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CHANGING FACES OF DEMOCRACY AND LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA.

KEY WORDS: Democracy, Leadership, Productivity, Crime, Social Contract.

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the use and abuse of the twin concepts of 'democracy' and 'leadership' by Nigerians and the attendant implications. It argues that the deliberate abuse of these concepts has in turn resulted in the abuse of their underlying principles and values. Consequently, political apathy, violent crimes, industrial actions and civil disobedience are on the increase. These developments no doubt pose a serious threat to industrial harmony as well as the national security. The paper recommends massive conscientization and re-orientation of the citizenry, particularly the present and future leaders, on the need to imbibe genuine democratic and leadership values; the urgent need to overhaul the existing laws guiding the activities of public office-holders; and the imperatives of strengthening the various anti-graft and financial crimes agencies in the country as panacea to these self-induced problems.

INTRODUCTION

Most African countries are enmeshed in various leadership problems. Nigeria happens to be one of those that are seriously affected. 'Democracy' and 'leadership' have become for most Nigerians and their leaders dynamic concepts in the sense of what could be easily uprooted from one context and be implanted in changing circumstances. Democratic leadership has assumed an entirely different phenomenon in Nigeria so much so that most Nigerians are no longer interested in politics and leadership issues. Democracy is supposed to be a brand of government that is operated on the basis of the consent of the majority of the people, but what obtains today in Nigeria is government or leadership by imposition. Leadership gives vision and direction to the people. This position is buttressed by the saying that the people perish where there is no vision.

The failure of leadership in Nigeria has resulted in a lot of developmental and security problems. The incessant industrial actions by various sections of the Nigerian workforce coupled with upsurge of militant groups from all nooks and crannies of the country has put a big question mark on the claim of Nigeria to be a democratic nation. This work probes into the historical roots of democratic leadership and its underpinning principles and values, with a view to demonstrating that things are no longer at ease vis-à-vis the current trends in democratic leadership in Nigeria. Unless our leaders re-orientate themselves towards embracing positive and lasting values, things may not really change for the better.

Conceptual Analysis

Democracy

When we define democracy as government of the people, what exactly do we mean? There are conflicting claims over the meaning, nature, and application of the term 'democracy'. Thus, the concept of democracy means many things to many people. Its appeal is such that virtually every regime lays claim to being democratic in all ramifications. It is based on the chameleonic character of democracy that Carl Beeker (1941:4) conceived democracy as "a kind of conceptual Gladstone bag which, with a little manipulation, can be made to accommodate almost any collection of social facts we may wish to carry about in it". In the words of Bruce (1921:20), "the word democracy has been used over since the time of Herodotus to denote that form of government in which the ruling power of a state is legally vested, not in any particular class or classes, but in the members of the community as a whole". The 2004 encyclopedic edition of the New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary defines democracy among other things as "a theory of government which, in its purest form, holds that the state should be controlled by all the people, each sharing equally in privileges, duties and responsibilities and each participating in person in the

government, as in the city-states of ancient Greece" (p.341). Still on the meaning of democracy, Macdonis (2001:438) defined democracy as "a type of political system in which power is exercised by the people as a whole". In his conception of democracy that has gotten popular appeal and endorsement, Abraham Lincoln defined democracy as a "government of the people by the people and for the people". And for Cohen (1972:394), "democracy is government by the people, self-government, the rule of a community by its members".

One thing is evident from all these definitions, and that is the fact that the ideas of "the people" "popular will", and "popular participation" underpin them. They appear to be saying one thing: that sovereignty belongs to the people! The problem with describing democracy as government of the people is to explain who the people are, and how they are to govern. There are two major schools of thought on democracy. The first school entertains the belief that is a form of government which emphasizes procedures that enable the people to govern. It is otherwise known as the procedural view of democracy. It outlines universal participation', 'political equality and 'majority rule' as the three basic principles of democracy. The second school sees democracy in the substance of government policies, such as in freedom of speech, freedom of religion, as well as in the provision of human needs (Janda et al, 2000:32-36). Having examined what democracy is all about, we can now turn our attention to exploring the meaning of leadership.

