

NIGERIA TO MOVE FORWARD!! - THE PEOPLE'S VERDICT!

Most honest Nigerians hold very strong views that the solution to Nigeria's political and economic problems lies beyond the formation of a "good government" that would create the required good atmosphere for the EXILES to return. NO! Many Nigerians, home and in Diaspora are still very skeptical. They believe there can never arise such a government and there are no signs to encourage hope! There is practically no one to bell the cat - no "messiah", not even BUHARI, no "Nigerian's Nelson Mandela!" It is hard to convince most Nigerians in Diaspora that things would change for the better in their fatherland.

They believe the African and black man's complete failure is rooted in the black people's inability to reason, lead or contribute to world development. A fury or frenzy African- American Pastor summarized the gloomy and gory scenario of the failed black race in his controversial sermon delivered sometime in the first week of July 2015. He was addressing his black congregation perhaps on what he saw as the 'failure' of Obama as black president of America in the raging **PASSAGE OF THE SO-CALLED SAME-SEX MARRIAGE LAW BY THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT APPARENTLY SUPPORTED OR APPROVED BY OBAMA ADMINISTRATION**. This was in spite of several recorded Obama successes including the renowned 'Obamacare' healthcare program! Like Louis Farrakhan, the black outspoken and controversial religious leader of the "Nation of Islam" (also often accused of being anti-Semitic, anti-white and prejudiced against gays), Pastor X used the occasion and the pulpit to publicly lash it out on the black race and folk as a whole Hear him:

".....I don't care what you my listeners and brothers and sisters may feel. I am just telling you the truth. You can disagree with me. You can even kill me, but I must tell you this: "The black man has not contributed anything to human development (forget the story that civilization started in Egypt. Egypt is not Black or part of Africa). Even before the white man's civilization reached Africa, Africans groomed in the dark. They never built monuments no cities not even any sailable boats on the seas, structures of iron, steel or stone, no sewage system. They have no brains. They lived in homes made of grass and wood. They wallowed in ignorance and only depended on what the white man could event and build..... South Africa those days witnessed great development in politics and economy (the system of apartheid aside . I never supported it). But the worst mistake the white supremacists made was to hand over government to the black man, Nelson Mandella! Since that handover South Africa has witnessed one of the worst and most shameful periods of instability and bad leadership, coupled with poverty, diseases, crime, HIV/AIDS, corruption, disunity, hate killings and confusion. Nigeria is a very

rich country in oil but Nigerians are poor, with millions of potbellied hungry children and millions of unemployed youths..... Look at what is happening in Rwanda and Hutus and Tutsis, in Zimbabwe with Robert Mugabe...And what of Africans of America, the descendants of ex-slaves? They too have no brains and cannot reason and lead. They have never achieved anything without the help of the white man..."

You are free to criticize the pastor who has raised the dust, hate or like him, an ignorant historian, a fool, stupid and what have you...we can only look at the facts and issues he raised.

Many believe that the only valid option for Nigeria is to look for another political arrangement. Most other Nigerians - the educated and the ordinary - have in the past and in recent times made this point but have been ignored by the ruling class. Nigerian tribal leaders and the military class find solace in "Letting the sleeping dog lie." Nigerians are too timid to take the bull by the horns - summon a sovereign national conference - discuss the past and take decisions that can create a bright future. It is a calamity! It is interesting to read what most Nigerians in Diaspora think about their fatherland. They react to every renewed call for patriotism and such stuff. All seem to be pointing to the same direction! Very scary? Is it?

I have abbreviated the names of contributors to this "opinion survey" for some reasons.

(1) WHITHER NIGERIA? - ONE NATION?

(E.M.O. writes from Canada)

- Does any honest Nigerian believe that Nigeria could exist peacefully and harmoniously as one nation with one destiny? I do not think so. The fundamentals of the Nigerian problems are deeply rooted in the diversity of the nationalities that make up the artificial contraption called Nigeria. I am very convinced that the solution to Nigeria's problems is neither in the system of government that would be suitable; nor the rotation of the presidency; or the personality of the president. Unless a seed dies and decays it would never regenerate into a gigantic tree. Nigeria must disintegrate into its components parts, and then come together voluntarily in a common market of equal and sovereign states. Any arrangements short of this prescription, is doomed to failure and futility. The idea of disintegration is an ideal that ought to be advocated with vigor and zeal by all who seek and crave salvation for that sub-continent fast going to

hell in a hamper. (Forgive my language.) There is no way out for Nigeria except disintegration.

(2) NEW NIGERIA? - YOU ARE KIDDING!

