

Politics, Administration and National Security

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effect of politics on administration and its impact on national security in Nigeria. The objective of the study was to among other things to investigate the impact of politics on the national security in Nigeria as well as its implications and strategy to curb it. The paper discusses varying views on the concept of politics and national security. Insecurity started in Nigeria as a result of agitation from different regions to get the attention of the Government and the international communities concerning their plight. The methodology involved primary and secondary sources. The paper had the sprinklings of all security challenges in all parts of Nigeria. The paper identified ethnic politics, religious politics, etc as some of the factors that constitute insecurity in Nigeria. The paper also brought to fore the salient point that insecurity in Nigeria has brought with it some consequences as Armed robbery, kidnapping, Boko-Haram insurgency, and political assassinations. The paper also proffered solutions. One of which is, there is a strong desire for a SOVEREIGN NATIONAL CONFERENCE so that all ethnic nationalities can make their stand known.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a populous Black African nation, blessed with an intimidating population of over 150 million people, with wide geographical spread across thirty-six (36) states and a federal capital territory (Akhemonkhan et al., 2012). Nigeria is part of the NEKS countries; an acronym for Nigeria, Egypt, Kenya and South Africa, described by analysts as nations with huge untapped markets for foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa (Alkali, 2008). At independence and several years after, the country was perceived as a relatively secured nation in the West African sub-region because of its steady economic growth and leadership role in the Economic Community of African States (ECOWAS). However, the sudden discovery of crude oil truncated the nation's steady drive towards sustainable economic development (SED), as the focus of Federal government shifted from commercial agriculture to crude oil exploration and exploitation (Dode, 2011). According to Watts (2009,) a total of \$700 billion oil revenues had been accumulated by the Nigerian government since independence. Unfortunately, the massive oil revenues have added little to the living standard of Nigerians. He asserted that 85 per cent of oil revenues earned overtime is shared among the influential political elites, who constitute only one per cent of the population, with the possibility that 40% or more of the national wealth accumulated overtime might have been stolen by the ruling elites, technocrats and policy bureaucrats..

The picture of mismanagement of the nation's oil wealth as painted above, justifies the

assertion that Nigeria is experiencing economic growth, but no sustainable economic development. While the ruling elites, technocrats and their cronies were busy stealing, 3 Journal of Studies in Social Sciences embezzling and sharing the nation's oil wealth, the agelong peace and security that the nation enjoyed started waning because of threats to national security orchestrated by militant groups with conflicting socio-economic and political agenda. The militant groups whose antics and activities portend serious danger to national security in Nigeria are: Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Bakassi Boys, O'odua People's Congress (OPC), Student Cults and Boko Haram sect (Rotimi, 2005; The Economist, 2008; Akhemonkhan et. al, 2012). The emergence of militancy in Nigeria fueled ethno-religious crises in Jos, vandalism of oil installations in the South-South, massive robbery in South-West, kidnapping in the South-East and heinous killing/bombing of innocent Nigerians in Northern Nigeria (Daily IndependentOnline, 2010). Other manifestations of threat to national security include drug trafficking, human trafficking, human sacrifice, ritual killing, sectarian violence, political violence, communal strife, natural disasters and pervasive acts of normlessness (Darmer, 2004). Evidence that lends credence to the fact that security situation is nose-diving in Nigeria can be found in the 2010 survey report published by the Business Environment in Nigerian States, which highlights the deplorable security situation in Nigeria along with other environment components. For 2007, the survey rated national security in Nigeria 62.69 per cent, as against 49.49 per cent in 2010 report. This represents a significant fall in national security rating by 13.2 per cent (BECANS-II, 2010).

From the foregoing, threat to Nigeria's internal security is real, as the international community has declared Nigeria a failing state in several circles as well as in policy papers. For instance, the Fund for Peace (FFP) in its 2012 report, ranked Nigeria as one of the top 10 failed states in Africa and 14th in the world because of growing wave of insecurity and endemic violence (Tella, 2012). 4 Journal of Studies in Social Sciences Threat to national security is the singular factor that is responsible for the astronomical increase in the nation's expenditure on internal security. The Federal government has continued to appropriate huge funds for „defence and internal security“ in the national budget; a trend that has denied capital projects in the education, health, agriculture and construction sectors the needed attention. In the 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 fiscal years, the total expenditures earmarked for both internal security defence in the approved budgets were N292.7 billion, N276.5, N422.9 and N563.2 billion respectively (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2011). Apart from the spending on defence and internal security at the Federal level, the 36 states and 774 local government councils in Nigeria enjoy security votes, a fund that has come under serious attacks and criticisms in the recent times. Some public analysts including few serving governors called for the immediate abrogation of security vote on the grounds that it is not economically sustainable considering the diverse challenges facing the nation; and also because security votes open the floodgate to monumental frauds and stealing of state's fund by the political elites in Nigeria (Eboh and Obodoechina; 2012).