The susceptibility of democracy to multiple interpretations notwithstanding, there are some outstanding features of democracy that seem to run through all the various definitions put forward by different democratic scholars. In other words, there is a cord of principle that binds (even if loosely) all the democrats together. Prominent among these common principles are: political equality, rule by the majority, popular control of policy-makers, theory of natural laws and natural rights, a government that is responsive to the popular will, the belief that a community of human beings can govern themselves, etc.

Leadership

The concept of leadership, like that of democracy, is not easy to define. For the reason that the definition of leadership can be articulated from different perspectives such as traits, behavior, influence, role relationship, interaction patterns and occupations, there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are scholars who have tried to define it (Sharma & Sadana 2008). Since the notion of leadership has different meanings for different scholars, it is bound to have numerous definitions. Hughes et al (2006:6) rightly observed that leadership is a complex phenomenon involving the leader, the followers and the situation. Leadership is influence, the art or process of influencing people so

that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals (Koontz et al, 1984:506). Leadership involves a relationship in which one person influences others to work together on a certain task vis-à-vis the realization of the person's and/or group's desired goals. For House et al, "Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization" (Sharma & Sadana Quoted, 2008:633).

Leadership is an important element of group dynamics. In other words, the success and failure of any (secondary) group is predicated on the effectiveness or otherwise of its leadership. Koontz et al (1984) were indeed right when they observed that every group of people that performs near its total capability has some person as its head who is skilled in the art of leadership. In Plato's and Aristotle's teleological theories of state, the society exists for a purpose, and that purpose is the good life. To use the very words of Aristotle, "the good life is certainly the chief goal, both of individuals and of states...A state exists for the good life, and not for the sake of life only" (Stumpf & Abel quoted, 2002:469) The essence of quoting Aristotle and Plato is to demonstrate that the discovery of the importance of leadership is an age-long one, seeing that the next step made by both of them, and indeed all the political theorists of state after emphasizing the need and essence of living in society, was to project and defend the ideal form of government (Leadership) that will make for the realization of the state's goal. Basically, leadership is of two kinds – the instrumental and expressive leadership. Whereas instrumental leadership refers to group direction that emphasizes the completion of tasks, expressive leadership focuses on collective well-being (Macionis 2001).

Leadership is also of different styles, ranging from authoritative, participative (democratic), laissez-faire, transformational to paternalistic leaderships (Macionis 2001; Sharma & Sadana 2008; Koontz et al 1984; Hughes et al 2006). Koontz et al (1984:507) gave a fantastic summary of the fundamental principles of leadership thus:

Since people tend to follow those whom they see as means of satisfying their own personal goals, the more managers understand what motivates their subordinates and how these motivations operate, and the more they reflect this understanding in carrying out their managerial actions, the more effective leaders they are likely to be.

It is important to note that the concept of leadership automatically implies the concept of "followership". Of course, there can be no leader without followers, just as there can be no followers without a leader. Leadership usually occurs in places and circumstances where there are group of people such as club, industries, age grades, family, professional groups etc. It is, however, leadership as it affects the wider society (state which is the highest form of human society) that forms the thrust of this paper. Similarly, emphasis is to be laid on how the activities of the leader impact on or affect the behavior and perception of the followers.

It is the contention of some scholars that leadership simply refers to the position or office of a leader. To this end, political philosophers are wont to asking such questions as: Who is a leader? What are the qualities of a leader? How is a leader able to influence members of his group towards the achievement of his and/or the group's goal? Why should human society deserve leadership? In other words, can't human society or group exist without leadership? Are leaders born or made? Or, is leadership situational? These questions and more form the basis of much of the researches that have been carried out and will continue to be carried out on leadership and leadership effectiveness.

Democratic Leadership

Having understood what Democracy and Leadership are all about, it is time we explored the meaning or import of the term 'democratic leadership'. Simply put, a democratic leadership is a leadership that is democratic. In other words, it is leadership that is founded on the hallowed principles of democracy. Democratic

leadership is nothing other than the combination of two words – 'democratic' and 'leadership'. Put in another way, two conditions must be in place for democratic leadership to exist. The first condition is that there has to be the existence of leadership. The second condition is that the leadership has to be democratic.