(Dr. M.I.O writes from UK)

- I have written off Nigeria longtime ago. It is an artificial creation of the British and even Nigerians do not understand their basic and fundamental problems. There is too much tribalism and lack of nationalism. The Nigeria we know of today will not be there in ten (10) years. This is my honest prediction. I have so far been correct about my predictions about Nigeria since 1972. That is why I am here. Even my classmates are now telling me that I predicted all these happening now, but nobody believed me at that time. We just pray to God to reduce the impending human suffering and agony as things continue to get bad in the country before the final disintegration of that Federation.

(3) ELIMINATE CORRUPTION AND YOU HAVE A NEW NIGERIA!

(Dr. D. E. writes from Los Angeles)

- I agree totally that Nigeria's problem does not lie on where the ruler or rulers come from. Igbo State Governors & Commissioners and Local Government chairmen & Councilors have not done any better for their respective jurisdictions. The single most critical problem with Nigeria is corruption and whoever will be president has to be a selfless, honest, patriotic and courageous man ready and willing to give this monster a serious battle. I believe that one man can make a difference, but this man must be somebody with no skeletons in his cupboard and hence be able to lead by example. We have never had democracy in Nigeria. Civilian rule does not necessarily equal democracy. Our politicians are rogues and opportunists and they are not in the game for altruistic reasons. I believe that being more numerous, they will do more harm to our treasury than the soldiers did. I disagree that Obasanjo is not the right man; he is not perfect but he is good. Whatever mistakes he might have made, he must have learnt from them. I think that he is a nationalist and has a sense of Nigeria's place in the history and destiny of Black people.

(4) A LONG WAY TO GO - PAST ISSUES MUST BE ADDRESSED -THE IGBO PREDICAMENT

(Mr. O. R. I. writes from Lagos)

- There are encouraging signs that some Nigerians have realized that to move forward to peaceful and stable Nigeria, some past issues that almost led to the disintegration of Nigeria should not be ignored. We should, for example be grateful to God for the repentance of General Gowon, his realization of his misdeeds during and after the civil war. But that is not enough. Some issues that have affected the lives of Igbo people have not been addressed. Unless they are re-visited, Nigeria may not move an inch toward realizing her goals.
- It was under Gowon's regime that the Igbos were given \$20 no matter the amount they lodged then in their bank accounts before the war. For Nigeria to move forward, the balance of the people's savings before the war should be returned to them.
- Since the end of the civil war the Igbos have witnessed an unprecedented marginalization among all the ethnic groups in Nigeria. Despite the program of reconstruction, rehabilitation, and reconciliation, could anybody point to any federal institution in Igboland? The Igbos have been known to be providers for themselves. Majority of the infrastructure in Igboland have been provided by communal efforts. Examples abound - the Imo State Airport initiative - the Abia State University, to name a few. They were built and completed by the people.
- The marginalization of the Igbos is evident in the distribution of offices in every sector of Nigerian government administration. The recent re-constituted Federal Executive Council has helped to solidify the position of the Igbos as **foreigners in their own land!** Why is it that only Igbos are information ministers (town criers) birthrights? Why not for instance, National Security Adviser? Why not Defense, State Security Service, Inspector General of Police, Director of Military Intelligence, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency etc.?
- The Nigerian government should know that justice delayed is justice denied. As we march toward a new millennium and the return to democracy, we must start balancing the anomalies that have been existing over the years: the witch hunting of the Igbos and their perception as "rebels."
- There are many wrongs against the Igbos that must be corrected if Nigeria should move forward, to a strong, viable and united country - The Igbos should be given back their "abandoned property" in various parts of Nigeria. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu - the first Nigerian to enlist in the Nigerian Army with a degree should be reinstated, promoted, and eventually retired and paid up-to-date his full entitlements along with Gowon, who was once stripped of his military titles but was reinstated upon his return from exile. The same measure and prerogative of mercy

should extend to Col. Ojukwu. I believe there was no victor and no vanquished!

(5) THERE IS NOTHING CALLED NIGERIA

(Mr. O. S. writes from Canada)

- There is nothing called Nigeria. Why do we keep fooling ourselves? It is time we all go our different ways. There was never any trust and there can never be any after this. The so-called Northerners are just holding everybody back. Our ways of life are different. We all have different goals as human beings. Enough is enough. If this separation is not achieved peacefully, it will be achieved forcefully.

