At critical times when nations found themselves at crossroads, it has almost always been a General that stepped forward to check a certain slide into anarchy. Nigeria is at a crossroads and gradually being run aground by an inept and clueless government at the centre. But, all hope is not lost because one incorruptible General is full of assurances to Nigerians that, with the right leadership, things can get better.

General Muhammadu Buhari, GMB to his admirers, is more than the ordinary Nigerian as he prefers to describe himself. Respected and eulogised by many just as he is falsely accused and suspected, the former Nigerian head of state represents the face of the new leadership the country is desirous of. He has been sincere enough to admit that, under his presidency, things won’t change within the first year but four years should be enough to get the country working again. In a country where ill prepared people corner political power and are only happy at the executiveness of office even when they are clearly overwhelmed by its trappings, General Buhari represents a race horse in the midst of cart horses; an oasis in an inhospitable desert.

Behind his permanent scowl is a man with an unquenchable love for country: a patriot, a wonderful democrat, a committed teacher and a dedicated student with eyes for details. At a point, you begin to wonder what such an incorruptible Nigerian is doing in the shark-infested water of politics. But GMB is steeled by his belief that the emergence of transformational leadership will remain a mirage if rare-breeds quit the stage for evil people. This is where he differed with his former deputy and another rare-breed, the late General Abdulbaaqi Babatunde Idaigbon. Few seconds in the General’s company reveals the real GMB: a man of honour and full of humour! He does not only bring down the roof; GMB joins in the ensuing general laughter!

At each point in his meritorious career, GMB resisted the urge to steal. This is an unusual trait in public life in Nigeria. As a military governor, petroleum minister as well as chairman of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, a General Officer Commanding, then Head of State and Commander in Chief and later as chairman of the Petroleum Trust Fund, GMB could have been the richest retired general today. He had every opportunity to loot the treasury and amass enough wealth to take care of his needs but never did. He never would, if he had to live his exemplary life all over again!

As with all standard bearers, GMB’s main crime is not refusing to steal when he had all the chances in the world to loot the treasury! No! After all there are many other Nigerians like him in that regard. His crime, and for which many have vowed to fight him for life, is that he would not even allow others to steal! No unrepentant thief would wish a man who will expose and sanction them around! When GMB pledges to stop treasury-looters from running the nation aground, all he is saying is that he will plug all holes deliberately bored in the system through which thieves got away with their loot. All he asks for and all he believes Nigerians deserve is a dedicated, committed and exemplary leadership which he is prepared to provide. Nigerians can no longer afford to beat about the bush by hoping a certified failed leadership can redeem itself. Nigerians cannot afford to wait for the opportunity to describe General Buhari as another best president Nigerians did not get!

It is just as well that GMB, despite initial misgivings from certain quarters, did not give up on his desire to serve his fatherland. At 72, the General is in good shape, focused and unfazed by the boast of treasury-looters who insist they will rule for ever. If they cared to check, they would have discovered that Africa’s political highway is littered with carcasses of leaders who told opposition politicians to go stew in their own juice. In Ivory Coast, Alassane Ouattara upstaged Laurent Gbagbo, the man who thought he had the whole country in his pockets and who shifted elections at his whim. Edgar Lungu and his predecessor, Michael Sata, once trod that frustrating and humiliating albeit weather-beaten path in Zambia. Mamadou Yusufu was once told by some God- rivalling men in Niger Republic that he would only rule in his next life! In Senegal, Macky Sall easily drubbed Abdoulaye Wade even after he was told to forget the presidency!

Nigeria’s situation, pathetic as it is, will rise to that level. On March 28, a fumbling and bungling government, more out of balance of fear, will be forced to acknowledge that it has been roundly
drubbed by a committed opposition! For Nigerians, it will be the end of a long, bad dream...and the beginning of a glorious era!

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(Article-Summary:
Nigerians are already looking beyond the March 28 presidential election, which the opposition All Peoples' Congress and its presidential candidate General Muhammadu Buhari are expected to win.

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