



BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON OGONI

JUNE 1994

Prepared by the Office of the General Secretary
Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation
The Hague

DEVELOPMENTS IN OGONI, NIGERIA.

January 1993 - April 1994

January 4: 300.000 Ogoni protest against Shell Oil activities and the environmental destruction of Ogoni land. It is the Ogoni's first mass demonstration.

February 15-16: Shell International advisors meet with Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) in London (later in The Hague, February 18) to consider strategies for countering the "possibility that internationally organised protest could develop" over Shell's activities in Ogoni.

April 18: Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa, MOSOP spokesperson, held by the state security service at Port Harcourt International Airport for 16 hours without charges, released, but arrested again 5 days later.

April 30: Construction work on Shell's Rumuekpe-Bomu Pipeline destroys freshly planted Ogoni farmland sparking what begins as a peaceful demonstration of approximately 10,000 Ogoni. Soldiers from the Second Amphibious Brigade then open fire on demonstrators, wounding at least 10 and leaving Mrs Karalolo Korgbara, mother of five in critical condition.

May 1: Mass demonstrations along Bori Road against the pipeline construction continue. Shell decides to withdraw the American workers, supplied by Willbros. Equipment is removed from Bomu area the next day.

May 3: Mr. Agbarator Otu dies after being shot in the back by 'members of the Nigerian military' (MOSOP statement) while protesting work on the pipeline at Nonwa.

May 16: Mr Saro-Wiwa has his passport seized while trying to leave for London.

May 19: Amnesty International issues an Urgent Action concerning the extra judicial killing of Mr Otu and the Nigerian Government's use of force against peaceful Ogoni protests.

May 24: Mr Saro-Wiwa begins a European tour and succeeds in drawing attention to the struggle of the Ogoni people. Shell responds to the international attention and is "happy to discuss these matters further..." (letter to UNPO, May 28)

June 12: Presidential elections are boycotted by the Ogoni.

A ruptured pipeline begins to spray oil in Bunu Tai, Ogoni land. 40 days later, the flow is yet to be stopped.

Mr Saro-Wiwa is prevented from travelling to the UN conference in Vienna by Nigerian security service, his passport seized.

June 21: Mr Saro-Wiwa and other MOSOP officials are arrested.

June 22: Ogoni people march in Bori, in protest against MOSOP arrests. In reaction, Second Amphibious Brigade soldiers are moved from Port Harcourt and stationed in Bori. Indiscriminate beatings and arrests of Ogoni people by "heavy armed and unfriendly Nigerian soldiers and police" (MOSOP release June 24) are frequent.

June 30: Amnesty International issues a Fast Action, concerning Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa.

July 9: At least 60 Ogoni people killed by Andoni when arriving back from Cameroon Republic by boat. This 'incident' marks the beginning of Ogoni-Andoni violence.

Mid July: Mr Saro-Wiwa is moved to a hospital and later released on bail, but the charges still stand.

August 5: Kaa is the first village attacked in the Andoni-Ogoni conflict, resulting in 35 deaths and 8,000 refugees. Over the coming months, similar incidents occur in over 20 other villages. MOSOP accuses Shell of being behind the Andoni-Ogoni violence.

August 31: MOSOP leaders summoned to Abuja for meeting with Interim Government, installed by president Babangida after the annulment of the election results. First time that the Nigerian government officially discusses the situation in Ogoni land with MOSOP.

Beginning September: Mr Saro-Wiwa, Senator Birabi and representatives of Rivers State Security Council visit the destroyed village Kaa and urge Governor Ada George to take measures to curb the Andoni-Ogoni violence. Meetings are arranged between Andoni and Ogoni leaders and government representatives. This leads to the creation of a Peace Committee, headed by Prof. Claude Ake.

September 15: General Abacha promises Mr Saro-Wiwa that federal troops will be sent to Ogoni land to help curb the Andoni-Ogoni violence.

October 6: Peace Agreement signed concerning the Ogoni-Andoni troubles, but without the signature of Mr. Saro Wiwa, or "consultation of the communities involved" (See letter Prof. Ake).

October 17: Oil spill at Korokoro oil fields in Ogoni, operated by Shell. Mr Baritonle Kpormon (30) shot dead at a checkpoint in Bori by a federal soldier who has been sent to ensure peace at Ogoni-Andoni border. Bori however is not at the border.

MOSOP Steering Committee meeting accepts the Peace Agreement but for two paragraphs, and calls for a Judicial Commission of Inquiry to be installed by the federal government.

October 19: Prof. Ake, chairman of the Peace Conference, sends a letter to Governor Ada George, stating that he does not agree with the Peace Agreement. According to him, it was drafted in haste and without proper consultation of the communities involved.

October 23: Two fire trucks from SPDC are seized at Korokoro by inhabitants of Korokoro.

October 25: 3 Ogoni men shot at Korkoro oil fields by soldiers of the 2nd Amphibious Brigade accompanying Shell workers who went back to retrieve the fire trucks. Uebari Nna (18) dies, Pal Sunday (14) and Mboo Ndike (70) are wounded.

November 17: The interim government resigns. General Sani Abacha becomes the new Nigerian leader.

December 13: Governor Ada George is replaced by Lt. Col. Dauda Komo. Violent clashes between Ogoni and Okirika over crowded land at water fronts, Port Harcourt. Over 90 people reported dead, many more wounded.

December 28: Probably to prevent the start of the Ogoni Week, MOSOP leaders Dr Owens Wiwa and Mr Ledum Mitee, lawyer, are arrested without being charged. The Ogoni Assembly is dispersed by Nigerian soldiers. Lt. Col. Komo states the Ogoni Week was aborted because MOSOP didn't apply for a permit "as is expected of any community, to hold such activity".

January 2: Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa is placed under house arrest.

January 4: Dr Owen Wiwa and Mr Ledum Mitee are released, Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa's house arrest is lifted.

January 11: 7 member Commission of Inquiry installed by River State government to investigate Ogoni-Okirika clashes, starts public sittings in Port Harcourt.

January 20: A 3 member ministerial team starts a 2 day tour of Rivers State to investigate the hostilities between communities there, as part of general inquiry of community clashes. The government is especially worried about troubles in oil producing areas.

January 21: 500 million dollar contract signed in Port Harcourt between Shell Nigeria and ABB Global Engineering of UK, allowing the latter to collect gas from 10 flow stations in Rivers State.

January 24: The 3 major oil companies in Port Harcourt estimate to have lost over 200 million dollars during 1993, due to "unfavourable conditions in their areas of operation", and call for urgent measures to combat the situation.

Beginning April: A small conflict between Ogoni and Okoloma leads to serious clashes; Col. Komo is reported to have said that soldiers have been directed to deal with aggressive communities, and if necessary shoot trouble makers.¹⁵ Ogoni people are arrested without being charged, among them Dr. Owen Wiwa.

Sources: Various, including MOSOP letters and press releases, Shell documents and various press articles.



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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

*Press Release
For Immediate Release
April 17, 1994*

Ogoni Situation Deteriorates - Governor Issues Order to Shoot Foreign Journalist Investigating Ogoni Situation Deported

The situation in Ogoniland, Nigeria has deteriorated even further in the last week with the Rivers State Administrator, Colonel Dauda Komo admitting that "soldiers have been directed to deal with aggressive communities and if necessary shoot trouble makers". The remarks, reported in Nigeria's National Concord, came after a week and a half of violence that has left over 30 Ogoni dead and several villages destroyed.

Some 20 people were killed on Easter Sunday, April 3, when a minor dispute with the neighbouring Ndoki community led to the intervention of the Nigerian military. According to the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) it was the military's intervention that resulted in the indiscriminate killings of Ogoni and burning of Ogoni villages. Among the confirmed dead are Miss Bekpege, Mr Kagbe Feghe, Mr A. Nedam, Mr Isaac Kpakol, Mr Piann Tan and Master Borgbara. In a connected incident 10 men, women and children were also killed in the town of Oyigbo, just outside Ogoniland, according to MOSOP reports.

