

Nigeria - 419 Coalition 1999 News on Nigerian Scam / 419 Operations

16 DEC 99

This was reported in the Nigerian print media 10 DEC:

An American citizen, Karl Heitz, has instituted a suit at the Federal High Court in Lagos seeking the sum of \$ 5 million or its naira equivalent being damages for conspiracy, deceit, negligence and laundering of his money by some Nigerian businessmen. Heitz, in a proposed amended particulars of claim, filed by Mr. Omachi Ologbo, named the following parties as co-defendants: London Trust Bank Plc, Martin J. White, Leed Merchant Bank Ltd, Mr. O.A. Smith; Mr. Pop Silva, Mr. Oliver Ohenweh and Linco Transworld Nigeria Ltd.

3 DEC 1999

From 'The Age' newspaper, a Melbourne, Australia daily, Saturday 20th November 1999, as synopsized by a 419 Coalition associate in Australia and sent in to us:

Heading: Nigerian scam leads the gullible greedy to death.

Written by: Ed O'Loughlin from Johannesburg, South Africa.

The article starts by stating that South African police have broken up a gang of tricksters who had added a deadly new twist to a familiar old scam. The police had rescued a Danut Mircea Tetrescu, a 42 year old Romanian businessman who had been kidnapped on 9th November. The police arrested seven suspected gang members, five South Africans and two Nigerians.

Senior Superintendent Chris Wilken said the suspects were being interrogated to see if they were the same people who had kidnapped, and probably killed, Kjetil Moe, a 65 year old Norwegian millionaire, in September.

The article said that Mr. Tetrescu and Mr. Moe were among nine businessmen known to have fallen victim to a new version of the 4-1-9 scam, which uses the greed of gullible Westerners to relieve them of their cash. One of the nine, Jean Pierre Li Shing a Canadian resident of Mauritius, was found bound and dead beside a road in June. Four others had survived after paying a ransom, and a fifth had been freed by police.

The article goes on to explain how a traditional 4-1-9 works and the origins of the name. It says the new version of the scam weds Nigerian guile to South African strongarm tactics. It then quotes Senior Superintendent Wilken again saying that it's possible that others have also been caught in the scam but have not reported it.

The article finishes by saying that Interpol has long rated Nigerians as world-beaters when it comes to mail and fax frauds.

29 NOV 1999

The Senator Afikuyomi and whistleblower Keyamo matter in which Keyamo has charged that Afikuyomi is a bail jumping 419er appears according the the Nigerian media to be degenerating into some kind of mutual political name-calling mess. Senator Afikuyomi has

said that the old charges were baseless and were the result of a misunderstanding between friends at the time and that the matter was resolved; meanwhile Keyamo the whistleblower has been hassled for obtaining the "incriminating" documents, regardless of their veracity or nonveracity, through inappropriate channels and of doctoring them. Both men are now indulging the requisite public name calling and breast beating etc. etc.

From 419 Coalition point of view, the whole matter has largely become of small consequence - the 419 that Afikuyomi has been "charged" with is for a very minor amount of money, and all of this hooha is perceived as unlikely to get us anywhere near where 419 Coalition wants to get -- which is the swift repatriation of 419ed monies in something like the huge amounts in which they have been stolen over the years.

24 NOV 1999

From The Guardian, Nigerian Publication, 19 NOV 99:

>> Lawyer, Afikuyomi Trade Claims Over Alleged Theft

>>

>> By Idowu Ajanaku

>>

>> THE searchlight on the life of politicians and public office holders >> in the present political dispensation beamed further yesterday with >> an allegation by a Lagos lawyer, Mr. Festus Keyamo, that Senator >> Tokunbo Afikuyomi jumped bail while being trial for theft and advance >> fee fraud, otherwise known as 419.

>>

>> Reacting, Afikuyomi described Keyamo's claim as "baseless."

>>

>> Addressing a press conference in Lagos yesterday, Keyamo said that >> Afikuyomi is wanted by the police for jumping bail, while the case >> was at the Apapa Magistrate Court.

>>

>> He, therefore, asked the police to arrest the senator and reopen the >> case.

>>

>> A charge sheet marked A/320, which Keyamo presented at the press >> conference reads:

>>

>> "that you Tokunbo Afikuyomi and others now at large on the 7th >> day of March, 1989 at about 9 a.m. at Navy Town, Satellite Town >> defrauded, and obtained the sum of N6,716.00 from one Sam Magbo by >> false pretence, that you would purchase United States (U.S.) visa and >> flight ticket for him which you failed to do. The offence is >> punishable under section 419 of Criminal Code Cap 31 Vol;

>>

>> "that you, Tokunbo Afikuyomi (m) and others now at large on the >> same date, time and place did steal of passport valued N100 and the >> sum of N6,716.00.

>>

>> Keyamo said that Afikuyomi was arraigned on June 12, 1989 but was >> granted bail in the sum of N6,000.00 and one surety in the like sum.

>>

>> Surprisingly, he added, Afikuyomi bolted away, thereby stalling the >> case.

>>

>> The lawyer said that the senator was subsequently declared wanted and
>> a warrant of arrest issued to that effect.

>>

>> The warrant of arrest dated 29/11/89 made available to The Guardian
>> was signed by the chief magistrate of Apapa Court with Afikuyomi's
>> photograph attached.

>>

>> The police, he advised, should, therefore, arrest Afikuyomi and
>> reopen the case.

>>

>> But Afikuyomi, in his response, said the allegation is baseless and
>> calculated to tarnish his image.

>>

>> He said: "I don't know what they are talking about. I have been
>> around. He says police have been looking for me all these years and
>> have not found me? I go to the police everytime, I am always
>> around. What is he saying? That a ticket to the United States, visa
>> and all that? Am I a travel agent? Or how can the quoted sum take you
>> to the United States?"

>>

>> "They cannot be serious. They can go to court. It is better that way."

>>

>> "You see, these people are out to make wild, baseless accusations.
>> They are mischievously concerned about my good person, my
>> achievements and my prospects. All they are trying to do is to damage
>> good reputations but you know that falsehood will always fall flat in
>> the face of truth. They would not go anywhere."

>>

>> "I am what I am and will continue to pursue my goals which is founded
>> on truth, honesty, good conscience for the good of my society and the
>> benefit of man."

20 NOV 99

From ThisDay, Nigerian publication, 19 NOV 99:

> Afikuyomi in Police Wanted List

>

> By Kola Ologbondiyan

>

> Lagos lawyer and human rights activist, Festus Keyamo has alleged that
> Senator Tokunbo Afikuyomi was in 1989 involved in a criminal case for
> which he jumped bail and now on police wanted list. Keyamo made this
> allegation in a document made available to ThisDay yesterday and signed by
> the Lagos lawyer.

>

> Keyamo alleged that Afikuyomi was involved in Advance Fee Fraud aka 419
> and was charged to court for these offences but allegedly ran away from
> justice. He further alleged that due to the poor record system in the
> country, the police does not know that this man who has worked his way
> into the Senate should indeed be on their wanted list.

>

> Detailing how Afikuyomi got entangled in the police net, Keyamo revealed
> that he gathered from the grapevine that the Senator was charged to court
> for some offence sometime in the 1980s. He said without nothing to work
> with, he first ruled out the possibility of a high court since the police
> will normally charge matters to the magistrate courts adding that another
> problem he confronted was that Apapa Magisterial division where he headed
> had about four courts where Afikuyomi allegedly faced

> criminal charges.

>

> Keyamo further disclosed that he painstakingly went through the records of
> all four magistrate courts at Apapa in the last fifteen years before " I
> stumbled upon the court record which indicates quite interestingly, that
> it was on June 12, but this time in 1989, that Mr. Tokunbo Afikuyomi was
> arraigned on a two-count charge of advance-fee fraud known as 419 and
> stealing a passport."

>

> The human rights activist further stated that "the charge with number
> A/320/89 was signed by a Deputy Superintendant of Police (DSP), the victim
> of the fraud was one Mr. Sam Mogbo and the Magistrate was one Mr. R.A
> Odetoyinbo. The prosecutor was one Sergeant Joseph Akose. Bail was
> granted to Tokunbo Afikuyomi in the sum of N6,000.00 and one
> surety in like sum.

>

> Dissatisfied with the level of success, the Lagos lawyer said he had to
> delve into the full details of the case saying that required him to
> discover the particular police station that charged the matter to
> court. Keyamo inquired from old members of staff about the signature of
> the DSP on the charge sheet and got information that the particular
> signature was always on charge sheets that came from Satellite Police
> Station.

>

> He said his findings especially at the smaller police station inside
> Satellite Town which served as the main Satellite Police
> Station in the 80's "clearly indicate that after Senator Tokunbo Afikuyomi
> was granted bail, he bolted away never to be seen in Apapa Court 1 again.
> Thus Afikuyomi's trial could not go on. He was subsequently declared
> wanted and a warrant for his arrest issued to this effect with his
> passport pinned to it," he declared.

>

> Keyamo who attached photocopies of court charges against Afikuyomi,
> warrant of arrest with the Senator's passport photograph, police diary of
> action, taken amongst others to buttress his allegation called on the
> press, Alliance for Democracy (AD) on whose platform the Senator was
> elected, the National Assembly, the human rights community and the
> Inspector General of Police to act immediately and let the truth prevail.

>

> The lawyer, however, maintained that Afikuyomi did not fill INEC Form 001
> for Tinubu as the Senator had earlier claimed citing that "the
> confessional statement of Afikuyomi and Tinubu's INEC Form, both in my
> possession does not indicate any similarity."

17 NOV 99

Sent out by Nigeria's Vanguard this date and to us by a concerned
Nigerian:

FG to publish names of 419 suspects

The Federal Government will soon publish particulars of suspected
fraudsters, also known as 419ers, as part of the efforts to save foreign
and local investors from being duped, the Minister of Commerce,
Alhaji Mustapha Bello, said in Abuja yesterday.

He said that the step was also being taken to help in bolstering public
confidence in the country, an essential ingredient to attract foreign
investors.

Mustapha told newsmen in the federal capital that a special investigation panel on trade malpractices had compiled the addresses, telephone and fax numbers used in sending scam messages and that Nigeria's foreign trade partners were already being alerted.

The minister, who lamented that the activities of the dopers had continued to cast the country in bad light, stressed that they had also scared off many would-be foreign investors who feared being ripped off.

He vowed to "put in everything" within his powers to expose the dealers, saying that the attack on their deeds would be fully sustained in spite of their being crafty in their operations.

419 Coalition note: The Nigerian Government promised this sort of thing plus television coverage of the 419ers detained in the Nigerian Government white paper on 419 in mid-1992. 419 Coalition sincerely hopes that the Obasanjo Government follows through on this promise, as it would be a Very Welcome first step in the right direction. 419 Coalition also hopes for quick trials and rapid repatriation of 419ed funds. We are always pleased to report on any constructive steps taken by the GOV of Nigeria in controlling supply-side 419.

15 OCT 99

From the Usenet soc.culture.nigeria newsgroup posted this date. 419 Coalition would like to add that, the Central Bank of Nigeria's most recent Press Statement notwithstanding, the Black Currency version of 419 is Nothing New. In fact, it is the second most prevalent type of 419 after the Classic 419 version and has been for many years. The Black Currency 419 version of the Scam is actually based, as we understand it, on a centuries old traditional West African con called the "Red Mercury" scam. CBN should of course know this. At any rate, the postings follow, verbatim, 419 Coalition posting on top of the original posting:

Folks:

The last update of the below item on our site was in 1995 and we see no reason to change it, the new ad campaign notwithstanding. Additionally, and unfortunately, we have noticed no decline in the rate of 419, including 419 operations since the Obasanjo GOV came to power. We still average over 60 hits a day on our main page as we have always done.

This is all very unfortunate, as we had great hopes for the Obasanjo Government in attacking supply-side 419. Perhaps it will get around to it after dealing with the Institutional 419 problems which are its current focus (rightfully so).

We would suggest that since many other GOVs and private organizations, including ours, are educating people on the demand-side of 419, the monies of the Nigerian Government being spent, best case, to educate the demand-side of the equation would be better spent in dealing effectively with the supply-side of the equation, since, given Nigerian sovereignty, they are really the only ones who Can deal with the

supply-side in 419 operations.

Respectfully,

Pascale
Coordinator
419 Coalition
<http://home.rica.net/alphae/419coal/>

INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION SERVICES &
419 COALITION STATEMENT ON
NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

When the Nigerian Scam produces enough negative press, SOP for successive Nigerian Governments has been for the Central Bank of Nigeria to buy ads in the Wall Street Journal etc. saying that neither they nor the Nigerian Government has anything to do with the Scam and that they, in fact, are doing everything they can to control it.

Since, in fact, the cooperation of both successive Nigerian Governments and the Central Bank of Nigeria have been absolutely essential to the continuation of large-scale Scam operations over the years, these ads represent nothing more than a cynical public relations ploy to get the heat off while the Scam continues unabated.

Likewise, the Nigerian Government's purchase of advertising time on 60 Minutes 5 NOV 95, a program which has been (with some help from 419 Coalition associates and others) critical of the regime, trumpeting that "Nigeria is a member of the world community" etc. was nothing more than a cynical public relations move to relieve both the pressure brought on the Nigerian Government due to continued Scam operations and to deflect the coming criticism it would receive for the hanging of several dissidents, including a Nobel prize nominee author.

You need to know that the Nigerian Governments' ploy of using paid advertising in the international media to escape criticism for its misdeeds is an established pattern - a perfect example of what Goebbels used to call the "Big Lie" technique - used repeatedly and quite successfully over the years.

