

No nation in the history of man has ever emerged from decadence from Without, Sustainable de-facto development occurs from Within.

Our fate, our destiny, our respectability as de-facto members of the human race rest largely on our achievements and output in our classrooms and laboratories beginning in Kindergarten. We can do it. 150 million plus brains. Let us get to work.

Pan Africa Children Advocacy Watch (PACAW), Inc. would like to express it's deep appreciation to all the eight members of the committee for the PACAW library and computer center projects for the primary and secondary schools here in Koro - Ekiti, Kwara State.

To the leaders of the committee, Mr Ajewole, Mr. Biodun Oyun and Mrs. Dupe Igunnu and Mr. Olokun thanks for your profound sacrifice, selflessness, honesty and love of the community. Let's give all of them a round of applause.

We at PACAW, Inc. salute all those who have made meaningful contribution inn the basic and secondary

education in the community since the establishment of the primary school in 1942 and the secondary school in 1980. These entities include regimens at the federal, state and local levels, the Koro Progressive Union (KPU), Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and benefactors. We acknowledge and applaud the contributions.

We congratulate all the participants in the 1st PACAW Leadership Academy which was held last week in this primary school. The attendance exceeded our expectation and I was particularly impressed by the active engagement of the participants and the spirited, honest discussions about the problems facing educators not only here in Koro - Ekiti, but in this State and indeed in the Nation. We hope next year's PACAW Leadership Academy will be as successful.

Finally, thanks to my wife for her support for all my activities outside my primary profession. Thanks to our on ors in the USA and future donors, hopefully both inside and outside USA.

Thanks to a couple who by convention are called In-laws, but who are truly my brother and sister for their love, extra-ordinary support and care.

God Bless You all

God Bless Nigeria

God Bless Mankind

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