Lt. Colonel Komo's statement coincided with the release on bail of MOSOP leaders held since Wednesday, April 6 without charge. Their release came after personal pleas from a high-level MOSOP delegation that included the MOSOP President Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa to the Rivers State Administrator, Colonel Komo on Sunday, April 10. Dr Owens Wiwa and Mr Noble Obani-Nwibari, the arrested MOSOP leaders, were investigating the cause of the Easter Sunday violence when they were picked-up by the Nigerian military. Ten other Ogoni people are still being held without charge at Port Harcourt Central Police Station.

Nigerian State Security Services are also restricting the movement of foreign nationals in the region. According to an internal memo obtained by UNPO the Services are on the alert for foreigners attempting to investigate the situation in Ogoniland. In the first related arrest, Geraldine Brooks, correspondent for the Wall Street Journal found herself detained by Nigerian security forces on Saturday, April 9 while investigating the Ogoni situation. She was subsequently deported from Nigeria.

Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa is currently in The Hague, Holland where he is participating in a meeting of the UNPO's Steering Committee and an international conference on conflict prevention where he will be a guest speaker on Monday, April 18.

Ogoni is a Member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organizations (UNPO). UNPO is an organization of nations and peoples not adequately represented in international fora, such as the United Nations.

For more information and interviews please contact Richard Boele, Media and Information Centre, at UNPO, The Hague, The Netherlands. Tel.: +31-70-3603318, fax: +31-70-3603346, Email: unponl@antenna.nl. For latest



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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

*Press Release
For immediate release
April 29, 1994*

Nigerian Government to use Armed Force Against Ogoni

The Nigerian government has decided to use armed force to resolve the ongoing problems in Ogoniland, according to an internal memo from the Rivers State Commissioner of Police, obtained by the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO). The memo details plans for the extensive mobilization of the police and armed forces and occupation of Ogoniland, a move which is sure to worsen tensions in the already troubled oil-producing region of south-eastern Nigeria.

The memo, titled "Operation Order No. 4/94 - Restoration of Law and Order in Ogoni Land" and dated April 21, 1994 describes an operation that will involve "the Nigerian Army, the Nigerian Airforce, the Nigerian Navy and the Nigerian Police - PMF and conventional units" to "restore and maintain law and order in Ogoni-land" and "to apprehend intruders who may wish to use the period to ferment further disturbances." The order sets no date for the commencement of the operation. The size of the planned armed intervention is particularly worrying considering Ogoniland already has Nigerian soldiers stationed there.

Details of the plan have surfaced as the Rivers State government announced a new law enacting the death sentence for those found guilty, by a special tribunal, of involvement in communal clashes. Ogoni leaders fear that the Special Tribunal (Offences Relating to Civil Disturbances) Edict 1994 will be used as a cover to arrest and detain Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) leaders.

Nigerian observers have drawn attention to a section of the memo that states "the purpose of this operation order is to ensure that ordinary law abiding citizens of the area, non-indigenes resident of carrying out business ventures or schooling within Ogoniland are not molested". This section is being interpreted as a possible first step towards foreign companies being able to recommence operations in Ogoniland.

UNPO has issued an appeal to governments and other international organizations to call on the Nigerian government not to use force to resolve the Ogoni issue and explore peaceful methods.

Ogoniland experienced violence most recently when about 20 people were killed on Easter Sunday, April 3, after a minor dispute with the neighbouring Ndoki community led to the intervention of the Nigerian military. According to the MOSOP it was the military's intervention that resulted in the indiscriminate killings of Ogoni and burning of Ogoni villages.

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Copies of the internal police memo are available on request.

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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

*Press Release
For immediate release
May 24, 1994*

OGONI LEADER DETAINED

Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa, President of Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) and spokesman for the Ogoni people in Nigeria, was seized from his home by armed forces at 1.00am on May 22nd. Dr Owens-Wiwa, Mr Saro-Wiwa's brother, believes soldiers from the Nigerian government forces, gained entry after attacking a night watchman and scaling the wall. However, Lt Col D Komo, Military Governor of Rivers State, said in a telephone interview, that he has no idea where Mr Saro-Wiwa is, and that he had eluded police.

While contradictory reports are reaching UNPO as to just who is responsible for the sinister disappearance of the MOSOP President, it is clear from the Nigerian press that 4 other Ogoni leaders have been killed.

When the abduction took place, Mr Saro-Wiwa was in the process of campaigning to explain MOSOP's decision to take part in the Constitutional Conference organised by the Nigerian Government. MOSOP leads the Ogoni people in a non-violent struggle for environmental and political rights and believes that dialogue is the only way to resolve the ongoing problems in this oil rich area.

Over the weekend, Mr Saro-Wiwa had attempted to take part in a series of peaceful rallies at various villages, but was turned back by security forces and ordered to leave Ogoniland. After repeated attempts to contact the Military Administrator to ascertain the situation, he returned to his Port Harcourt home to await further developments.

Dr Owens-Wiwa last spoke to his brother at 3 pm, on May 21st. He was then awoken at 2.00 am and told by his brother's driver of the kidnapping. Dr Owens-Wiwa later visited detention centres but drew a complete blank. He is appalled by the events: "We have been harassed, intimidated and killed since we started our non-violent struggle against eco-terrorism and political marginalisation."

No-one has confirmed where Mr Saro-Wiwa is being held or when he will be released. Fears for his safety are growing and the UNPO General Secretary appealed to the EU Commissioner, Hans van den Broek, and several governments to intervene with the Nigerian authorities to secure his release. He has been detained several times in the past by the government.

Recently Ogoniland has been the scene of increasing tension, as plans for an extensive mobilisation of armed forces allegedly to be used for "restoring and maintaining law and order in Ogoni Land" contained in a memo from the Rivers State Commission, were revealed by UNPO on April 29, 1994.

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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

*Press Release
For immediate release
May 25, 1994*

Arrested Ogoni Leader Rejects Nigerian Government Accusations

In a smuggled statement from Ogoni leader Ken Saro-Wiwa, currently being held without charges in Bori Military Camp, Port Harcourt he rejects Rivers State Administrator Colonel Komo's charges of threatening other Ogoni leaders or of any involvement in Saturday's killing of four Ogoni leaders. The statement appeared in today's edition of the Nigerian Guardian in the form of a letter to Colonel Komo. The statement appeared in today's edition of the Nigerian Guardian in the form of a letter to Colonel Komo. Upon hearing of the Ogoni leaders' deaths Mr Saro-Wiwa responded "I have stood against violence, all those responsible for this should be brought to book."

Despite attempts to contact Colonel Komo on Saturday Ken Saro-Wiwa was arrested on Sunday May 22 at 1.00am and taken to Bori Military Camp, Port Harcourt, a Federal Army installation. The Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) President was subsequently beaten and the latest reports from Nigeria say he is still in hand and leg cuffs. Since Monday he has been taken to Government House for questioning and returned to detention. Mr Saro-Wiwa has been denied medical attention. An application to the Nigerian High Court has been made for Ogoni leader's release.

Ledum Mitee, MOSOP Deputy President and Ogoni lawyer being held with Ken Saro-Wiwa, has detailed the events around Saturday's disturbances in Ogoniland. The smuggled statement clearly raises questions about the conduct of armed forces in increasing tensions immediately before killing of the Ogoni. The officers explicitly named in the report are the officer-in-charge of the troops at Bori, Stephen Hassan of the Mobile Police Force and another commanding officer, Naval sub-lieutenant Nwatu. The report clearly details how Nigerian security forces prevented Mr Saro-Wiwa from campaigning in the government approved elections for the Constitutional Assembly.

The Ogoni deaths and dramatic escalation of tensions in the region has coincided with the implementation of an extensive mobilisation of armed forces for "restoring and maintaining law and order in Ogoni Land" as laid out in Operation Order No. 4/94 from the Rivers State Commissioner of Police released by UNPO on April 29, 1994.

