

POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA ASSEMBLIES: A CASE STUDY OF CRISIS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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ABSTRACT: This research work is aimed at determining the nature, scope and reasons for increase in the frequency and the scale of political violence in Nigeria. It will adopt the use of past records of political violence in Nigeria using journals, newspapers, textbooks on political science and some internet materials on the case study. The research work therefore identifies poverty, a culture of impunity, weak penalties, a lack of effective governance, and small arms proliferation, amongst others as reasons for political thuggery in Nigeria. Furthermore, the influence of godfatherism in Nigeria politics further entrenched the culture of violence within the political space. Also, political violence is an expression of systemic and leadership failure in Nigeria, it shows weakness of the apparatus of the state particularly the police, state security service and national intelligence system. The research work also looks at the effects of instability and violence in Nigeria society, it's recommended and proffers a number of solutions ranging from sustainable development, security sector and electoral reforms, and anti – corruption measures.

KEYWORDS: violence, war, godfatherism, thuggery, assemblies, crisis, elections, sustainable development.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Violence is a common means used by people and governments around the world to achieve political goals. Many groups and individuals believe that their political systems will never respond to their political demands without applying violence. As a result they believe that violence is not only justified but also necessary in order to achieve their political objectives. By the same token, many governments around the world believe they need to use violence in order to intimidate their populace into acquiescence. At other times, governments use force in order to defend their country from outside invasion or other threats of force. Political violence is used by citizens, groups, or governments in different contexts:

- Animal right violence and domestic terrorism – by the Americans for medical progress, who oppose the destructive actions of some animal rights activists.
- No compromise animal liberation front and more exhort animal rights activists to use any means possible to achieve their political goals.

Another context of political violence occurs when the military or some other organized group seize control of the government in their country. Coups d'état happen frequently in some countries, and they may involve much bloodshed but sometimes occur without serious injuries or loss of life. Political violence is a common phenomenon in Nigeria. It is a deliberate use of force to achieve specific political objectives. Obviously, political violence is encouraged by internal and external contradictions in the nation's political system. A range of political crisis is triggered off by political differences of the ruling elite.

The fact that politics deal with power acquisition and allocation of resources, the instinct and urge for political violence become inescapable reality in social engineering; although, violence in Nigerian politics sometimes seem to possess liberating and redemptive value; corruption, poverty, and high rate of illiteracy promote the culture of political violence in Nigeria.

The influence of godfatherism in Nigerian politics further entrenched the culture of violence within the political space. Of course, political violence is an expression of systemic and leadership failure in Nigeria. It shows weaknesses of the apparatus of the state particularly the police, state security service and the national intelligence system. The persistence of political crisis symphonizes ugly trends in the political development of the nation. Consequently, political violence could arise from wide spread frustration in the polity. In some instances, violence erupts in politics as a manifestation of high joblessness of people particularly the youths. Also, money politics has corrosive effects on the political system. Sadly, electoral violence is a major threat to the democratic ethos in Nigeria. Indeed, poor democratic ethos of those seeking public offices for self enrichment encourages electoral violence.

The use of weapons, arms and ammunition are increasingly associated with electoral violence. At every stage of the electoral process, politicians employ the services of touts to intimidate the opponents and the opposing parties. The quality of their weapons changes with time and sooner than later these thugs become the politicians' special squad or private army. The experience reveals that political violence could be perpetrated to disrupt the selection of candidate for an election. And, violence could be committed in the course of campaign, political rallies and during elections. Physical assault, molestation of opponents and other forms of harassments are common features of the electoral violence in Nigeria.