Another impetus that threatens national security apart from militancy is economic corruption. Insecurity for lives and properties increased in the country because corruption has entered the management of the nation's security budgets (defence spending, internal security votes et cetera). National security has suddenly become a big-time business, as bureaucrats and

military officials diverted security votes and expenditure on defence to personal coffers. They tactically fuel insecurity in different parts of the country to get more funding from all levels of government. Albert (2005, cited by Fagbadebo, 2007) described the incidences of bombing and attendant threat to national security in Nigeria, as a political intrigue unleashed on the nation by ruling elites to cover up corruption. 5 *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences* He asserts: “The bomb attacks also became a veritable vehicle by which the government diverted the attention of the people from substantive issues in politics. Each blast reported and discussed in the NTA and Radio Nigeria news for several weeks...all these were aimed at attracting sympathy for the government and ...through this kind of diversionary tactics Nigerians were led to forget about the fundamental issues in their nation’s development while sympathizing with the Head of state „whose genuine efforts towards lasting democracy“ were being thwarted by „subversive elements“”..

Indeed, the heaviest cost of corruption is not in the bribes themselves, but rather in the underlying economic distortions they trigger.” On the strength of the foregoing scholarly revelations, Boko Haram, Niger-Delta militants, South-East kidnappers and other insurgents are mere monetisation of insecurity and extension of political intrigue in Nigeria. Media reports noted that Boko Haram for instance is secretly being provided financial and logistics assistance by opportunistic politicians, serving and retired security officers and some elements, but these unscrupulous elements pretend to be defending the interests of oppressed people. The real agenda of sponsors of militancy is to subvert the nation’s security and heat up the system (Bello, 2012). Another conspiracy theory indicates that Boko Haram was nurtured in Borno state to provide a buffer against the rival politicians from the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), which ruled at the federal level (Ibid.). The vandalisation that trailed Boko Haram’s bombing and heinous killings of the innocent did not spare public and private institutions such as residential buildings, media houses, churches, mosques, telecommunication masts, markets, 6 *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences* motor parks and vehicles et cetera; the criminal elements equally extended their terror act to the United Nations headquarters as well as the Nigerian Police Headquarters in Abuja (Otto and Ukpere, 2012). Rebuilding of public and private infrastructural facilities destroyed by militants as well as rehabilitating victims of violence are avoidable activities that put further financial strain on meager resources of the Federal, State and Local governments. This unnecessary expenditures therefore justifies the need for preventive policing in Nigeria! Gregory Starr, the United Nations Under-Secretary for Security remarked that adequate security measures that is commensurate with the environmental climate of Abuja were put in place by the United Nations to safeguard the lives of its workers, but Nigeria failed to provide its own share of security thus making UN headquarters vulnerable to preventable attack unleashed by the Boko Haram extremists (Okeke, 2011).

Faced with growing threat to national security and coupled with huge expenditure on security as elucidated above, some proactive stakeholders across West Africa organised an international summit in order to bring the regional security challenges to the front burner. At the West African Security Summit; the Ghanaian Foreign minister noted that security is imperative for survival of African region. He posits that: “The quest for peace has eluded Africa for too long. Despite the tremendous gains by some African countries in this area, the entire continent is often judged on the basis of the few, but rather brutal conflicts and grave human rights violations

that continue to plague it. The African continent is yet to rid itself of conflicts that threaten peace, security and political stability. The seemingly never-ending conflict in the Great Lakes region, the intense fighting in the horn of Africa, the post-electoral violence that broke out in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Cote, d Ivoire and the grave human rights violations arising out of the Arab spring, particularly in Libya and the spillover consequences in tormenting an Islamist rebellion in Mali, are but a few of the security challenges of our continent. These conflicts have resulted in the death of millions of innocent Africans who entrusted their lives, and rightly so, in the hands of their leaders. These conflicts do not only give Africa a bad reputation; they also indict the assertions that Africans are capable of managing their own affairs.”(Agha, 2012).

