

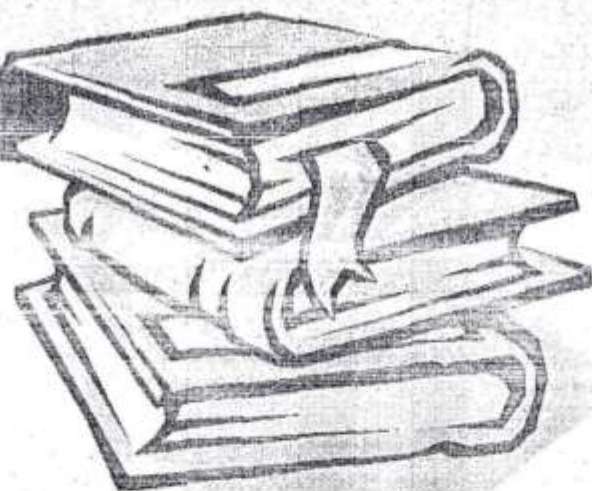
FRAMEWORK OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE
IN NIGERIA: A BOOK OF READINGS

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CHAPTER

23

**THE EVOLUTION OF FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA
FROM 1900 TO THE PRESENT: REAPPRAISAL**

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Abstract

This study focuses on the issues of federalism and examines the stage and circumstances that brought the different ethnic nationalities together since 1900. It also examines the problems and ways at different stages made to ensure that these nationalities live together without alarming friction among them. It is discovered that mistakes were made from the Colonial days and even after independence by the various rulers of this country. That the seed of discord was sown by the white Colonial masters. The whites favoured the northern domination of the country through the administrative structures they put on ground during and after their exit. However, we can still go along as a federation if changes are made to accommodate all the ethnic nationalities by our leaders. No section or ethnic should claim or show superiority over others as a lot of changes have taken place since independence and after the civil war in 1970.

Introduction

Nigeria is a pluralistic society and to some extent a British creation. By 1900 what is today known as the Federation of Nigeria was administered as separate protectorates North and South until they were brought under the same

geo-political and economic umbrella by the British in 1914. By 1914 Nigeria was not known as a federation, rather an amalgam of nationalities called protectorates. Since then Nigeria has not known or seen any peace. One nationality would be playing down on another for the control of political power at the centre prior to and after independence. This was the game plan of the British colonial masters. The British twisted the Political power to suit the north. That was the genesis of northern domination of the country.

Today, Nigeria has experienced many problems ranging from political, economic, military domination by the major ethnic groups; the rise of ethnic nationalism by the minorities to lessen the pressure exerted by the major groups. This has led to political economic and social friction. One wonders whether Nigeria is truly a federation. If the affirmation is yes, how did it come about? Can it really continue as a federation, how and what is the future?

THE THEORY FEDERATION

Saam Egite Oyovbaire quotes K. C. Wheare as having defined a federalism as:-

...an association of states so organised that powers are divided between a general government which in certain matters...is independent of the governments of the associated states, and, on the other hand, state governments which in certain matters are, in their turn, independent of the general government (Oyovbaire 1985:59).

According to Wheare, the federal principle demands that powers should be divided in such a way that the general (central or inclusive) and regional governments are each within a sphere, co-ordinate and independent. Neither level of government must be in a position to disregard or over-ride this terms of the constitution as concerns the power, status and rights which each has to enjoy. Both Federal and State government must possess fiscal autonomy. (Ibid).

The necessity for a federation to be established may arise from some of the following:

fear of attack by a foreign power, economic and administrative advantages, ethnic and cultural forces, common historical experience, geographical contiguity, similarity of political institutions, colonial policies, and political leadership (Awa 1976:15).

Geographical contiguity forces people to know one another, appreciate the economic and political strengths and weaknesses of their area, and to think seriously of union. But this may not always be the case, because if geographical contiguity is taken to its logical conclusion, the whole world may become a federation. Fear of attack may lead independent groups to come together for self preservation. This was the case with the American colonies before and after the American war of independence. Economic and administrative advantages are usually a strong urge to the formation of federations because the new areas will benefit from the removal of tariffs, mobility of labour and economies of scale. This was the main reason for the British establishment of the Federation of Nigeria,

Ethnicity and cultural factors encourage the formation of federation in two ways. In the first case, identity in racial and ethnic background make for a federation like in India, Germany, Australia and America. In the second case racial and cultural diversities also demand a federation as the Nigeria, Canada, Switzerland and what was obtained then in the defunct Soviet Union (Ibid).

