

**NIGERIA AT SIXTY:
BURSTING THE IGNORANCE AND HYPOCRISY BLOCKING OUR
PATH OF UNITY IN POSITIVE DIVERSITY TO OUR COLLECTIVE
SAFETY AND PROSPERITY**



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BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

The challenges of democracy, leadership and development will continue to be with us as long as we are living. This is because history is dynamic. The things or issues that will require attention will continue to change and expand with time as our activities and circumstances unfold new faces, forms or structure. No society is exempted from this standard process.

More critical is the fact that, these changes are inevitable, irrespective of our care, carelessness or neutrality. For example, with economic relationships, the creation of money is followed by banking services. If you decide to use money and never go to the bank, a change of currency will not exclude you and your relevance.

The very same applies to democracy, leadership and development. It will not matter whether you voted or not, whether you belong to a political party or not, whether you are for the ruling party or the opposition. You cannot be free from being affected. It is therefore more intelligent to be conscious of your status and role in any given circumstance.

We have attained sixty years of independence as a people with the sovereignty of our nation. However, nationhood or Nationalism continues to elude us. The only positive thing about this experience is that it has continued to grow stronger and logically attracts greater concerns by more and more people, cutting across all strata of the society.

The expression of these concerns, dissatisfaction, complaints have taken the forms of criticisms, protests and even revolts. The right recipient of these is always the leadership, with the leader at the top.

And the root summary cause for this, is the absence of an ideological framework that we hang on and revolve around. This has led to suggestions based on the comparison of the ones that other admirable countries are identified with. This specific concern has repeatedly been thrown at our political parties that appear to be different. Our constitution has not been saved this drawback, in the observation of some. And our 'governance' has effectively been management and administration of projects, works, services etc.

The clear benefit of an ideological orientation is that, it enables the definitions of challenges, directs to solutions and makes livelihood fairly predictable for the holders and outsiders. It specifically defines limits that cannot be exceeded, without consequence. This is practically more fitting the more relevant it is to the people and history. And at the end of day, it must produce more satisfaction than regrets, confusion or frustration. Not even disagreements will generate these.

Because, it is a summary of the purpose of life, its pursuit and commitment is total. Life and resources of the individual or group members and the country can be committed to it as a positive investment. It gives a people and nation an identity for itself and what is honourable in relation to other nations. Therefore, for a society where Anything Goes, there will be no difference between new and

strange things being introduced. But in a society where limits are defined, the things that will pass will be clear against the things that can only be tried but will not pass through.

Thus, in all societies deliberate efforts are made to educate members on this continuously and milling the younger generations through it. The families, the organizations and the nation are equally disposed to this. The more and better a society is able to this, the more organized it is expected to be. And its self-satisfaction or fulfilment is what is most fundamental, against the opinions of others. This is the attribute of its independence.

TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS is therefore the status and role every citizen is committed to in thinking and practical activities. It is true because it is what RIGHT is for them. Those who differ are free to do so outside their confines. But as long as they are within their confines, their ideology must not be contradicted or abused. It will amount to disrespect and a slight in the least. It will be resisted to preserve its integrity.

In our case, it is either not clear or totally abused. Whatever informs this cannot be unconnected with disappointment, dissatisfaction, frustration or even embarrassment with the results that impact on us, WITHOUT using a common platform for defining our challenges and solutions or expectations. This means that we do not lack one or the ideas of that relevance.

The real gap, incapacity or failure is in our Admitting, Understanding and Commitment to ours. It is this unfortunate status that is responsible for the disconnect between our efforts in democracy, leadership, development and the results we get. And to worsen the situation, we do not keep educating ourselves and milling the younger generations through it, because of these weak or negative attributes.

Our constitution provides two related ideas for livelihood in relation to global varieties and our peculiarities. The first is economic. Our country admits and practices MIXED ECONOMY. This recognizes the direct participation of the state or government in the economy on behalf of the citizens, for collective safety and prosperity. While this will be at the commanding levels, individuals are not prohibited in free participation in the economy. These will admit independent operations or the partnership between the two categories. The logic and sense in this structure is that as a developing economy, private individuals or a club of this do not corner all economic opportunities and benefits. It especially protects the interest of the majority who are weak and vulnerable, because the participation of the state will empower the state to enlarge the opportunities for the growth and development of an increasing number of the weak.

The second idea is that no religion shall be adopted by the state. This specifically protects the belongingness to any faith of choice that is civil. Any form of livelihood that will for instance involve burying people alive along with a dead

king or an association that engages in killing or eating fellow humans is not admissible. And Nigeria is comfortably most populated by Christians and Muslims.