The "democratic leader" consults with subordinates on proposed actions and decisions and encourages participation from them (Koontz et al, 1984:509). A democratic leader hardly takes action without first of all consulting widely with his subordinates with the aim of obtaining their consent. According to Macionis (2001:166), "democratic leadership is more expressive and makes a point of including everyone in the decision-making process".

The Emergence of Organized Leadership

The formation of government be it aristocratic, democratic, monarchic or authoritarian form of government could be traced to men's exit from the pre-social contract state otherwise known as the "state of nature". The concept of the state of nature is very popular among the contract theorists. According to this school of thought, state of nature refers to the condition of human life prior to the formation of the civil society and government (Stumpf & Abel, 2002).

Although the advocates of the social contract differ in their views of human nature, they are, however, unanimous in contending that the civil society came to be as a result of the contract entered into by men or persons in order to escape the dangers inherent in the state of nature. The state of nature is a "state of unlimited freedom characterized by war of all against all; it was a state of human existence without a common government; the state of nature is indeed a situation man existed in when there was no security of life, property or liberty; it was a situation characterized by constant fear of violent and sudden death.

Because the state of nature is characterized by unlimited freedom with no central power or jurisdiction, it was not long before people in that state realized that it was not the best for them, especially as their life and private possessions are not safe. What is more, there was no independent authority to apportion blame and apply punishment in the face of transgression of the laws of nature. Therefore, it was in a bid to avoid the dangers associated with the state of nature that men entered into social contract for the purpose of forming a civil society.

Now, in turning our attention to the social contract, the questions to ask are: what was the purpose of the contract? What were the contents of the contract? And what was its outcome? When the individuals who were formerly in the state of nature discovered that such a state of existence is unsafe for them, they came together under a pact/agreement and individually and collectively authorized the constitution of government with such power and authority as to make laws for the good governance and preservation of their life, liberty and property. In entering into the social contract, the persons that so entered agreed to surrender some of their rights to the common authority to be so constituted for the purposes of enforcing restraint on their activities and providing for their common good.

According to Hobbes, the agreement that resulted in the social contract required the individual to relinquish his autonomy, while noting thus:

I authorize and give up my right of governing myself, to this man, or this assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy right to him, and authorize all actions in like manner" (Stumpf & Abel quoted, 2002:475).

In his own description of the social contract, Locke (1952 Chap.2 para.4) states thus:

"When therefore, any number of men so unite into one society, as to quit everyone his executive power of the laws of nature, to resign it to the public, there, and there only, is a political, or civil society".

The outcome of the social contract was the emergence of an organized government or leadership. Whether the instrument of this government or leadership is concentrated in one, few or many persons is a different thing altogether. The important thing to note is that the end in mind for constituting a common sovereignty was to ensure order, security, equality, and, indeed the common good of all.

Different social contract theorists used the device or phenomenon of social contract to justify different forms of government. For instance, whereas Locke used it to stress that political authority rests on the consent of the people and accordingly recommended limited representative government as the best form of government, Hobbes relied on it to canvas for absolute sovereignty – a situation in which all the powers of a state will be concentrated in one individual or body. Seen thus, the origin of the concept of democratic leadership could be traced to men's exit from the state of nature and the formation of the social contract.

Democratic Leadership in Nigeria

It is not an exaggeration to assert that the Nigerian brand of democracy or democracy as practiced in Nigeria is a charade. The concept of democracy presupposes a government in which the will of the majority gives direction to the decisions and activities of the government. Democracy also presupposes certain principles such as equality of citizens, the rule of law, free and fair election, separation of powers, personal freedom and political rights, etc.

As we had noted earlier, the essence of human beings entering into a social contract was to better secure the common good of all. Nobody will willingly give his consent to any contract that is aimed at bad governance as well as abuse and misdirection of the instrument of the collective will of the people. It is indeed one of the hallowed principles of democracy that the will of the majority (when genuinely secured) should govern. Ideally, it affords every qualified member of a political community a voice in political decision-making.

