

## Why the Waste?<sup>1</sup>

Letter to the Editor of *Newswatch*

November 1, 1993

Yohanna Mai Gona

In your excellent special edition, *Years of Waste* (October 4), you asked: “Why are the people bewildered?” Again you asked: “Why is a nation once awash in petro-naira now groaning under the heavy weight of debt?” (p. 21). I ask: “Why do we continue to ask such questions when we all know the answer?”

Example 1 – A recently appointed lecturer in a university only yesterday explained to me why he is living in a hotel for over two months at a cost of some N5,000 per week to the university.<sup>2</sup> Someone told him that if he would pay a mere N2,000 - N3,000 to the appropriate key authority, they would have a suitable house for him in no time. If not, they would continue wasting the people’s money at N5,000 per week. I am told no one at the university is challenging such callous procedures. Of course, I do not believe such an incredible story!

Example 2 – This past week, a daily reported that the reason for petrol shortage at one of our oil depots is that its managers have their hands forced by high military boys. Now surely, that could not be? Perhaps someone should sue that paper for slandering the military leadership.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Editor of *Newswatch*, 1 Nov/1993. I used my Hausa pseudonym “Yohanna MaiGona” (John Boer or Farmer). See *Every Square Inch*, vol. 2, p. 391.

<sup>2</sup> If the amounts used in this letter seem small to today’s reader, remember that in 1993 these were sizable amounts that people would respect.