The scale, trend and patterns of violence vary across societies and periods. The prevalence of political violence both locally and internationally has manifested a lot of devastation in human civilization. The acts of violence have in no small measure debilitated advancement in developing countries. Even in the most advanced countries, the phenomenon of violence has continued to be a reoccurring saga and thus possesses a need for collaborative efforts in combating its dangers. Political violence has consequently affected the behavioural patterns of various political groups and social adherents. The consequences of violence therefore have continually drawn the attention of various governments, voluntary agencies, religious organizations and the academia towards controlling the spectre of its persistence.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature review for this study will be done under the following subheading: (a) overview of the concept of violence in Nigeria, (b) nature and sources of violence in human beings, (c) Features of wars and violence in Nigeria, (d) morality and scales of violence in Nigeria.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

Politics and violence are like Siamese twins in Nigeria. Political activity has always featured a notable degree of violence, in both the colonial and post colonial phases of the country's chequered existence. According to [2] comment on the place of violence in the colonial social order is apt: the colonial strategy was despotic. Inevitably, Nigeria was administered with the most unspeakable cruelties, and with unbounded forces of annihilation which rendered mass murder an administrative technique of the colonial regime. The obvious outcome was that pre-colonial societies were smashed into pieces through raw violence defined in colonial literature as 'punitive expedition', 'patrols' or 'pacification'.

The seeming kinship between political activity and violence has not changed significantly since independence. A retrospective survey of the First Republic (1960 - 1966), for example would show how the social fabric gradually unraveled until the fateful military intervention of 15th January 1966. Again, the threat of possible collapse into complete anarchy triggered the putsch of 31st December 1983, which affectively interred the second republic. Contemporary political violence in Nigeria is different in two ways from what happened in the past and this deserves close scrutiny. The bomb explosions, all apparently directed at military targets, add a new and worrying dimension. This study is of the view that the current wave of political violence springs from political disaffection occasioned by the sudden termination of the democratic transition process, when it was virtually at the point crystallization.

Political violence has taken place throughout the whole country. In the south –western states for example, the coalition received reports of politically motivated attacks, killings, destruction of property, violent clashes between rival political parties, and threats and intimidation of political candidates and supporters. There are several reports of violence perpetrated by gangs hired by different politicians. There have been numerous studies dealing with violence of various dimensions in Nigeria, before and after independence. But none of these studies had an in – depth study of ethnics in the area of violence. This study is therefore intended to do a more analysis of violence in Nigeria. But as we know, every human action takes place

in a socio – historical context and so we cannot completely avoid the social and historical aspects of violence. However, even when this is done, it is only to provide necessary background for the study of ethnicity aspect of violence in Nigeria. So we will definitely look at the other dimensions, which previous scholars have examined, but our main emphasis will be on the ethical violence in Nigeria.

To further achieve the objectives of our literature review, we shall examine contributions made by scholars on the problem of violence in human societies. We shall pay particular attention to the kind of violence identified in Nigeria and how other writers have assessed the various acts of violence perpetrated in Nigeria morally. This will help us identify the existing gaps in the study of violence and be able to focus adequately on the efforts of filling such gaps.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF VIOLENCE IN HUMAN BEINGS

There are two schools of thought to the concept of the nature and sources of violence in human beings; they are the innate and the external sources. According to Field as quoted by [2] who sees innate violence in human beings in a psychological points of view and stresses that “ while violence is most obvious in the form of direct aggression, it can also be manifested through verbal aggression of psychological intimidation reinforced by the threat of more direct action. Again, he opined that aggression is as behaviour intended to hurt someone. This is in line with Sieber’s in [21] view that a lot of theorist associated in explaining the sources of violent actions. Cox also expressed his view on violence and summated that aggression is an in born drive similar to sex or hunger which is unavoidable since it is innate. In supporting the action of violence by individual, frustration – aggression hypothesis theorist, Cox further said that aggression as always a consequence of frustration [20].

In consonance to Cox ideas, Stuabs in [21] has also stated that a variety of motives result from threat, attack, the perception of danger and interference with the fulfillment of goals. Self protective personal goals can become so intense that they develop imperative, forceful quality of needs. Aggression is a likely response.