Furthermore, the nuance called sustainable economic development is inextricably tied to the level of national security. Babangida (2012) lends credence to the above submission in his policy paper on national security. He identified food sufficiency, water supply, power supply, good roads, good schools, good hospitals, functional infrastructure, decent housing, effective public transportation system et cetera as genuine indicators for National security in Nigeria. With food security and other complementary security elements in place in the six geographical zones in Nigeria, the rising wave of lawlessness of Boko Haram, Niger-Delta militancy and armed robbery would be sustainably redressed.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Almost every issue in the society is politicized. It affects our lives in the fullest extent. Matters that did not involve politics in the past now are seen as political issues. That is why the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo was quoted as saying concerning the 2007 elections, as “a do-or-die as far as his party, the PDP was concerned. It turned out exactly that; and the result has been a rash of judicial challenges to the mis-begotten polls.

As stated above by Karl W. Deutsch, a renowned political scientist in America, that man will be killed by politics. He is rather saying the obvious because, politics has killed so many Nigerians since independence and still counting. In Nigeria, issue of politics are widely recognized as contributing factor to instability and insecurity, namely, politics of power rotation, electoral politics/violence, revenue allocation, politics of state creation, federal character, political corruption, ethnic/religious politics and so on. The nature of governance in Nigeria makes instability and insecurity possible. According to Gani Fawehinmi, “I must hasten to add that the fact that there is government does not mean that there is good governance

Attributes of good governance which this paper will espouse are quite novel and will address forms of insecurity. Therefore, ”the structure, functions, purposes, powers and duties of governments must serve the interest and satisfy the aspirations of the people who must freely agree to the fundamental law of the country. *Politics, Administration and Security: Reflections on the Nigerian state* intends to conceptualize politics, governance and security. It will devote enough time analyzing different components of politics that have been impeding state building in Nigeria. Equally, hindrances to good governance and over all implications to state security shall make up the study. Based on the above, we now raised the following research questions;

What are the politics that have been impeding state building in Nigeria?

What are the hindrances to good administration in Nigeria?

What are the implications of security challenges on the Nigeria State?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general concern of this paper is to investigate the impact of politics on the national security in Nigeria. While the specific objectives of this paper are:

To investigate types of hindrances to good administration in Nigeria

To examine the implication of insecurity on the Nigeria State

To proffer solution on the way forward

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The importance of this paper cannot be overemphasized due to the fact that it holds a lot benefit to the administration of Nigeria. The paper will be of great benefit to politicians on the administration of Nigeria. It will also be a source of literature to both post and under-graduates students and as well researchers who may want to undergo a study on the subject matter in future.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Politics was derived from Greek word ‘polis’ meaning city-state. It was first used by Aristotle (384 – 322 BC) in his book *POLITICS*, referring to the affairs of Greek city state, asserting that man by nature is a political animal. In other words, “the essence of social existence is politics and that two or more men interacting with one another are invariably involved in a political relationship.” It is against this background that Harold Lasswell defined politics as “who gets what, when and how, the study of power or the study of influence and the influential.”

Politics is about decision making, about public actions or goods, which concerns government as regards the direction and self-direction of large communities of people such as Nigeria. Therefore, any community larger than the family contains an element of politics. As Deutsch pointed out, that: It is on the decisional aspect of politics that makes a man to choose to assassinate another to get to a political position in Nigeria thereby justifying the assertion that “politics is a dirty game.

In this paper we shall be constrained to substitute Administration with Governance. Governance is the totality of the processes of constituting a government as well as of administering political community. It is the umbilical cord that links the governor and the governed. Government means “the government of the federation, or any state, or of a local government council or any person who exercises power or authority on its behalf.” Good governance guarantees security where the structure, functions, purposes, powers and duties of government must serve the interest and satisfy the aspirations of the people. Society tend to be well secured when government in power evolve and sustain economic policies and programmes

capable of preventing crises and conflicts.

Security, they say, is every bodies business; the condition or feeling safe from harm or danger, the defense, protection and preservation of core values and the absence of threats to acquire values. For David Francis, security is about the survival and conditions of human existence, about peace, development, justice, whose absence create the condition for conflict and insecurity. It is a direct threat to humans as a result of physical and psychological abuses inflicted upon non-combatant individuals, including children, the aged and women in the environment of armed conflicts. The condition above, Bassey Ate confirmed is characterized by forced exodus of populations, creating refugee flows, genocide, rape of women, ethnic cleansing, organized killing of the unarmed, child soldiering, anti-personal mining of farmlands.

THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY

The Human Needs/Socio-Economic Perspective.

The socio-economic perspective of the Boko Haram challenge in Nigeria, essentially attempts to de-emphasise the interpretation of this being a particularly Muslim or northern crisis (Kukah, 2012). The perspective which blames social conditions for the violence is anchored on the human needs theory of social conflicts. Its central thesis is that all humans have basic needs which they seek to fulfil and failure caused by other individuals or groups to meet these needs could lead to conflict (Rosati et al, 1990 cited in Faleti,). The theory is similar to the frustration-aggression theory of violence, which posits that aggression is always a consequence of frustration (Dougherty and Pfaltzgrate Jr, 1990:266). According to the theory, relative deprivation is a perceived disparity between value expectation and value capabilities and that the lack of a need satisfaction – defined as a gap between aspirations and achievement generally – relies on the psychological state of frustration and aggressive attitudes emanating from it (Midlarsky, 1975:29).

AREA OF STUDY

Nigeria is one of the most fascinating countries in Africa, with institutional problems, cultural difficulties and ‘big man’ politics, yet in economic terms it works – it became the largest economy on the continent in 2014. Despite its economic position, Nigeria has major security issues to overcome to ensure stability, such as Boko Haram’s insurgency; Niger-Delta Militancy; Kidnapping; Armed Robbery; etc. On the Boko Haram front, it has recently had some success with the help of its neighbours. **Nigeria Politics & Security** highlights the issues that matter to business and demonstrates the difficulties encountered by investors and the opportunities available.

RESEARCH METHOD

In examining the various perspectives that have attempted to capture the causes of the insecurity in Nigeria, we looked at general theoretical frameworks that have been employed universally to explain similar crisis. In this regard, we made reference to foreign and local (Nigerian) sources.

At the same time, we paid critical attention to the diverse views provided by the broad spectrum of the Nigerian society. In doing this, adequate consideration was given to all the shades of opinions representative of the various divides of the Nigerian society. This was in view of the complexity of the Nigerian society, the tenuous relationship among its disparate social groups and the implication of the insecurity on the continuing existence of Nigeria as a single corporate entity. The idea is that resolving the various forms of insecurity challenge and forestalling a resurgence of the sort in the future may to a large extent depend on a national consensus on what the problem really is and how it will be tackled as was the challenge posed by the Niger Delta militancy. Apart from the dangers it constitutes to Nigeria's immediate neighbours, Nigeria's position as a strategic country in global consideration also warrants that even non-Nigerians share concerns over what may have gone wrong. The paper accommodated such views. We also considered perspectives provided by persons with security backgrounds. Indeed the contemporariness of the problem is such that as the violence escalates and the State intensifies efforts towards finding solution, fresh perspectives emerge, and the media relay these developments. Reliance on these media sources is a function of this contemporariness. Generally, the historical-descriptive method of inquiry was adopted in the study.

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Having conceptualized the study in the preceding section, the paper will now situate the study especially the different dimensions of politics, i.e issues that constitute insecurity in Nigeria, beginning with ethnic politics.

Ethnic Politics

Ethnic politics is one of the divisive factors causing insecurity in Nigeria which can well be located in the early activities of the Nigerian Youth Movement of 1936. According to Nnoli: Equally, constitutional development in Nigeria, in another way, created the condition for separateness and ethnic division. If one should bring in the 1946 constitution of Sir Author Richards to buttress a point. The new constitutional proposals then, which according to the publisher, "were designed to promote the unity of Nigeria, to provide adequately within that unity for the diverse elements which make up the country."¹³ Also the regional elections of 1951 revealed the divisions which were to continue to plague all attempts at political unity of Nigeria despite its federal principles. Consequently, she entered upon her era of independence with a constitution unsuitable for a country with such diverse group of peoples who had not yet attained full national unity. Supporting the above point, Bala Takaya submitted that:

It will be good to add here that the trends in ethnic politics of Nigeria are available in many literatures and need not delay us here. It is the understanding in political quarters that the British tutored the northern elites about the leadership of Nigeria which by share number have fallen to them. This, nonetheless, aided the evolution of political tension, ethnic sentiments and suspicion across the political divide. Ethnic conflicts are caused by historical legacy of mistrust between ethnic rival groups, even biblically speaking. This mistrust and hatred are not genetically transmitted but visibly part of immediate reality occasioned by myth, socialization and education. Indigeneship and settlers division, as Dipo Akowonjo described it, remain the

most significant cause of ethnic violence. This is an entrenched division between people considered 'indigenous' to an area, and those regarded as 'settlers'. Settlers are consistently discriminated against in the predominantly Christian Plateau State. Their rival, the Hausa Fulani Muslim nomads complained that the Christian farmers steal their cattle. One also notices that there are indigenous Muslim ethnic groups who fiercely opposed the perceived expansionist tendencies of the Hausa Fulani.