In a related development, democracy, just like every other form or style of government, is a concept that only receives flesh and blood through the instrumentality of leadership as expressed by the people of a given community. In other words, democracy presupposes leadership, nay, a peculiar form of leadership. Quality leadership is necessary and important for the survival not only of a democracy, but also of any human organization. Besides being a dynamic process, leadership is a two-way system involving a reciprocal relationship between the leaders and the led (governed). Leadership requires or entails the moral and intellectual ability of the leader to visualize and work for what will best realize the intended welfare of all. In this context leadership is synonymous with vision, and the people perish where there is no vision.

Democratic leadership entails that the leader should provide the masses with an opportunity to participate in decisions affecting them. Since a democratic leader usually exercises the control of his subjects via the deployment of the forces within his community, he is very likely to raise the morale of his people and as well enjoy their continued support. This accounts for why the present writers are of the strong opinion that there is a direct relationship between good governance and high level of productivity and vice-versa.

In turning our attention to the major task of this segment of our discourse, which is a consideration of the Nigerian leaders and their purported practice of democratic leadership, we realize the compelling need for us to agree with Ikejiani (2008) that democracies as practiced in Africa are phony democracies. Democratic leadership as practiced here in Nigeria is nothing short of a corruption of the concept of democratic leadership. Again, this writer agrees with Ikejiani that in Africa of today, people go into politics for profit and not for the sake of service to humanity. In her words,

The concept of democracy in (Sic) Africa has been reduced to the formal instrument of elections, which does not allow for discussions on the social prerequisites and institutional general

conditions under which the expression of the will of the people take place (Ikejiani-Clarke, 2008:25).

And in going further,

In Africa today, people go into politics for profit and not as a service. The leaders are not accountable and electoral processes faulty due to the privatization of state power...The continuous holding of elections under conditions of systematic manipulation, and the absence of the rule of law and separation of powers aimed at excluding the real will of the people from political articulation, appears as an empirically well-founded confirmation that these democracies are phony... (p.25)

The above picture as being painted by Ikejiani captures clearly the attitude of Nigerian politicians. True to the above picture, Nigerian politicians have turned the supposedly public goods into private ones. Our leaders emerge not through the barrels of our collective votes but rather through some pre-determined mechanisms -- rigging.

The concept of "god fatherism" has become the new-found democracy in Nigeria. Some powerful individuals have constituted themselves into personality cults so much so that they (instead of the electorates) determine who gets what as far as political leadership is concerned. We should not forget in a hurry the abduction saga that took place in Anambra state involving a sitting governor. In that scenario, a single self-styled political good-father single-handedly mobilized the apparatus of government (police) to illegally unseat the chief Executive Officer of the state.

What is more, because these politicians were not elected by the people, they in turn see themselves as not being accountable to the people. Looting of public funds has become the order of the day. The claim that Nigeria is a multi-party state is a claim that exists only in paper. Opposition political parties are being muzzled on a daily basis. Job opportunities are increasingly being reserved for the relations of our so-called leaders and their cronies. Foisting of illiterates and political thugs on the people as a way of political compensation is now gaining momentum. The majority of the populace is being teleguided towards abandoning education while embracing illiteracy. Teachers in public schools are grossly underpaid, just as public schools and universities are systematically being under funded. In a bid to maintain political and leadership hegemony, our public office-holders send their children to foreign schools where there is little or no interruption in the academic calendar, while back home they deliberately starve schools of fund with a view to creating tension and academic unrest.

Obasi Igwe (2008) was indeed right to have declared Nigeria a degenerate state. "A degenerate state", according to him, "is a state in which those entrusted with power or authority do things the wrong way, thwart the course of justice, adopt informal instead of formal, unlawful instead of lawful, means in reaching ends, a state in which people in power or authority ridicule meritocracy and cultivate mediocrity, and define the interests of the people in terms of their own interests or other parochial concerns" (Obasi Igwe, 2008:33). He noted that when a few people engage in the above activities, it gives hope that the ills might be corrected. But it becomes a different thing when most of those in power are engaged in such since, according to him, such a scenario is only symptomatic of a failed state. He further contended that the standard of everything in a degenerate state becomes very low, be it in education, in job, production and even morality, just as people born into such a system begin to view such corrupt standard as the standard or correct way of doing things. Obasi Igwe's analysis captures the real picture of the trends of democratic leadership in Nigeria.