In a related incident soldiers raided the offices of the local newspaper SUNRAY on Saturday May 21. About 50 officers including members of the airforce, navy, army and police force surrounded the office and took away the editor Mr Charles Tambou for questioning. He was questioned about the visit of Mr Saro-Wiwa to the office. More SUNRAY staff were later arrested only to be released on Sunday morning after Mr Saro-Wiwa's arrest.

Also being held with Ken Saro-Wiwa is Commissioner Dr Barinen Kiobeh and at least eight other Ogoni people. UNPO has obtained a list of their names.

UNPO's General Secretary, Dr van Walt has appealed today "There should be an immediate judicial enquiry into the deaths and the circumstances around them. The Nigerian government should also reduce tensions in the region by releasing Ken Saro-Wiwa and the other Ogoni leaders. I also appeal to the Ogoni people to stay calm."

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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

*Press Release
For immediate release
May 31, 1994*

Mass Arrests of Ogoni as Nigerian Troops Ransack Villages

The Nigerian authorities have arrested hundreds of Ogoni in the last week causing thousands to flee their villages. Military checkpoints have been established throughout Ogoniland where those passing are forced to undress. People bearing Ogoni tribal scars on their chests are being automatically arrested. Confirmed information puts the number of Ogoni men already arrested in the hundreds. Most are being held in the Bori Military Camp, Port Harcourt. There are also unconfirmed reports of Ogoni being killed.

With the increased harassment of Ogoni people thousands of Ogoni have left their villages, particularly in Gokana, where last Saturday's killing of four Ogoni leaders occurred. Widespread looting by Nigerian soldiers, both State and Federal, of the deserted villages has been reported by eyewitnesses. The town Gioko in Gokana has been described as a "ghost town". Other affected villages include Nwe-ol, Bera Barako, Deeyor, Nwebiara, Biara, Mogho, K. Dere, B. Dere and Lewe.

Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) President, is still being held without charges in Bori Military Camp, Port Harcourt. He is still in leg cuffs which has resulted in the severe swelling of one of his legs. He is also in need of medical attention for a long-standing heart problem. On Friday Mr Saro-Wiwa's lawyer, Mr Gani Fawehinmi, was refused access. He is attempting to see the Ogoni leader again today.

Still being held with Ken Saro-Wiwa is Ledum Mitee, MOSOP Deputy President and Ogoni lawyer and Commissioner Dr Barinen Kiobeh. Unconfirmed reports have noted the unusual arrest of Chief Kalikpo, from Bane village - a traditional Ogoni ruler not generally recognized as an active MOSOP member.

The mass arrests in Ogoni have come after the implementation of an extensive mobilisation of armed forces for "restoring and maintaining law and order in Ogoni Land" as laid out in Operation Order No. 4/94 from the Rivers State Commissioner of Police released by UNPO on April 29, 1994. Tensions were further heightened when these troops prevented Mr Saro-Wiwa from campaigning for the Constitutional Assembly elections on Saturday, May 21. Tensions peaked when four Ogoni leaders were killed by as yet unidentified people, on Saturday, June 21.

The Ogoni have been engaged in a non-violent struggle against the environmental degradation and social neglect of their land and people caused by Shell and other multinational oil companies in cooperation with the Nigerian government.

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Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

Press Release
For immediate release
June 14, 1994

Nigerian Military Massacre Ogoni

Nigerian soldiers have massacred over 40 Ogoni villagers in the last two weeks in the worst violence to hit the oil bearing delta region since tensions began early 1993. The soldiers have already attacked over 20 villages, indiscriminately shooting, looting, burning and raping in what appears to be a systematic campaign of terror according to reliable reports from Nigeria.

With the widespread confusion in Ogoniland it is feared the number of dead, which includes two pregnant women, could be much higher. Eyewitnesses have seen some bodies slit open and weighted with rocks before being thrown into the Imo River. Over a hundred Ogoni have already been wounded in the government's attacks. Many of the refugees also report the widespread raping of women and young girls by the Nigerian soldiers.

The attacks appear to be deliberately planned, as that on the major Ogoni town Bori confirms. Three days before the attack on Monday June 6, 1994, the other ethnic tribes living there, including Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, Ibibio and Ikwerre were warned of the impending attack and told to leave. The attack on Bori resulted in the killing of one person and the serious wounding of five others and looting. In a similar attack on Bera village at least 4 people were gunned down by looting soldiers. The attacks are also accompanied by demands, from soldiers, for large sums of money. Several villages have paid this extortion money only to see their villages ransacked anyway.

Trucks are arriving daily in Port Harcourt markets loaded with the looted possessions of Ogoni villages - the trucks have been loaded with even basic domestic items and livestock. Many of the looted Ogoni houses have subsequently been burned. As a result hundreds are already homeless with large numbers of refugees fleeing the region, many to Ibibio territory in Akwa Ibom State.

A leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), who has recently returned to Nigeria and is currently in hiding said, "Ogoni hasn't experienced violence like this since the civil war, the place is under a terrible form of martial law, I didn't imagine the extent of the destruction. What makes this so terrible is the systematic destruction, the soldiers have been given an open order to do whatever they like." Most members of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) have gone into hiding as hundreds of Ogoni are still being held at Bori Military camp. There are persistent reports that those detained are being subjected to torture.

This latest systematic oppression and bloodshed follows the May 21 killing of four prominent Ogoni by unidentified persons. The killings have been used by the government forces as an excuse for their heavy handed arrests of young Ogoni men.

Today the Port Harcourt High Court is expected to hear a case on the detention of Ogoni leader Mr Ken Saro-Wiwa whose whereabouts are still unknown. Fears are also held for the Ogoni leader's health - he has been missing since being moved from Bori Military camp on the night of June 2, 1994.

A world-wide week of action, the *World Ogoni Week*, has been called, beginning June 20, 1994 in which over 10 international human rights and environmental organizations are expected to participate.

The Ogoni have been engaged in a non-violent struggle against the environmental degradation and social neglect of their land and people caused by Shell and other multinational oil companies in cooperation with the Nigerian government. Ogoni is a Member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organizations (UNPO). UNPO is an organization of nations and peoples not adequately represented in international forums, such as the United Nations.

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**URGENT
ACTION**

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 44/07/94

Distr: UA/SC

27 June 1994

Further information on UA 200/94 (AFR 44/03/94, 24 May 1994) - Prisoner of conscience / Legal Concern
and new concern: Health concern

NIGERIA: Ken Saro-Wiwa, writer, President of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP)
and also: Ledum Mitee, lawyer, Deputy President of MOSOP, chairman of Rivers State branch of the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO)
Barinem Kiobel, Commissioner (minister) of Commerce and Industry in the Rivers State administration

Amnesty International is continuing to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Ken Saro-Wiwa and other members of the Ogoni community who are prisoners of conscience.

Ken Saro-Wiwa has now been held for more than a month and has been denied visits from a lawyer and his family. Arrested on 22 May 1994 in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, in southeast Nigeria, he was initially held in Bori Military Camp, Port Harcourt, but was removed in early June to another, unknown, place of detention. While held in Bori Military Camp he was reported to have been held in leg irons which resulted in swelling of one of his legs. He also suffers from a heart complaint for which he is not receiving medical attention.

Although accused of being responsible for the murder of four leading members of the Ogoni community at a meeting held in Giokoo in Ogoniland, Rivers State, on 21 May 1994, it is not clear whether he has been formally charged. The state authorities claimed that he had incited youths to murder the four men, after he was prevented by the security forces from campaigning for the elections of delegates to a constitutional conference. Amnesty International believes that the accusations against him are unfounded, that he has neither used nor advocated violence and that his most recent detention, as on several occasions in the past, is solely because of his campaign against environmental damage and inadequate compensation by oil companies operating in Ogoniland.