Politics of Political Power

Political power struggle in Nigeria remains a matter of life and death, ultimately the reverse in advanced democracies. Here, the struggle is either between political parties or between ethnic groups fighting for the position of the presidency. As Nnoli observed: The political parties history in Nigeria are abound in many reading materials which show the trends and implications for the society. But the most worrisome is the importance attached to the office of the President of Nigeria. One has noticed that the struggle, which seemed deadly, has affected more ethnic groups than the former regional groupings of the first Republic. More worrisome, which lately suggests 'gentleman agreement', is rotational presidency since the return of democratic governance in 1999. Incidentally, a victory by any of the present registered parties in a federal election was seen as victory for one ethnic group over the others. This gentleman agreement 'willed' the presidency to the north after the eight years tenure of President Olusegun Obasanjo from the Yoruba South. As the late President Umaru Yar'adua took over the mantle of leadership and was suffering health complications, it created the 4th Republic constitutional crisis. I have argued elsewhere that the constitutional crisis of the present national government has in the main elements that have hampered Nigeria's progress over time.

Giving the health condition of the late president, the Nigerian senate passed a resolution asking the then Vice President, Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian from the oil rich South region to start acting as President. Then, Nigeria was mired in a political logjam that tend to threaten its fragile, nascent democracy unless the government addresses the power vacuum created by the absence of President Umaru Yar'adua and its nagging effect on governance. At the heat of the crisis was the President's refusal to delegate power to his deputy.

The political tension generated by the constitutional quagmire forced the National Assembly to invoke the 'Doctrine of Necessity' to pass a resolution mandating the Vice President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan to move up as The Acting President. The contentious position of the presidency created feelings in the South that the country is being held hostage by the North, somewhat a resurgence of the long standing suspicion that has dogged the relationship between the two regions since independence. But with the senate resolution, power is back in the South and 'the Northerners are really hurt', submitted Oriyomi. This paper advocates that it does not matter where the president of Nigeria comes from, in so far as the dividend of democracy is felt by everyone.

Religious Politics

Where did this country get it wrong that religious issues are now so contentious as to breed

insecurity? Religion with its moral principle and values are expected to direct societies and the lives of its adherents. Christianity and Islam, two adopted alien faiths in Nigeria, have from their entrant into this society made social welfare services and educational development an important component of their activities. What is worrisome is the violence associated with this “proselytizing religions”. It is a truism that violence started from the Maitatsine uprising of the 1980s to Boko Haram of today, that this violence is associated with religious beliefs, which is almost bringing government to her knees. Religion relate to issues and workings of the supernatural or a system of beliefs and practice, by which a group of people interpret and respond to what they feel is supernatural and sacred. It is the interaction between it (religion) and society which affects social behaviour and influences other institutions of society, not letting some people hide under it to wreck havoc to the society.

Historically speaking, religious conflicts never blew up during the colonial era with their (Christianity and Islam) ideological hold remaining dominant and exclusive in their respective regions. It was cool as well during post-colonial times, when regional political parties tend to plead on the sensibility of religion in their political struggle for power. However, the return of civilian democracy, religion became politicized especially the Sharia law as several states in northern Nigeria introduced or announced plans to extend the application of it to criminal offences as they have predominant Muslim populations. Despite assurances that the application of Sharia will be restricted to Muslim Nigerians, due process issues and the nature of some punishments imposed by Sharia, notably amputation and flogging, mean that the many thousands of Christians living in the north are deeply concerned that Sharia law and punishments will be applied to them also.

In the year 2000, Constitutional Rights Project (CRP) organized a seminar with the title “the place of women under Sharia”. Justice Ambali, in a paper opined that people are asking a lot of questions among the adherents of Islam and the followers of other faiths especially Christianity, ‘what is this Sharia? Why Sharia? What is it out to achieve? What problems is the agitation capable to cause?’ etc. One disturbing effect of this religious issue is high number of people killed especially today’s Boko Haram Islamic sect. Islam laid down a universal fundamental rights for humanity which are to be observed and respected under all circumstances whether such a person is resident within the territory of the Islamic state or outside it, whether he is at peace with the state or at war:

Human blood is sacred in any case and cannot be spilled without justification. It is not permissible to oppress women, children, old people, the sick or the wounded. Women’s honour and chastity are to be respected under all circumstances. The hungry person must be fed, the naked clothed, and the wounded or diseased treated medically irrespective of whether they belong to the Islamic community or are from amongst its enemies.

