



ONDO ANTHEM, OPEN GRAZING AND MATTERS ARISING

The **Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission** has observed with concern the highly orchestrated campaign of calumny mounted by some individuals and groups over the recent action of Arakunrin Akeredolu, SAN in finding a lasting solution to the frequent attacks on the farmers and their farmlands by the armed herders in the Southern part of the country. The orchestrated campaign which started as a market place rumour is now assuming a dangerous dimension, especially with the recent press release by the Northern Elders Forum (NEF). An attempt to equate the adoption of the State Anthem as an assault on the integrity of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is tantamount to reducing germane State matters to the level of the mundane.

The crudity of the allegation against the Ondo State Governor and Chairman, Southwest Governors Forum, Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN by the Northern Elders Forum (NEF) over the adoption of the State Anthem in public engagements and schools in Ondo State, has become quite worrisome, especially with the tendency for unsuspecting members of the public to believe the falsehood. This lie is being peddled by the NEF and their backers and before it takes root, it is better we nip it in the bud.

The Commission will no longer keep quiet and watch the peace and progress that the Region is noted for to be threatened by unfounded allegations of political jobbers and ethnic jingoists. It is important to state with every sense of responsibility that the allegation that Governor Akeredolu, SAN is supporting the agitators of the Yoruba Nation is not only spurious, but smacks of a poorly scripted plot aimed at painting him in a scurrilous light. The NEF by its statement is also attempting to frustrate the good intention of Akeredolu in protecting the farmers and farmland that are being attacked by armed herders, leading to a threat to food supply and general security in his State and Western Nigeria at large.

It is rather unfortunate that at this critical stage of our democratic development when all efforts should be geared towards finding a lasting solution to the incessant attacks by the herdsmen on the farmers, all that interests the NEF is political posturing and grandstanding, which has consistently heated up the polity in the past few weeks.

Governor Akeredolu, SAN has demonstrated on several occasions that as a responsible



ONDO ANTHEM, OPEN GRAZING AND MATTERS ARISING

Governor, his main duty is to protect lives and property of the people living in Ondo State irrespective of their ethnic or religious background. He has also made it clear that he is not in support of any individual or group agitating for Yoruba or Oduduwa Nation. By his actions, he has demonstrated that he stands on a virile, united and indivisible Federal Nigeria.

He does not have to be 'politically correct' when it comes to policy formulation in his State with the likes of those whose concern is the wellbeing of the cattle and the armed herders and not the host community who are predominantly farmers.

The future of Nigeria must be on mutually agreeable terms and not on the terms of a few privilege, who will stop at nothing to maintain this defective status quo that is now violently rocking the boat of the country. For so long, issues have been swept under the carpet, so much so that the carpet is now undulating and tripping everyone who walks on it.

Governor Akeredolu, SAN is clearly guided by the constitution in trying to address the issues that have buffeted our nationhood and we at DAWN Commission believe it is in our collective interest if the likes of NEF join hands with him and others to steady this ship that is clearly listing.

As a matter of fact, every State in Southwest Region has its own Anthem with each identifying with Yoruba culture and moral values. That Arakunrin Akeredolu Introduced a State Anthem that clearly espouses the **OMOLUABI** values of hard work, honesty and integrity in Ondo State should indeed be the least of anyone's worries, particularly in these perilous times that we are in.

Signed:

Seye OYELEYE

Director General

DAWN Commission