In organising a federation, the aim is always to maintain unity while preserving diversity. The diversities should be found in particular territorial or geographical areas. If they are not grouped territorially, it will be difficult to create a federation on the basis of diversity. (Jinadu 1979:15-19).

To ensure the political stability of a federation, no one unit should be so large – in relation to population and wealth – that it can complete effectively with the rest of the county. Such a large unit will be tempted to use its majority in the popular chamber to impose its will on the rest of the country. This was the case with Northern Nigeria in the First Republic. Wealth may induce in units a sense of self-sufficiency, which in turn will breed secessionist tendencies. The three big regions of the First Republic were guilty of this. On the other hand, units must not be too small to be financially viable. In this wise, the creation of units along ethnic and linguistic lines should be pursued with caution, because some ethnicities are so large that they have to be broken into two or more units while others are so small that they cannot even exist as municipalities. (Awa 1976:38-44).

THE ETHNIC FOUNDATION OF THE NIGERIAN FEDERATION

Against the background of the theory of federalism, it is time for us to inspect the ethnic foundation on which the Nigerian Federation was constructed.

Awa talks of ten major ethnic groups plus several smaller ones. They differ in language, religion and social life. The dominant nationalities are the Hausa/Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the West and the Igbo in the East (Awa 1976) Peter P. Ekeh puts the number of ethnic groups within the borders of

Nigeria at more than two hundred. He claims that most of them are clearly identified, with distinctive languages, cultures and racial traits. For his part, A. E. Afigbo talks of "fifty-one presently identifiable ethnic group". (Afigbo 1987:31) in Nigeria. The discrepancy in the figures does not destroy the fact that there are many nationalities in Nigeria. It only highlights the fact that a federation is an absolute necessity for ruling such a group which was put together by an act of the colonial government, and not by any desire by the nationalities to come together. The importance of a federation for Nigeria is further driven home by the country's vast area of 924,000 square kilometres and a 1991 population of 88 million (Oyovbaire).

" This population has possibly gone up by now. Only a federal system can take good care of such an area and of such a population.

Okwudiba Nnoli provides material which goes to support the establishment of a federation on grounds of diversity. He says that it was only after colonisation that the term Yorubaland began to be used to refer to the domains of all rulers who claim descent from the mythical Oduduwa. In short they did not constitute entity before the British came. The Igbos, too, were organised into separate and autonomous political societies (Nnoli 1980:35). Against this background of multi-ethnic diversity, it will not be fair to advise a unitary government for Nigeria.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COLONIAL RULE IN NIGERIA

Colonial rule in Nigeria was established region by region and on different dates. Moreso, these regions were ruled separately for many years before it was thought necessary to bring them under one administration in 1914. Lagos for instance, became a British colony in 1861 (Crowder 1966:169). In 1885 the Oil Rivers Protectorate was declared over the Niger Delta, and in 1893 the Protectorate was extended inland and renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate. In 1900, the Niger Coast merged with Lagos to form the colony of Southern Nigeria (Coleman 1958:45). The Lagos colony which comprised all of Yoruba except Ilorin was placed under the Colonial Office, like the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. (Crowder). In 1906, the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was amalgamated with Lagos under the title of Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. (Coleman). In the North, the charter of the Royal Niger Company was withdrawn in 1899 and Lugard was appointed High Commissioner of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria on 1st January 1900. (Crowder 1968). In 1914, the two protectorates were amalgamated to form the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria (Coleman). What is emerging here is that Nigeria has never been a unitary state in its history, not even under colonial rule. The separate administration of the various protectorates, and the faulty implementation of the

amalgamation in 1914, kept the various parts of Nigeria apart for most of their colonial history. Having thus developed separately for so long, federation was the only sensible thing at independence, if only self-interest had not blinded the main political actors against the correct way to federalize.