Recent demands of Boko Haram that Nigeria be made an Islamic state have been seen as against the secularization status of Nigeria backed by the constitution. It is also absurd for Boko Haram to demand that Christians leave their abode in northern Nigeria. Due to this they have been bombing churches in outright disregard of universal fundamental rights laid down by Islam, thus:

The life, property and honour of a “dhimmi” (non-Muslim citizens) is to be respected and protected exactly like that of a Muslim citizen. There is no difference at all between a Muslim and a non-Muslim citizen in respect of the civil or criminal law. The Islamic state shall not interfere with the personal rights of the non-Muslims citizen in respect of the civil or criminal law. The Islamic state shall not interfere with the personal rights of non-Muslims. They will have full freedom of conscience and belief and will be at liberty to perform their religious rites and ceremonies in their own way. Not only can they propagate their religion but they are entitled even to criticize Islam within the limits laid down by law and decency...

Security Challenges of Nigerian State

Of many challenges facing the Nigerian state, the quest for security is undoubtedly the most pressing. Many states in the society are hard hit in this vicious circle of orgy of violence with its attendant consequences. Some security challenges of the Nigerian state include armed robbery, political assassination, kidnapping, cross-border crimes, small arms and light weapons proliferation, communal violence, Boko Haram terrorism etc. Security is about the condition or feeling safe from harm or danger, the defence, protection and preservation of core values, and the absence of threats to acquire values. It is about survival and the condition of human existence. Violence is a universal phenomenon sometimes employed by people to express their grievances. In Nigeria, both politicians and citizens have had to resort to violence in certain situations to vent their frustrations. This situation in Nigerian politics poses some interesting questions for political inquiry. That is, from what sources and by what processes it arose and how it affects the political order.

Armed robbery is basically theft through the use of violence or threat of violence. Perpetrators are usually armed and frequently dangerous. This threat has been with us over time, causing untold hardship and loss of lives. Indulgent into robbery remain the fallout of decadent society where many youths cannot be gainfully employed while the elite lives in affluence.

Political assassinations have taken a worrisome dimension since the return to democratic governance in 1999. The belief that politics remains the surest way to wealth and fame, citizens stake their lives and resources to it. That is why politicians hire assassins to eliminate perceived political opponents. According to Abia “assassination means murder by treacherous means...physical, non-justifiable liquidation of a human being”.³⁵ It is worthwhile to mention some of those who are recorded victims, Chief Bola Ige, Mr. OdunayoOlagbaju, Osun State House of Assembly; Chief Marshall Harry (ANPP) South; Chief AminasoariDikibo (PDP) Rivers; Barr. Barnabas Igwe and his wife Abigail (Anambra State); Mr. AlabiOlajoku (ACN) Osun State; Mr. Funso Williams (PDP) Lagos; Dr. AyodejiDaramola (PDP) Ekiti; ³⁶ and so many others too numerous to include here.

Kidnapping/hostage taking.

Recently, in Nigeria, especially in South-Eastern part, the spate of kidnapping or hostage taking and related criminal acts was on the increase day-by-day. This aspect of insecurity has been blamed on political elites who armed youths and dump them after elections. Curious enough,

“the incidences of kidnapping, hostage taking for ransom, armed robbery, sexual violence and complicity of security operatives among others are common in Aba and environs” 37. Other parts of the country witnessed one incident or the other resulting in lose of lives and parting of huge sums of money.

Small arms and light weapons proliferates everywhere and the effects are too numerous. For instance the war in Liberia and by extension Sierra Leone which are connected with the wider politics of the region remains the cause. The proliferations of SALW are attributed to protracted conflict in these countries over the years. These arms became readily available for cross border bandits, criminals, political tugs etc, who misuse them and thereby increase threats to national unity and security. Col. ShoboNojeem opined:

Besides being a direct cause of death and mutilation, the effects of small arms are far reaching when consideration is given to its economic costs, social upheavals, resource allocation away from human needs, undermining of the legitimacy of the state in Africa.