Another school of thought was the psychoanalytic theorists who were of the opinion that violence is a necessity. The key idea to the necessity of violence is repression. Also, Sigmund Freud opined that repression is the pillar on which the whole edifice of psychoanalysis rests. He further enthused that psychoanalytic theory deals with the conflict resulting from the clash between the “pleasure principle” and the “reality principle” meaning that, either by nature or by social organization, man is a neurotic animal. He also stated that no adult is force from conflict and repression. Because of this clash, violence is inextricable rooted into man’s nature.

FEATURES OF WARS AND VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

There are different kinds of violence perpetrated in Nigeria, but we shall consider a few among them which will include politically bred violence religious violence ethno- religious violence, ethnic violence and socio-economic violence.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA FROM 1960 – 1979

Nigeria got its independence in 1960. At the peak of this independence, was the regional and tribal bigotry that has characterized the already emergent volatile political terrain. These were politically bred violent activities among Nigerians, which we shall consider. At the time of Nigeria’s independence, the country was first composed of three regions; northern region, eastern region and western region. The fourth, which was the mid-west, was created in 1963. In each of the regions, one party was dominant. The northern people congress (NPC) controlled the government of the north, the National council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) controlled the government of eastern region and subsequently with the mid west after its creation. In the western region the Action Group (AG) was in control. These parties founded their support and influence on regional basis [2].

In 1962, a crisis within the ruling Action Group in Western Nigeria split the party. The leader of the party, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, had vacated his position as regional premier before the Federal elections preceding independence and opted to contest for a seat in the Federal House of Representative. His deputy, Chief Samuel I. Akintola, succeeded him as the premier of western region. The crisis within the party affected the position of the government he controlled in western Nigeria, as the governor there appointed a new premier, Alhaji D.S Adegbenro, who appeared to him to enjoy the confidence of the majority of the members of the House of Assembly.

Akintola who then lost his position as premier, did not accept his removal, and at the ensuing meeting of the House of Assembly, there was confusion and members fought freely among themselves, to the extent that the police were forced to

use teargas to disperse them. The Federal government upon the event in the assembly declared a state of emergency in the whole region and appointed Dr. Moses Majekodunmi as the administrator of the region with full powers. Subsequently, Chief Obafemi Awolowo and some of his top party aides were arrested detained and charge with plotting to overthrow the federal government. They were sentence to imprisonment on charges of treasonable felony [2].

In 1962, Nigeria had conducted a new census. The results were controversial. The eastern region refused to accept them, and was later cancelled. The following year, a new census was organized and the results were unacceptable to the east. The census issue and the crisis, which had rent the Action Group apparently, brought about a realignment of parties. The failure of the census had embittered many, and as the first federal elections since independence were to take place in 1964, the alliance geared themselves to win elections by whatever means. There was an air of despondency and disillusionment, regionalism, tribalism and parochialism of the political leaders, which had made the achievement of true unity questionable. While this was going on, the Tiv in the middle belt revolted against the oppressive government of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) which ruled them as part of Northern Nigeria. They took up arms and refused pay their taxes. Before the independence, the Tiv, Idoma, and their neighbours had demanded a separate state to be known as middle belt state. In the same year, the army was used to quell them and the rebellion dragged on for some time [2]. However, the federal election of 1965 was engulfed in many corrupt practices. The elections were shamelessly rigged and the aftermath was a breakdown of law and order. Members from opposing parties and opinions embarked on a plan of arson, murder, and general defiance of law. The state of lawlessness continued up to 1966.