THE NIGER COMMITTEE OF LORD SELBORNE, 1898

Some of the political problems of the Nigerian Federation can be traced to Lord Selborne's committee of 1898. When it became clear that British would have to assume direct control over the lands of the Royal Niger Company plus those of the coastal protectorate, the Selborne Committee was appointed to determine the future of Nigeria. The members were Goldie – representing the Royal Niger Company, Sir Clement Hill of the Foreign Office, Sir Reginald Antrobus of the Colonial Office, Sir Henry MacCallum the Governor of Lagos and Sir Ralph Moore the Commissioner of the Niger Coast Protectorate.

The views of Moore, Goldie and MacCallum, as could be expected, dominated the findings. It was agreed that the unification of the Niger territories should be the ultimate aim. But because of poor communications, its immediate implementation was impossible. As such, they recommended the creation of two provinces – the northern and the southern. For administrative purposes, the Committee advised that both provinces should utilize the existing African states, with their traditional political, judicial and social institutions. The aim was to escape the costly and overstuffed direct British administration, and prevent young and stubborn officials from provoking African opposition and resistance. It was on the basis of these recommendations that the British Government, in December 1899, declared a protectorate over the Lagos interior. The Niger Coast protectorate became the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria while the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria was declared in the North, (Flint 1969-243).

According to Flint, the Committee stressed administrative economy and efficiency, with no regard for long term goals and the deeper purposes of British governance. The members failed to face the question of the African relationship to British control. Also ignored was the African's future share in economic affairs in Nigeria were left to the decisions of the men on the spot. (Ibid). Jide Osuntokun accuses the Selborne Committee of being short-sighted and blinded by monetary matters and the economic exploitation of Nigeria (Ibid).

THE AMALGAMATION OF NIGERIA, 1914

In 1912, Sir Frederick Lugard was nominated as Governor-General of Nigeria with the task of amalgamating the northern and southern protectorates. Economic expediency was the reason for amalgamation. The North was running

at a deficit which was being met by a subsidy from the south and a Grant-in-Aid from Britain of about £300,000 yearly. There was also the need to co-ordinate railway policies in the North and South. More to that it was logical to amalgamate the two territories so that the poor land-lacked North should benefit from the revenues of the rich South with a long seaboard.

On 1st January 1914, the amalgamation of Nigeria came into force. Lugard decided to maintain the distinction between North and South, and rejected all suggestions that the country should be broken into four or seven units. The Northern and Southern Protectorates were each ruled by a Lieutenant-Governor. As Governor-General, Lugard carried on with general reform. The amalgamated Nigeria retained the status of a British Protectorate, but Lagos remained a colony.

The Southern Legislative Council was reduced to a municipal council for Lagos. Its place was taken by the Nigerian Council with a majority of its members being white officials. There were only six nominated Africans – three from the North and three from the South. It was only an advisory body which met once a year.

In administrative matters, Lugard amalgamated the Treasury, Railways, Survey, Judiciary, Military, Posts and Telegraphs and Audit. The rest was left to the Lieutenant-Governors, so that the two Provinces developed in isolation (Crowder *Ibid*).

Amalgamation in principle was not bad, but the method of its application sowed the seeds of conflict in Nigeria. Lugard inherited a caliphate whose geographical boundaries were not quite established, but instead of breaking it up into smaller units he chose to consolidate it. The result was that, by the time colonial rule ended, Northern Nigeria had acquired a corporate identity that was more concrete than what it had been in 1914. Northern Nigerian now had a fixed geographical boundary, and it was now also identified with the Hausa/Fulani culture and the Muslim religion. These features were not so strong in 1914, and would have been less so by 1960 had Lugard broken up the territory into smaller units and allowed southern Christian and commercial influences of change to come into contact with the North. But as it was, he protected the North against all Southern influences, so that the two provinces progressed as two countries owned by one master.