According to Asogwa (2009:218), "the attitude of our political leaders in recent times has largely remained a mockery of the rule of law and every other known democratic principle." He adds that illegal impeachments, unauthorized approvals, election rigging, executive lawlessness and other sundry unconstitutional acts and decisions have become the order of the day.

The following happenings in Nigeria as provided by Asogwa (2009) provide support for our claim that the twin notions of 'democracy' and 'leadership' have assumed changing faces in the hands of Nigerians and their so-called leaders. First, in July 2003 and during the reign of former President Olusegun Obasanjo, a sitting Governor, by name Chris Ngige, was forcefully removed from office and abducted by a team of armed policemen led by the then AIG zone 9, Mr Ralph Ige. Thereafter, the then Deputy Governor, Mr Okey Udeh announced that he had assumed power as the substantive Governor following Ngige's resignation from office.

Second, some governors have been removed from office in a manner contrary to the stipulations of the Nigeria's 1999 constitution. The constitution had provided that no Chief Executive (governor or president) can be removed from office except by two-third majority of members of national or state assembly. Contrary to this stipulation, Joshua Dariye of Plateau state was removed from office by only six (6) out of the twenty-four (24) members of the state assembly in November 2006. However, the Supreme Court declared Dariye's impeachment null and void in April 28, 2007 and directed his immediate reinstatement. Similarly, Rasheed Ladoja of Oyo state was impeached from office by eighteen (18) out of the thirty-two (32) members of the House. Relief came to him, however, when the Supreme Court in its landmark judgment in December 7, 2006, quashed the purported impeachment and ordered his reinstatement.

Third, there have been increasing cases of unholy alliance between some electoral officials and some members of the ruling party resulting in unjustified denial of the electoral victory of some political office-holders elected by the popular will of the masses. The elections of 2003 and 2007 are good examples in this respect. In 2003 election, for instance, some INEC officials allegedly in collaboration with the ruling PDP declared Dr Chris Ngige the winner instead of Mr Peter Obi of APGA. It took over three years of legal battles before the Court of Appeal sitting in Enugu finally ruled that Mr Peter Obi was the authentic winner of the election. There are many other undemocratic practices involving cases of unholy alliance between the supposedly electoral umpire and the ruling parties in states across the federation which resulted in the denial of electoral victory to the rightful winners. The problematic aspect of the whole thing is that in each of these cases the perpetrators of the undemocratic act in question would usually dub their actions as 'democracy in action'. It is these trends, this corruption of the concepts of democracy and leadership that we call the "Nigerian brand of democratic leadership". Having x-rayed Nigerian leaders and their conception and practice of democratic leadership, let us turn our attention to a consideration of the causal factors of failed leadership in Nigeria and their implications.

Causal factors of failed leadership

The saying that the love of money is the root of all evils is wrongly placed. In actual sense, at least in a third world country like ours, it is rather the truth that the fear of poverty is the root of all evils in the same way that corruption is the major cause of failed leadership. Corruption in Nigeria and everywhere has its root cause in the fear of poverty. Every opportunity with group or public resources is seen as an opportunity to escape poverty. Paradoxically, when fear of poverty becomes psychologism, it becomes insatiable. The president is accused of corruption, the minister, legislator, governor, chairman of local government, billionaire, millionaire, messenger, apprentices- name it. In private capacities those who traffic in fake and adulterated drugs, bunker oil, sabotage means power generation, improved transportation and communication, etc. are all driven by the fear of poverty. All the above and even armed robbery, pen robbery, ritual killings, fraudulent deals are in the real sense traceable not to poverty but to the mental state of morbid pseudo phobia, fear of poverty. Frankly speaking, no amount of wealth re-distribution can put an end to these crimes of corruption informed by fear of poverty, which necessitates failed leadership.