> Fellow Nigerians and well wishers:

>
> Please find below the full text of an advertisement in today's Globe & Mail
> (Canada), 14/10/99 and probably in many other major national newspapers
> around the world.
> As the press statement clearly indicated, if it sounds to good to be true it
> is probably not true. Only people who are by themselves corrupt and greedy
> are usually taken in by these scams. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. The
> Nigerian government through its Central Bank has done its duty. This
> advertisement/press statement took a complete half page in a long format
> newspaper. It can't be easily missed!
>
>>From now henceforth, no reasonable person anywhere in the world could with

> good conscience hold the Nigerian government, its Central Bank or the
> millions of innocent Nigerian people responsible for these scams. The money
> spent on the advertisement is money well spent in my humble opinion!

>

>

> CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA

>

> PRESS STATEMENT OF ADVANCE FEE FRAUD/SCAM

>

> (14th October 1999

> as published in the Globe and mail)

>

> 1 The publicity campaigns by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the
> Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria have proved successful in
> sensitizing the public about the menace of advance fee fraud and the
> falsehood of claims that easy money could be made in Nigeria. Consequently,
> the reported incidence of advance fee fraud (A.K.A. '419'), has declined
> significantly. Nevertheless, there are still some people who have continued
> to fall victim to the solicitations of advance fee fraudsters. This warning
> is, therefore, specifically intended for the benefit of those misguided
> people who, in the quest to make easy money at the expense of Nigeria, are
> defrauded by international fraudsters.

>

> 2 The advance fee fraud is perpetrated by enticing the victim with a bogus
> 'business proposal which promises millions of US dollars as a reward. The
> scam letter usually promises to transfer huge amounts of money, usually
in US

> dollars, purported to be part proceeds of certain contracts, to the
addressee

> s bank account, to be shared in some proportion between the parties. A
favorable response to the letter is followed by excuses why the funds cannot
be remitted readily and subsequently by demands for proportionate sharing of
payments for various 'taxes' and 'fees' supposedly to facilitate the
processing and remittance of the alleged funds. The use of 'fake
Government,

> Central Bank of Nigeria, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, etc.
documents is a common practice.

>

> 3 The fraudsters usually request that at the transaction be done under the
cover of confidentiality. Sometimes, the 'victims' are invited to Nigeria
where they are given red-carpet reception and attended to by the fraudsters,
posing as Nigerian Government officials. Quite often the fraudsters invent
bogus Government committees purported to have cleared the payments. Also, it
is not unusual for them to contrive fake publications in the newspapers
evidencing purported approvals to transfer non-existent funds.

>

> 4 To consummate the transaction, the 'victim' would be required to pay
'advance fees' for various purposes: e.g. processing fees, unforeseen taxes,
licence fees, registration fees, signing/legal fees, fees for National
Economic Recovery Fund, VAT, audit fees, insurance coverage fees, etc. The
collection of these 'advance fees' is actually the real objective of the
scam!

>

> 5 A recent variant of the scam directed primarily at charitable
organizations

> and religious bodies overseas involves bogus inheritance under a will. Again
the sole aim is to collect the 'advance fees' already described above. A new
strategy that has also been used to defraud the 'victims' is an offer to use

> chemicals to transform ordinary paper into United States dollar bills, which
> would be subsequently shared by the parties.
>
> 6 You are again warned in your own interest not to become yet another
dupe to
> these fraudulent solicitations or
> schemes. Genuine and prospective investors in Nigeria are advised to consult
> their home Chambers of Commerce and Industry, or Nigeria's Chambers of
> Commerce and Industry, Manufacturers Associations of Nigeria, Federal
> Ministries of Commerce and Industry, Nigerian Missions in their countries of
> origin, their embassies or High Commissions in Nigeria for proper briefing
> and advice.
>
> '7The Central Bank and indeed, the Federal Government of Nigeria cannot and
should not be held responsible for bogus and shady deals transacted with
criminal intentions. As a responsible corporate body, the Central Bank of
Nigeria is once again warning all recipients of fraudulent letters on bogus
deals, that there are no contract payments trapped in the bank's vaults.
They
> are once again put on notice that all documents appertaining to the payment,
> claims, or transfers purportedly issued by the bank, its senior
executives or
> the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the various purposes
> described above are all forgeries, bogus and fraudulent.
>
> 8 Please join the Central Bank and the Federal
Government of Nigeria to fight the criminal syndicates
> who play on the gullibility and greed of their victims by reporting. any
> solicitation to your local law enforcement agencies or the local
> International Police Organization (Interpol).
>
> 9 You have been warned several times before! You have been warned again!!
>
> DON'T BE FOOLED! MANY HAVE LOST MONEY
>
> IF IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE THEN IT IS NOT TRUE

7 OCT 99

US Declares 27 Nigerians Wanted
October 6, 1999
By Adelanwa Bamboye

Lagos - No fewer than 27 Nigerians have been declared wanted by the United States Department of Justice for offences ranging from drug trafficking to laundering of narcotics proceeds.

Already, the USA has made extradition requests to Nigeria to surrender the wanted persons. The suspects are to be extradited to face criminal charges.

Some of the suspects whose names were submitted to the Nigerian Government include Prince Mingi Cookey accused of wire fraud and conspiracy, Nwakibe Ugochi-money laundering of Narcotics proceeds, Nwokedi Emeka-conspiracy to import Heroin and Ogunegbe Jude-wire fraud and money laundering.

Others include Mr. and Mrs. Oluwole Ogunbuyi-conspiracy to import Heroin, Okipiri Johnny, Rasheed A.M, and Alhaji Usman Tukor.

P.M.New checks revealed that the extradition of fugitives is governed by a 1931 extradition treaty between the U.S. and Great Britain under the principle of succession.

Also, Nigeria entered into an agreement with the US on procedures for mutual assistance in law enforcement matters on 2 November 1987.

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29 SEP 99

In case anyone has doubt about whether it is business as usual for the 419ers under the new GOV in Nigeria, over the last 2 weeks in addition to many other reports we have had reported a \$6 million loss from Australia and a \$1 million loss from Colorado; both 419's still running as of this date.

We here have noticed NO reduction at all in 419 operations emanating from Nigeria since the new Government came into power, in fact, it seems to us that 419 operations are, if anything, continuing to escalate.

20 AUG 99

US GOV Task Force Is Changing Phone Numbers 30 AUG

The United States Government Joint Task Force on West African Fraud, run by the Secret Service, and also known among other things, as the **419 Task Force is Moving to larger quarters and changing its phone numbers and address Effective 30 AUG 99.**

The New Phone Numbers for Task Force will be:

Voice: 202-406-5850

Fax: 202-406-6930

The New Snailmail Address Effective 30 AUG is:

**U.S. Secret Service
Financial Crimes Division
419 Task Force
950 H Street
Washington, D.C. 20001-4518**

Task Force has also acquired Outside-In email capability. They note that this can be used for forwarding 419 letters received via email rather than printing them out and faxing them in. Materials sent in should still be labeled No Financial Loss - For Your Database if that is the case and Loss - and whether or not there is a US Connection - if there Was a Loss, just as always. If you are from outside the US, you should also note the Nation you are from.

Please **try not to use the email address for general inquiries** and the like; there is plenty of material already up on the web on this site, the Secret Service Site, and all the other sites we have linked in our Scam Fighting Links Section etc. Please do your General

research there, the Special Agents are quite busy catching the Bad Guys and, in 419 Coalition view, really do not have the time to answer a pile of General questions the answers to which are readily available elsewhere. **So please use the Email address for Serious Business Only AFTER you have done your homework.** And **Please don't be emailing them and asking if they ever heard of your particular Scammer etc. etc. - for legal reasons they are not permitted to tell you even if they have, so there is No point in asking.**

The New Email address for Task Force is:

419.fcd@usss.treas.gov

Please note down the new phone numbers, the new snailmail address, and the new email address. Remember that the new phone numbers and addresses don't go into effect until 30 AUG. Until then, use the old ones.

6 AUG 99

Nigerians are justifiably proud of their World Cup Contender Super Eagles football team, and of hosting the World Youth Soccer Championships. That makes the following 419 letter especially repulsive. Is NOTHING sacred? :) :)

By the way, under the Obasanjo government, so far, 419 Coalition continues to average over 60 hits a day on our main page, just as we did under its predecessors. Sad, but true. And the Obasanjo Government Wants Foreigners to Invest in Nigeria? Ah well...

Here is the 419ers 'Let's Use Something Nigerians Can be Proud of to Further Humiliate the Nation' 419 letter:

Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
X-Mozilla-Status: 0011
Content-Length: 3108
Date: Fri, 6 Aug 1999 17:15:33 -0700 (PDT)
From: IDOWU USMAN
Subject: RE: INVESTMENT
To: @fl.net.au

SUBJECT: INVESTMENTS

SIR,

I AM BELLO USMA, SECRETARY TO THE NIGERIAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION,PARENT BODY OF THE NIGERIA '99 LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE, AN AFFILIATE OF FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (FIFA).

IN THE COURSE OF OUR PREPARATION TO HOST THE WORLD YOUTH SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP TAGGED NIG'99 EARLY THIS YEAR HUGE SUMS OF MONEY RUNNING INTO MILLIONS OF UNITED STATES DOLLARS WAS BUDGETED BY THE THEN MILITARY GOVERNMENT FOR THE SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION OF THIS COMPETITION.

IN THE SAME VEIN, FIFA VIA HIS PRESIDENT ,SEPP BLATTER MADE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AVAILABLE FOR THE SAME PROJECT NOT TO TALK OF

CORPORATE ORGANIZATIONS AND FOOTBALL LOVING INDIVIDUALS WHO MADE HUGE DONATIONS.

HOWEVER IN MY CAPACITY AS THE SECRETARY, TO BOTH THE LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (LOC) AND THE NIGERIAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (NFA), I AND SOME OF MY COLLEAGUES IN SENSITIVE POSITIONS WERE ABLE TO OVER-INVOICE MOST CONTRACTS WHICH WERE AWARDED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND THE REFURBISHING OF THE 8 STADIA USED FOR THE COMPETITION. THE CONTRACTORS WHO HANDLED THESE PROJECTS HAVE BEEN PAID-OFF.

IT IS PERTINENT TO KNOW THAT A TOTAL OF THIRTY TWO MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS (US\$ 40,520,000) WAS REALIZED AS OVER-INVOICE AFTER THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ALL THE STADIA. THIS OVER-INVOICED SUM IS LYING IN A SUSPENSE ACCOUNT IN LONDON READY FOR REMITTANCE INTO AN OVERSEAS ACCOUNT.

DUE TO THE RECENT DIRECTIVE BY THE PRESIDENT TO CLOSE ALL LOC FOREIGN ACCOUNTS WITHIN 17 DAYS FROM THE 29TH OF JULY I HAVE BEEN UNANIMOUSLY MANDATED TO SEEK FOR A HONEST AND TRUSTWORTHY FOREIGNER WHO WILL ASSIST IN ENSURING THE SUCCESSFUL TRANSFER OF THE ABOVE SUM WHICH WE HAVE BEEN SAFEGUARDING INTO HIS PERSONAL/COMPANY ACCOUNT SINCE THE NIGERIAN CODE OF CONDUCT DOES NOT ALLOW US TO OPERATE A FOREIGN ACCOUNT.

ON SUCCESSFUL REMITTANCE OF FUND (US\$ 40,520,000.00) IT IS AGREED THAT 30% OF THE TOTAL FUND WILL BE FOR YOU, WHILE 5% WILL BE USED TO SETTLE ANY EXPENSES THAT MIGHT BE INCURRED BY BOTH PARTIES AND THE REMAINING 65% WILL BE FOR US (TO BE INVESTED FOR US INTO FOREIGN INVESTMENT BY YOU IN YOUR COUNTRY).

YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED AND CURIOUS AT AN OFFER LIKE THIS, BE REST ASSURED THAT THE MODALITIES AND LOGISTICS TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL TRANSFER OF THIS FUND HAS BEEN WORKED OUT. ALL WE REQUIRE FROM YOU IS YOUR CO-OPERATION. THE PROPOSITION THOUGH MAY NOT FALL WITHIN THE WIDE SPECTRUM OF YOUR BUSINESS CONSULTING AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES KNOW IT STRICTLY THAT YOUR BUSINESS LINES DOES NOT MATTER, RATHER YOUR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE PART TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THIS PROJECT IS MOST PARAMOUNT.

THIS TRANSACTION IS LEAK PROOF AND URGENT. WE KINDLY REQUEST THAT YOU ACCORD IT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SECRECY IT DESERVES. YOUR SWIFT RESPONSE WILL BE HIGHLY APPRECIATED. PLEASE YOU CAN REACH ME BY E-MAIL BELLOUSMA@YAHOO.COM OR THROUGH MY FAX NUMBER : 873-761-966-261.

THANKS

BEST REGARDS

BELLO USMA

25 JUN 1999

This piece sent in by a Concerned Nigerian:

THE JOHANNESBURG MAIL AND GUARDIAN 20 JUNE 1999:

Dramatic escape in
Japanese kidnap
OWN CORRESPONDENT, Durban | Sunday 10.30am

IN A dramatic twist, a visiting Japanese businessman who was allegedly kidnapped, on Saturday escaped and ran into a hotel sushi restaurant in Durban for refuge.

Johannesburg police spokesman Inspector Mark Reynolds said on Sunday morning that Kensuke Matsumoto left a Johannesburg hotel on Wednesday to conduct business in Durban with Nigerian nationals.