If Lugard had loved to preserve the emirate system he could have made the caliphate into a country in its own right, without having to force it into an unholy alliance with the south. Following natural frontiers, the south could have been broken into two countries, east and west of the lower Niger. This was the type of policy which the French followed in French Equatorial Africa and French West Africa. But the British for economic reasons, are fond of creating political

entities which disregard the needs of political harmony. We have the cases of Sudan and the defunct Central African Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. For historical knowledge Rhodesia is now Zimbabwe and Nyasaland is Malawi. Both countries are found in South-East Africa.

Coming back to Nigeria, Oyovbaire states that by the time the amalgamation was carried out, the North had been politically frozen into a "natural region" within the Nigerian framework'. Between 1914 and 1960, the concept of the North as a "natural region" was nurtured and consolidated so much so that it survived colonialism and remains a fertile political platform in Nigeria today.

CLIFFORD'S CONSTITUTION, 1922

When Sir Hugh Clifford became Governor of Nigeria at the end of the first World War, he tried to reverse the separation between North and South. Clifford expanded the central secretariat, amalgamated all departments and appointed a Chief Secretary who was to act as the Government deputy. The attempt to destroy the practice of separate development between South and North was frustrated by the colonial Office which appointed Sir Richmond Palmer as Lt. Governor of Northern Nigeria. Palmer belonged to the school of Charles Temple which emphasised northern superiority to the south, and encouraged a separate northern identity (Osuntokun 1979:92).

The constitution of 1922 itself provided for a Legislative Council of forty-six members, twenty-seven of them unofficials. Of the unofficials Lagos was to provide 3 and Calabar 1 by adult election (Crowder Ibid). In the Northern Provinces, the 1922 constitution vested legislative power in the Governor alone. This meant that the Legislative Council legislated only for the colony and the Southern provinces (Ojiako 1981:10). Even though the 1922 constitution was a forward step in the elective principle, it failed in bringing Northern Nigeria closer to the South. The North continued to develop along its conservative path alone.

THE 1930s

Sir Donald Cameron, Governor of Nigeria from 1931 to 1935 attempted to revive Clifford's policy of real unification between North and South. But his efforts were frustrated by the worldwide recession and consequent economic problems. However, his successor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, went ahead to divide the southern provinces into two – East and West – in 1939. But, like Clifford, his work in the North was obstructed by the Chief Commissioner (formerly Lt. Governor), Sir Theodore Adams. He favoured princely power and authority and championed emirate independence. Sir Theodore Adams is on record as having

said, in 1941, that the emirs considered the North as a separate country so that enforced co-operation with the south would lead to a demand for a "Pakistan". (Osuntokun). So it was that on each occasion, the Colonial Office conspired with the administrative head in the North to frustrate the Governor General's Plans for unity.

THE RICHARDS'S CONSTITUTION

The Richards constitution came into effect on 1st of January 1947, with three objectives: 'to promote the unity of Nigeria to provide adequately within that unity for the diverse elements which make up the country and to secure greater participation by Africans in the discussion of their own affairs (Crowder 1966:273). The new Legislative Council of forty-four members had twenty-eight unofficials as against sixteen officials. The rest were nominated or indirectly elected through Native Authorities. The North was included in the Legislative. But regional Councils were created for the North, East and West. The constitution was criticised for arresting Nigerian unity by promoting regionalism (Ibid). But what Sir Arthur Richards did was to express in constitutional form the reality of Nigerian policies of separate development. He did not create a new situation (Osuntokun Ibid). The thesis of this paper is not against federalism. Our point is that it should be properly applied. One would have expected Sir Richards to have broken the country into a number of regions so that no one region would be so big as to dictate the pace of the Federation. Thus the British missed the last chance to create more regions before the self-seeking nationalists took the initiative.

As if in self defence, Sir Arthur Richards in 1948 is reported to have said:-

It is only the accident of British sovereignty which has made Nigeria one country. It is still far from being one country or one nation socially and politically there are deep differences between the major tribal groups. They do not speak the same language and they have highly divergent customs and ways of life and they represent different stages of culture. (Osuntokun Ibid).