Misplacement of priorities, lack of focus, corruption, poor infrastructural development, unstable polity, inconsistencies in government

policies and distortions in values orientation have rightfully been adduced as causal agents of poverty. Be that as it may, the bottom-line is that no one wants to be poor, live below the poverty line or be poverty-trapped. Hence for most people in the developing world the fear of poverty is the beginning of a new life. To them, and reasonably so in this context, poverty is a curse; it is a dreaded infection, worse than even Ebola, HIV/AIDS, SARS, Bird or Swine flu. Therefore, no opportunity to escape the odious cycle of this evil called poverty in one's life should be missed. Such opportunities could be fair or foul.

The Shakespearean fair is foul and foul is fair explains better what is meant by fair and foul means of escaping poverty trap and staying above the poverty line. Elective positions, political appointments, forming and running NGO's, applying for and getting appointment in public, civil and private services are some very credible ways to stay above the poverty live. Other ways could be fraudulent such as claiming to be victims of wars, claiming to be running from victims of dreaded diseases such as HIV/AIDS or outdated cultural practices such as female circumcision and outright duping of unsuspecting members of the public.

However, the snag is that even the above fair means have been made foul. This is because most people bring greed to bear on these and overzealously, and mysteriously and in a no holds barred manner see and use them as leeway out of poverty. In this no caution is observed, no accountability is hoped for and no public good is focused.

The above become more so when the need to escape poverty transcends the material into a state of mind or what one might call psychologism. At this point the need to escape poverty is driven beyond the mean and by and large becomes a morbid phobia. But oftentimes such phobia is found to be pseudo. At this point no amount of material acquisition can put an end to the rush for even the foulest means of monetary or material acquisition. This is the mental state of most public and private office holders and most horribly most private individuals in Nigeria and other African countries who are supposed to provide leadership. The typical individual, even a president or any office holder in Nigeria or any African country is afraid of leaving office or letting go of any opportunity of amassing fair or foul wealth because of the possibility of slipping into poverty again. But, where without prejudice to the above, he is sure that he must leave office one day or let go of such opportunities then virtually every minute of his work time would be occupied with how to personalize every public fund that comes within his official execution or opportunities.

Implications of failed leadership in Nigeria

It had hinted earlier that leadership is a dynamic process and a two-way system involving a leader and his followers. This comes to mean that followers are a critical part of leadership equation. The leadership process and style at any given time is bound to trigger off certain reactions from the followers in the same way that the actions of both the leader and followers at any given time are bound to create certain atmosphere in the state. The atmosphere so created might tend towards either positive or negative dimensions. Hence in this section, we shall consider some negative implications of failure of leadership or bad governance, especially as it affects productivity and national security.

Impacts on Productivity

The governance effectiveness of a government or leadership has a lot of roles to play with regard to the people's way of life and attitude towards the realization of the common goal of the state. Since a bad government pays little or no attention to the welfare of its citizens, does not provide the masses with basic amenities; collaborates with contractors to inflate contract sums and thereby siphon public fund, it then follows logically that the workers and masses of the people will develop an attitude of non-concern, non-co-operation and non-commitment towards the realization of the set goals of the state.

Bad leadership affects workers productivity in many ways. When workers perform their work but are not paid as and when due,

they resort to "not-my-father's property" attitude towards their duty. In such a situation, most workers hardly stay at their duty posts. Again, bad leadership produces bad followership. When the followers discover that their leaders have made bribery and corruption, looting of fund as well as mediocrity their standard norm, they, too (that is, the followers) will equally embrace and adopt such norm of behavior in their various places of work. What is more, bad leadership triggers off incessant industrial actions in the country. The Nigerian nation provides a good example of state where strike actions by workers have become the order of the day. The Nigerian government loses much in money each time a section of Nigerian workers goes on strike. The recent scenario in 2009 where virtually all sections of Nigerian workers declared strike action almost at the same time is symptomatic of failed leadership. The end result of these things is that they impact negatively on the followers', especially the workers' productivity which in turn retards our collective economic and national development. Let us conclude this section on the impacts of bad leadership on productivity by borrowing Professor Obasi Igwe's comments about Nigeria. According to him,

Nigeria... seems to be a country that believes that a mango tree can produce plantains, or that when you scorn at excellence and meritocracy, extol mediocrity, and rig the wrong people into the choicy positions, the mediocres would suddenly "learn on the job", and move the institution, enterprise or nation "forward". What about the time they are "learning on the job", killing patients with wrong diagnoses and medication because they should not have been admitted to do medicine, killing travelers on broken bridges because they should not have been employed as the "Chief Engineer" (Sic) without competitive interview and examination...destroying the chances of brilliant people so that those like him/her will gain the upper hand, and rendering Nigeria less competitive(Obasi Igwe, 2008:37).