He was thought kidnapped after his son in Japan received a phonecall asking him to pay \$50 000 as ransom for his release.

"I have been confined. They will not release me until the money is paid. Please send \$50 000," Matsumoto was quoted by his son as saying. After his escape, Matsumoto fled to a Japanese restaurant in the Holiday Inn on Durban's Snell Parade, from where the police were summoned. Matsumoto was taken for a medical examination, but he did not appear to be seriously injured.

Police said his kidnapping could be connected to the so-called 419 scam letters. These are letters written by Nigerian nationals, which lures their victims to either deposit sums into their accounts with promises of large returns, or to lure their victims to areas where they are abducted and forced to pay money to be released.

Further reports indicate that Matsumoto was one of four foreigners kidnapped.

26 MAY 1999

This piece sent in by a Concerned Nigerian:

ABUJA MIRROR: MAY 19-25, 1999

LEAD STORY:

Nigerian "419ers" hit the Internet

NIGERIAN white collar and advance-fee fraudsters who have brought untold damage to their nation's image have now invaded the Internet with their nefarious activities.

The scammers who had effected their fraudulent acts through letters sent by fax to gullible, greedy and unimaginative people abroad who lose huge sums of money to the crooks, in the belief that they would benefit from some obviously dubious transactions, like contracts at NNPC or the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

Abuja Mirror investigations have unearthed a frightening new dimension to the scam as the scammers have now started posting their letters on the Internet with the hope that they would trap more victims through the world network of computers.

In the past one week alone, Abuja Mirror has accessed over seven of such letters making fantastic and obviously fraudulent business proposals which can only appeal to the naive, greedy or outrightly foolish Internet subscribers.

For instance, one individual who described himself as Richard Kellogs posted a mail from an e-mail address: richard.kellogs@hotmail.com, stating that he seeks assistance for one of his clients whom he claims

is "the son of a top government official who served in the past military regime here in Nigeria (and who) wishes to invest the sum of US \$30, 000,000 (thirty million dollars), in Africa, America, Europe or Asia".

The "Business Consultant" who claims he is writing from the obviously non-existent address of 9 Press Avenue, Lagos, Nigeria, further states: "For obvious reasons, our client does not wish to place this fund with established financial institutions. It is his desire that the deal be handled as quietly as possible without possibility of any leakage to the press. He has therefore instructed us to look for a reliable foreigner to invest this money on his behalf".

"If you agree to act as a fund manager", the letter continued, "we shall release the sum of US \$30 million to you if you meet our requirements. The money is available in cash and upon a favourable response from you, we shall know how to commence business with you".

The letter then promised advanced payment commission of 15 per cent of the total sum to the 'fund manager' as well as an annual commission of 10 percent of the returns on investment for the first five years..."

Another writer who seems to have netted a victim, claims to be the son of the late first president, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and that the 'cruel military government' in Nigeria has been frustrating his attempts to invest his late father's huge fortune in the country, and is therefore looking for an interested foreigner who would serve as a broker for the purported huge sums.

From the exchanges on the net, it is obvious that an interested foreigner has fallen for the scam, and a meeting has been fixed in Ghana where the foreigner will definitely be set up and ripped off through the demand of sundry sums.

Yet another scam e-mail posted by one "Ahmed Mustapha" from "Ahmed.Mustapha@yahoo.com", and addressed to one Carlo Pace, on May 13, 1999, states: "My name is Ahmed Mustapha, a staff of Federal Ministry of Finance. Following approval for the payment of debt owed to creditors of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in the budget of 1998, I have the mandate of my colleagues to source for a reliable businessman who will help us to claim some of this approved money".

The mail continued, "Out of the approved \$836 million for debt repayment, \$233 million is non existing loan which we have carefully included and now need a potential foreign partner who will assist us to receive it and invest on our behalf. For a start we are ready to apply for an immediate payment of \$33 million ..."

Continuing the mail declared, "The process of transferring this money is known to us and we are ready to share it on the ratio of 60%: 40% once we can jointly finance the transfer of the funds to your account or any company account nominated by you. It will take a maximum of two working weeks". As usual the businessman was requested to furnish the writer with his address, fax/phone numbers as well his banking details, and instructed not to reveal the information to anyone.

Fortunately, the scam deal seems to have fallen flat on its face, as the mail addressee scoffed at the mail and drew the Internet subscribers to the scam, stating that the mail was an old story from Nigeria.

It would be recalled that the different relevant agencies in Nigeria like the CBN, the Police and the Ministry of Information have been warning nationals of all nations to be wary of scam letters from Nigeria and to make contact with Nigerian missions before taking up business propositions [with Nigeria].

419 Coalition Comment: We appreciate this piece in the Abuja Mirror, though it does, as is customary in the Nigerian media, concentrate on Classic 419 and ignore so-called Legal 419 (like the Will Scam, Contract Fraud, COD Goods and Services Fraud) in which there is no question whatever of victim as co-conspirator, etc. Additionally, the Bad Guys have been attempting to use the Net for their operations for over two years now, this is in actuality nothing new. But, the general view is that given the mass of information available concerning 419 readily available on the Net, on demand, 24/7 (including this site), the odds of successful 419ing are less via the net than by other means -- though the Bad Guys still try, of course, and will keep on trying. On the warnings from CBN etc. etc., we are afraid that we here still see these as largely a smoke screen covering butt against the inability or unwillingness of the Nigerian authorities to make counter-419 a priority matter in which the criterion for successful operations is the Repatriation of stolen monies on the same scale as it is absconded with (see GOV of Nigeria Media Campaigns menu item on front page of this site, that was written several years ago, and we are afraid nothing much has changed, though we are always hopeful that it will; and that large scale quantifiable results will be obtained consistently from GOV of Nigeria efforts in this matter).

24 MAY 1999

This is from Frieda Springer-beck of IIGN, a German based global organization fighting 419:

...Nigeria has given last week the very first final judgment in a case of advance-fee-fraud. The victim is a member of our association and together with the police I could organize the arrest of the suspects. The judgment was already pronounced last year in february. But now Nigeria has given final judgment, without any change. I think, this should be a very good sign.

Also I could understand during my stay in Lagos last week, that there are a lot of changes in progress.

Of course, I am very grateful to the Nigerian Government and to Inspector General of Police who are leaving end of May. With their help and assistance we could start the fight against advance fee fraud at all.

I am also very hopefully, that the new HEAD OF STATE, General Obasanjo will calm down fraud which he promised...

419 Coalition Note: We responded to Ms. Springer-Beck that we are pleased, as always, with any constructive actions that the Government of Nigeria takes in this matter. However, we did note that success in one, or few cases, makes little impact in the overall situation, in which there are globally hundreds, perhaps thousands of new cases daily. We did indicate that the primary criterion of success in this matter is, for us, the amount of monies flowing back in relation to the amount of

monies which have flowed in, not convictions etc., which remain very few, though convictions are indeed welcome as well. Finally we joined Ms. Springer-Beck in the hope that the incoming Obasanjo administration will take a more active role in this matter, reiterating our criterion for success as stated above.

11 MAY 1999

This piece sent in by a concerned Nigerian:

18 charged in plot to steal \$332,000 using counterfeit bank drafts
By Susan Schramm
Indianapolis Star/News

INDIANAPOLIS (May 11, 1999) -- They were told they could get easy cash. Some of them were told they wouldn't get caught. But the 15 Indianapolis-area residents recruited into a scheme using counterfeit checks did get busted.

They cooperated with local and federal investigators but not before they caused a loss to area banks of \$152,000, authorities said Monday.

"Most of them have no criminal histories and are really inexperienced in this," said Marion County Prosecutor Scott Newman. "We think they were sought out probably because they were young and naive."

Newman and the U.S. Secret Service announced the filing of criminal charges Monday against the 15 men and women and the three men who are accused of recruiting them.

The accused ringleader, Mobolaji A. Omolade, 25, of the 2400 block of Hovey Street, was charged with 14 felony counts -- fraud, conspiracy to commit forgery and theft.

Omolade has been in the Marion County Jail since March. He is set to go on trial Thursday on previously filed charges of forgery, theft, attempted theft and fraud. Those charges are related to the counterfeit check scheme.

Omolade, a U.S. citizen born to Nigerian parents, has been held on \$1 million bail, set high because of his statements to a friend that he was going to flee to Alaska.

Also Monday, police arrested one of two men suspected of being an Omolade accomplice. Louis David Query, 20, of Greenwood was being processed Monday evening at the Marion County Lockup.

Police still were searching for Anthony McNary, 27, of the 2100 block of North Medford Avenue. McNary was charged with four counts of fraud, and Query was charged with five counts of fraud.

The 15 people who were recruited to pass the counterfeit checks at area banks have not been arrested, but some of them were arranging to turn themselves in, Marion County Deputy Prosecutor Larry Brodeur said.

The counterfeiting scheme began with a source in New York who supplied Omolade with counterfeit checks, Newman said. The scheme, which began last July, worked like this, Newman said:

The counterfeit checks appeared to be real and contained actual company names with the companies' actual bank account numbers. The people recruited by the men would receive a counterfeit check made payable to them.

The check would usually be in an amount around \$20,000 and would be drawn on a company's actual checking account. The people would then deposit the checks in their personal bank accounts, opened at Indianapolis-area banks.

Within a week, the person would withdraw the money in increments and give it to Omolade, McNary or Query. In exchange for filtering the money through their bank accounts, the person would generally get \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Some of the banks caught the bad checks, some of the companies stopped payment on the checks before they went through, and police obtained court orders to freeze some of the bank accounts, Newman said.

Because of those efforts, the banks didn't lose as much money as they could have. The defendants tried to steal at least \$332,000, Newman said, but got away with only \$152,000.

The investigation is continuing into the New York source of the counterfeit checks, police said.

5 MAY 1999

This piece was reported in the Nigerian print media 3 MAY and was sent in by a concerned Nigerian:

4 NIPOST Staff Held Over 419

Four staffers of the Nigeria Postal Services (NIPOST) have been arrested by detectives attached to the Special Task Force on International Fraud at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja.

P.M.News learnt that the NIPOST staff were arrested on last Monday while allegedly tampering with both local and international mails sent to various notable Nigerians through the airport.

Their arrest, according to sources, followed intelligence tips on their illegal activities by members of the Task Force headed by Mr. Okoro, an intelligence officer at the airport. Airport security sources who confirmed the incident said they were on the trail of others who have dented the image of the country by illegally tampering with mails and engaging in advance fee fraud known as 419.

Sources hinted that those who were arrested will soon be arraigned before the Miscellaneous Offences Tribunal. On Tuesday, Mr. Ogbonnaya Onovo, a Police Commissioner and Chairman of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) said his men arrested immigration and airport officials for allegedly engaging in illegal drug trafficking outside Nigeria.

419 Coalition Comment: We are very much in favor of anything that can be done by GOV of Nigeria to stem the tide at the source. We would also, however, like to see some of the "Big Man" 419ers arrested -- even if they are in Government, CBN, or other responsible posts --

AND their stolen monies promptly repatriated from whence they came.

5 MAY 1999

This piece is from the PM News, a Nigerian newspaper:

Pastor In 419 Scam
May 4, 1999
By Adelanwa Bamgbose

Lagos - An Igbosere Chief Magistrate Court has ordered that a bench warrant be issued for the arrest of Pastor Peter Amuchelan for contempt of court.

Sources told P.M. News that in February last year, the pastor allegedly obtained the sum of N770,000 from Nicholas Umeozor by false pretence that he would supply Nicholas with computers, office equipment and computer accessories.

The pastor was further alleged to have on 18 April last year at 24 Eniasoro Bayonku Street, Surulere obtained various items including 15 cartons of Peak milk and office items worth N1.3 million property of one Miss Nwanyiaye Uwawe.

After his arrest, detention and arraignment on 12 June last year, the court ordered that the pastor be detained and he was charged under the advance fee and fraud law of 1995. No plea was taken from the accused pastor.

At the last hearing in the case, the pastor was absent from the court where he was facing two separate criminal charges. Sequel to his absence, the prosecutor Inspector Ebotha prayed the court to issue a bench warrant for the arrest of the pastor.

Presiding magistrate, Chief Magistrate Kotun while adjourning further hearing till 2nd July ordered the arrest of the said pastor.

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419 Coalition Comment: As always, we appreciate anything that the GOV of Nigeria does in these matters. But once again, we ask Where's the Money and When Will It Be Returned to the Victim?

14 APR 99

This piece is from the Vanguard, a Nigerian newspaper, sent in by a concerned Nigerian:

419ers change tactics ...now blackmail companies

HIT by the dearth of people to con and defraud, a situation occasioned by the harsh economic realities, con-men, popularly known as 419ers, are now seeking greener pastures in corporate organisations, especially the productive sector, which they use various guises to milk to the bones.

The 419ers prowl around big companies, and working in concert with disgruntled staffers, brandish fictitious documents containing spurious allegations of official misdemeanours, and demand a ransom, failing which

they threaten to turn the 'document' to the police and the press.

The latest victim of these evil desperadoes is an Ikeja-based manufacturing company, which a group of conmen, operating under the bogus name of Group (AG.30) and headed by one Chief Bassey O. Akpan, bombard with a litany of alleged misdeeds, and demanded a ransom of N5 million, failing which they threatened to turn their "findings" to the police or the press.

The laughable allegations, written on a plain sheet of paper, and addressed to both the police and editor of a Lagos evening tabloid, ranged from tax evasion, cheating in expatriate quota to drug peddling, money laundering and importation of arms and ammunition.