Nigerian Nationalists like Awolowo and Abubakar Tafawa Belewa had earlier expressed the same views. In 1947 Awolowo said:

Nigeria is not a nation; it is a mere geographical expression. There are no 'Nigerians' in the same sense as there are

'English' or 'Welsh' or 'French' the word Nigeria is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria from those who do not (Osuntokun Ibid).

For his part Abubakar Tafawa Balewa declared, in 1947 that:

Since the amalgamation of southern and northern provinces in 1914, Nigeria has existed as one country only on paper. It is still far from being united. Nigeria unity is only a British intention for the country. (Ibid).

Even the Nigerian nationalists who opposed the regionalism of the Richards constitution did little in their words and deeds to foster national unity. In 194, Azikiwe allowed himself to be elected President of the Ibo State Union. Within a twinkle, he was reduced from a national leader to a tribal head. The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) was equally affected. It lost its national appeal and became a regional party. The attacks on the Egbe Omo Oduduwa by Zik's newspaper, the *West African Pilot*, while at the same time giving a lot of publicity to the Ibo State Union, did a lot of damage to Zik's claim of being a universalist (Uba 1989 220-221).

The result was that rival regional political parties were formed – the Northern Peoples Congress in the North and the Action Group in the West. Thereafter, regionalism became a platform for politics so that no leader was willing to make an honest effort to discard it (Osuntokun Ibid).

THE MACPHERSON CONSTITUTION 1951-53, AND AFTER

The Richards constitution had been criticised among other things, for lack of prior consultation and for making regionalism a main feature of the Nigerian structure. But the Mackpherson constitution which benefited from grassroots consultation ended up with regionalism more entrenched than ever before. The Regional Assemblies were even responsible for selecting those of their members to represent the Regions in the Federal House of Representatives (Olusanya 1980:531-532).

Dr. Azikiwe was the first victim of the defects of the Mcpherson constitution when, as an NCNC opposition member in the Western House of Assembly, he was prevented by the Action Group majority in that House from being nominated to the Federal House. He therefore decided to make the constitution unworkable especially in the East where the NCNC was in the majority. The result was the *Eastern Nigerian crisis of 1953* which soon spread to

the Federal House and forced the British Government to call for Constitutional Conferences in London in 1953 and in Lagos in 1954. These conferences produced the Littleton Constitution which confirmed federalism as the form of government for Nigeria. The failure to move away from federation showed that federalism had become a natural part of the Nigeria system. Unfortunately, no one was bold enough to take the measures which would make federalism function properly in Nigeria. They knew that the correct thing to do was to create smaller units, but each regional leader saw his region as a political power-base which should not be lost. Consequently the only real improvement in the 1954 constitution was the provision that elections to the Federal House should be direct and no longer through the Regional Houses (Ibid).

The Constitutional conferences of 1957 and 1958 merely confirmed the existing federal structure with every regional leader jealously defending his empire. All this while the political centre in Nigeria was not very contentious because the major leaders concentrated in their regions. But with the approach of independence in 1960, Awolowo and Azikiwe moved to the Federal House in the 1959 federal elections. The presence of the two men in Lagos set the stage for the turbulent politics of independent Nigeria.

THE MINORITIES PROBLEM

For long, the major political leaders ignored the demands of minority groups in their regions for the creation of more States. The minorities feared domination by the majority tribes in their respective regions, and their interest was championed by the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State Movement, the Benin Delta State Movement, and the Middle-Belt Movement affecting the Eastern, Western and Northern Provinces respectively.

The 1957 constitutional conference directed that a commission be appointed "to ascertain the facts about the fears of the minorities in any part of Nigeria and to propose means of allaying these fears whether well or ill-founded" (Ibid). Possibly, under pressure from the major political leaders, the Commission reported that the creation of smaller units, would create more problems as great as it sought to cure" (Ibid). This is how Nigeria went into independence without having solved the minorities problem.