Amnesty International is also calling for the release of Ledum Mitee, who was also arrested on 22 May, and all other prisoners of conscience. These are believed to include Barinem Kiobel, a recently appointed Commissioner (minister) in the Rivers State administration, and several other prominent members of the Ogoni community, arrested around the same time and held at Bori Military Camp; none are known to have been charged with any offence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the days and weeks following the murders on 21 May, the presence of security forces in Ogoniland has been intensified, ostensibly in order to search for those directly responsible for the killings. However, the security forces have indiscriminately arrested members of the Ogoni community; reports suggest that several hundred have been arrested and are detained either at Bori Military Camp or at Kpor in Ogoniland. Some are reported to have been released after the extortion of large amounts of money by soldiers.

The security forces are reported to have attacked some 30 Ogoni villages; over 50 people are reported to have been deliberately and arbitrarily killed during these attacks and more than 180 have been injured (please refer to UA 249/94, AFR 44/06/94, 27 June 1994).

Ken Saro-Wiwa has been repeatedly arrested and harassed by the security forces in the past because of his campaign on behalf of the Ogoni people, and specifically because of his influence both within the Ogoni community and internationally. Ledum Mitee has also been previously detained; he was held for a week without charge following his arrest on 28 December 1993.

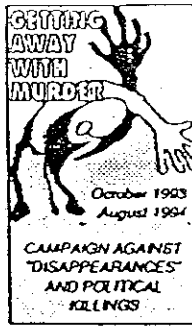
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Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the *release* of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These are termed *prisoners*



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**URGENT
ACTION**

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 44/06/94

Distr: UA/SC

UA 249/94

Extrajudicial executions / Fear for safety

27 June 1994

NIGERIA

Members of the Ogoni ethnic group

0 5 JULI 1994

Since 21 May 1994 more than 50 members of the Ogoni ethnic group are reported to have been extrajudicially executed and over 180 others wounded during attacks by the security forces on Ogoni villages in Rivers State, southeast Nigeria. The attacks are believed to be continuing and there are fears that many more members of the Ogoni community may become victims of extrajudicial executions. Amnesty International is calling for urgent measures to halt the killings and to protect all members of the Ogoni community.

The security forces are reported to have attacked some 30 villages, firing at random, destroying and looting property and setting fire to homes. According to reports, the village of Uegwere Bo-ue was attacked twice within four days. On 4 June, four people were shot, two of whom died. During a second attack on 8 June, seven people were killed, including a 10-year-old boy. Some of the victims are reported to have died after their homes were set ablaze by soldiers. In the village of Buan, a pregnant women, Leyira Piri, is reported to have been shot dead; six others were critically wounded. Other villages attacked are reported to include Yeghe on 1 June where two people were shot dead and Okwali on 12 June where five people killed and several others critically wounded.

These latest extrajudicial executions have occurred since the presence of security forces in Ogoniland was intensified following the murder on 21 May 1994 of four leading members of the Ogoni community by a group of youths at a meeting in Giokoo. Ostensibly searching for those directly responsible for the murders, the security forces have indiscriminately arrested members of the Ogoni community; reports suggest that several hundred are being held either at Bori Military Camp in Port Harcourt or at Kpor in Ogoniland. Some are reported to have been released after the extortion of large amounts of money by soldiers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Ogoni community has been campaigning against environmental damage and inadequate compensation for destruction of land and crops by oil companies operating in Ogoniland. In April 1993 security forces were reported to have opened fire on peaceful demonstrators in Biara; 11 people were injured. Shortly afterwards, further shootings at Nonwa resulted in one death.

Since 1993 the security forces are alleged to have been responsible for a number of extrajudicial executions after being brought into Ogoniland to maintain order. Although hundreds of Ogoni were reportedly killed in intercommunal fighting, there is evidence implicating the security forces. An official inquiry into some of these killings has not made its findings public (see UA 176/94, AFR 44/02/94, 4 May 1994).

The President of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ken Saro-Wiwa, was arrested on 22 May 1994 in connection with the incident which resulted in the latest attacks by the security forces on the Ogoni people. Although accused of inciting youths to murder the four Ogoni leaders on 21 May 1994, it is not clear whether he has been formally charged. Amnesty International believes that the accusations against him are unfounded, that he has neither used nor advocated violence and that his most recent detention, as on several occasions in the past, is solely because of his campaign on behalf of the Ogoni people (see UA 200/94, AFR 44/03/94, 24 May 1994, and AFR 44/07/94, 27 June 1994).

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Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the *release* of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These are termed *prisoners*

Environment 14/15

Guards have abducted Ken Saro-Wiwa, Nigerian novelist and Ogoni leader. His crime? To protest against the devastation of his land

Where trouble flares

Kay Bishop

THE Ogoni people of the Niger delta in Nigeria describe their diminutive leader, Ken Saro-Wiwa, as "the tallest man we have in Africa". A respected novelist and a campaigner for the rights of the Ogoni, Saro-Wiwa has addressed the UN in an attempt to halt what he describes as the "genocide" of his people. He has become a political hot potato for the military government and multinational oil companies. On Monday he disappeared.

The 500,000 Ogoni are a fishing and farming people on the southernmost coastal plains of Nigeria. It is an oil-rich area with one of the highest population densities in Africa.

For the past 30 years they have seen their environment devastated by pollution from the hundreds of pipelines and wells on their land. Highly toxic gases, a by-product of oil operations, are flared into the atmosphere, while on the Niger Delta as a whole there have been an average of four oil spills a week. Although they provide a considerable percentage of Nigerian wealth, they are not employed by the oil companies and their communities have remained poor and neglected.

Shell began operations on the delta in the late 1950s and now accounts for 50 per cent of Nigeria's daily oil production. Laid end to end, its pipelines on the delta would stretch from London to New York.

In January, 1993, to mark the UN year of the Indigenous People, the Ogonis, under Saro-Wiwa's leadership, decided to turn their long-standing campaign for rights into an international movement. Some 300,000 Ogoni people took part in demonstrations against the government and Shell.

The government clamped down and the Ogonis have suffered increasing harassment. Farmers dem-



Tall man: Ken Saro-Wiwa, abducted on Monday

onstrating against a Shell oil pipeline over their farmland were shot at by soldiers sent to protect the workers. Many were injured. The military have routinely silenced resistance to oil operations.

Nigeria was in a state of chaos when Ibrahim Babangida annulled the results of the June presidential election. The military's broken promise of a return to civilian rule caused widespread rioting. In the clampdown on pro-democracy activists which followed, Saro-Wiwa was imprisoned for a month. Amnesty campaigned for his release.

Unprovoked attacks on Ogoni villages which had started in July 1993 escalated. To date, over 1,000 people have been killed by raiders and 30,000 have been made homeless. The military denies any involvement, saying they were the results of "ethnic clashes".

Observers disagree: Professor Claude Ake of the UN Commission on Development and Culture, appointed by the military to look into the causes of the attacks, is convinced "broader forces" have been at work because of the sophistica-

tion of the attacks. Saro-Wiwa himself believes the attacks were "a military punishment".

Shell have consistently refused an interview about the pollution but did send Channel 4 a statement saying that "Shell Nigeria is sympathetic to the problems of the communities on the Niger Delta and that they are committed to playing their part in resolving them".

Saro-Wiwa had been planning another Ogoni week for early 1994 to celebrate their cultural festival and mark the end of the UN Year Of Indigenous People, but the military refused permission for it to go ahead. Saro-Wiwa was put under house arrest for three days.

Earlier this month, a leaked report detailed plans for a massive military operation, "Restore Order in Ogoni". Hundreds of soldiers have been drafted in to the area and a new law passed against anyone "obstructing" economic activities. The punishment is death. Many believe this is aimed at Saro-Wiwa.