Threatening to expose the evening tabloid as collaborator in the crime if it refuses to publish the spurious allegations, the 419 group, demanded that the following conditions be met between November 14, 1998 (date of its correspondence) and end of February, 1999: that workers salaries be increased, outstanding taxes paid up to date, casual workers given permanent employment, and "pay N5 million to our Group (AG 30_ between now and end of February, 1999," among other conditionalities.

A month earlier, the same letter had been sent to the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, who promptly dispatched crack detectives to investigate the matter. Before then, and after severe pressures and intimidation from the con-men on the company to pay, the organisation had turned the letter of blackmail to the police.

After a thorough investigation, spanning several weeks and during which the company and its key officials were thoroughly scrutinised, the police returned a clean bill of health to the organisation.

The Lagos State commissioner of Police, in a letter to the company, which was signed by Mr. K. M. Mukaddam SP, the officer-in-charge of the General Investigation Department, Ikeja, said: "Based on the report, a team of detectives booked and left for the said company for fact finding.

Search warrant was executed in that company and during the execution of search warrant, no incriminating items were found. One of the company's directors voluntarily took the detectives to inspect all the routes and corners of the offices, factories and premises of the said company.

Also original Certificate of Incorporation of the company was inspected, Tax clearance certificate of the last five years was inspected, and found to be in order.

"During the course of this investigation, all the above six allegations mentioned by the petitioners against your company were found to be false because of no substantial proof. As such it has been discarded with, just like the other kinds of allegation made against other good company like yours.

Furthermore, the petitioner gave fake name and address, which does not exist. In conclusion therefore, this office regards the petition as baseless and a calculated attempt to destroy the good image of your reputable company. This ends the investigation into this false allegation."

Following the abortion of this 419 bid, the public, and indeed corporate

organisations, have been warned to be wary of the new antics of these indolent reapers and report any attempt to blackmail them promptly to the police.

Vanguard Transmitted 09 April, 1999

6 APR 1999

From 1 APR 99 Los Angeles Times by Jeff Leeds:

**Agents Arrest Nigerian National
Over Alleged Fraud Scheme**

U.S. Secret Service Agents have arrested a Nigerian National for his alleged role in a scheme to defraud a Southern California businessman out of \$1.8 million.

Authorities say Hilary Okey Amadi, 45, is linked to other suspects in a web of Nigerian organized crime rings engaged in mail fraud and other scams.

Amadi, who is charged with wire fraud, was ordered detained as a flight risk Wednesday, a day after he was arrested at his West Hollywood home. Authorities say that Amadi has a visa to the United States but that some of his immigration papers have expired.

Assistant U.S. Atty. Susan De Witt said Amadi posed as a deputy governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria in 1993 and contacted an apparel firm owed \$35 million by the Nigerian government. He allegedly promised to help a company director collect on the debt in exchange for fees paid upfront.

In a second series of alleged rip-offs, the same victim in 1994 met in Cameroon with several people who had identified themselves as Nigerian government officials and had showed him currency covered with black powder. They said they would give the man the money if he first paid for chemicals to clean it. He told investigators that he eventually paid about \$1.8 million.

Solicitations continued until early this year. After the victim, a Diamond Bar man, complained to authorities, investigators staked out a print shop from which Amadi allegedly faxed the victim. They later served a search warrant at Amadi's Beverly Hills business, Acme Employment Agency.

A preliminary hearing for Amadi is set for April 13.

Here is the original United States Joint West African Fraud Task Force and United States Secret Service Press Release issued on the Amadi arrest:

Press Release

United States Attorney Alejandro Mayorkas and Frank O'Donnell, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, Los Angeles Field Office, announced today the arrest of Hilary Okey Amadi, aka Mustafa Bello, of West Hollywood, California, on federal wire fraud charges. Agents of the United States Secret Service Los Angeles West African Task Force, assisted by local law enforcement agencies

arrested Amadi at his residence in West Hollywood and executed a federal search warrant at Acme Employment Agency located at 204 S. Beverly Dr. Suite 105, Beverly Hills, California.

The complaint filed against Amadi charges him with federal wire fraud stemming from his involvement in an advanced fee fraud scheme. This type of fraud scheme, more commonly known as "419" fraud, has come to be associated with West African organized financial crime rings operating out of the United States, Nigeria, and abroad. The name "419" fraud is derived from the criminal code section in Nigeria relating to fraud. This type of fraud scheme typically involves the solicitation of potential victims via letters sent by facsimile or mail that purport to be from various government or bank officials in Nigeria. The solicitation letters promise the payment of large sums of money in exchange for payment of advanced fees by the targeted victims.

In this investigation, Amadi attempted to defraud a Diamond Bar, California, victim of \$350,000. Amadi misrepresented to the victim that he was the Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. The complaint alleges that between 1993 and the present, the victim was defrauded of approximately \$1.8 million by other individuals linked to Amadi. The complaint further alleges that Amadi told the victim that he would have to wire transfer \$350,000 in order to obtain payment owed on a \$35 million contract between Catouche International Corporation and the Nigerian Government for uniforms, shoes, and accessories.

In addition to the arrest, during a search of the Acme Employment Agency, believed to be used by Amadi as a fictitious business front, law enforcement officers report discovering documents linking Amadi to more than 30 additional potential victims throughout the United States and abroad. Attempted fraud losses associated with these victims are expected to exceed several million dollars.

Amadi was brought before federal Magistrate Judge Ann Jones on March 30, 1999. A detention hearing is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on March 31, 1999 before Judge Jones.

Los Angeles Secret Service Agents were assisted by Deputies from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and Officers of the Beverly Hills Police Department.

6 APR 1999

This is the story of a UK Lady 419ed on two levels, in her own words, posted here with her permission:

In July 1998, I advertised my then home of X XXXXX XXXX XXX, New Cross, London, SE14, for sale. I was contacted by a company called Uptown Gold UK Ltd, by fax, stating it was from "Ernie and Tony", with a view to my renting the property out. I ignored this fax as I only wanted to sell. I was then left a telephone message, by a man who identified himself as Ernie, from Uptown Gold UK Ltd, asking if I would be interested in allowing them to act as agents for the sale. I returned the call and arranged a valuation inspection with Ernie, but it was a man who identified himself as Tony who actually attended the house. Tony gave me a business card, which I no longer have, this stated his name as A.A.Egbowon and showed the offices of Uptown Gold UK Ltd to be at Suite 32, Battersea Business Centre, Lavender Hill,

London. The only telephone number I recalled for this business was 0171 223 5129, however, these offices are no longer occupied by Uptown Gold. Tony and I had quite a jovial chat and I asked about his name, as one A was obviously for Anthony, what was the other for? He said Adeniyi. I also asked where he was from, as he had a strong African accent, he said originally Nigeria, but he had lived in Vienna for about ten years before coming to the UK in October 1997. He asked about my husband, and I said was divorced. He told me he was divorced also. A couple of days after the visit, Tony contacted me again, asking if I wished the company his company to act as agents. We negotiated a fee and I was sent a contract, which I signed and returned to him. this would have been during either the last few days of July or the first few days of August 1998. Following the signing of the contract, Tony called again and proposed a second visit, in order to take photographs. When he called again, he was accompanied by a man whom he introduced as Ernie. Ernie spoke with a slight American accent, but also said he was Nigerian. I believe this man to be the same Ernie to whom I had originally spoken.

After this second visit, Tony began to phone me two or three times a day, updating me on all the contacts he said he had put the house with, and saying he was advertising it, along with several others, in property magazines. After about a week he asked me if I would like to go out with him for the evening. I realise now this was after he had ascertained that I owned the house outright, I was divorced, I did not have a serious boyfriend, that I had few friends and seldom went out, and that one of the reasons I was moving was because my mother had recently died and I would be inheriting some money. We did go to the cinema one evening, and Tony's phone calls continued several times a day. He had told me that he was 33 years old and, although I am somewhat older, we did, as far as I was aware, get on quite well and had a good time talking. After a short time, Tony told me he was actually married, for the sake of convenience, to an Austrian woman, (whom he referred to as Tina,) but that he was unhappy and wanted to divorce, but was waiting for his papers to remain in the UK. He claimed that he and his wife rowed constantly and that it was draining him. He told me he wanted her to leave him of her own volition, rather than him forcing a divorce on her, which would jeopardise his residency. During the next few weeks Tony showed me both a photograph of the woman he said was Tina and a letterhead for his Company, stating it was registered at an address in White Hart Lane, Tottenham. He said that the address was for his house, which he had bought for cash earlier in the year. I later learned that the full address was 132 White Hart Lane. Tony also told me that he was acting as an agent for the United States Green Card Lottery. At one point Tony asked me if I would like to try for a Green Card and then, later, suggested he and I "run away together" to the States. However, due to the fact that Tony had revealed he was married, and not divorced, as he had originally claimed, our relationship (which had become sexual) deteriorated and we parted acrimoniously in September 1998. I regretted the split, as I had become very fond of Tony, and attempted to contact him within a day or so of our parting, but was rebuffed. As Tony was now refusing to communicate with me, but still had the contract for the sale of my house, I spoke to his partner/assistant, Ernie. I told Ernie the problem had been caused because Tony and I had not kept our relationship "professional", and now that we had parted, Tony was refusing to deal with me. Ernie asked if he could mediate , and proposed visiting me. I agreed to this as Ernie said that he could get

Tony to release me from the contract. Ernie then proposed that he take over the sale, not through Uptown Gold, as he could use another company as a ‘front’. He also told me that he and Tony had known each other in Nigeria, as children, and he knew where Tony’s family lived. He then said that Tony and Tina were “deeply in love” and that they were not likely to part, but that Tony did have a habit of finding “other women”. As I quickly discovered, Ernie himself was looking for easy sex and seemed to think that I would be compliant, which I was not. I was, therefore, unsure what to make of his claims regarding Tony’s marriage. However, as I wanted to get the contract with Uptown Gold declared void, I let Ernie visit again, on the pretence of further discussing his taking the sale over. On both occasions I was forced to keep asking Ernie not to make physical contact (he was constantly stroking my arms and breasts, and attempting to kiss me). During this second visit Ernie contacted the company he intended to use as his “front”, this was Capitol Estates, which Tony had told me was run by his friend “David”. I later found out this company was in Finchley. A few days after this second visit, I received a fax, stating the contract was now void. When Ernie phoned me later, I told him his services would not be required, one of my reasons being that I could not trust him to “keep his hands to himself”.

Some weeks later, in late October, I received a telephone call from Tony, saying he regretted what had happened and that he would like to see me. I told him that he knew where I was, and it was up to him. Within minutes he was at my door. I was already expecting my friend, Wendy, and her daughter to visit. We had a brief conversation, when he asked how the house sale was going and I said that I had a buyer. Wendy then arrived and I was surprised when Tony stayed to meet her. She engaged Tony in conversation and suggested that he joined the three of us on our proposed visit to Alton Towers. After Wendy had taken her daughter home, Tony told me that he was ready to divorce and, while we had been apart, he realised how much he missed me. Our relationship started again at that time. Tony was persuaded to drive us to Alton Towers. During the journey there, he received a telephone call from a friend identified as Abbey. I spoke to this chap for a short time. Later I asked what Abbey’s surname was, and was told “Lincoln”. On our way home, as we drove through north London, Tony pointed out Capitol Estates, saying it belonged to his friend, David.

Tony told me his wife was making life unbearable and had asked for a divorce. He then said he was going to have to find the money to pay her to leave the house, as she had put an extensive amount of money in to the property, although he was the owner. He also indicated to me his business was not doing well, it was short of funds, that he did not want to continue with property management, and he was considering moving his office back into his house or even closing the Company down. He then began to discuss the idea of moving to the USA again, and asked if I would like to go with him. I mentioned Green Cards and he said these were no problem to get. We agreed that it was probably best to go to the USA for a few weeks holiday, to see if we thought it was a feasible move. He also said that he wanted me to live with him, wherever we were, and that his house was safe, as he had a pre-nuptial agreement with his wife regarding this, so we would have that house to live in whatever happened. We did discuss the possibility of my buying into the house, which would give me an asset and Tony the capital he required. At first he did not like the idea, but later thought it was not a bad idea. He told me that on a few occasions that, mainly during

weekends, when he and his wife were arguing, the neighbours had called the police out to the house. During the first few days of November Tony told me that he was going to the naming ceremony for his sister's baby daughter. I asked where the sister lived. At first I was told Deptford, but in later conversation I was told "just by Camberwell". I do not know the sister's name. Tony then told me that he desperately wanted to get away from the house, as a temporary measure, and wanted to visit his elderly father in Nigeria. He had become increasingly despairing when talking about his home life and really did seem upset by everything. Apparently the father required an operation and there was some problem with land that the family owned. I agreed to lend Tony the money for the air fare (which I paid for by Visa on 10th November at East to West Travel in Denmark Street, WC2) and I also lent him £1,000 (from my Company account, the cheque being payable to Uptown Gold's account) which he said would cover the operation and the legal fees for the land dispute. I told him that, as I was closing my Company down, I would need the £1,000.00 returning before the end of February. The ticket was to travel out on the Saturday following 10th November, and had a fixed return date of three weeks. While Tony was away, he asked me to put down all my thoughts on us, whether I wanted to go to the States, etc. As the subject of us living together had been broached a number of times, Tony also wanted to know how I felt about adopting children, as I am unable to have children myself.

