

Dear Edos.

The quality of contributions in the last week on Edo Nation's forum was wonderful that I wish we continue to have such fruitful and high level discuss in the future.

The last time I commented on Prof Omoruyi's posting was to ask him to stop singing old songs as such songs have not helped our cause over the years. That observation obviously did not endear me to the Prof. That looks like light years away, but Prof. are very intelligent people, quick to forgive and may be forget due to many research topics up their sleeves.

His last postings were very well balanced, stimulating and thought provoking and I join him to ask all those who think of the progress of the Edos to read all the postings for their information and criticism as well. Although the discussions at the London Round Table Conference have been reposted several times by different individuals, the comments on the issues raised have been scanty. Mr Evbayiro's response posed several questions which to me are very important. These questions raised fundamental issues to the success of any organization or movement originating or that will originate in Edo Land.

While deliberating on what should be the Edo agenda which the Prof. is professing, and which organization should move that agenda forward, we should answer the question 'How united are we?

Prof Omoruyi clearly stated that correspondences from two icons in Edo politics did not acknowledge each other and both icons are supporting the same political party in their own ways and at different levels without interfering with each other. His essays carefully demonstrated at what levels both were playing. Whereas Brigade-General Ogbemudia has danced at home on several occasions with continuous forays into the national scene, Chief Enahoro has persistently danced at the national level. Prof Omoruyi went further to say that my most respected Chief will not win an election at Uromi his home town if he should contest with Chief Anenih but 'Edo okpa ma khin' is his brain child. Truthful as it seems there is no doubt that the Chief is a huge force in Nigerian politics. This lack of co-operation amongst our political icons is a dis-service to the Edos in general. It is for this reason the thorny issue of unity amongst the Edos must be

resolved first before embarking on any agenda or else such efforts will end in quicksands.

The name 'Edo okpa ma khin' is right, all embracing, original, traditional, could be unifying but can the Edos unite under this name when some of us are already humming it that 'Edo okpa mahia te khin' As the Edo word 'te' has come into it, it foretells it's ultimate demise in the future and this may be a matter of time. Note the word may be. As very traditional people, we Edos respect our elders and lineage. In Prince Robson Momoh's recent interview, he stressed this brotherliness and common origin of the Edos. He described the problem in the traditional council in Edo State as a disagreement between brothers. If that is the case, our sons and daughters everywhere including the political icons amongst them should as matter of priority address this issue critically and resolve it immediately so that the Edos can move on as one indivisible people. History tells us that all the Chiefs and Enogies in Edo land, some part of Delta state and even Ondo state are of the same blood lineage as our inheritance laws are based on the primogenitorial system as in the UK. If we acknowledge this fact, then the Edos can easily solve this unity problem. Do we see ourselves as brothers and sisters? The answer is likely to be NO. It is for this reason one section of the Edo community will not nurture what the other has started. There are the problems of lack of trust and greed. We do not trust each other as we believe there is always ulterior motive in any conceptualisation by one section or the other in Edo land. The problem of greed derives from poverty as the leader tries to enrich him/herself before executing projects for the general good. To progress and to become relevant in the context of the nations' politics, we have to bury the hatchet and pull the same string. This will be easy to achieve if all of us still believe the concept of our ancestral origin as told in our history lessons.

Edo Unity should surpass all our differences. We should work together as one though of many parts. There should be mutual agreement , harmony or concord which will produce uniformity or constancy in our demand for example from the federal government for our need or meeting the need of our people. According to Aristotle there should be unity of action, as there is unity of place and in our own case in Edo land unity of origin.

Edo unity should symbolize, that in spite of our differences, we understand each other by overcoming prejudices, respect each other by recognising the good in one another, actively care for each other and ultimately work together towards a common goal for the good of our people. If we try to establish a respectful, caring relationship we shall be making giants strides towards the goal of achieving the set objectives of empowering our people economically and in addition realize our shared values and goals.

It is time to forgive and forget errors of yesteryears and move on as that is the only means and way of actualising our desires in the Nigerian nation of today. Digging too deep into the past to understand the present and plan for the future sometimes can be counterproductive and therefore should be avoided.

We may not accept it, ENA is a giant of a forum through which we can actualize our unity. It has succeeded in the Americas and I am sure if we globalize the concept it will succeed ultimately everywhere. The only problem today is the leaders are sacred of dragging ENA into politics hence we have not heard from the President or Secretary in spite of prodding from members of this forum this last week. Their action is understandable but for any organization to succeed in leading a people like the Edos, it must not be partisan i.e. It must not be seen as being part of a political party or organization. The hierarchy should show probity and be bold enough to talk without fear or favour, for or against any individual or group trying to slow down the progress of all in Edo land. The leaders should be those who have been true it all and have demonstrably served our people in various capacities in the past. During the creation of the Mid West Region Oba Akenzua the 11 of Blessed memory played that role. It is for this reason some think Omo n' Oba Erediauwa should play that role like his father did. Before accenting to such call we should remember the events and actions of the penultimate government in Edo land vis a vis our traditional ruler. It is for this reason and the fact that times and attitude have changed that some of us should not clamour for such a role for the custodian of our culture. In view of this let him who the cap fits take up the mantle of leadership. Let there be a new born without blemish or adverse history under whose leadership the Edos, these various organizations in Diaspora and those in Nigeria will unite for a common purpose of creating an Edo land that will be a paradise on earth through

guiding and assisting the government of the day in Edo land. It will not be enough to unite and sit on the fence, there must be total commitment to the Edo cause by all.

I shall be back.

Stephen Ogbonmwan.

If we are only for ourselves, what are lives for? Make a difference, make the world a better place.