But we have not been able to clearly define a framework that admits the relationship between the two to give us safety and prosperity on a consistent and predictable basis by ourselves and others. This is a big responsibility we have been ignoring. And it is the root of most of our confusion, regrets, dissatisfaction, disappointments, frustration etc.

To be sure, it is not because it is impossible – as deserving as it is. It is like we are sleeping and only require to be awake. We are lying down and require to stand up. We are silent and require to speak up. We are screaming the glory of God without getting moved. We are constantly praying but deeply enmeshed in committing sins. We are children or servants of peace but are arrowheads of violence. We constantly preach orderliness but enjoy corruption.

But we are attracted to people and nations who attain and sustain orderliness, resist corruption, are awake, standing and clean.

What is the difference? They have physical territory that is recognized as theirs and we do not lack this. They have specific flags with a colour or design that depicts a critical aspect of their identity and we have too. They have a national prayer or anthem, we do not lack one. They have constitutions, we have one too.

They have men and resources like we do. We have needs, wants and fancies like them. But even with structures, institutions and processes like political parties, legislatures, judiciary, banks, companies, media and associations, we are still far below what we can, should or minimally achieve. WHY?

OUR DESPICABLE IGNORANCE

The consciousness of our identity that is most critical in the first step to livelihood. We have an identity but are not conscious of it. It is therefore not TRUE or it is FALSE because it is not serving, it is not being used. Our relationship with our resources and ourselves therefore inevitably fail to meet our needs, wants and fancies like safety and development for our prosperity.

But because it is historically inevitable for the three to be in play, for history, our burden is the muddling or straightening of the relationship between the three. Indeed because muddling can possibly enable a skewed provision of the needs, wants and fancies, it can be luring or tempting and even deliberately pursued. Mischief, Oppression, Wickedness, Manipulations etc. will become pervasive and these gradually compete for spheres of control. Society then becomes caught up in confusion, frustration etc.

The damaging characteristic of wasting irrecoverable time with the implications of destroying the family, corporate and state institutions. The inevitable

destination is checkered safety and prosperity. Ignorance and hypocrisy cannot replace knowledge and sincerity.

Indeed knowledge and sincerity that is unique cannot be suitably replaced or replicated by another one that is of different characteristics. This is why as much as relationships can be feasible, the RIGHTNESS of that relationship does not have to be disrespectful or abusive of any party. It is however possible for one to appear to take advantage of the other, but it will be at the detriment of the seeming beneficiaries because, it will necessarily be limited to isolated aspects. Thus, whenever the beneficiary insists on sticking to his holistic identity, it will be insincere and a slight on the other. Where the advantage is accommodated, it generates greater complications in the pursuit of common safety and prosperity.

Take an example of a man who lives on the principle that fornication and adultery are absolutely unacceptable evil, getting involved in a community where these can be accommodated. A fruitful relationship can eventually lead to one of the following: the man may leave and as generations grow, his recognizable relations may connect with the covert relations. Indeed, they may find attraction to each other and get married. Incest becomes institutionalized. It will be foolish and irresponsible to say it was not intended. Another possibility may be non-admitted accommodation. This can lead to the mother appearing with the child at the embarrassment of the father. Indeed it can happen on the death of the father. And it will not be sufficient to close the chapter with the ruling that, the child is not

recognized. Indeed, the covert and overt but same related generations may be part of different communities and go to war, killing each other. For such man, godliness and blessings have not just been turned against but he has contributed to a possible disaster for generations to come. This is why those who believe in the hereafter need to understand the gravity of ignorant or deliberate commitments that are WRONG.

It is not different with corporate livelihood or nationalism. This is why for example, in the objection to alcoholism, the abuse covers not just the person who drinks alcohol. The maker, the marketers, the hosts, the specific farmers of the raw materials, the specific sellers of the raw materials etc. are subject to sanction because of their roles in empowering the availability of alcohol. Do we observe that a seditious material in an organized society admits the writer, the publishing house etc. for questioning? It is to Protect what is Right.

In essence, those who have nothing to lose are those who have nothing to protect. As a result, those who have things to protect must in their relationships with others DO SO MORE AND BETTER BY SUPPORTING, ENABLING AND ENSURING THAT THE THINGS TO PROTECT OF OTHERS ARE NOT DISRESPECTED OR ABUSED. Indeed, those who have nothing to protect have the responsibility of ‘protecting’ their identity by deterring those with protection EXCEPT they will declare abandonment of their protective identity. Anything short of this relationship will generate corruption because of the insincerity and

hypocrisy on both sides. It will be most irresponsible of the party that is knowingly involved.