(6) ADDRESS THE PAST ISSUES THAT ARE CAUSING FRICTION

(Dr. R.A.R writes from UK)

- Nigeria remains bonded by the closeness and similarity of the cultures and traditions of tribes and people that make up our country. But today, Nigeria still remains divided by the same issues that caused disagreements in parliaments during the first republic, the same issues that precipitated the civil war of 1967.
- We have yet to seriously and openly address these issues, and if we hope to ever move forward as a nation, we must address these issues. One way that has been suggested is to form a government of national unity, invoke a sovereign national conference, and discuss our past, present and future as a nation, as different tribes, peoples and cultures and as people with different religious biases.
- The convening of Sovereign National Conference of all spectrum of political and social forces in the country to decide on the future of Nigeria is imperative. There is need to decide on whether they people wish to continue to remain Nigerians and on what terms.
- As an organization we believe that in spite of all these challenges, we are still better off as one country but the basis of that association needs to be renegotiated and agreed upon by all Nigerians in equality and freedom.

(7) NEW NATIONS - NOT A NEW NATION - THE ONLY WAY FORWARD

(Mr. Ade writes from Houston, Texas)

- I believe a confederation of four main regions may be the ultimate solution for Nigeria's power tussle among the tribes. We could have the

Hausas, Yorubas, Igbos, and Delta Area tribes rule themselves with just a common defense ministry. And only defense!

(8) PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION

- Nothing short of a people's revolution will bring peace and stability to Nigeria
- The Nigerian people must put all rhetoric aside and face reality. The tyrants will not go away unless the people make them. No amount of negotiation will take them out. A lot has been said along ethnic lines. I must say it is time for Nigerians to wake up. The tyrants include people from all ethnic groups in Nigeria.
- The real enemy of Nigeria is the flagrant disregard for fundamental human rights by a few Nigerians and the reluctance of the people to confront the ruling mob. All efforts to ensure that the people control their own destiny must come from the people. No foreign nation will spearhead the resistance movement. This is the people's job
- Ordinary Nigerians of all ethnicities have lived together in peace. They know that a united country based on the principles of equality and justice is the best way to go. I strongly believe that in the end the will of the people will prevail. But in the meantime Nigerians should not be deceived. The road will be rough.

(M.M.S. PhD writes from Abuja)

(9) TRIBALISM POINTS TO THE NEED FOR A NEW POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT: “FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NORTHERN NIGERIA!”; “FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF SOUTHERN NIGERIA!”

(Mr. T.N. writes from UK)

- The disease with Nigeria is tribalism. A complete eradication of ethnic differences and hates is the sole solution of the Nigerian disaster. When the Yorubas stop hating and disrespecting the Igbos and Hausas. The Yorubas must stop castigating, bullying and discriminating against Igbos all non-locale among them, a kind of peace and progress might be on the horizon.
- When it seems Northerners are benefitting, the southerners say the North is dominating and Nigerian becomes “*Federal government of Northern Nigeria!*” When the South seems to be dominating the government, Nigerian becomes “*Federal government of Southern Nigeria!*”

Nigerians should call a spade a spade and look at the reality of the situation. Who is fooling whom? I propose a confederation for Nigeria with a small center. Nigerians should stay where they belong.

(10) THE END IS NOT IN SIGHT

(Mr. D.O. writes from New York)

- It is hard for anyone to accurately predict the future of the nation called Nigeria. However one thing is sure about Nigeria as there will be darkness at the end of each day. The end to Nigeria's problems is not in sight. The country is too divided for any analyst to be optimistic about Nigeria's future. No one in Nigeria has attempted to solve Nigeria's problems. The status quo is too comfortable for those who wield political power to venture into the unknown for better or for worse.
- The major tribes are too arrogant, for lack of a better word, to recognize that the country belongs to all. It is only with the vision of a Nigeria for all Nigerians that some progress will be made. On the other hand, Nigerians are too optimistic - an optimism that is built on a weak foundation and not backed actions that will bring about a better Nigeria for the future generations. Until Nigerians from all tribes participate in building one nation for all the future will remain bleak. Heavens have helped Nigeria, but Nigeria has not helped herself.

(11) IT IS A SHAME

(Mr. A. Kofi C. writes from Texas)

- I write as a Ghanaian who obviously has great interest in our brother country - Nigeria. To predict the future of Nigeria in these circumstances would be like an attempt one would have made to predict the life spans of both Abacha and Abiola. But I must not hesitate to point out that the mess in Nigeria is a shame to the military establishment in Africa. Turning potentially rich countries into poor beggars is a shame.

(12) DISINTEGRATION -THE MOST HONORABLE SOLUTION TO THE NIGERIAN DILEMMA

(Mr. N. C. Los Angles, USA)

- Czechoslovakia showed the civilized world the way out this kind of quagmire. Gentle hugs and firm handshakes and then bye-bye to all that. People don't have to die. The lives of individuals are sacred. States are

human constructions. They cannot have priorities over the aspirations and lives of citizens. Let Nigeria go the way of all such human anachronisms.

