Commentary

Rumor has it that when they were presented with the estimate for the conference facilities the Atlanta Chapter President snapped "frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn." From that ominous moment caution, as we know it, was gone with the wind. That was how we ended up with acres of prime Ramada real estate for a play ground.

But they weren't playing. They took southern hospitality to a Texas proportion - the food, drinks, services. Being in the Bible belt you get the impression that Christ himself was behind the buffet counter doubling everything.

The guests also brought a good collective appetite, and their check books too. They came from Washington, Washington, DC, New York, Maryland, Minnesota, Texas, California, Virginia, Florida, Alabama, Illinois and, of course, Georgia. The new members especially exhibited a lot of needed enthusiasm which should be capitalized on.

To match the Atlanta spirit, the delegation reports were timely and exciting. In fact, on behalf of all the members, I pray and hope that all the APU wishes will come through. No "pipe dream" here. No! Not if the IAD has anything to do with it. For the first time, the IAD is resolved to make a sizeable investment in our collective affairs. Without declaring so, it even sounds more and more like a branch of APU.

We are making progress both here and at home. We have gone through growing pains. Like any other organization we have dealt with stages of formation, storming, norming, and now, after 14 years, we have to be ready for the performance stage. The most critical factor in all these stages may be leadership and we have been so lucky with it that we may sometimes take it for granted.

It is true we don't have lawyers and doctors with 6 figure incomes like other towns. It is also true that there are not that many of us here in the USA. It is even more true that of those here in the USA only a few actively participate in the IAD. But, so what? We are still Agulu. We have zeal, we have survivability, we have gonads, we are kind and smart people. In the words of the famous Ozoemena Nsugbe "Agulu adihi Igbo ata aja". We are the ones that feed our nation through the bakery and supermarket businesses we dominate. We even have numbers (at home). But we need UNITY. More than money, we need hearts and minds. With that we can push or pull in the same direction with a unified force and achieve common goals.

To that effect, our public discuss should not be limited to once in 12 months. Membership in the organization should not be limited to dues and conference attendance. No one should be a "laid back, hands off" member because this limits discussion to knee jerk criticism and witty commentary. Mental capital is needed in addition to the scarce money. Please spend some time and thought to read and reply the emails, come up with new ideas, make phone calls, join a branch chapter, join a committee. PARTICIPATE!

The executive is committed to enhancing communication that's why it spends money running the website (www.agulu.org). Some of the articles there are over a year old and someone has to contribute material to update the site and keep it worthy. Please write an article about your village, age grade, masquerade troupe, deity, etc. Help make it "our" site instead of "the" site.

We all agree that Agulu must make up for lost time. We will also agree that no single individual is named Agulu. Agulu is us! So, while admitting that many of us have never bought a tuber of yam at the bazaar in the name of fundraising, we remain very hopeful because:

"No winter lasts forever,
No spring skips it's turn,
April is a promise that May is bound to keep"
- Hal Borland

That PROMISE is you and me! PEACE be with you.

See you in Daytona. Chike Aniukwu