On the 15th of January 1966, a group of young army officers overthrew the first republic. It seemed clear that it was intended as a radical and nationalist protest against tribalism and corruption of the politician. Their speeches stated thus: our enemies are the political profiteers, swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes and demand 10%, those that seek to keep the country permanently divided so that they can remain in office as ministers and VIP's of waste, the tribalists, the nepotists. In the course of the coup, the plotters kidnapped and killed Tafawa Balewa, the prime minister, and the premiers of northern and western regions. In ensuring the breakdown of governmental authority, the commanding officer of Nigeria Army, General Aguiyi Ironsi, assumed power. One of the main consequences of the January 1966 coup was an inflammation of Nigeria's deep – seated tribalism. The country is divided into three powerful competing groups; the Hausa and Fulani of Northern Nigeria, who are principally Muslims and comprise the largest segment of Nigeria, the Igbo who controlled Eastern Nigeria; and the Yoruba of the western region. The Northerners who believe that Igbo officers were responsible for the January coup in which the prime minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, a northerner was killed, triggered a revolt against the national military government in July 1966. In that uprising, General Ironsi was killed and the government of Nigeria put into the hands of Col. Yakubu Gowon, a northern Christian in September 1966. Northern resentment against the Igbo's flared sharply resulting in the deaths of many Igbo's and their exodus to eastern region. Peaceful demonstration of students concerned about their future and civil servants, escalated into urban mob violence as Igbo's were attacked in Sokoto, Kano, Katsina, Bauchi, and Zaria.

The east, where important petroleum production had begun, grouped itself behind Lt. Col. C.O Ojukwu and sought to withdraw from the federation and establish him a separate country known as Biafra. This marked the beginning of the Nigerian Civil war, which nearly shattered the prospect of a central government in Nigeria. Obasanjo clearly described the situation where he said: The war itself was the culmination of an uneasy peace and stability that had plagued Nigeria from independence. That uneasy peace and stability had their genesis in the geography, history and demography of Nigeria. But the immediate cause of the civil war itself may be identified as the coup and counter- coup of 1966, which altered the political equation and destroyed the fragile trust existing among the major ethnic groups. On the 10th of January, 1970 Ojukwu the Biafra rebel leader announced that he was about to leave Biafra, in order to arranged a negotiated peace. He said that he would be away for a short time, but it was only after twelve years in the exile in Ivory Coast that he was allowed to return to Nigeria. By 12th January, 1970, Col. Philip Effiong, to whom Ojukwu had handed over the care of remaining bits of rebel territory, ordered his men to lay down their arms. At the same time, he broadcast his unconditional surrender to General Yakubu Gowon and appealed to him to halt the federal advance in the name of humanity. So by 15th January, 1970 General Gowon gave a victory message to the nation which finally ended the secession [12pp 134-136]. By this, General Yakubu Gowon consolidated his regime by embarking on reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. In 1975, when Gowon was attending a meeting of the organization of African Unity (OAU), he was overthrown in a peaceful coup by General Murtala Ramat Muhammed, who was subsequently assassinated by Col. B.S Dimka in a foiled coup on 13th Feb, 1976. General Olusegun Obasanjo succeeded General Murtala Muhammed and then led the country into civilian rule in 1979. The subsequent years that followed also saw the emergence of politically – bred violence, especially with the beginning of the civilian regime from 1979 – 1983 and the years that followed. We may not go into the details of those violent activities because they were not as serious as was witnessed in the years that preceded the civil war.

RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

[10] has stress that the most classic example of conflict between the followers of prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and of Jesus Christ is in Nigeria. Violent clashes connected ostensibly or actually with religion are not unknown in Nigeria. A series of violent demonstrations, riots, and civil uprising have forcefully made many Nigerians and the governments come face to face with the harsh reality that religion is being systematically manipulated by some forces, for specific purposes which are clearly opposed to the unity of the people of this country [5] from 1980, especially in northern Nigeria, most incidents of collective violence assumed a religious character. This could be seen in the intra and inter – religious violence.