When Tony returned from Nigeria, earlier than expected (he said a friend had paid the excess administration fees) he said he was giving up the office in Clapham and moving the equipment to his home. He then asked what I wanted to do, go to the States or not. I said that, on the whole, I preferred to stay in Britain, but would go to the USA, if that was what he wanted to do. He said that he was pleased as he had changed his mind, but still wanted us to go on holiday, saying he wanted to visit friends, during February, in Atlanta. He also said that the next time he went to Nigeria, he wanted me to go with him, we even discussed the timing for me to have the necessary injections. At one point he even broached the idea of us marrying, but I said that as he was not even divorced, this was certainly too soon to make a decision like that. During the first few days of Tony's return from Nigeria, he said he was packing his office equipment and moving it to his house. He then gave me his home office number (0181 880 9096, which became unavailable around 21st January 1999). He also began to look for work, as he said he needed a steady income while making decisions on what to do next with the business. I even accompanied him to one or two interview venues. Tony also called his friend in Atlanta, from my home telephone using some sort of card which meant that I would not be charged for the call, saying he wanted to visit, probably in February, with his girlfriend. I assumed he was referring to me as I was sitting with him at the time. My house sale was being finalised and contracts were exchanged in early December. Tony told me that his divorce was nearly finalised, he just needed to find the money to pay his wife before she would sign the papers. He thought that this would be fairly soon, and said how much he was looking forward to my moving in with him. Tony quickly found employment, he said, as a trainee manager with MacDonald's, and was assigned to Oxford Street 2 (near the Oxford Circus Marks and Spencer branch). My house sale then came up for completion on 18th December, and Tony's induction to MacDonald's was over the previous weekend, 12th and 13th December. He showed me his work manuals, uniform, etc., and once he had started there, went into great detail about how the food was stored, prepared,

acceptable storing times, and so on. On 16th December I moved from my house to stay, as a temporary measure, with my brother in Tunbridge Wells. I continued to travel up to central London to meet Tony. He constantly talked about his training at MacDonald's.

Tony continued to talk about how fed up he was with his wife's constant arguing, fighting and shouting. He again told me that he could not wait to get her out of his house and again asked if I definitely wanted to live with him, once the divorce was settled. I believed Tony's claim that the divorce was going through quickly "by mutual agreement" and that Tony's wife, Tina, would be leaving for Austria immediately the papers were signed. However, as there was no money to pay Tina the amount Tony said he owed, she would not leave, although she had, he said, handed her notice in at work. We also discussed what I intended to do. I had not been working for any employer, other than my own Company, which was (and still is) in the process of being closed down. Tony said that, as I would be moving in with him very soon, I should wait and look for employment in Wood Green. He even went as far as to suggest that, as long as I could bring about £500.00 into the house every month, I did not need to work full-time, as this would mean we could have more time together around Tony's shift work. Some time between our relationship starting again, and my moving from my house, Tony did ask that, should he ever do "something really terrible" to me, would I take my life. As I did not foresee what was going to happen, and assumed he meant arguments, possibly affairs, I said of course not.

We did not see each other, or speak to each other over the Christmas break. I tried to contact Tony, but his mobile telephone was switched off and there was no reply from the home office number. However, after the Bank Holiday, he contacted me in a very agitated state, saying that the Christmas period had been a nightmare and that his mother-in-law was now coming over from Austria, and that Tina was packing everything in sight, including his gardening equipment - he always maintained that his wife did not even use the garden. He was quite frantic about getting the divorce over with quickly and said that he could not get a loan to pay his wife. He told me he needed in excess of £37,500.00 in order to pay her and his mother-in-law the money they had put into the house. I had no reason to disbelieve any of this, I have witness several divorces and seen how relationships deteriorate. The only thing I found odd was Tony's assertion that his wife could not return to Austria until she had changed all of her personal papers back to her maiden name of Gleihls, having been using either Egbowon or Egbowon-Gleihls. As my house had been sold, Tony was quite aware that I had capital. He visited me at Tunbridge Wells, with his friend Abbey (it was the first time I met this person) and, on this occasion, borrowed £100.00 in cash, saying it was to pay for a season ticket in order to get to work. Within days he then telephoned me in a terrible state and persuaded me to lend him £38,000.00 in order to pay his wife to leave. He said that if the money were presented to her, she had no option but to leave within days. I agreed to lend him the money, only as I believed it was to have his wife leave and allow me to move into the house, and also only on the assurance that he would either be putting my name on the deeds of the house, or, as soon as it was possible, he would take out a mortgage to repay me. Either way, Tony said I would be moving into his house within days. I would not have made the loan without some sort of agreement, and it was only made in the belief that I would be moving into Tony's house. Tony gave the

bank details, he claimed was for his solicitor's client account and, on Monday 4th January 1999, I went to the Co-operative Bank in Croydon to make a CHAPS transfer. The details Tony gave me also included a telephone number for the person, Dr Solomon Odusanya, whom he said was the solicitor. The details for the account were Dr Solomon Odusanya, Nat West Kingsland Branch, sort code 60-12-18, account number 61768685, and marked Ref. Anthony Adeniyi Egbowon. Once I had made the transfer I telephoned the person I believed to be Dr Solomon Odusanya, and asked that he furnish me with a receipt, which he agreed to do. I did not think to keep the paper with the details of the account and telephone number for reference. Later Tony told me that his solicitor did not want to issue a receipt to me and had suggested we should draw up an agreement between ourselves. I did not doubt Tony at all, he had my complete trust. Tony then said I should visit his house, which up until then I had never been to, to see if I liked it and make sure I wanted to live there and whether I preferred the idea of a 50% share or him taking out a mortgage. He even suggested that if there was anything I disliked, we could redecorate, and if I really hated it, we could always move. When I got to the house, there were photographs everywhere of Tony and the woman he had previously identified as his wife, Tina, both individually and many of them together. During the visit Tony wanted sex, I told him I was not comfortable with this as it was still his wife's home. He became increasingly agitated with me saying "it's my house, for God's sake, it's my house". I also discussed with him the subject of his friend, Ernie, as I would not be comfortable if Ernie were to visit whilst Tony was not there, having previously told Tony of Ernie's 'overtures' to me. Tony told me that Ernie never visited unless invited. He then mentioned that Ernie was now working with David, at Capitol Estates. I looked around the house and garden, Tony made a lot of comments about how good the garden would look once my furniture, ornaments and container plants were in it, and how we could alter the garden. He said how pleased he was to have found someone who enjoyed gardening, and how "pretty" we could make the place look. He also asked which items of my furniture I wanted to bring, as he thought that all of my possessions would not fit in the house. I then left the house, before his wife returned from work.

Tony next told me that he and his wife were to visit his solicitor's office in Camberwell, on 8th January, in order to sign the divorce papers and hand over the money. However, on that day he told me this had not been accomplished as the solicitor had furnished him with the wrong account details and, as the signatory for that account was not available, the money could not be transferred within the firm's accounts. I did not feel this could be correct, but as Tony was in such a state, I did not pursue the matter other than to say I thought it ridiculous. Within these few days, Tony's mobile phone became unobtainable. He said this was because Ernie, who had the partners phone, had not paid the bill and so both telephones were temporarily suspended. I know little about mobile telephones and so had no reason to dispute this. Tony and I next met on Sunday 10th January, when we went to a hotel in Finsbury Park for the night. He presented me with an agreement he had drawn up, dated 4th January, on Uptown Gold headed paper. I think it was at this point that I realised that Tony's first name was Adeniyi, rather than Anthony. I believe he showed me his driving licence to confirm this. I was not happy with the agreement, as my name was misspelt and he had used my old address, rather than where I was then living. Tony said he would draw up a new agreement, with the correct details, but in the meantime we each signed copies of

the agreement to hand. A few days later Tony told me that he and his wife were going to the solicitor again, on Friday 15th January, in order to sign the documents and hand over the money. By this time he said that his mother-in-law had arrived and things were at an all time low. He said I would be horrified at how empty the house was, his wife had packed almost everything, and even tried to take his office equipment. He said he could only bear it as it would be over within days, and both the mother-in-law and Tina were booked to leave on Sunday 17th January, for Vienna. He seemed very distressed, claiming racist abuse and attacks. Tony asked me to travel up to London over the coming weekend (16th and 17th January) to see him, however, as I was suffering with a heavy cold and sore throat, I refused. Tony said he was disappointed, but understood. He said he would phone later that day, and on Saturday, he did not call me until the Sunday evening. He said that he had been too upset to speak to anyone over the weekend, the divorce papers still had not been finalised, as the money was still in the wrong account, and his wife and mother-in-law had refused to leave. He asked if I could make another loan, when I said I did not have another £38,000.00 he asked if there was £37,000.00, as this was acceptable. I was still feeling very ill, but as Tony was so distressed, I agreed to travel up to Wood Green to meet him. During this telephone call he also said that his wife had taken almost all of the furniture, and I could now bring all of my furniture. He even made a comment about "regrettably, even your bed", which was an item he disliked for some reason. He said that if I made the loan on the Monday, 18th January, then his wife and mother-in-law would have to leave straight away, and in fact I could move in that night, so I should bring an overnight bag with me. I agreed, under some duress, to make this loan, again on the understanding it was to pay his wife to leave and enable me to move in with him, that this money would be repaid and that my previous loan of £38,000.00 was being transferred back to my account (which was to be done within the next few days). He then said that his wife had even packed his television, and if I were going to be at his house that night, I would be spending the evening alone, as he had to go to work at MacDonald's, and could we get my television out of storage. I travelled to Wood Green to meet Tony on Monday 18th January, as arranged. Tony collected me, with his friend Abbey, at Wood Green tube station, using Abbey's car. We drove back to the shopping centre and Tony and I went to the Co-operative Bank there. I obtained a banker's draft in respect of a Mr A.R.Dada, having got Tony to check that this would be okay. The bank noticed that my home address for my account had not been updated since I had moved. As I was giving the details for the Tunbridge Wells address, Tony said it was daft, as I would be changing it again within days to his address. We then left the bank, and Tony went with Abbey, saying he was going to the solicitor's and asked me to phone him, on Abbey's mobile phone, at about 3.00pm. When I did call, I was told to meet him again at Wood Green, the banker's draft had been refused and he needed me to make another CHAPS transfer. We met again at Wood Green, and after "words" we went back to the bank in order to make the transfer to Mr A.R.Dada, Abbey National Bank, sort code 09-01-16, account no. 42569162, marked Ref. Adeniyi Anthony Egbowon. It was, by this time, too late for the bank to action the transfer that day. Whilst waiting in the bank, Tony showed me the back of his passport, whether it was Austrian or Nigerian I do not know, with a Home Office stamp stating he had leave to remain in the country as spouse of Martina Egbowon, an EC national. He made a comment about how much of a liar he was, with reference to this stamp, but I had no idea what he meant and he did not elaborate. Once we had

completed the paperwork in the bank Tony just kept thanking me, and saying how he would make it up to me. He assured me that the first loan was definitely on its way back to my account and would be there no later than Friday, which would have been 22nd January. We met Abbey again outside the shopping centre and, as I could not move in that day, Abbey drove us down to Charing Cross station, Tony saying he was too upset to drive. While travelling Tony noticed a poster advertising a talk by a person known as "Mr Nice", he had been reading this persons autobiography the previous week, and he asked me if I would like to go the following weekend. As I was still unwell, I was not enthusiastic but, in hindsight, this reassured me that we would be together, or at least seeing each other, the next weekend. Also, Tony did ask if we could go and get my television from storage anyway, but I refused to allow this on the basis that if his television had been taken by his wife, what was to stop her taking mine as well. Tony seemed a little disappointed, but accepted this. Both Tony and Abbey came into the station with me, but as the car had been left on a meter, they left after about ten minutes.

On the morning of Tuesday, 19th January, I called Abbey's number to see if I could speak to Tony but he was not with Abbey. I was then notified by the bank that the transfer had been made and soon afterwards Tony called me, to say the money had arrived in his solicitor's account. He said he was so happy and excited as "it was over" and that we would now be together and he couldn't wait for me to move in. I did think that this was rather gushing, but as he had been under such strain, and had passed a lot of that stress onto me during the previous weeks leaving me feeling rather oversensitive, I took it to be unimportant. Tony called again during the evening and that he would borrow Abbey's car and collect me on Thursday, as his wife and mother-in-law would be leaving that day. He also said that he was going back to work, having taken two days off with the stress. I asked if he realised what kind of stress he had put me through, and that I was finding it difficult not to worry about the fact that he had taken all of my money. He asked me to have faith and patience, and that the original loan was on its way back, definitely, and that we could really talk about things in a couple of days, when we were together, but he did not want to discuss things over the telephone.

On the Wednesday evening, 20th January, Tony called again. He said that plans had changed and he would not now be able to collect me until Friday evening. He would not elaborate on what had changed, but said he would call tomorrow (Thursday) to let me know approximately what time he would be coming to fetch me..

On Thursday evening Tony did attempt to call me. My brother was already on a call when he came through on 'call waiting', shortly after 9.00pm, and my brother asked him to call back. He said he would do so, but did not call again.

When I heard nothing at all on Friday, I began to worry. I tried to telephone the home office number, never having had the domestic telephone number, and found a message saying the number was not available. On Saturday I was very worried and telephoned Tony's friend Abbey, as he was the only person for whom I had a telephone number. Abbey said he had not heard from Tony since he had last seen me. I knew this was not right, as Tony had been with Abbey when he called me on the Tuesday, but thought that Abbey may have mistaken the day.