THE SECONDARY STATUS OF MIXED ECONOMY PRINCIPLE

Every Nigerian is entitled to basic living needs, wants and fancies, irrespective of language and location. And our provision is that NO individual or group must be left out. This is the only benefit and security of giving the state a superior status in economic affairs. Individuals, families and groups or associations cannot be entrusted with this. This is because everyone has access and must not be denied in participating in our collective affairs. The twin requirements that will be sufficient to ask to be part of it is to be a Nigerian. And if you have the knowledge and skills for state responsibility, you stand the chance of being entrusted with it. And the greater role of asking, demanding and supporting, by guiding, protesting or criticizing rests with the others.

However, men and women are not meant for lifeless goods and services just as living to only meet physiological needs, wants and fancies does not give fulfilment. The principle of mixed economy is then an instrumental guide for employment by Nigerians to serve the needs, wants and fancies of ALL.

And the identity of Nigerians is majorly or largely religious, as Muslims and Christians. This is without discrimination against individuals, circles or

communities that choose to be outside, to the extent that they are not opposed to the religions by principles or practices.

SECULARISM WITH RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The two are not competing. The principle admits full scale religious identity and livelihood **AS LONG AS SECULAR AFFAIRS OR RELATIONSHIPS ARE PURSUED WITHOUT CONTRADICTIONS** for the collective safety and prosperity of every and all citizens of Nigeria. Non-Nigerians will logically be necessarily required to respect and uphold this **REGARDLESS OF THEIR BELIEFS, PRINCIPLES AND ORIENTATION.**

This provision and standard **REQUIRES** that every citizen who is a Christian or Muslim, be so, consistently, on their own and in relation to others. This **WARRANTS** that Christians and non-Christians support Muslims to remain, continue and be better Muslims. And if any Muslim or Muslims attempt to be a bad or wrong Muslim, they should be **CHECKED**. This can be by Questioning, Exposure, Reporting, Reminder, Correction, Resisting. The very same will apply to Christians by Muslims and others – **ON SECULAR MATTERS.**

This relationship does not empower interfering with canonical practices. A non-believer has no business with the prayer or non-prayer lifestyle or livelihood of believers. But a non-believer absolutely has responsibility of questioning a believer who is asking for the service of blow job, alcohol in room service etc.

This responsibility is higher, where a believer applies to work in a brewery of alcoholic drink or establishing a club or gambling outfit. And such customers should be reported. The responsibility is highest and not to be tolerated, on national affairs. A believer who is found to approach any related great sins must be helped and sanctioned appropriately where it is committed. This is why and how the Shari'ah and the judicial structure are to be positive benefits of both Muslims and non-Muslims.

For example, a leader who has a lieutenant that is a Muslim and is accused of excesses bothering on his trust, does not need to set up a probe. There is the quick method of engaging the person in swearing after Asr prayer together, with witnesses. It is also very convenient to demand that a leader applies it to miscreants or pretenders around him. It is therefore helpful to deal with complaints of interference in official matters by strangers or outsiders. Believers should be safety valves for the safety and prosperity of mankind.

THE PRINCIPAL BINDING PRINCIPLE

Neither a Muslim, a Christian, a non-believer is to be tolerated for telling lies on self, another or any issue nor acting accordingly or to that effect. It is WRONG between a couple, friends, peers, in a group, association, organization, or country. And the responsibility of ensuring this does not rest on the teller alone. The listener has equal responsibility because of the possible negative consequences or impact on our general safety and prosperity.

An example of such consequence is the laws and service now engaged for such on the social media and the impact of careless sponsorships for such.

Take the personality of Muhammadu Buhari after his return from health care in London. The idea that the person who returned was cloned was floated. Is there NO ONE who printed and sold the idea or broadcasted it not aware that the World Health Organization has banned its application to humans? Is his wife not available to be asked the simple question, if he is the one or not? Were the doctors who attended to him in any way competent for such? Will the Bishop of Canterbury not be reliable for the truth? But in our setting of ignorance and hypocrisy, it is muted and spread. Is the sponsor or originator neither a believer nor an unbeliever?

If the consequence of this on the polity is undermined, what of the slight on the Prophet that Muslims believe in and non-Muslims or non-believers are not compelled to believe in BUT are required to respect? After the ruling on the execution of the person, interested parties are questioning the ruling or expressing reservations. Nobody cares and is supportive, even if the person is a Muslim. Is the most constitutional thing to do, not speed up the completion of justice? Was the judicial system wrong? Are there no Muslims on the tray of dissuading the completion of justice? This is hypocrisy and is WRONG of all Nigerians not to support the ruling, especially if he is a Muslim. How can we expect straightness or consistency in our pursuit of collective safety and prosperity when we are

ignorant and hypocritical about our identity and livelihood? It is simply, logically and sensibly IMPOSSIBLE. Truth is the direct opposite of Lies and mixing them cannot produce pleasant results.