The first intra religious violence was the Maitatsine uprising in Kano city from 18th – 29th December, 1980 which led, according to official figures, to the killing of four thousand on hundred and seventy – seven civilians. Even if the actual; figures of those killed were not higher, this amounts to a massive slaughter of human beings by whatever standards. This was subsequently followed by the Bulunkutu uprising in Maiduguri from 26th -30th October, 1982 which has led to the killing of over four hundred persons, according to newspaper reports. Another riot by Maitatsine adherents is that of Rigasa in Kaduna state on Friday 29th -31st October, 1982, which led to the killing of over forty persons, according to official reports (Nigerian Standard 11th-12th Nov, 1982 pp 13). The Maitatsine disturbance also erupted at Gombe, though it was alleged that it was the Muslim youths under the guise of Maitatsine. Over one hundred lives, including policemen, were killed. This took place from 23rd April to 28th April 1985. Though it cannot be ascertained what actually was the cause of these disturbances, but it was certain that the Maitatsine adherents in Kano condemned some of the main teachings of Islam as lay down by the Quran and Sunnah. The Maitatsine disturbances also occurred in Jimeta – Yola on 15th Feb. – 2nd March 1984.

Other form of violence in Nigeria are intra – religious violence, inter – religious violence, ethno – religious violence, ethnic violence in Nigeria, intra ethnic violence, socio – economic violence and judicial violence etc.

MORALITY AND VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

The concept of morality deals with prescriptions of what is good or bad. It talks about rules guiding good and bad behaviour.

[12], further opined that morality considers the moral nature of obligations and analyses or the value and good conscience of the individual within the society. Ethnic on the other hand is a branch of philosophy which studies moral principles, and thus it is seen as a discipline like any other subject (geography, economics, and psychology). If ethnics are therefore seen as a branch of philosophy, it must therefore use philosophical inquiry to determine the morality of an action by asking questions and using reflective evaluation. Ethnics further deals with arguing, reasoning, evaluating and seeking position for the justification of any action in a particular environment. It presents fact by finding their meanings order to determine the rightness and goodness of an action.

Ethnics therefore raises questions in order to bring ground for philosophical interpretation of issues, phenomena and action that can be adjudged good or bad, right or wrong. Hastings has further stressed that ethnics gives a training which can enable us to see effects in our actions and other people’s conduct, so that we can set things in their right conduct and make profitable suggestions for future occurrence. Is should be noted at this juncture that, ethnics goes beyond the level of religious convictions asking questions and providing reasons for evaluation. When we speak of “ethics of violence in Nigeria”, what do we actually mean? Nigeria is a pluralistic society in religious, ethnic and socio – economic contexts. So the people that make up these pluralities have their thought – patterns, beliefs, convictions, and orientation in Nigeria towards violence. So ethics of violence in Nigeria consider the reasons and arguments of the people that make up this plurality use in justifying and defending the course of their violent actions in Nigeria. Added to above is the justification of violent actions by the state apparatus; the police, army and the security agents in the name maintaining law and order.

Generally, the scale and preponderance of violence in Nigeria ranges from the state – sponsored violence to civil disobedience or riots. Worst of it all is the intra – and inter – religious as well as ethnic clashes that have claimed the lives of innocent citizens of Nigeria. For the intra-religious crisis, especially the Maitatsine, their upsurge was said to be for moral purification and cleansing of the religious of Islam.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A lot of theories have been advanced by some scholars as the sources of violence which can be seen from external or environmental factors. But we shall consider a few among these theories.

The cultural theorists, propagated by [11] see violence as a symptom of an individual or society under extreme stress. So whether it is a slum boy cornered against a wall or a nation threatened economically, both lash out in violence. In the political theory, Rousseau is of the opinion that “man was born free, but is everywhere in chains”. The noble savage was the primitive man unrepressed by culture, education or social conditioning. When this freedom is replaced by repression or restriction, violence has a liberating value. This theory has been developed to justify violence not only as a pragmatically effective weapon, but also as morally valuable. In supporting the above assertion, Sorrel states that

“Violence destruction of decadent society was not just politically revolutionary, but as an expression of the life – force, morally purifying. It is to violence that socialism owes its moral values through which it brings salvation to the modern world”.

Fanon, in analyzing settler – native relationship described violence as catharsis – relief of strong suppressed emotions through drama or any artistic device as a way of providing relief from anger, suffering, frustration, depression and so on. He sees colonialism as inextricably bound up with violence that takes shape in three stages.