Communal/Religious conflicts are numerous in different parts of the country. One of the main causes of these problems is mostly the struggle between rival ethnic or religious groups seeking to maintain or gain control of resources available in a particular part of the country. Often, when one group gains access to power, it uses state institutions to distribute economic and political benefits preferentially to their ethnic brethren. In Jos Nigeria, indigene ship and settlers divisions are rife and the most common cause of communal violence. There is an entrenched division between people considered indigenous to an area, and those regarded as ‘settlers’. The government’s attempts to resolve the conflict have never worked given the spate of killings and reprisal killings. It has now claimed the lives of a senator; the majority leader in the Plateau State House of Assembly and scores of others this July 2012.

Boko Haram Terrorism or insurgency has become increasingly worrisome as the orgy of violence and bloodletting stir us in the face making government seem helpless. Terrorism has no universally accepted definition. It relies heavily on who is defining the act and on what purpose. But it is any attack or threat of attack, against unarmed targets intended to influence, change or divert major political decision. It was in July 2009, when security agents battled members of this sect for six days, for allegedly attacking a police station in Bauchi State metropolis. The group also unleashed violence on the public in Maiduguri, Kano and Potiskum. Other parts of the country have been affected e.g Police Headquarters Abuja, United Nations office Abuja, Christmas bombings in Madalla Niger State, several churches in Niger, Kaduna, Kano, Taraba, Gombe, Bauchi states have been hit. We are all aware of the fall out of these bombings on the security leadership of this country as the National Security Adviser General OwoyeAzazi (rtd) and the Minister of Defence, Alhaji Mohammed Bello were sacked.

Mr. President should acknowledge the failure of the security agencies hence there should be a complete overhaul of the Security Agencies in the county to pre-empt these security breaches. In particular, the failure of the intelligence services to contain the recurring security breaches. The spate of bombings has once more brought to limelight the need for a Sovereign National Conference. Until these structural distortions and anomalies are addressed, the monster

of insecurity will loom large and Nigeria will once more be listed as a terrorist nation. Mr. President has to act decisively to execute his Office, and this can be achieved by implementing the anti-terrorism law and punish culprits of such heinous crimes capable of causing instability in the nation. This will vitiate the implementation of Mr. President's transformational agenda. The long-term effect is that the on-going terrorism will discourage potential investors in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

There is clear correlation between the quality of governance Nigerians get and the degree of violent conflicts the country encounters. Lack of confidence in politics of the country, the politicization of almost every issue, state officials corrupt enrichment, epileptic or weak institutions, etc make people resort to self-help strategies to cater for themselves. The consequences remain insecurity meted to both the haves and the have-nots. Issues raised in this paper are very glaring. Therefore, state building or lack of it, the leadership should be held responsible for instability, insecurity, corruption, assassination and all manner of security challenges. This is because an average Nigerian provides almost everything he needs for survival in the midst of plenty. Not until politics is played in the usual way that guarantees good governance and every one sleeps with his two eyes closed, we may be heading for a precipice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the speed Nigeria is deteriorating, there is a strong desire for a SOVEREIGN NATIONAL CONFERENCE so that all ethnic nationalities can make their stand known this amalgamated country. The way forward is for us to keep laying emphasis on the need for the evolution of six regions. The federation should stay but let every region grow at its own pace. The Western region has clearly set the pace going by the result of the last election. All the Western states voted massively for the Action Congress party (ACN), a party that is not sufficiently different in programmes from the Action Party of Chief Obafemi Awolowo. Each region should have its own police Force. MOPOL and Interpol could be transformed into the only Federal Police crack elite team. The rest members of the police force should be dismembered and directed to return to their regions. It is the duty of the regions to now retrain, equip and pay them.

Second, the judiciary is not helping matters at all. This institution is heavily compounding our problems. It has got to really sit up. Cases of corruption are not meant to be compromised at all, let alone adjourning them endlessly. The judiciary ought to have, at this stage in our development, evolved time scales for cases. There ought to have been a time to determine a case; time to close that case; and time to deliver judgement and pass sentences. In Nigeria, cases that bother on corruption and insecurity have most often been compromised thus the law is no longer acting as a deterrent. What is happening in Jos is too gory to narrate. The endless killing going on in that city has made the demand for regional govt more pertinent. The country cannot just continue to toe the line of extinction. Most Nigerians do not value human lives. They debase them. Most have become conditioned to act of carnages, brigandage, looting, massacre, butchery and bestiality. Thirdly, the Federal govt should always be decisive on issues that bother on insecurity. We have never had strong leaders. From Shagari to Yar 'Adua and now

to Jonathan, what we have heard were leaders handpicked and imposed on the people. We have over the years been denied leaders that would bring us out of the woods. First were Awo in 1979 and, controversially, Abiola in 1993. We have never had it so bad. OBJ was an imposition by the Northern oligarchy. Corruption was commonplace under OBJ and under Jonathan, what we have is intertwined corruption and insecurity.