Abbey suggested that, if I had Tony's address, I should go to the house and see what was wrong. On Sunday 24th January, I wrote a letter to Tony, stating the monies I had lent him, which totalled £76,500.00, and saying that if he did not get in touch by midday on Tuesday 26th January, I would take legal action against him. Firstly I went to MacDonald's, as I had been led to believe he would be working on the Sunday. I was told by staff there, that he had not attended for about two weeks. At that point I knew that things were not as I had been led to believe, and realised that Tony must have been lying for some time. Then I travelled up to 132 White Hart Lane. The door was answered by the woman I recognised as Tony's wife, Tina. She wanted to know who I was, but did ask if I wanted to "come in", to which I said "no". I said I had lent Tony money and I wanted to know when he intended to pay me back. She seemed surprised, though only a little, that I had lent Tony money. She said he did not live there anymore. I asked her when he had moved out. She said "on Thursday" and said she could show me a letter. I asked to see the letter, She again asked who I was, then refused to show me the letter. She said all that she knew was that Tony had paid her "carriage" and "paid his carriage and left", she did not know where, she added that she would be leaving also, but did not say where she was going. I asked if she meant Tony had left the country, and she said she thought he had. I was bewildered by the fact that Tony had, apparently, been a cheat, I said I would leave my letter with her, which she began to open as I walked away. She also called after me "Who are you? Have you been with him?" I said "What do you think?" and carried on walking.

I tried to phone Abbey, but only got his mobile's voice message. I then went to visit a friend, with whom I had business, and told him what had happened. He did not come up with any ideas, and after a couple of hours, I continued my journey home, via Charing Cross station. From Charing Cross I telephoned Abbey again, this time I spoke to him and told him what had happened, asking if he knew anything about it. He said he did not. I then asked if he knew how much money Tony had borrowed, and when I told him, he did seem appalled. He said he would ask around, and I should call him back after about 6.00pm. When I spoke to Abbey again, from Tunbridge Wells, he said he had seen another of he and Tony's mutual friends, who said that he had seen Tony on Friday, and Tony had said he was leaving for Nigeria, apparently for good, then and there. Abbey then asked me for Tony's home address, saying that he did not have this. I thought that odd, but Abbey said that he had always visited Tony, in the six months since he had met him, at the Battersea office, or at other friend's homes and offices. It was really after this that I became distressed, realising just how many lies Tony had probably told me in order to deceive me into thinking that I was only loaning him my capital for a short period, and that his intentions were to actually steal it. I told my brother what had happened and he insisted I call the local police (Kent Constabulary), which I did.

* The last time I saw Tony was on Monday 18th January, 1999.

* The last time I spoke to him was on Wednesday 20th January, 1999.

* His last attempt to contact me was on Thursday 21st January, 1999.

* I never received the amended loan agreement.

* The original loan of £38,000.00 was not in my account on the Friday (22nd January) as I had been assured by Tony, and has not been credited to date, 28th January 1999.

* Tony never repaid either earlier loan, made in November, for the ticket to Nigeria, nor the £1,000.00.

I no longer believe that Tony ever intended to divorce, nor did he ever intend for he and I to live together. I believe now that he had always been deceiving me, with the purpose of dishonestly obtaining my money, by any method he could

The only helpful information I can give follows:

Tony's ex-colleague, and childhood friend, Ernie (also known as Enny, I do not have a family name for him) is supposed to be working for another of Tony's friends, David, at Capitol Estates in Finchley.

Tony said that when he and Tina arrived in Britain, they lived in rented property on the Broadwater Farm Estate. He also told me that he had a current housing application for a flat, intending to sub-let this until he could fetch his younger brother over from Nigeria. If this is true, then the application may be with Harringey Council.

Tony claimed to have been studying in Vienna and had lived there for about ten years, until coming to Britain in 1997, and still had business contacts there. He also said that he had been married previously, to another Austrian woman.

Tony was dealing with the Green Card Lottery, through his Company, during August and September 1998. He also said that his friend David (at Capitol Estates) was also dealing with this Lottery. It is possible that he obtained a Green Card for himself, and possibly also for his wife. He claimed to have friends in Atlanta, and had promised me that we would visit them.

I was never given Tony's domestic telephone number. I believe it to have been a cable service. I know that he claimed to have made and received lots of calls from the USA, Nigeria and Austria on this line. If he used the domestic line to call me, then the number was always withheld, I assume so that I could not call his wife.

The contact telephone number I have for Abbey is 07957 907334. After a while I had doubts about Abbeys story. On Monday 18th January, when he picked Tony up, to meet me, I was told they were both subjected to racial abuse from both Tony's wife and mother-in-law. As Abbey later claimed he had not been to Tony's house, I wondered where else this incident could have taken place.

Tony claimed to be some sort of minor prince, by his mother's family. She apparently died in May 1998, aged 54, from diabetic complications. Tony said that the funeral entourage was over 1000 people. I can only say this took place in Nigeria. Tony's father is in his late sixties and lives in Nigeria, as do his eldest and youngest brothers. Another brother, married to a Yugoslavian woman, is supposed to live in Vienna. Tony claimed to have several uncles working for the UN in Brussels.

Between October and early January, Tony claimed to have been visiting a friend in an immigration detention centre in either Rochester or Chatham. Tony said that he needed around £5,000.00 to get his friend released. Although I was never directly asked for this money, I sensed he wanted me to make the loan. I never discussed the matter further.

At 132 White Hart Lane, there were many photographs of both Tony and Tina. I have since been told that, if Tony really was on the Trainee Managers programme at MacDonald's, then they would have a photograph of him.

Tony claimed that his wife, Tina, was the step-daughter of a millionaire, and the family were threatening to "cut her out of the Will", if she did not leave him. He also claimed that an aunt of Tina's was supposed to own the biggest theme park in Austria. Tina's family also apparently own properties throughout the Canary Islands. As Tina was, according to Tony, born in Australia, rather than Austria, I do not know if the maiden name used is that of her birth, or her step-father.

I was told by Tony that he was going to transfer his bank account from LLOYD'S, which was several weeks ago, to a new bank. Whether this was his personal account, or the Company account, I do not know. When we were in the Wood Green branch of the Co-operative bank he took papers in order to open a new account with them.

Tony said he was regularly visiting the Health Centre, opposite his house. He also said he was a member of BUPA.

I was told that he had a conviction for Fraud, apparently for misuse of a Road Fund Licence. I did not, at the time, think this was particularly significant.

After Tony had completed the induction course at MacDonald's, he claimed to have been offered another post, with London Underground.

* Tony gave his date of birth as 18th October, 1965, making him 33.

* He is between 6' and 6'2" tall, and is slightly overweight. He has a shaven head, mainly due to a receding hairline, a flat, angular nose, a pencil moustache. His upper left front tooth is discoloured (brown) and the teeth behind are slightly crooked. His walk is slightly stooped and he turns his feet out at an angle. He does not have a deep voice but it is heavily accented.

* He had two small vertical scars on his cheeks, these apparently mark him as Yoruba. His back is covered with short horizontal scars, mainly on his right side, these were, he said, 'witchcraft' scars, some sort of ritual protection.

419 Coalition Note: If you have any additional helpful information on Tony Egbowon, please email it to delabutte@yahoo.com

26 MAR 1999

This sent in by a Concerned Nigerian:

Nigeria Vows To Eradicate Advance Fee Fraud
March 25, 1999

LAGOS, Nigeria (PANA) - The Nigerian inspector-general of Police, Alhaji Ibrahim Coomassie, has expressed government's committed to the eradication of advance fee fraud and other criminal acts in the country.

He told the second West African fraud meeting in Abuja Wednesday that the

fraud was one of the most notorious economic crimes prevalent in the world today.

According to him, the fraud is usually perpetrated through a conspiracy between some dubious Nigerians and gullible foreigners.

Coomassie said that a joint operation now existed between Nigeria and the United States law enforcement agents to combat the menace.

He noted that more than 40 cases involving over 125 suspects were before the special tribunal established for such offences under the Advance Fee Fraud Decree of 1995.

Nigeria's attorney-general and minister of justice, Alhaji Abdullahi Ibrahim, said "the crime of advance fee fraud should be considered a challenge that can be eradicated with greater efforts."

The meeting attracted police chiefs from over 30 countries.

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419 Coalition Comment: To which we say that anything GOV of Nigeria does would be much appreciated, but what we want to know of Inspector Coomassie (the same man who hassled Walter Carrington, former US Ambassador to Nigeria who was actually trying to get something Done about 419) is :) : Where's the Money? When will it be returned? Where's the Money? When will it be returned? :) : That IS, after all, the crux of the matter, Inspector. While we appreciate any and all actions of the Nigerian Government in this matter, bottom line is Talk is Cheap - we've been hearing it for years and years, now SHOW US THE MONEY :) :)

26 MAR 1999

This letter from an American woman who unwittingly married a 419er, was 419ed, and who has appealed to Justice Fati Abubakar, Nigeria's First Lady, for Justice was published in This Day, one of the major newspapers in Nigeria on 18 MAR and other newspapers there are reportedly showing interest in this story. We have reprinted the appeal to Fati Abubakar verbatim, in full, below:

Her Excellency the First Lady
The Honourable Justice Fati Abubakar
Presidential Villa
Aso Rock
Abuja
Nigeria

7 January 1999

Dear Justice Abubakar,

You, as the First Lady of Nigeria and as a High Court Justice, have the knowledge and wisdom to further the cause of justice. I humbly request your help in a criminal matter of fraud, in which I am a victim. At least six Nigerian Newspapers have covered the case since it was broken on 12 June 1998 by National Concord (1). I married the son of a First Class Igbo Chief in New York in the belief that I had found an honourable man with whom I could share the rest of my life. It is clear now that the marriage was a

prelude in the grand design to defraud me of all that I have worked for. His brother and sister joined with him to lure me into investing in a series of transactions that were apparently designed to improve our common lot. This entailed exporting cars from the U.S. to Nigeria to sell for profit and using my "husbands" sister's contact with the Nigerian Minister of Petroleum to acquire favor to execute oil transactions. Needless to say the whole thing was an elaborate scam that has devastated me and nearly destroyed my life.

The marriage has been annulled on the grounds of fraud (2). To this day I do not know the age or real name of the man who married me. Much information has been revealed since he defrauded me. He used seven different names for different reasons. One of his passports reads, "Moses Ituludiegwu Agwuna" but he worked in the United States of America under paperwork listing him as "Prince Chaka Agwuna". His brother, who told me his name was Chukwudi Agwuna, also used the identity in the U.S.A. of Prince Chaka Agwuna. Chukwudi Agwuna also married an American woman, whom he has since abandoned. He has never granted her a divorce and has since married one Nnenna Okpe in Ikeja, Lagos.

Chukwudi and Moses abandoned the New York apartment they had shared, and a search of that apartment uncovered blank copies of Nigerian Birth and Death Certificates as well as letterhead from a Hospital in Lagos. They also had filled in a set of these documents with the name and all the requisite details to fabricate a birth and death. They tried to authenticate these forged records with actual rubber stamps that were found with the documents (3). Also there was a letter stamped and sealed with Igwe Osita Agwuna's name and title explaining that the person on the forged Nigerian documents was his son and died as a result of a murder (4). Also there was a forged letter on the hospital's letterhead explaining the medical reasons for the death and it was stamped with an official rubber stamp from the hospital.

(1)

Champion - Aug. 1998
Weekend Concord – 12 Dec. 1998
National Encomium – 15 Dec. 1998
This Day – 21 Dec. 1998
Guardian – 28 Dec. 1998
The Punch – Jan. 1999

(2), (3) & (4)

See attached

I reported this case to the Presidential Task Force on Financial Crimes on 23 March 1998 and turned over all of the evidence to them. They arrested and later released on bail, the "419 husband". After the initial recovery of some 10 percent, it appears that the criminal brought his father to the Task Force to get him released as a free man unencumbered from the restrictions of bail. The Agwuna family still holds over 270,000 stolen dollars and yet the son of Igwe Osita Agwuna III of Enugwu Ukwu, is still freely spending that money as he recently bought and paid for an airline ticket that took him to London. He had always said that his father was so powerful in Nigeria that he could get anyone out of jail. After receiving a phone call from him in England in November of 1998, I realized the irony in his claims about his father's influence. I had thought that the role the Igwe had played in freeing Nigeria from the clutches of British oppression would have made him the type of man that would have been exerting his influence to help free only the innocent and the oppressed. According to the Igwe's autobiographical account of his role in fighting to end Colonial Oppression, he was sentenced for sedition and subsequently jailed. Now that, if it's

true, is the act of a National Hero. But I am dumbfounded to learn, that the so-called National Hero, who welcomed me into the fold of his family over the telephone after marrying his son in New York, has never even feigned a gesture of decency toward me during or after this ruthless act of 419 has been carried out by his family.

I sent this so-called "Hero" countless letters either by DHL or hand delivered through an attorney and Reverend Minister in Enugu. At first asking for his help but with each passing week and month that he refused to respond, I pleaded and beseeched him to step in and stop the criminal actions of his children (5). He has consistently remained silent toward me.... but he has spoken loud and clearly to the Task Force, convincing them to drop the bail on his son. Through contacts made through the U.S. Embassy, I learned that the Igwe was enjoying the cars last year that had been stolen from me, and telling people that they were gifts to him from Abacha. What could debase a man and father to this level of thievery who once waged a moral war against the British Oppressors? How can someone with his intensely personal experiences of being oppressed, throw away his honor and reputation (if his autobiography is true) by the systematic and contrived plan of evil and oppression he is helping to carry out by shielding his children and keeping stolen loot. He has chosen the wrong person to oppress. My heritage and my blood line has been deeply affected by oppression and exploitation such as in Ireland, where the English sanctioned The Great Hunger and entire villages of my ancestors starved to death.