The Nigerian military forced their way into his house at 1am on Monday and he is believed to be held in Port Harcourt. When asked this week for an explanation, the Sandhurst-trained military governor of Rivers State, Lt Col Komo, said four pro-government Ogonis had been murdered by Ogoni youths in a car bomb attack. He described the youths as "Ken's own boys, who are like the SS of Nazi Germany. He will be entitled to a lawyer just like in Britain".

Earlier this year we took Saro-Wiwa to a Lancashire farm to compare Shell's operations in Britain with those in Nigeria. The farmer was amused when asked whether the British army had been brought in to accompany Shell workers. "No," he replied.

Ken Saro-Wiwa's novel *Sozaboy*, about the Biafran civil war, is published on June 6 by Longman's.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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★ ★ ★ EASTERN EDITION

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WHITE OAK, MARYLAND

Slick Alliance

Shell's Nigerian Fields Produce Few Benefits For Region's Villagers

Despite Huge Oil Revenues, Firm and Government Neglect the Impoverished

How Troops Handle Protests

By GERALDINE BROOKS

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

KPOR, Nigeria—Walking near her mud hut just before dawn last January, Grace Zorbidom carried a kerosene lantern to light her way. In the darkness, she couldn't see the oil slick oozing from a rupture in a pipeline that runs hard up against her tiny village. When she set down her lantern, a sheet of flame engulfed her.

Still in pain almost three months later, she lies on the earthen floor of a traditional healer's hut as her burns are treated with poultices made from leaves. She says Shell Petroleum Development Co., which owns the pipeline, never inquired after her nor offered to pay for her medical care.

"I curse the day Shell found oil on our land," says Mrs. Zorbidom, a subsistence farmer and mother of eight. "It has killed the gardens and the fish, and now it is killing the people, too."

The Royal Dutch/Shell Group in London says it is "hazy" on details of the accident, which it says it couldn't investigate because of tensions in the area, and can't confirm Mrs. Zorbidom's account.

Military Intervention

But Mrs. Zorbidom's accident is just one of many instances in which Shell's presence, coupled with decades of the Nigerian military government's own neglect, has damaged a vulnerable local community. Now, the tension is so high that Shell has had to shut down its operations in the area. Moreover, protests, even peaceful ones by unarmed peasants, have been violently suppressed by the military, which often intervenes at Shell's request.

Shell "has a clear responsibility to safeguard its employees and the interests of its joint-venture partners," says Eric Nickson, a spokesman. "It also has a legal obligation to notify the authorities whenever it perceives a threat to the continuity of oil operations. Unavoidably, therefore, the company has on occasion been compelled to ask for assistance."

Nigeria's government depends on oil for 80% of its revenue, and sees any threat to the industry as imperiling its shaky hold on power. Oil produced by Shell accounts for about half of these revenues: in 1993 Nigeria produced an average of close to 2 million barrels a day. Shell operates a joint



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venture in which it holds a 30% interest, the Nigerian government 55%, Elf Aquitaine of France 10% and Agip Francaise 5%. The U.S. bought 36% of Nigeria's 1993 output—about 11% of U.S. oil imports.

Mrs. Zorbidom is an Ogoni, a 500,000-member ethnic group of farmers and fishermen living on a patch of Nigeria's swampy coastal plain. The Royal Dutch/Shell unit struck oil on Ogoni lands in 1958 and, by some calculations, has extracted some \$30 billion worth since then. Yet even by Africa's harsh yardstick, the Ogoni remain desperately poor: most live in palm-roofed mud huts and dig for yams with bamboo sticks. Of Shell's 5,000 employees in Nigeria, only 85 are Ogoni. Because they are a powerless minority among Nigeria's population of 88 million, the Ogoni are often overlooked when it comes to the allocation of jobs either in government or the private sector.

Although there are 96 oil wells, two refineries, a petrochemical complex and a fertilizer plant in the 404-square-mile Ogoni area, the sole hospital is an unfinished concrete husk, and the government's schools, unable to pay teachers, are rarely open. "All the children learn these days is basket-weaving," says Leema Menegbo, a teacher who hasn't been paid since December. To survive, he sells taxi rides on the pillion seat of his motorbike.

Recently, the government has made it harder for foreign observers to visit Ogoni lands. In April, it denied visas to a fact-finding mission from the Netherlands-based Unrepresented Peoples Organization. Then, apparently concerned that the delegates might slip in, it set up checkpoints throughout the area to monitor Western travelers.

Another possible threat, in the government's view, are foreign newspaper reporters. When I approached an army officer to ask for the military's account of a violent incident, I was handed over to the secret police, held and interrogated for two days and then deported "for security reasons."

Since 1982, the government has supposedly directed 1.5% of its oil revenue back to

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Slick Alliance: Shell's Huge Oil Fields in Nigeria Produce Few Benefits for Impoverished Villagers

Continued From First Page

the communities where the oil is produced. Facing growing discontent, it raised that figure to 3% in 1992. But, Shell's Mr. Nickson says, "little or none of the money seems to have reached the intended beneficiaries." Instead, most of it seems to have been spent in the tribal lands of the ruling majority or vanished in corrupt deals.

Last year, the Ogoni organized their first protests against Shell and the government. In April 1993, farmers stood in front of the earthmoving equipment of a unit of Willbros U.S.A. Inc., a Tulsa, Okla., oil-service company that was laying a pipeline for Shell through croplands. Shell says "all land acquisition procedures were followed, agreements reached on full compensation, and the local community paid." Nevertheless, many Ogoni protested what they say was continuing exploitation of farmland. Nigerian military shot into the crowd. One Ogoni died. A woman's arm had to be amputated.

Mr. Nickson says the "response to the disturbance was determined and carried out by the Nigerian authorities."

Now, the protests have escalated, and so has the violent response. Since January 1993, Shell has barred its workers from the region, saying one of its employees was beaten and others harassed. In a series of murky incidents, Nigerian soldiers have stormed Ogoni villages, saying they were quelling outbreaks of unrest between the Ogoni and neighboring tribes.

The Ogoni say the raids are punishment for obstructing Shell. They say the military has orders to use minor land disputes, which had long been settled with little violence, as a pretext to lay entire villages to waste. Some raids are conducted by a feared unit called the Mobile Police, nicknamed "Kill and Go."

In the latest incident, on Easter Sunday, mud-walled buildings were reduced to rubble and gutted by flames. One dwelling appeared to have been raked by automatic-rifle fire. At least four villages had been abandoned, apparently in haste. On the floor of one partly burned hut, a dish of half-prepared cassava meal was speckled with stains of what looked like blood.

Villagers taking refuge in a nearby town told of indiscriminate shooting by soldiers in full uniform. One badly bruised 10-year-old girl says she was gang-raped. Three days later, the whites of her eyes were bloodshot, the flesh around them purple and swollen. "She says the soldiers

tried to rip out her eyes," her mother explains, "so she couldn't identify them."

Mr. Nickson says Shell "deplores" cases of the military's "heavy-handed" clampdown and "regrets the pain and loss suffered by local communities that has resulted." He adds that Shell "does have sympathy with many of the grievances felt by people in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria, who believe they don't receive a fair share of the oil revenues that accrue to the Nigerian government." Finding the government deaf to their protests, he says, they have turned on Shell to raise the international profile of their campaign "by making environmental accusations and disrupting oil operations."

While many oil companies had poor records in developing nations, most have tried hard in recent years to reduce environmental damage and foster good community relations. For instance, when Dupont's Conoco Inc. unit drilled an exploratory well in Gabon between 1989 and 1992, it flew in much of its equipment to avoid pushing a major road through the rain forest. When trees had to be felled, the company hired scientists to cultivate cuttings so that sites could be replanted with exactly the same species that had been removed. All this far exceeded the Gabon government's requirements. "We are going to do what is environmentally right," says Carlton Adams, a Conoco spokesman. "That may mean we do what the regulations say, and it may mean we do more." Mr. Adams believes this approach "has become more and more standard in the oil industry as environmental awareness has grown."