The first stage is oppression, when foreign invasions, military or economic enter and oppress the people in any country. The second stage is repression, with the colonists too powerful to be overthrown; the natives are forced to turn their natural aggression against themselves. There results a period of chronic tribulation, magic and fratricidal murders and fighting. The natives are unable to fight back against the colonist who takes their aggression to themselves. The third stage is revolution. In this stage of revolution, violence is not only indispensable as a pragmatic tool to overthrow the colonial government, but such violence is cathartic and re- humanizing. The colonized man finds freedom in and through violence. In this regards, violence is seen as a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inactions. It makes him fearless and restores his self – respect. Fanon dreams of the worthless, the prostitutes, and the hopeless dregs of humanity being re – awakened to rediscover them through violence, taking their place to march proudly in a great procession of liberated nations and men.

Source of violence in evolutionary theory according to Morris is based on Charles Darwin’s concept of natural selection which appears to justify the value of survival by means of violence, for life was viewed as a continuous free fight. Morris further interpreted human violence in the light of its animal origins, observing that whereas animals only want defeat or domination, man goes on to murder. He gave example on the development of armed conflict with unarmed conflict, where there was no danger of violence, but aggression was conventionalized, channeled into contests, and sports such as judo, athletics, wrestling and boxing. But armed conflict has created the horror of violence which is seen in the extension of hands where clubs, spears, guns, bombs and missiles were used each with greater potentials of destructive force.

The social learning theorists are of the opinion that aggression as a source of violence is learned response and not an inbuilt instinct. Though they acknowledge the presence of psychological mechanisms for violence and rage, they totally dismiss the instinct notion of aggression. They felt that people behave aggressively because they have learned to do so and not because of biological instinct or frustration. They argued that many studies have shown that people’s behaviour change after watching displays of acts of aggression and hostility.

Jensen and others have corroborated the Social learning views and opined that learned experience is an important determinant of aggressive behaviour. Children learn that aggression can enable them to control resources such as toys and parental attention. Children also get into aggression by observing others behave aggressively. The violent behaviour of some teenage gangs provides its younger members with aggressive role models. Children whose parents discipline with physical force tend to use physical aggression when interacting with others. The influence of the mass media, especially television, on promoting aggressive behaviour is not yet well understood but a growing body of research evidence indicates that watching violent entertainment is linked to subsequent aggression. The above shows that there are different views concerning the origins and sources of violence in human beings. Despite the fact that there are other sources of violence that are inherent as a result of many factors within one’s environment, some of the innate sources as discussed above, are contributory to the individual’s violent actions in the society.

DISCUSSION

VIOLENCE IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SERVICE COMMISSION

The National Assembly is Nigeria’s bicameral legislature and the highest elective law – making body of the country. It consists of the 109-member senate and the 360 – member House of Representatives. The term of the National Assembly is 4-years from the date of its first sitting after the general elections. The current 7th National Assembly was inaugurated in 6th June 2011.

The National Assembly Service Commission established year 2000 has continued to consolidate and strengthen the institutional framework and operational standards for the National Assembly Service. In its pursuit for excellence, the commission believes that all efforts to boost staff moral and professional competence should be supported and rewarded. This objective would be achieved with the combined efforts of the commission and the entire staff of the National Assembly Commission.

The commission is the highest policy making body and its decisions are implemented by the management. The chairman and members of the commission are on full time basis. As a result, the commission holds statutory meetings weekly. In addition to this, the commission operates the committee system. There are six committees namely: establishment committee, senior staff committee, junior staff committee, documentation, research and records committee, tender board, and finance and general purpose committee. Each committee is chaired by one of the commissioners while a director serves as the secretary with the exception of finance and general purpose committee where the chairman to the commission presides and the secretary to the commission serves as the secretary.

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

The National Assembly Service Commission has various Departments through which it carries out its obligations namely: Department of appointments, promotions, Discipline and Appeals, Departments of Administration and Supplies, department of finance and accounts, department of planning, research and statistics.