Although I have never faced starvation and I have always been able to find gainful employment, I do know what it is to learn sobering lessons from my parents that are the legacy of great suffering. Mr. Agwuna did not have to join in this plan to steal from me; I would have gladly shared anything I had with him as a person who at one time (I had been conned into believing) was a hero who helped free his own people from the shackles of British oppression. I had seen him as a courageous role model before I learned the truth about him. I would have been an asset to his family, but instead I am someone that they have "thrown on the side of the road" after committing the act of robbery.

I WONDER IF ANYTHING STIRS INSIDE MR. AGWUNA WHEN HE READS ACCOUNTS OF HIS FELLOW 419 IGBO'S, SUCH AS THE ONE PENNED BY BEN AKPARANTA OF GUARDIAN RECENTLY WHERE SOME 419 SELF-PROCLAIMED "MAFIA" BOYS RAPED TO DEATH AN EIGHT MONTH PREGNANT WOMAN. WHERE IS MR. AGWUNA? SPEAKING OUT ABOUT REDEEMING THE MORALITY OF HIS PEOPLE OR HIS CHILDREN? NO, NOT HIM. WHY DOES A FIRST CLASS CHIEF RETAIN HIS POSITION WHEN HE SERVES AS A ROLE MODEL FOR THE 419 COMMUNITY? THESE ROVING IGBO "MAFIA" COWARDS, THAT ARE RAPING AND MURDERING AND DESTROYING THE GOOD NAME OF THE IGBO HERITAGE, CAN FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF A FIRST CLASS IGBO CHIEF AND TRADITIONAL RULER FOR GUIDANCE IN HOW TO GET AWAY WITH 419 CRIMES. AGWUNA HAS STILL NEVER, TO THIS VERY DAY, ANSWERED A SINGLE LETTER I HAVE SENT HIM BY EXPRESS COURIER OR HAND DELIVERED BY AN ATTORNEY.

(5) See attached

I've read about your accomplishments and your intelligence as you've earned your place in the High Courts of Nigeria. I understand the proud feelings that Nigerian people can take in having a woman in Aso Rock that they can look up to. Although there are people in far greater need than me that could be asking for help, I still believe that allowing these criminals to walk freely after committing this crime would be sufficiently regrettable. I've witnessed the maltreatment of hard-working and decent Nigerians who are harassed for no reason other than that they are Nigerian. My attorney in Lagos was treated like a criminal by the notary at the U.S. Embassy during

the summer of 1998 when he was getting documents notarized on my behalf. Letting these criminals walk freely will only further endorse unfair and rude treatment to other honest Nigerians, not to mention the message it sends to the International business community.

I fiercely defended this Nigerian family that I "married" into. My family and many friends abandoned me, saying, "Nigerians are thieves". I was deeply offended by their statements. I cast away one of my longest standing friends for having what I called prejudiced and preconceived hostile attitudes towards Nigerians and, most importantly, toward the man I was intending to share the rest of my life with. But where do I stand now? The main criminal whose bail was rescinded is now inexplicably free in a foreign country. The Courts of New York in the United States, where the marriage took place, have wiped the marriage off the records by annulling it on the grounds of Fraud. But I am feeling like a fool for having trusted and loved a Nigerian, because even after making two trips to Nigeria and fully cooperating with the PTFFC for a full eight months, the Agwuna family seems relatively unscathed. Maybe that is why people that know them here in Nigeria call them "Mafia".

The Igwe Osita Agwuna, Eze Enugwu Ukwu, Igwe Umunri, Chairman of Anambra State Council for Arts and Culture and (finally) Executive President of Enugwu Ukwu Traditional Authority STILL has not addressed so much as one word to me in response to my numerous pleas. It seems clear he must be addressing A LOT of other people to keep his crooked children shielded from justice.

Uchenna Agwuna, who told me she is a personal friend of the Nigerian Petroleum Minister, and who compelled me to buy for her and the Minister of Petroleum \$30,000 worth of gold and diamond watches, has NEVER been arrested. She has never returned the stolen goods or money. She has slandered my name in an issue of "This Day", but since then, she has run from the Police when they have attempted to catch her. In the 21 Dec. 1998 "This Day" article, she claims that a car agent that was to import the cars stole the cars that I shipped and that the cars "disappeared somewhere in Brazil". Uchenna has convicted herself with her own tongue as she is the person on record as the consignee of the cars (6) and many people in Lagos and Anambra State saw all of the cars either parked in Igwe Osita Agwuna compound OR in various car lots in Lagos. In addition, her own brother confessed to the PTFFC that Uchenna Agwuna and Chukwudi Agwuna were the master minds behind this scheme and he told the PTFFC amounts that he sold the cars for or where they were located if not sold. And in many tape recorded conversations with Chukwudi, his wife Nnenna and Uchenna, ALL OF THEM ADMITTED THAT THE CARS WERE PARKED IN IGWE OSITA AGWUNA'S Enugwu-Ukwu compound A.K.A. Obu Ofo Nri Palace.

After learning that the PTFFC had dropped the bail charges on the main criminal, my Embassy assisted me in making an appeal to The Special Fraud Unit of the Nigerian Police. Police Commissioner Waziri and Superintendent of Police Otitoju, have made a brilliant and powerful start to this investigation. But they have been handed a case file that some describe as "murdered". As a High Court Justice, do you know why the PTFFC would drop bail on a known and confessed criminal? This criminal has not returned so much as one Kobo of the stolen money in close to one year to me, the victim, but he is still using the stolen money to buy himself airline tickets to London.

(6) See Attached

This crime has torn my life apart and I humbly plead for your help. I have

spoken with the Special Advisor to the Head of State on Financial Crimes and Drugs and he has agreed to meet with me in the near future to try to find solutions. I would like to suggest that of any funds that I recover, a percentage of the proceeds would be used in a fund to help the most poverty stricken of our brethren. Nigerians have told me about your work to establish charitable organizations and I know that you would be the person who could best channel a donation. I've read and heard about your charitable work and like so many around the world watching you and your husband forge a bridge to the future, I have the deepest admiration for you. One journalist recently wrote about you and elaborated on the fundamental reasons that your role as the partner of the Head of State is one of the keys to the success of the Government today. And that the success of future Presidencies can be predicted by the caliber of the person married to the Head of State. I will be praying for the elections to yield victory for leaders that are able to follow in the upright footsteps of you and the President. And I thank you for reading this letter and for whatever you can do to help me, even if it is simply advice and sympathy. May God bless and empower you in all ways especially in your service to Nigeria.

Sincerely,
Siobhan O'Donnell

419 Coalition Note: If you can be of assistance to Ms. O'Donnell in this matter, her email is chichi7@email.msn.com . Also please look at our Latest News article of 15 FEB 1999 below for more information on this matter.

23 MAR 1999

The 3 MAR 1999 Loudoun Easterner (VA) "In This Corner" column by John Geddie, page 3, has an amusing story of a Nigerian 419 attempt sent to his office. After recounting the letter etc., Mr. Geddie says of "Dr. Babatunde Jose", his Scammer, "I would warn him that there is a Federal Task Force assigned to such operations, not to mention a private organization with its own web site. There is always a chance that these people would think that the Doctor was involved in a similar [419] enterprise. From personal experience I can tell you these people have very little sense of humor on the subject."

"For the benefit of the agent that will call here, yes, we have a copy of the letter. Yes, we will send it in. Yes, we understand the gravity of the situation and that millions of dollars are involved... As for us, we decline the offer offer because we do not understand the secret instructions [such as] you must persist when the telephone says 'subscriber not available' or 'the number does not exist'... Persisting makes my brain hurt..."
:) :) :) :)

6 MAR 1999

This sent in by a victim of Black Currency 419

This message was sent by mass e-mail to various African Countries in Nov. '98

-----Original Message-----

From: Admin
To: n123@idt.net
Date: Friday, March 05, 1999 12:54 PM

Attached is photo of one of Africa's scam artists in the BLACK MONEY SCAM. He goes under the name of Anthony Obuke or Anthony Nzongo for recent crime.

Their latest victim is a Canadian Family Business whom they scammed out of

over \$130,000 U.S. DOLLARS.

They ask the victim to assist them in leaving Ghana to a politically stable country whereby they can invest cash left to them by their father who was shot in Zaire War.

They claimed that they are the sons of General Nzongo (General of Mobutu) from Zaire. They claimed they have cash in security house in Ghana but they need these foreigners' financial assistant to clear the cash from security house and since the cash was defaced for security reasons they needed a bulk of foreign currency to buy the block chemical needed to wash the money. They set themselves up as an international SAYUNG INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION - Subsidiary to Petrochemical in Ghana and used the Oil Refinery plant in Tema as their location. They actually went to the plant to pick up the chemical (block chemical) in front of their victim.

Their regular meeting place was the Golden Tulip Hotel in Accra.

They assumed the names of Anthony & Thomas Obuke and a mother Judith for security reasons while they are in Ghana but claimed their birth names are Thomas & Anthony Nzongo. They claimed that their ages are: Thomas 30 yrs, Anthony 26 yrs, and mother Judith 46yrs.

This ring of thieves have many people including Ghanaian nationals involved in their ring. The crime has been reported to International Crime Agencies

The Black Money Scam has been known to originate from Nigeria but is occurring all over various African Countries.

Please make your viewers, communities, and listeners aware of this BLACK MONEY SCAM in your region. Criminals do not just hurt themselves they discredit an entire country.

Please post this photo to assist in catching this thief. Also pass this e-mail on to your local police, army and immigration department so they can post it on their borders

It is the belief that both Anthony and Thomas and many members of their ring go to various African countries and set up their operations: Countries these men have operated from are: Ghana, Cote D' Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

Some of the most recent mobile numbers they have assumed are:

027574064 Thomas
027572410 Anthony
027554348 Felix
027574327 Evans

They also operate from an E-mail under the name of Realstar@Africaonline.com This Reality Star company has been notified and they have confirmed that they have reported it to Ghana BNI. They also know who the criminals are.

They have also used a communication center who knows them very well and act as their personal receptionist. The name of center is BJs Comm Cen GH
Fax & Phone no is: 233-21-241-181

Anthony & Thomas were last seen in October/November '98 at these locations:
Miklin Hotel - East Legon, Accra
Bayview Hotel - Legon Rd. Accra
Darold Hotel - Achimota, Accra North

A mass photo e-mail will be sent worldwide in an attempt to capture these criminal. Any assistance your company/department can provide will be helpful.

CRIMINALS DISCREDIT A NATION

Picture Attachment, Anthony Nzongo:



1 MAR 1999

This news piece sent in by a concerned Nigerian:

Nigerians Held For Printing Fake Dollars In Ivory Coast

February 26, 1999

By Moses Uchendu

Lagos - Nigerian businessmen suspected to be international money launderers, have been arrested and detained in Abidjan, capital of Ivory Coast for being in possession of fake US dollars running into several millions.

The Nigerians, according to a BBC report, were arrested last week in central Abidjan, following a security tip off in the area after they were trailed for several weeks for various financial crimes ranging from 419 to money laundering.

The fraudsters numbering about 5 were said to be moving from one 5-star hotel to another where they perpetuated different kinds of criminal activities against their business colleagues, including Europeans and Asian businessmen.

The Nigerians were said to have been printing fake US dollars running into several millions and had been using the fake dollars to transact businesses only for their victims to discover later that the notes were fake US dollars.

However, the fraudsters ran out of luck last week when a group of Ivorian

security agents who had been on their trail for weeks swung into action, arresting five of them few metres away from their alleged base in Abidjan. The Nigerians were arrested with three briefcases, each containing bundles of fake 100 dollar notes which ran into millions.

Ivorian top security officials who paraded the suspects before newsmen in Abidjan said each of the three suitcases contained 8 million US dollars which totalled about 24 million fake dollars. The report further said that the set of Nigerians were one of the several groups of Nigerian fraudsters who are on the wanted list of the Ivorian police for several financial crimes and money related crimes within and outside Abidjan in recent months.

The Nigerians were paraded along with three other suspects, a Liberian and two Sierra Leoneans who were accused of smuggling gold and other precious stones into and outside Ivory Coast.

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15 FEB 99

We received this today from an American who proposes to lead a delegation of 419 Victims to Abuja to ask the GOV of Nigeria to make greater efforts in fighting 419. We post her note to us up verbatim, with permission, so that any other victims who wish to join the Delegation can contact her to make the necessary arrangements:

To Whom it May Concern;

I was told by the State Department to contact you for help. I have been in contact with the Secret Service, the US Embassy in Lagos, my local District Attorney's office, the FBI and the State Department regarding a case of 419 in which I have been a victim. Since no one was able to help me in this country, I travelled to Lagos in March of 1998 and I reported my case to the Presidential Task Force on Financial Crimes (PTFFC). Within seven days of landing in Lagos, the Task force arrested the main culprit and with the next month they recovered roughly \$40,000 of the \$313,900 stolen from me. I received this money and they promised repeatedly to continue collecting as much money as possible and then take the three criminals involved to the Military Tribunal to face charges.

I returned back in the States May 2, 1998 and kept in touch with the Task Force through phone, fax and express courier. I drafted a letter over the summer of 1998 requesting that Nigeria go ahead with the Tribunal as the prospects of recovering the money seemed to grow dimmer each week. I sent this letter to the Chief of Army Staff, the Directorate of Military Intelligence and to the Chairman of the PTFFC, Lt. Col. Hassan. I'm sure you won't be surprised to know that, not only did they not take the criminals to the Tribunal, they rescinded the bail that they had taken on the main criminal and he fled Nigeria. He had the nerve to telephone me from London in November 1998.