Similarly, many companies strive for local goodwill. When Dallas-based Hunt Consolidated Inc. went into Yemen in the 1980s, it worked closely with the central government, but also negotiated separate deals with the many tribes in the isolated areas where it had to operate. By hiring as many local people as possible, building roads and drilling numerous water wells, the oil company forged good relationships in regions renowned for strife.

"For years, the standard practice has been, you give the locals what they want and write it off as a cost of doing business," says one Houston-based drilling consultant now in Nigeria. "The sums you're talking about are peanuts anyway—lunch-money in the oil business."

Shell's record in Nigeria also contrasts starkly with its operations in Western

countries. One of its corporate advertisements shows a scenic landscape in Wales. "If we told you a certain oil company wanted to push a pipeline through this lovely Welsh valley," the soundtrack says, "you would probably quite rightly be very alarmed." But, the ad continues, the film shows the valley after Shell laid its pipe. Consulting with residents, the company says it worked with minimal environmental impact and completed a total restoration.

Sights on a Tour

Yet a three-day tour of the Ogoni region reveals a ravaged environment. After the late-afternoon rains of the wet season, the low sun sparkles on the glossy leaves of banana palms as women, bowls of cassava balanced on their heads and babies in slings on their backs, trudge home from their fields. In many places, the only hint of the 20th century is Shell's network of oil pipelines and flow stations, a network so extensive throughout the Niger Delta that, if laid in one line, it would stretch from London to New York. In at least four locations, oil pulses out of busted pipes and slicks dead vegetation.

"Some of the facilities installed during the last 30 years, whilst acceptable at the time, aren't as we would build them today," Mr. Nickson says. "Given the age of some of these lines, regrettably oil spills have occurred from time to time." But he also blames more than half the recent leaks on "deliberate sabotage so that compensation claims can be made."

Mr. Nickson adds that Shell hasn't been able to enter Ogoni lands in recent months to fix the breaks because it fears for its workers' safety. He says attempts to clean up one spill by using an Ogoni contractor were obstructed by youths who think that untended spills "support their claims of environmental degradation."

Ken Saro-Wiwa, a prominent Nigerian author and the Ogoni's principal spokesman, calls those assertions "preposterous." He says that although uneducated youths, frustrated and angry, may have damaged some Shell installations in one or two incidents, "the people would never deliberately spill oil on their land because they know the so-called compensation is paltry and the land is never restored."

Near a settlement called Ebubu, a spill from more than 20 years ago still hasn't been cleaned up. In an area the size of four football fields, cauliflower-shaped extrusions of moist black tar cover the ground to a depth of about three feet. Shell says the spill happened during civil war in the late 1960s and cleanup work was completed in 1990. When sunken oil reappeared, the company says it planned further work but can't act while the threats continue.

Questions Annoy Nigeria's Military, And Reporter Is Questioned Herself

Fouled Water Supplies

Meanwhile, drenching rains wash oil into streams and inlets. The Ogoni, who have only a few water wells and virtually no piped-in water, rely on the streams for drinking and bathing. In Bori, the largest Ogoni town, children draw water in jerrycans from a stream alongside the rubbish dump. In a nearby village, a warning—"Don't Fetch Here"—is scrawled on the community well, but a woman, illiterate, dangles her bucket into the murk.

Lifting the lid on a blackened pot simmering over a wood fire, a teenage fisherman shows the meager meal that will feed him and his nine brothers. Their day's catch is five fist-sized crabs and a quarter pound of minute shrimp. The boys say that to catch more, they have to go farther out to sea each year—and don't have a boat that can do so safely.

"Before, we could always get plenty of fish from the river—even the little children could pick up periwinkles from the mangroves," the youth says. Now *Nypa* palms, which fishermen consider useless and previously were unknown in the area, have colonized the polluted inlets where fish-friendly mangroves once thrived.

As bad as the oil contamination is in the wet season, the dry months bring a more immediate danger: oil fires. Ogoni farmers, who generally can't afford the petrochemical-based fertilizers made in the sprawling plant nearby, used to burn crop stubble to enrich their land. But now, with pipelines crisscrossing fields and skirting villages, few take the risk.

Shell, which operates out of lavish office and residential compounds in nearby Port Harcourt, says that since 1985 it has spent more than \$2 million on community projects for the Ogoni, including road improvement, three or four water projects, building several classrooms and providing school equipment.

Meager Benefits

But outsiders familiar with the projects say Shell is either inflating their value or paid far too much for the results on the ground. "A couple of classroom blocks of dubious quality and one or two wells in an area," says Sister Majella McCarron, Nigeria liaison for a Catholic organization, Africa Faith and Justice Network.

A European nurse helping the Ogoni says staff at her clinic asked Shell to extend the tar on an oil-field road a few

extra yards so that patients wouldn't have to slog through wet-season mud. To her astonishment, she says, the company representative refused. "He said their roads were there to service their wells."

Sister Majella fears that the government might decide to put an end to the protests in one massive military sweep. Last week, the Nigerian government ordered more than 400 additional police and soldiers into the Ogoni area. "It would be like Rwanda," she says. "In the news for a day, and after that, the world would just shrug and turn away."

I had asked to interview a Nigerian military officer, but suddenly I am the one answering questions.

Soldiers have brought me to an unmarked building in the Niger River Delta city of Port Harcourt. It is the headquarters of the Nigerian secret police, known as the State Security Services, or S.S.

"Who are you spying for?" barks a tall, bullet-headed man, wearing African robes and toting a walkie-talkie. By late afternoon, the equatorial air seems as heavy as soup. Sweat dribbles down my face. I hope it doesn't make me look guilty.

My interrogators don't give their names; so, as the afternoon wears on into evening, I make some up. The bullet-headed one I mentally call Kojak. Another, a small, cocky man with the exaggerated facial expressions of a high-school actor playing a Gestapo heavy, I name the Bantam. The one apparently in charge, I dub the Boss.

A Matter of Trouble

Kojak thumbs through my passport, pausing at the visas for Croatia and Afghanistan. "You go places where there is trouble," he says. I explain that as a foreign correspondent, writing about trouble is my job.

"Your job," he says pensively. "Writing about trouble? Or causing it?"

By midnight, it is clear that although my interrogators speak perfect English, we aren't talking the same language. "You are trying to tell me I can get a visa and go to the U.S. and talk to anybody I like?" Kojak asks. Yes, I say. Kojak looks at Bantam. They laugh derisively. "Where is your U.S. government press card?" I explain the First Amendment. They laugh.

These men seem unlikely to believe anything I say. They certainly don't believe that what I have been doing—investigating claims of military abuse of peasants in a dispute over oil drilling—is the ordinary business of journalism.

I realize I've made a mistake about Nigeria, confusing the bravery of individual Nigerian journalists, who fill the local newspapers with aggressive, often-critical reports on the military government, with the existence of a free press. Now I am standing against a wall, in profile, having mug shots taken. No one has read me my rights or charged me with anything, but a policewoman is forcibly searching me for the notebooks I've refused to hand over. "Madam," the Bantam says melodramatically. "Let me remind you that you have had 38 years of very good life. You have a husband. Don't risk it all now."

People at Risk

The risk, as I see it, is to the people named in my notebooks—most of whom hadn't asked to have me knock on their doors and ask them questions. Now, their next unwanted guest might be the S.S. Kojak carries away the notebooks and I never see them again. Worried that this might happen, I have used a few minutes when I was left alone to scribble some key names and quotes in my Filofax amid jottings on Afghanistan. I hold my breath as the police scan these scribbles. Fortunately, they miss the Nigerian names buried among mujahedeen officials.

"You are a French national, aren't you?" the Boss suddenly asks me even while holding my Australian passport and U.S. green card. My requests to contact the Australian High Commission in Lagos have been ignored all afternoon. "You are a French national sent to survey our oil installations for sabotage." He doesn't wait for an answer. Leaving the accusation

dangling, he strides out. Beyond the barred windows, I hear his car start. I gather I will be spending the night.