The pervasive role of violence in Nigeria politics has a devastating human rights impact on ordinary Nigerians. As discussed above, thousands of Nigerians have been deprived of their very right to life or have been subjected to physical assaults because of the violent nature of political competition in Nigeria. But casualty estimates, considered alone, actually understate the scale of the human rights impact of political violence in Nigeria. Violence also discourages and prevents political participation and plays a central role in denying ordinary Nigerians a say in choosing their "elected" leaders.

CONCLUSION

The preceding discussions have shown that violence is an ill wind of social phenomenon, which does no one any good. In its aftermaths both its perpetrators and victims are loser. Also, that violence is not native to man but rather a consequence of his fallen nature, his frequent transgressions against the grains of his nature. It is his handiwork, for this reason, solution to that self inflicted problem must come from him. God's grace shall continue to shelter him but he (man) must work out his own salvation as regards violence.

The antidote to violence in any society is justice. Nigerians should allow justice to rule. In the rule of justice with its assistants – law, fairness, equity, and equality, no one lives in fear of another, no one bears ill – will against another, everyone acts as his brother's keeper, everyone thinks good of another and everyone's joys or pains become the joys or pains of all. In such a situation development moves in a light speed and Nigeria will be a place to live for Nigerians to develop their individual and collective endowments to the fullest extent possible and thus attain both self and collective fulfillment. This may look like a dream. But, if it is a dream, it is one bound to come true if selfishness is replaced with altruism, ignorance with knowledge, greed with contentment, injustice with justice, a do – or – die politics with law governed politics, poverty with wealth and every bad thought with good thought and bad action with good action.

An attempt to suggest the way out of Nigeria's myriad of problem is a Herculean task. It is an attempt undertaken solely in obedience to Sir Winston Churchill's diction: "The difficulty can be overcome immediately; the impossible takes a little longer", [19 pp 32] so are Nigerian problems, they are difficult but resolvable; if Nigerians especially their leaders face the task with sincerity of purpose and dedication they call for. First, efforts should start from the source of all that is ugly, immoral, despicable, repressible, soul-sapping, wrong, bad, revolting, wicked, unjust, dehumanizing, depressing, regrettable, etc, in Nigeria which is ignorance. Ignorance is the evil of all evils – the mother and sustainer of all wrongs. Problem of ignorance is hard to solve because the problem solver doubles as the problem creator and hence the problem to be solved. And it is known as a fact that man is hardly a good judge in a matter of his interest is involved. But in this case he has no other choice than to learn to be a good judge on which ever matter that comes his way whether his personal interest is involved or not. Experience has shown that ignorance is darkness and the only thing that can disperse darkness is light, which is also called knowledge. Knowledge is a confirmed antidote to ignorance, for that, should be pursued with religious zeal. The means through which knowledge is acquired is education. Education is a process of training of training the young as well as the old members of society to acquire knowledge and skills. Knowledge of the world they live in, knowledge of themselves, their role in the world, the real meaning, purpose and essence of life. Skills with which to translate what they know into practice for the good of all. No wonder the great philosopher Plato says: "those who are rightly educated generally become

good men” [18 pp 30] and good women too. In another forum Plato hammers that: “No man should bring children into the world, which is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nurture and education [18 pp 6].

So, the purpose of education is to make good men and women out of members of the society; hence moral instructions are necessity. Morally, educated people are assets to the society, propellers of development. This is because they know that the resources of the world are gifts to be share by all, for that reason they remain sensitive to their needs, to others’ needs and to the world’s needs and work for the realization of all. Only morally educated person is sensitive in these ways. That is why [17 pp 67] says: “An educated person is one who is morally good and properly adapted to his society and who contributes meaningfully to the growth and development of the society”. Politics should be ridden of a do –or die syndrome. And lastly morality should be enthroned in all facets of Nigeria’s life and strictly observed by leaders and the led, the old and the young and the high and the low in the society.

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