Impacts on National Security

In her discourse on leadership in Africa, Ikejiani-Clarke (2008:27) noted that "the leadership induced by authoritarian rule thus fosters political violence, liquidation and brutalization of political opponents, crisis of long incumbency – control of the media, police, army and intelligence. The record of African leaders in governance has also pushed to the front burner the question of national renaissance..." The widespread violence and subterranean activities being witnessed in the Niger-delta area and some other parts of Northern Nigeria signal people's expression of age-old and bottled-up grievances against bad governance, exploitation as well as desecration of the underpinning hallowed principles of the social contract. What the MEND is doing in the West, the Odua People's Congress (OPC) is doing in the West, and the MASSOB is doing same in the East, just as the Boko Haram is doing its own in the North.

The daily upsurge of militant groups with terrorist bent in the Niger-Delta and some Northern parts of the country smacks of these people's reaction to the perceived massive environmental degradation and exploitation as well as the official corruption and apparent neglect of the basic needs of the people in their respective areas. Even the thirteen percent (13%) derivation the federal government agreed to pay the oil producing areas does not make any impact on the lives of the ordinary citizens. There is this allegation that the fund goes down the drain the moment it gets into the hands of their leaders (Governors). The insecurity of life in the Niger-Delta and some parts of the North alone has cost the Nigerian government a whooping amount of money running into trillions of naira. It is now that the situation is getting out of hand that the federal government seems to have woken from her slumber, what with the window-dressing it is doing with the "amnesty deal". In any case, the planned introduction of 10% derivation to the host communities is a welcome development

Political Apathy

It is not out of place to say that most Nigerians are no longer interested in the entity called Nigeria, especially as it concerns politics and leadership issues. Since the people's votes no longer determine who rules them, many Nigerians consider participation in political activities a waste of time. They have resigned

themselves to fate, just as they are no more interested in who becomes what. What will happen when leaders and representatives of a given community were not chosen by them, but rather imposed on them from Abuja, the Nigeria's seat of power? But this is exactly what we get in our Nigeria of today. What do you expect from people who read in newspapers about how new roads have been constructed in their community and so and so number of transformers installed there when in the real sense nothing happened? You are sure to get nothing short of political apathy, anger, and people's hatred for their country.

Concluding Reflections: The Way Forward

Chinua Achebe was indeed right to have noted that Nigeria's problem is that of leadership, but I have to add that this goes hand in hand with the problem of value which I think is even more fundamental. We think that our leadership problem is an offshoot of our distorted values. Wrong values have resulted in misplacement of priorities by Nigerians. It is especially our inclination towards materialistic and ephemeral values that mostly influence our leadership misbehavior.

Our starting point, therefore, should be value re-orientation. We need to impress it on our leaders and the entire citizenry that the goal and purpose of man's existence transcend this earthly happiness. They should equally realize that leadership is meant to be a part to the realization of the common good – the very purpose for which men quitted the imaginary state of nature.

We conclude this piece of work in the following words of deep-rooted conviction. Crimes of corruption, political debauchery, armed robberies, kidnapping, ritual killing which are the benchmarks of failed leadership could be solved once and for all times if a mental state would be formed and propagated that will reform the idea of poverty as not lying in the absence of having inexhaustible material acquisition but rather in being not contented with one's position in life-lack of humility in accepting one's position in life. Being contented with ones position, being humble in seeking, being simple in living and loyalty and accountability to people define being truly rich.

As part of the way forward, we also recommend that the various existing anti-graft agencies and the various laws guiding political and leadership offices should be further strengthened, if really Nigerians are serious about wanting to move Nigeria forward.

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