Ethnicity and the foregoing problems and criminal activities individually and collectively create insecurity and breach of the peace that are likely to or indeed affect legitimate social and economic activities in the country. These problems also have the very damaging consequence of giving the signal to the rest of the international community that Nigeria is not a safe and secure place and as such not suitable for economic investment and activities. This is particularly important in view of the efforts being made to create the desired atmosphere to attract foreign investment.

Beyond the effects of security concerns on the economic fortunes of the country, the nature of the security challenges facing the country also have implications for the country's political system. As mentioned earlier, social cohesion among various groups and interests is important in the process of national political development. Therefore, the constituent parts of the country must be and indeed feel that they are being carried along in the process of national governance. Experience has shown that widespread discontent and loss of confidence in the system have ways of affecting national political stability. Invariably continuing escalation of violence and crises across the country will impinge on the survival of our democracy.

Accordingly, there is the challenge to rethink and improve on policy and institutional means of dealing with security concerns arising in the country. At the political level, the federal, state and local governments should evolve programmes of cultural and political education and orientation that seek to enthrone the fundamentals of democracy so that the political contestants as well as the generality of the citizens imbibe principles and practices essential for sustainable democracy. Such programmes must also address specific tendencies that create security breach and concerns in the country.

In addition, a process of legislative and constitutional review should be initiated to assess the country's constitution and amend or expunge as necessary areas that have been found to give rise to conflicts and security problems. The process should also introduce new provisions and legislations that will ensure better and more effective interplay of interests among all groups and stakeholders in Nigeria. Such exercise should also embrace ways of making the country's democratic space more open, free, fair and tolerant as exists in other democracies around the world. Among specific lingering political issues that should be addressed are: the laws relating to political parties and their activities; the establishment, funding and activities of the electoral body; local and state government relationship; allocation of national resources and revenue; citizenship rights; devolution of security powers to states and local governments. In addition, the legislative and constitutional review should also embody security sector reforms that will make the security agencies and institutions more effective in combating crimes and other threats to national security and make them accountable to the democratic political system and structures. These democratic structures include the states and local governments. I believe that we need to

give a more concrete understanding to the definition of governors as the chief security officers of the state.

In all, what we need is a good government, no more no less. And a good government is possible in as much as people who are put in positions of authority are allowed and are committed to discharge their duties without fear or favour; are determined to serve with zeal and patriotism; are not ready to sell out to international capital and are ready to stand by the truth and die for it. In all, there is no mono cultural theory that is a cure-all to the diverse nature of insecurity in Nigeria but I believed and stand by the theory that Nigeria should evolve into six regions, each region having its Premier or Governor, each region has a right to retain its states or to abolish- the choice is theirs in the region to make; each region should be in charge of its Education, Security, Health, Agriculture, Housing, Transport and Energy policies. The Central Government should be in charge of the Army, Central Bank, Customs, Prisons and Immigration services, MOPOL and Interpol, ALL WORKING at the same time IN THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY. The objections to this Sovereign National Conference are coming significantly from the core north unbeknownst to the people from that region that the fallout from that conference would sufficiently be in their favour. Pessimism is a social disease but in a society of rights, it is right!

To end this presentation, allow me to quote former Head of State, AbdulsalaamAbubakar from his guest lecture at NIPSS, Kuru, on November 26, 2004, "Democracy is a sought-after value. It is not a perfect system of governance, even theoretically. But as Aristotle argued, it is the least evil of all possible governments. The strength of democracy is drawn from the fact that it is supposed to be the product of the will of the majority of the people. Government is held in trust for the people. The citizens feel a sense of ownership of the state for they can identify with it as vital stakeholders whose will gave existence and legitimacy to the state and the government. As shareholders of the common-wealth, the citizens will not only avoid such behaviours that hurt and sabotage the system, but join forces to resist any such attack on the collective interest. That in-fact is the real basis for the development of grand tactic, the mobilisation of the entire national asset for the protection of the nation, which I believe can work best in a democracy".

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