

# Nigeria at 60. What a Charade!

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by admin Tuesday, September 29, 2020 - 05:02 comments

A nation without nationhood is an entity without content. An empty vessel. This in my opinion summarises what the country Nigeria embodies.

I admit this assertion may be indecorous and disingenious to the few who have maintained their chastity in a nation whose leaders revel in ignominy, self conceit and wanton calumny. In a clear dereliction of duty its so-called leaders, typifying the electorate, bastardize the office of state to entrench a culture that puts to shame the archetypal devil himself. A nation where after nearly three decades of civilian rule, the three arms of government are so exclusive that they have redefined democracy to mean the art of stealing from the people for the party by the party. Their only allegiance is and remains the party, a vehicle for wholesale looting of the resources of indigenious people groups under the guise of a unitary Federation.

Whilst some may argue that sixty-birth years in terms of national development is little, they perhaps lose sight of what it says of the intelligence or resourcefulness of such a nation. If you must reinvent the wheel, should it require one reverting to pre-historic tools when templates abound to complete the task efficiently? On the contrary, younger nations have taken a more forthright path and in lesser time than currently posted by Nigeria, have done amazingly, transforming the lives of their citizens to assume nationhood status with pride.

The folly of Nigeria and its leadership has been pride and arrogance without substance. Unmerited leadership has been the norm and appears to have taken root. Short of referring to Nigeria as an Oligarchy, the elements that have foisted themselves in leadership overtly or covertly have in essence claimed rights of passage dismissing all other entities as irrelevant and inconvenient.

Behold the nightmare Nigeria is yet to be relieved of. The deception of an amalgamation. The marriage of inconvenience never consummated in true love. The cataclysmic disembowelment of a neophyte nation in January 1966. The calamities of recrimination in July 1966. And the genocidal annihilation of dissent under the guise of preserving the entity.

In preventing true reconciliation and restitution, the post Biafra years has been one of strategic marginalization and lopsided empowerment of hitherto docile groups whose only interest was in an inchoate existence bereft of advancements of any sought. Little wonder History as taught in schools was rudely excised of any reference to the truth of the nation groups that indeed represent the entity Nigeria.

Today's Nigerians, children born post second republic and since the millenium have little understanding of the 'Whys' and 'How' it is, certain regions of the country appear to be advantaged in terms of resource allocation and opportunities more than the the rest of the nation. They would be similarly bemused as to the fact that the most developed regions of the country do not necessarily inform wider development. This confusion extends further in the ongoing socio-political and security crises witnessed across the nation. It is perhaps the agenda of certain people groups to erode any collective memory of what the truth about Nigeria's existence is. By denying the origins and the bases of the confederation birthing the country those invested in the rapacious domination of the entity hopes to pursue their course regardless of other views.

Adult Nigerians may be grouped into the following categories, pre-independence, immediate post independence including post-Biafra; deliberately using the term Biafra in recognition of the fact of the event as opposed to 'civil war', a coinage meant to erase the term Biafra from national conscience, pre-millenials and the millenials including todays generation.

In my opinion, the pride of Nigeria truly derives from the infrastructural development embarked upon by the erstwhile regional authorities leading on to and shortly after independence. The regional governments in a largely altruistic pursuit of social and economic development transformed the lives of its people in ways that did make Nigeria truly promising and a pride of Africa. The hallmarks of greatness remained and sustained the country through the "years of plenty". Unfortunately without foresight or vision the military leaders that followed since Biafra had no agenda and no vision. The leadership were in principle elements who continued to battle their conjured enemy that was all things "Biafra". The choice of leadership could be tracked back to the group that directly or indirectly prosecuted the war. The effect was institutional sectarianism embedded in Federal government without apology to marginalised groups.

Although the nascent democracy post independence was not perfect, and the rude awakening of the January 66 coup did not help, the events that followed has since further embedded mistrust and spite across the regions. The claim of there being a "One Nigeria" is as ludicrous as the reality of todays leadership represents.

The truth of Nigeria's decadence can be traced back to the unwholesome sale of the people's rights following the infraction of military rule and the subsequent

disembodiment of the regions into states, strategically designed to shift power, not only centrally, but also in favour of the North. It was indeed a reset that has maintained the slow but certain depredation of resources of one for another!

Nigeria did witness an era of true statesmen. Men who were well read, well informed and self made. These were men who hoped for the best for their people and served until they could no longer give. Men from the North, the East and from the South. They saw, understood and envisioned what true freedom could be. They did not steal or amass wealth for themselves. They infact had little to show for their service at the end of their course.

In contrast what do we have today? Men who claim to lead, but alass, have in their short time in government amassed wealth untold. For those who have been in and out of government, they have contributed nothing tangible to the course of the nation other than deceit and crises. The nation has not known any peace since they have been in office. Sadly they make claim to office like it was their birthright.

It is indeed an inditement. Little wonder many have left the country, and are desperate to leave. The few working hard to sustain communities are embattled by so-called state agencies, extorting sums untold under various guiles. Like a rudderless ship, aghast by the wind, Nigeria is but a breath away from peril.

Dont ask me for solutions because these men know the truth and they know the solutions but they all thrive on falsehood and derive pleasure in ravenous living, enriching themselves of what is not rightfully theirs.

The analysis of the state of the nation is pathetic and ominous. It is a charade and a travesty, having a moribund leader for president. Having representatives who continue to relish in emoluments no hardworking citizen would ever earn in any employment in government or private service. Not in the 21st century. Not in the age of information. I have no sympathy for a country who elects for itself charlatans and half baked clowns whose goal is to steal from its own people all to self-satiation.

It is not a happy time for majority of hard working Nigerians. Many remain impoverished. Many are terrorised and dread each waking day not knowing what, who or where is safe.

North, South, East or West - there is no where to be called home anymore, not for families in Nigeria nor for diasporans, craving for a place they could call their country.

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