- But where necessary Nigeria should go like the old Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and others. But why civil war. Biafra tried it and it did not work. But if today Biafra should have its way, the rest of Nigerian old regions should peacefully go their way.

(13) Nigeria & Biafra: Root Causes of the Dilemma

(Mr. E. Obi writes from UK)

FORGET THE PAST, WE MUST. However, acknowledging its role in history is a functional necessity. Have the Jews forgotten the Holocaust? No sane Biafran will call for another war, or demand that blood be split. But the issue is the unrelenting efforts of the nation to distort, and deny the facts as they were. The evils of the civil war, must be acknowledged, documented, and redressed. Acknowledging its history is essential to our forging ahead. It is also this denial that lies behind some of the primordial sentiments. Let's learn to solve problems by attacking the ROOT CAUSES, rather than involving ourselves in "their" style of bringing peace to the Balkans, and or Rwanda. What is the root cause of our predicament?

(14) Unity - The only forward

(Yusuf Ahmed writes from London)

Irrespective of what the world thinks, and how many calls for self-determination the truth is that, within the confines of Nigeria and the hearts of every true Nigeria, lies the unity and progress required for Nigeria to take her rightful place in the scheme of things. Let's look inwards, and work together to make something out of a nation blessed with so much resources, human and otherwise. It can be done. It has been done in the annals of history. The aetiologies of Nigeria's problem demands that we drop our old attitudes in order to achieve sustainable development. The new paradigm in the concept of development as echoed by latest pronouncements, is "human development." Nigeria has been left in the dark for too long. It is time to catch the Zion train. As Bob Nesta Marley philosophized, "where there is a will, there's always a way, etc. The will is within each and every one of us, and the train is passing our way. We should not miss it.

(15) To move forward - Address Past Issues - Otherwise another War!

(Mr. Emeka C.O. writes from London)

Who says that no sane Igbo man or Biafran will call for another war or demand that blood be split." **DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE HEART OF THE IGBO.** We will definitely fight another war, but only if it is our war. We, like the Yorubas despise the North for the mess they have made of Nigeria. We, like the Yorubas want power in the hands of the people instead of with uneducated corrupt northern soldiers. However, if there is one thing we realized during Biafra, it is that we cannot by ourselves champion the movement for liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In 1966, we would have defeated the north if they were not supported by the Yorubas and all the other groups in Nigeria, including USA, UK and Soviet Union and the Arab World. It is all these Nigerian ethnic groups that betrayed us which are now asking for our help and support. Before we side with them, they must prove like we once did that they are willing to die on their feet rather than live on their knees. They must prove that they are more than just talk. They must prove that they can fight their own battles instead of crying to the West. When they do this, we will join them and show the north that the Igbo man is back and stronger than ever.

(16) Enough of the 'military garb politicians' and politics and Nigeria's style of democracy

(Lucas B. writes from UK)

We cannot continue to accommodate a continuation of the bad politics, which have ruined our dear Nigeria since 1960. Here we go once more, embarking on another endless transition program that will have no end. Unless we are steadfast and refuse to be taken for a ride by the discredited Nigerian military, we must refuse to participate in these costly games. The military must effectively leave office and hand over power to an Interim Government of National Unity, which will organize, realistic **Sovereign National Conference** and then national and regional elections.. I believe that this plan will permanently put to rest the perennial convulsions, which seem to engulf our once great nation every decade. Failure of the military clique to grasp this and put Nigeria right once and for all, I believe, will eventually lead to the disintegration of the Federation, piece by piece. A word is enough for the wise

(17) Basis for the Nigerian unity to be re-negotiated

(Umeh C. writes from London)

I have to conclude that the North/Military/Cabal have no plans to let go political power anytime soon. They are intent on keeping power and influence in their grasp for as long as possible. To them, a **Sovereign National Conference** will not be in their favor and they see 'disbenefits' of allowing the basis of Nigeria to be renegotiated. They obviously prefer the status quo. It seems to me that Nigeria's ills are certain to continue for a long time to come. Brace yourselves brothers and sisters; the struggle has just begun!

(18) Let the Sleeping dog lie

(Mr. E. M. writes from London)

National Conference again? Waste of time and resources!! My counsel to those who see the convening of a **Sovereign National Conference** as the only way to work ourselves out of the present impasse should do some serious soul searching and think over their viewpoint thoroughly. For the sake of the welfare and progress of fellow citizens of our dear nation and the West African sub-region, it is much wiser for all of us to simply let the sleeping lie undisturbed.