At this point I returned to Nigeria, and appealed to the PTFFC for answers. When they gave me the brush, I cold called every major Newspaper that I could throughout Lagos in the 2 weeks that I had to spend there. Many of them interviewed me and I showed them my thick file of evidence and told them how the PTFFC had completely dropped my case and DROPPED the bail on a known and confessed criminal. Six major newspapers covered my story: This Day, Guardian, National Concorde (and Weekend Concorde), National Encomium,

Champion and The Punch. I would like to send you copies of these articles if you would like to see them and if you give me a mailing address. Also, I was approached by DBN Television Station and they interviewed me on camera and aired it several times on television with a call-in segment for viewers.

My case may or may not be unusual in that I had met the main culprit in New York (where I live), dated him and eventually we married. I met many people in the States who vouched for the family. You see the father was one of the freedom fighters for Nigeria back when they broke free from the British. I read about him in little books that were shown to me. The father, it has been confirmed was a freedom fighter and he is now what is considered a First Class Chief. It seems that the father is not without his connections as he was the one that pressed the Task Force to drop the bail.

The Courts in New York where we married have since annulled the marriage on the grounds of fraud. I am keeping up the pressure with the Nigerian Press and have since made contacts with some major Network producers that are pitching my story to Nightline, 60 Minutes, Dateline, etc. I have spoken with the Special Advisor to the Head of State for Financial and Drug Crimes and he has given me an appointment to see him in Abuja. Right now I have two other victims that will accompany me on this meeting (collectively, the three of us have lost approximately 4 million dollars), but am trying to put together a larger delegation as there will be a lot of press coverage. The State Department suggested I contact you because they said you may be able to connect me with other victims or pass my phone number on to other victims who may want to march with us to the Capitol and press for some assistance from the very Nigerian Government that espouses there official stand against these fraudsters.

Can you help me? My telephone # is (516) 725-7595, my fax # is (516) 725-7872. I am trying to put this delegation together as soon as possible. The Nigerian Press will be printing an open letter that I have written to the First Lady, The Honorable Justice Fati Abubakar, requesting her assistance. I plan to meet with the National Security Advisor also while in Abuja. Your web page is wonderful and it seems that you are one of the most knowledgeable people on this subject of 419. I would be extremely grateful if you can assist me in this mission.

Thanking you in advance.

Sincerely,

Siobhan O'Donnell
chichi7@email.msn.com

15 FEB 99

This one is really a 1998 News piece, but on review we find that we failed to put it up, sorry, so here it is belatedly:

The 7th Annual Nigerian Crime Conference was held in Ft. Worth, Texas, from NOV 30th through December 3rd 1998. Over five hundred representatives from federal, state, local, and foreign law enforcement, private industry, and the banking community attended. The US GOV even sponsored the attendance of Mrs. Ojomo from Interpol Lagos, and Mrs. Waziri of the Special Fraud Squad, Nigerian Police.

By all accounts the conference was a success. It was also felt that while

Mrs. Ojomo and Mrs. Waziri were of course aware of the global implications of Nigerian crime, that it was nevertheless constructive for them to see first hand the focus it is getting and to take that message home with them.

3 FEB 1999

This piece appeared recently in the Vanguard, a Nigerian newspaper:

Business Vanguard
Scams on foreign bank account
holders increase

By lanre Alabi

Those who operate foreign accounts and have their statements of account being sent on any kind of mailing system in Nigeria stand the risk of being duped.

Police sources revealed a fresh wave of scams on foreign bank account holders has swept through the system and that fraudsters are now working in concert with some officials of foreign banks to dupe innocent citizens.

The surge in such fraud cases (known as 419) worsened the economic risk rating to Nigeria towards the end of 1998 and at the beginning of 1999.

Officials of the Presidential Task force on financial crimes revealed that as at February 1998, over 4 million suspected scam letters were intercepted by the Nigeria Postal Service.. Five million letters were sent back from twelve countries for being post marked by forged franking machines.

The central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has spent over \$4 million (N344 million) materially and financially to fight the problem. The bank placed warning advertisements in about 80 newspapers and magazine in 12 international languages in 36 countries.

Over 8,560 was said to have been investigated by the Task Force on Financial Crimes between 1996 and 1998. Sixty-five of such cases are at various tribunals. Other effort have been put in place to warn both Nigerians and foreigners. For example information has been circulated to business men not to enter into any business relationship in Nigeria until such business has been certified genuine by the Nigerian embassies and High Commissions in their countries.

As a back up measure, defence attaches in such countries have been directed to carry out enlightenment programmes on 419 scams as a way of dissuading people from falling prey.

Vanguard Transmitted 01 February, 1999

419 Coalition Comment: Where's the Money? When will it be repatriated? Also, for CBN's anti-scam media efforts, please see "Nigerian GOV Media Campaigns" menu item on 419 Coalition main page. Additionally, given the 4 million letters seized by Nigerian authorities stat given in the piece, why then, as little as 7 or 8 months ago was Paul Ogwuma, Governor of CBN, stating in public that over the entire many year run of the Scam only some 288,000 letters had been sent? And of these 8500 investigations how come only 65 people are awaiting trial? And when will these 65 come to trial? And when they do will they be convicted? And, once again, WHERE'S THE MONEY? WHERE'S THE MONEY? GOV of Nigeria needs to Quit Yappin' and SHOW US THE MONEY!! Boggles the mind....

7 JAN 1999

This Nigeria PM News piece sent to 419 Coalition by a Concerned Nigerian;

Amazing Wealth Of Ezego: The Late 419 Kingpin
January 6, 1999

Lagos - The last Christmas day was one that was eagerly awaited in the household of Chief Victor Okafor a.k.a Ezego. The controversial Lagos-based, Igbo millionaire reputed for his immodest flamboyance was to turn 34 on Christmas day.

Plans were afoot to celebrate his 34th birthday which coincided with the birthday of Jesus Christ, the venerated founder of the Christian faith. To this end, a trip to his hometown, Ihiala, Imo State, was planned.

A huge and characteristically magnificent double celebration for the yuletide and birthday was on the cards. Afrobeat king, Femi Kuti and his Positive Force Band were billed to entertain the guests on what would have been one high-voltage party in the sleepy Ihiala community.

The magnitude of the planned party had reportedly taken the Igbo big pocket to the Afrikan Shrine in a bid to tie up all the loose ends with Femi Anikulapo-Kuti. Since the party was billed to run from Christmas eve till the Boxing Day, Ezego decided to commence his trip to Ihiala on 23 December. The journey to Ihiala and the grand plan of huge Xmas and birthday celebrations did not materialise.

Death delivered a blow as Ezego died in an auto accident that reeked of the immodest opulence that had characterised his life. According to reports, Ezego started the journey from Lagos to Ihiala in a convoy of six top of the range automobiles. This included a Lexus Jeep, a Lincoln Namjafor 1999 model, a new Honda, a stretch Limousine and a blue Porsche.

Reports say Ezego normally travelled to Ihiala by first taking a flight to either Enugu or Port Harcourt from where he would be driven to Ihiala. The high rate of air crashes, sources claim, scared Ezego from making the trip by air and to choose to go by road. That proved a costly one.

Ezego's trip out of this world began when, sources said, he climbed behind the wheels of the Lexus Jeep in the convoy, to drive himself to Ihiala from Lagos. The jeep was said to have developed an engine fault somewhere on the Lagos-Ibadan expressway. Apparently obsessed with the idea of getting to Ihiala without delay, the jeep was egged on until it finally got spoilt in Asaba.

Not wanting to leave the expensive automobile at the mercy of thieves, Ezego was said to have ordered one of his boys to buy a rope with which the jeep will be towed. The boy was said to have come back with a chain that was attached to the broken down jeep and surprisingly, the Lexus Jeep which Ezego was driving. More amazingly, Ezego was said to have insisted on towing the Cherokee Jeep with the Lexus Jeep with him behind the wheels.

The journey continued until one fateful moment somewhere between Ozabulu and Okijja on the Onitsha/Owerri road, two kilometres from Ihiala, Ezego's destination. Ezego was said to have run into a bad stretch of the road while going down a steep slope and for no obvious reason, suddenly applied the brakes. Apparently oblivious of any clear sign of danger, the driver of

the Cherokee jeep was caught unprepared for such sudden halt and he rammed the Cherokee into Ezego's Lexus, fatally pushing him into a gaping ditch beside the road. This account of Ezego's denouement is, however, not the only one in circulation.

Another version claims that it was the chain holding the two jeeps that snapped, forcing the Cherokee at the back to run into Ezego's Lexus, making it lose control and taking the ghastly plunge into the ditch. Frantic efforts were made to save his life as members of his entourage went into the ditch to bring him out so he could get medical attention. Ezego was rushed to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital with a deep gash and a grotesquely puffed-up face.

Incidentally, the Lady of Lourdes Hospital was said to have benefited from Ezego's philanthropy. He was said to have made a N15 million donation to the hospital some years back. Ezego was said to have arrived the hospital in a reasonably stable condition, but could not receive adequate medical attention as a doctor was not available.

By the time the doctor came, Ezego was said to have been bleeding through the mouth. He was said to have suffered internal bleeding and shock. All efforts to put him in a stable condition failed.

Family members suggested a move to a better hospital in Port Harcourt. It is, however, not clear whether the flamboyant millionaire died on his way to Port Harcourt or why attempts were being made to fly him to Lagos from Port Harcourt. Ezego's life was the stuff of which fairy tales are made.

A classic rags-to- riches tale. A secondary school drop-out, Ezego had a turmoil-ridden childhood that climaxed with his father disowning him after he was fingered a member of robbery gang that terrorised Onitsha traders.

Escaping from the trader's extra-judicial justice which caught up with some of his colleagues, young Ezego fled to Umumeni village from where he was driven out by his father. He headed for his mother's village, Umuduru. It was from Umuduru that Ezego moved to Lagos in 1989 to join a mentor.

Not known to have learnt any trade or vocation, Ezego, within a decade, built a questionable but stupendously huge financial empire that launched him into the Brahmin class of the rich and powerful on the Lagos social circuit. Since hitting the big time, every action of Ezego registered high on the social scale. An immodestly opulent life-style that was manifested by a compulsion for car collection.

At a time, the value of his garage was put at N800 million. Ezego bought properties worth N500 million.

The bunker in his Ihiala country home was valued at N500 million. The marble for the walling of his Ihiala's home was imported from Italy. According to legends of the Ezego phenomenon, the late businessman had an insatiable appetite for cars, women and football. Despite his lowly and decrepit background, Ezego moved in the nation's highest social and political circles.

He had a cosy relationship with the top echelons on the nation's police force, notable politicians and several top brass of the army. They were usually guests at his various parties which are said to be capable of

rivalling the biggest and wildest of Hollywood's rave-ups. Being so well-wired to those that matter, Ezego, for long was shielded from the law despite his spendaholic traits that lacked visible evidence of subsistence.

He was alleged to have been involved in a myriad of 419 activities and gun-running. The most visible means of livelihood he had was the Ezego Shopping Complex on the up market Allen Avenue and the Ezego Plaza on Murtala Muhammed International Airport Road in Lagos.

Yet he never stopped spending. The shield that had kept Ezego away from prosecution gave way in 1997 when he was arrested with some civilian and military friends and detained on charges of gun running. He spent close to a year in detention and was sprung last June. The death of Ezego draws the curtain on the life of a social phenomenon whose wealth, and flamboyance albeit questionable, assumed legendary dimensions.

5 JAN 1999

This Nigeria PM News piece sent to 419 Coalition by a Concerned Nigerian:

Canadians Fall For Nigerians' 419 Traps
January 4, 1999

Lagos - Canadians and others from around the world are continuing to be lured by a money-making scheme set up by Nigerian fraud artists, the Nigerian high commission in Ottawa confirmed.

The Globe and Mail reported that a letter, or phone call, purportedly from the Central Bank of Nigeria, the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), or a senior Nigerian government official, looks for a "An overseas partner" who would be willing to bank millions of dollars the senders just happened to have and wanted to move out of Nigeria for 30 percent of the amount transferred.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police estimate the scam artists have sent 10,000 letters to Canadians over the past decade, causing their victims to lose an estimated C\$30 million (US\$19 million), the paper said.

The former Nigerian cabinet ministers and a family member of former dictator Gen. Sani Abacha defraud Nigeria of about US\$2 billion by buying and reselling debt payments on an unfinished Russian-built steel plant, the government said.

[**Go To 419 Coalition Main Page**](#)

[**Go To 2018 News**](#)

[**Go To 2010 News**](#)

[**Go To 1999 News**](#)

[**Go To 2017 News**](#)

[**Go To 2009 News**](#)

[**Go To 1998 News**](#)

[**Go To 2016 News**](#)

[**Go To 2008 News**](#)

[**Go To 1997 News**](#)

[**Go To 2015 News**](#)

[**Go To 2007 News**](#)

[**Go To 1996 News**](#)

[**Go To 2014 News**](#)

[**Go To 2006 News**](#)

[**Go To 2013 News**](#)

[**Go To 2005 News**](#)

[**Go To 2012 News**](#)

[**Go To 2004 News**](#)

[Go To 2011 News](#)

[Go To 2003 News](#)

[Go To 2002 News](#)

[Go To 2001 News](#)

[Go To 2000 News](#)