THE 1962/63 CENSUS QUESTION

In 1962 Balewa government conducted the first after 'flag' independent Nigeria Census. The Eastern Nigerian government suspected that the figures were rigged. Hence there were lots of criticisms. As a result Balewa cancelled

the figures and ordered another census in 1963. The provincial figures accepted placed the population of Nigeria at 55,653,821. A breakdown of the figure showed that;

Northern Region	-	29 millions
Eastern Region	-	12 millions
Western Region	-	10 millions
Mid-West Region	-	2 millions
Lagos Federal Territory	-	6 millions

Again these figures did not go down well with the Eastern regional government as a lot of criticisms generated. The Eastern regional government went to supreme court asking the court to declare that the figures were inflated and should not be accepted. At last the Eastern regional government lost the case and the figures were sadly used until the 1991 census. The importance of census to any nation is well known, but in the case of Nigeria was purely used for domination. The "heavily" Populated North used its numerical strength in political theatre to perpetuate northern strength on who should hold the mantle of leadership of this nation (Crowder).

The creation of the Mid-West Region in 1963 should not be taken as an honest attempt to solve the Nigerian federal problem. It was simply a conspiracy between the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) and the NCNC to reduce the size of Awolowo's power base. After all, the north needed a breaking up more than the West. The East too, was not lacking in minority areas that were ripe for regional status. In effect, the creation of the Mid-West Region did not change the existing structural imbalance in the country (Oyovbaire).

DECREE NO. 34, 1966

Decree No. 34 of 24th May, 1966, which abolished federalism in Nigeria and established a unitary state was the work of a man for whom History meant nothing. Ironsi completely misunderstood the cause of Nigeria's problems. He failed to realise that federalism in Nigeria had been around for so long that the solution was no longer destruction but perfection of the system. The outcome of decree No. 34, was negative in the sense that it raised fears in the non-Igbos that the Igbos were plotting again, so soon after January 1966. (Ibid).

THE CREATION OF TWELVE STATES, 1967

The first act of Gowon, as Head of state, was to restore the Federation. Then, on 27th May, 1967, he created twelve states out of the Federation of Nigeria – 6 in the North, 3 in the West and 3 in the East. His aim was that "no

one Region or Tribal group should be in a position to dominate others” (Ibid). The twelve-states systems removed the problem of uneven distribution of political power between the federating units and it provided each state with an environment of competition and it co-operation on more equal terms with others states. (Ibid). But we must not forget that the immediate reason to create the twelve states was the desire to deprive Odumegu Lt. Col. Ojukwu of the support of the minority areas in the Eastern Region. Had the emergency not arisen, the story of federalism in Nigeria today would have been different. Regional political is such a part of Nigeria that it needs a soldier and an emergency for politicians to be forced to part with some sections of their domains.

THE SEVEN NEW STATES SOF 1976

Another soldier, General Murtala Mohammed created seven new states in 1976, bringing the number to 19. The number has since gone up to 36 plus the Federal Capital territory – Abuja through the agency of military rule. What the creation of new states did was to elaborate the idea of a balanced federation as established by the 1967 changes. However, a balanced federation does not mean an uncontrolled establishment of new entities without regard to their ability to function effectively as States.

THE 1979 CONSTITUTION AND THE PRINCIPLE OF “FEDERAL CHARACTER”

The term “Federal Character” was coined by General Murtala Muhammed when inaugurating the Constitution Drafting Committee on 18th October, 1975. By it, he had in mind the executive branch of government – the Presidency and the Cabinet. He expected their composition to reflect the ethnic and geographical balance of the country (Eke 1989:29).

The Constitution Drafting Committee broadened the usage of “Federal Character” to include almost every diversity. It now applies to every facet of government and the conduct of its principle also applies to every other level of government down to local government administration. (Ibid). The principle seeks to avoid the predominance in any government, or its agencies at any level of persons from states or form a few ethnic and other sectional groups.

Rotimi Williams as quoted by P. P. Ekeh, defines “Federal Character” as:-

...the distinctive desire of the people of Nigeria to promote national unity foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation notwithstanding the

diversities of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish, harness to the enrichment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Ibid).

The principle of "Federal Character" is placed into clearer perspective by Livingstone definition of Federalism. He says:-

...the essence of federalism lies not in the institutional or constitutional structure but in the society itself. Federal government is a device by which the federal qualities of the society are articulated and protected. (Jinadu).