As soon as the gate clangs shut behind the Boss's car, someone tunes a radio to a disco station. Three fluorescent tubes glare overhead. "Is it possible to turn off the light?" I ask my female guard.

"It's possible, but the mosquitoes will be worse." Squadrons of mosquitoes, infamously malarial, are already circling us.

In the morning, a new guard arrives, introducing herself as a devoted fan of the televangelist Jimmy Swaggart. Every time the interrogators leave the room, she smiles radiantly as she launches into a fervent exegesis on hellfire, Satan, the special vulnerability of women as the Devil's vehicle. Worried about what my interrogators are doing while gone, I tune out most of her monologue. But suddenly one remark resonates. "Do not be afraid when men accuse you falsely," she says, quoting the New Testament. "For the truth will set you free."

Wanting to believe that I fill out a form given to me by the interrogators and listing every place I've lived, every job and every relative. Suddenly, on about page 20, I find a question I can't answer: "What salary range will you be requiring for this position?" I soon realize that my tormentors are using an S.S. employment form as a suspect-information sheet. Somehow, an outfit that practices such small economies seems less formidable.

"Your husband—his name is different from yours," the Boss says, late on the second night. "I put it to you that 'Geraldine Brooks' is a code name you use for your cover as a journalist and that you are in fact an agent of a foreign intelligence agency." I explain that many women keep their names after marriage. He walks away without comment. Once again, I hear his car door slam. I wonder whether there will be a third night, or a 30th?

An Unnerving Drive

The next morning, no one comes to question me. Near noon, the Bantam strides in and barks that I should follow him to the car. An S.S. woman climbs in on either side of me. Where are we going?

The car stops at a sprawling government building. I follow Bantam through corridors to a door that says Immigration Investigation. Inside, Bantam pushes a gray paper bag and a letter, both stamped SECRET, across the desk. Reading upside down, I make out the order for my immediate deportation "for security reasons."

The immigration official opens the bag and upends it. Nigerian banknotes worth about \$290 flutter down—the payment for my escort to Lagos airport. The immigration official glares at the Bantam. "It's not enough!" he roars, pounding the desk and sending the banknotes aloft. "You go back and tell your boss he has to cover my man's hotel bill and taxi fares as well as the plane ticket!"

The Bantam looks as though his feathers have been doused with cold water. "Yes, sir," he whispers, backing out of the room with a little series of half bows.

Late that night, a Lagos immigration official fills out the paperwork for my departure, studiously writing "repatriation" in place of the S.S.'s more draconian "deportation." As a woman immigration officer escorts me to a seat on an Amsterdam-bound plane, she asks what happened in Port Harcourt. I explain about my interview request and what followed. She gives me a goodbye hug. "Nigerians," she sighs. "We never learn."

—Geraldine Brooks

The Plight of the Ogoni

Shell Oil: Caught up in the politics of pollution

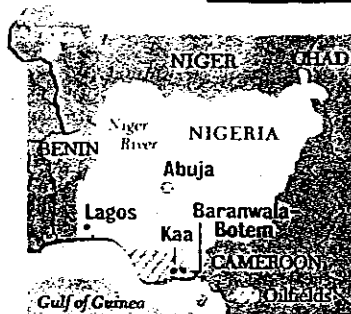
BY THE TIME THE BROKEN PETROLEUM pipeline was fixed, John Ntorue says, the surrounding forest looked as if it were carved from chocolate, and a spreading pool of crude oil covered the ground. Now he's tempted to abandon his home in the Nigerian village of Baranwala-Botem, in the oil-rich but impoverished Niger Delta. "Maybe I'll find another place," he says. "It's killed my chickens and goats. And the smell—it makes you sick." The pipeline from the Korokoro pumping station, owned by Shell Petroleum Development Co. of Nigeria, Ltd., broke in June. Shell says it fixed the leak the next day; the villagers say the spill continued for a month. Either way, the mess continued to trickle into the river, fouling the drinking water and the fishing grounds of villages downstream.

For the approximately 500,000 members of the Ogoni ethnic group who inhabit the delta, the spill was one more incident in a long history of abuse and neglect. While their lands bear the brunt of the industry that makes the country Africa's largest oil producer, Nigeria's share of the profits goes straight to the central government. As the country's biggest foreign oil company, Shell has become a principal target for the Ogoni's frustrations. In January, after a Shell employee was severely beaten and his car set on fire, the company pulled its personnel out of the region, leaving the pumping stations to run on automatic settings. But the activists of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (Mosop) say they won't rest until their polluted lands are cleaned up, their people are fairly compensated and the government gives some measure of political autonomy to the Ogoni people.

Mosop's leader, a nationally prominent writer named Ken Saro-Wiwa, has spent the last quarter century battling the oil industry. Until recently the Nigerian authorities tolerated him as a harmless nuisance. That changed two years ago when he founded the group and began advocating Ogoni autonomy. In the last six months the Nigerian government has jailed and released him four times.



PHOTO BY JAMES M. MATHRE FOR ODYSSEY-MAGAZINE



Division of spoils: The government gets the gold, the locals get the goo

Saro-Wiwa recently spoke with NEWSWEEK at a hospital in Port Harcourt where he was undergoing treatment for heart trouble he suffered in prison. "We've been fighting for the environment for a long time. Nobody listened," he says.

"But when we made a political case—ah, that began to draw some attention."

Perhaps too much attention. Last month a group of armed men, some wearing Nigerian navy and police uniforms, swept into Kaa, an Ogoni town of roughly 5,000 inhabitants. The sound of gunfire in the streets brought Maria Nwiku racing from her home. As she emerged, a bullet hit her leg sent her sprawling. Two of her children, running with her, were shot dead. As Nwiku watched, attackers forced their way into her house and murdered her elderly husband and their third child. She struggled to her feet and ran for cover in the bush. Behind her she heard the sound of an explosion; when she turned to look, her home was in flames. Community leaders say at least 35 townspeople were killed in the raid. Government officials contend that the massacre was part of a continuing ethnic feud between the Ogoni and the Andoni people, who live across the river from Kaa. But many Ogoni are convinced that the military supported the raid in order to punish the autonomy movement.

Such incidents only deepen Ogoni anger at the government and at the oil industry, which they accuse of blighting their lands. In turn, Shell blames the Ogoni people for aggravating the company's pollution prob-

lems. Mosop members have committed deliberate acts of sabotage against pipelines; the oil company complains—a charge that Saro-Wiwa himself says may have some basis in fact. When spills happen, village leaders often try to block the company's cleanup efforts, according to Nnaemeka Achebe, Shell's general manager for business development in Nigeria. "The longer the mess is around, the bigger the claim they can demand," he says. "They want the evidence there." Not that the villagers stand much chance of collecting any sort of damages. Shell delivers its compensation payments to the Nigerian government for distribution, but the money tends to disappear before it reaches the victims.

Stunted growth: Shell says its operations comply with Nigerian law and with the company's own environmental guidelines. Nevertheless, the strictness of Nigeria's pollution standards can be judged by visiting the government's petrochemical plant at Okikra. A lingering boiled-cabbage smell pervades the air. An iridescent sheen coats the stream that runs through the center of town. Fish have mostly died off, and vegetation in the area has grown stunted.

Townspeople routinely complain of diarrhea and vomiting and insist that the chemical factory is slowly poisoning them. Saro-Wiwa asks why the First World can't show as much concern for them as for threatened plant and animal species. "The West worries about elephants," he says. "They stop the export of rhino horns and things like that. And then they cannot worry about human beings dying." Whether his own group's efforts will help or hurt is a question that has yet to be answered.

CHRIS MCGREAT in Baranwala-Botem

60 feared dead in Ogoni rampage

ON YEA 60 people were feared dead, 700 wounded and about 70,000 rendered homeless, following a rampage in Ogoni village. The disturbance entered its second week last Friday.