It was for this reason that the member of the Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC) put the principles of "Federal Character" in the Constitution – to articulate and protect the federal qualities of the Nigerian society.

The principle has been criticized for encouraging low standard in the public service. Even if this true, it is a short term weakness because once the under-privileged have been given the opportunity to discover their potentialities they will not waste time to catch-up. Meritocracy is sometimes a cloak for nepotism. The greedy man sees merit only in his own people. "Federal Character" is a reminder to the greedy man to look around and discover talents outside his family, tribe or religion.

1996 CREATION OF SIX GEO-POLITICAL ZONES

In 1996 Nigeria was divided into six geo-political zones. The zones are the South – South zone made up mainly the ethnic minorities of the South. Other were the South – East zone, the South West, North West, North East and North Central. Some of the reasons advanced for the creation of these zones were that since the 1992 constitution made room for rotational presidency, each zone would take its turn in producing a president. That will reduce the so-called marginalisation echo.

There was rise in ethnic nationalism especially in the South – South and South – East zones. It became necessary to kill the urge for this ethnic move to create a state within a state. It does not seem to have disclosed this urge for the formation of these ethnic communities. It was created for the balance of power among the component states. This of course does not change the political arrangement that existed from independence, rather it solidifies and strengthens the north hold to power politics of the nation.

REVENUE ALLOCATION

Revenue allocation has been of contention for long because each party wants to benefit maximumly from the national resources. On the other hand, the parties want resources which will help them develop their spheres of influences so that they will be seen to be contributing effectively in nation building.

Between 1948 and 1952, the arrangement was that the budget excesses of the central government be allocated to regional government on the principle of derivation. Autonomous revenue and tax jurisdictions were given to regional governments from 1952- 1954. From 1954- 1959, the previous arrangements were entrenched, but emphasis was made on the need to provide to the regions and to the centre an adequate measure of fiscal autonomy within their own spheres of government. The period 1959- 1966 played down the emphasis on regional financial autonomy. The financial stability of federal centre had to be the guarantee of the financial stability of Nigeria as a whole. A Distributable Pool Account was also established. Its broad conviction was emphasized between 1966- 1969.

Since the end of the civil war, the trend has been for increased federal government involvement in some previously assigned regional functions. This has naturally hurt the ego of the State Governments, but the trend continues. There is now a deliberate effort by the Federal Government to have its presence felt in every part of the country, through the establishment of federal projects and the direct funding Local Governments (Oyovbaire). Now, the derivation principle has been adopted to satisfy the areas and zones where the treasure base of Nigeria anchors.

CONCLUSION AND THE FUTURE

We Nigerians have practiced federalism for so long that it is that becoming part of our culture, and for anyone to suggest moving away from it will amount to an unnecessary disturbance of the status quo. Federalism in itself has never been the problem; it is its application that has been the cause of trouble in Nigeria since the days of colonialism.

The new practice of the Federal Government to fund Local Government directly is now moving the country away from state federalism into Local Government Federalism. The establishment of direct links between the Federal Government and the Local Governments will increase the influence of the Federal Government at all expense of State Governments' prestige. On the other hand, the demand for the creation of ridiculously small states will be reduced because people will realize that a locality does not necessarily have to reach statehood before it can have access to the Federal Government.

There remains a gloomy note. The concept of the "North" which survives colonialism seems to have survived the creation of states. The concept transcends ethnicity and religion. For example, some of the leaders of the July 1966 coup were Christians. It was not a question of Christians or Muslims. It was a simple question of Northerners versus some Southerners. Assuming the northern domination in politics is likely to survive because, while the North remains a block, which can even penetrate some parts of the South, the South cannot even maintain regional unity.

Again the South seems to be living in a fool's paradise, with its talk about academic superiority over the North. It appears that the North is being judged on the pre-civil war standards. Many things have changed between 1970 and now if the South remains counting its gains, it will realize too late that while it was counting old gains, the North was making new ones.

All said, the future of Federalism in Nigeria remains hopeful. The enjoyment of autonomy in the Federation of Nigeria is more preferable to a doubtful sovereignty outside the country. No State is now big enough to try it alone. The Federal Government grows stronger at the expense of State Governments.

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