From Tuyo Lukula, Port Harcourt

Backed in the two columns. Hundreds of resistors were seen tramping out of the council, apparently heading for Port Harcourt, as fears were ripe that the third coup will in Ogoni, Tai/Elemba, may soon witness similar mass.

Soldiers at the road block who stopped the *Guardian* reporter from entering Gokanah, from Yegoh, said the place had become "a military zone."

Bori was desolate at the weekend as the people now look at strange faces with suspicious while shops and markets have been

closed down.

The state polytechnic, Bori, has been temporarily closed down, albeit unofficially because students have either gone into hiding or fled the campus. Lecturers complained that those who turned up, refused to take lectures.

Mr. Oswald Green, an indigene of Bonny Council, who lectures at the institution, said he had been living along with members of his family in his office since the incident started in Bori last Monday.

Narrating his ordeal, the lecturer who threatened to abandon his job and flee to Port Harcourt, if nothing urgently is done, said it

on Monday, I was sleeping when I heard heavy gun shots very close to my residence at Kenule Street. I laugh they (soldiers) were right behind us. Next morning, Tuesday, I went out to the street, to see that

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60 feared dead in Ogoni rampage

Continued from Page 1

people's houses and shops have been broken into and properties removed. Green, who said he heard rumours of the soldiers' determination to "wipe out" the rumour, as he did not hear it over the radio or read it in the papers.

Saying that he was moved and felt concerned by what he saw on Tuesday, the teacher stated that his first reaction was to rush to Port Harcourt and the office of the state Attorney-General, Mr. Adokye Amintamaka

was his first point of call. The commissioner, who said he was busy to see anybody, asked Green to write what he wanted in a sheet of paper which his secretary passed to him. The message read that "S.O.S Army are killing the indigenes of Bori." But the commissioner replied on top of the note that "thanks for the information, I will report to the appropriate authorities."

Green said he lodged some complaints at the office of the Information Commissioner, Director

General of the military, Works Commissioner and his Education counterpart.

The hiterto boisterous Bori now look like a graveyard as inhabitants warned their ordeal.

A woman who runs a restaurant disclosed how she was forced by soldiers, to lie down, along with her comrades, inside water, outside the restaurant. The soldier, she claimed asked for the whereabouts of her husband and when she told them he was not around, "they asked me to bring whatever I have with me. I gave them N2,000 and they

However, the situation was not the same at an hotel where two service girls were alleged to have been raped because they could not produce any money. Two lodgers who had had no accident the previous day and decided to lodge in the hotel were also disappointed of their money by the visiting soldiers.

A chairman of the Hospital Road along who said to have been broken into, was looted.

An indigene of the area who identified himself as a teacher in Government Comprehensive High School, Talba, said residents who do not have money to port Harcourt, to the night and come out in the day time.

The Conference of Ogoni Traditional Rulers have written the State Administrator, Lt. Col. Musa Koina, over the incident. In their letter dated June 4, 1991, the rulers

FROM: GMB

TO: MD, DMD, GMC, GMH, GME, GMW

Meeting at Central Offices on Community Relations and Environment
(15/16th February in London, 18th February in The Hague)

Attached are draft minutes of the meetings held with advisers last week in SIPC and SIPM on Community Relations and Environment. They should provide background for discussions on the same subjects at the SPDC Strategy Review on 26/2/93.


N.A. ACHEBE

22nd February, 1993

cc: HSEL, HSEE, HSEW
PAGL, PAGE, PAGW.

File note

(following meetings on 15/16 February with Achebe, Omuku and Okonkwo)

The overriding PA issue facing Shell in Nigeria comes under the overall umbrella of community relations. In reality it is, in fact, a clustering of important issues, both for SPDC and the Group. It is commonly felt that other parts of the nation are benefiting from oil more than those who live in the oil-producing states, and this manifests itself in community attacks on installations, disrupting operations.

The problem is not restricted to Nigeria; it has been thrust into UK sitting rooms through the TV programme "The Heat of the Moment" and the information has spread, most recently in the Netherlands and Australia. International networking, most prominently so far involving the Ogoni tribe and Ken Saro-Wiwa, is at work and gives rise to the possibility that internationally organised protest could develop.

Ken Saro-Wiwa is using his influence at a number of meetings, last year in Geneva at the UN Commission on Human Rights and, most recently, one organised in the Netherlands by the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (despite its acronym, UNPO, is not a UN offshoot). However, WIP (the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples), based in Amsterdam, is also involved and networks with organisations such as Amnesty International and Survival International (these organisations have in the past corresponded with Shell on matters relating to our involvement in countries with oppressive regimes and undermining the lot of indigenous peoples). Ken Saro-Wiwa/UNPO will be using every opportunity made available by 1993 being the UN's declared Year for Indigenous Peoples.

The attack is focused on Shell as it is perceived to be rich and powerful; it also alleges collusion with the government in the repression of local indigenous peoples, using the Umuechem massacre as an example. And standards of health, safety and treatment of the environment have been brought to question, particularly relating to oil spills (the majority of incidents arise from operational failures, but the greatest volume is due to sabotage) and flaring. With both there are perceived health risks and a waste of national resources. There is an inference of double standards, that standards in Nigeria are way behind those in places elsewhere, particularly in OECD countries. Yet it is stated that something will be done in the EP booklet "A Matter of Commitment". For instance, it says: "Great efforts are being made to reduce flaring and venting.....the main drive is to find markets for the gas."

Exacerbating these problems are encroachment by communities onto company lands (resulting from the high rate of population growth and shortage of land in oil-producing areas), the country's general economic decline, the challenge to traditional leaders by educated,

unemployed youth and the perception that community projects undertaken so far have had little real impact are little more than tokenism.

The main thrust of the activists now seems to be directed at achieving recognition of the problems of oil-producing areas by using the media and pressure groups. By concentrating accusations against Shell, especially internationally, they feel that the publicity generated will have greater impact.

Herein lies risk for Shell. Urgent attention, therefore, is being directed to the issue. The problems of the communities in the oil-producing areas are recognised. In the absence of real government action to ensure that the 1.5% (now 3%) fund has provided any significant benefits for these communities, SPDC has given some help, concentrating on agriculture, education and health care.

No matter what Shell does in the way of endeavouring to improve public relations, SPDC will be under pressure until the communities feel that their case is being heard and that real benefits start to flow from the 3% committee. Meanwhile HSE aspects of SPDC's operational activities will require particular attention. Priority will have to be paid to:

- spills - reducing the incidence from operations - this will involve improving staff motivation and training
- reduce flaring - a high priority
- gas gathering - having been one of the promulgators of the associated gas framework agreement, SPDC is losing ground as competitors propose practical schemes
- air and water quality - a need to work with consultants and the government (FEPA) to monitor standards and improve understanding, so a sense of realism can be given to growing accusations
- encroachment - reassess present methods of negotiation and levels of payment for land required by SPDC, also reassess the real needs for land in terms of technological advances and especially in more populated areas - there is also a need to assess what can be done where encroachment already represents a high level of risk
- PA staff - ensure that the quality and levels of staff are of a professional standard suitable to undertake these sensitive activities - training will be required, workshops are already planned for 1993 in conjunction with Group PA (PAR)
- consultants like IITA will need to be involved to monitor the performance of existing agricultural projects
- youth programmes - renewed urgency should be given to reviewing possibilities for introducing employment programmes
- indigenes - SPDC and SIPC PA departments to keep each other more closely informed to ensure that movements of key players, what they say and to whom is more effectively monitored to avoid unpleasant surprises and adversely affect the reputation of the Group as a whole

- media relations - need quality improvement to respond to questioning from international press on matters that may have an impact on the Group's reputation
- employee communications - need to be more effective in demonstrating to staff work already undertaken by SPDC to help communities and HSE efforts already under way in vital parts of the business, together with their need to be vigilant, especially in safety and environmental matters, thus mobilising their support