It is in this light, one should wonder over Buhari is a religious bigot. And abandons everything to prove the contrary, regardless of the costs. The Vice President had to state that his principal has not attempted to convert him. But the Abiola-Kingibe ticket was faultless and most embraced. It is not different in getting loans without interest from an Islamic Bank or having diplomatic relations with the State of Israel. What is rational and sensible to expect from an individual, group or nation that is ashamed or afraid of the collective identity that will grant it safety and prosperity?

The contradiction of the truth or identity of one or a people in livelihood is what is meant by INSINCERITY, HYPOCRISY. It is the means to the same destination of the IGNORANT.

This is why sanctions are put in place, to maintain straightness and predictability in our general pursuit of prosperity, safely. And in order not to make sanctions a way of life in the relationship between leaders and followers, education is promoted to wipe out ignorance. But take our country today, at sixty, how committed are we to education at our family level? What of schools, beyond schooling? And what does the government do about education, beyond schooling? Indeed what do political parties do about this education for our

collective safety and prosperity, in power and out of power? What do we expect to be the dividends of ignorant polity and hypocritical leaders? Who will help the other?

This is why the only unfortunate meeting point is the culture of complaints and criticisms in diverse and even contradictory modes, with everyone having a peculiar solution, but an opportunity to use it ends up in DISBELIEF, CONFUSION AND FAILURE. This is why and how our best bet fails, most of the times. Success is a matter of chance.

The following are a few examples of diversions, confusion, insincerity, hypocrisy that can only be hatched by inconsistent identity in the pursuit of collective safety and prosperity.

a) Nigeria's former president, Olusegun Obasanjo, has advised the Igbos to be weary of the promise of the APC government to hand over power to them in 2023, noting that it was dangerous to take the APC government seriously, the Vanguard reported.

- Speaking at the inauguration of the South East chapter of the Presidential Support Committee in Umuahia, Mr Mustapha assured Ndigbo that Mr Buhari did not hate them. According to him, the shortest route to producing a president of Igbo extraction is by supporting and voting for APC in 2019. He urged them to ensure that Mr Buhari returns in 2019.

- The minister (Babatunde Fasola), at a special town hall meeting on infrastructure organised by the Ministry of Information and Culture and the National Orientation Agency, urged the people of South-West to vote for Mr Buhari in the 2019 elections, to guarantee a return of power to the region in 2023.

But Mr Obasanjo, at the event, asked the Igbo leaders across the federation to remain focused and united, saying the All Progressives Congress (APC) would not honour its promise to hand over presidency to an Igbo indigene in 2023. These were newspaper reports in December, 2018. The question here is, what is true and building of our collective safety and prosperity here? What is Christian or Islamic about the identities of the speakers, that conforms with the pursuit of our collective safety and prosperity? This is the dangerously hopeless culture and orientation I call FREE DEMOCRACY.

b) The letter, copied to Mr Malami, read in part: “SERAP is seriously concerned about the apparent inertia by the authorities to diligently and expeditiously prosecute high-profile corruption cases. While many of these cases have been dragging before your assumption of office in May 2015, several of the cases have not satisfactorily progressed, contrary to Nigerians’ expectations.” “Speedily, diligently, effectively and fairly prosecuting high-profile corruption cases would demonstrate your government’s commitment to enhance probity in public life and willingness to enforce accountability in public life.

Expeditious prosecution of those suspected of grand corruption irrespective of the position and status of that person is imperative to retain public confidence in the ability and willingness of authorities to prevent and combat corruption.”

“According to our information, details of about 103 high-profile corruption cases being handled by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) were reportedly made available in 2017 to the Office of the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice upon request.” “Further, the case files of 15 high-profile corruption suspects are allegedly missing. The missing files are among the 23 cases reportedly sent by the now defunct Special Presidential Investigation Panel on the Recovery of Public Property, (SPIP) in 2019 to Mr Malami, and include some charges of fraud involving some former governors and senators, as well as non-declaration of assets and possession of foreign accounts cases.”

SERAP therefore urged President Buhari to instruct Mr Malami to: Explain why after several years these high-profile corruption cases have not been expeditiously, diligently, effectively and satisfactorily prosecuted to logical conclusion; Take immediate and concrete steps to prosecute the cases in close cooperation and collaboration with appropriate anti-corruption agencies; etc . The question in this case is, why and how did these challenges come up in the first place, under a sweeper governance? If there is no consistency in the identities of the leaders and the followers, actions will not be predictable and a lot of human

and material resources will be wasted in correcting derailment. Let me also quickly add that critics are not a better guarantee in this arrangement. You will not understand until you become burdened as part of it.

c) The Yoruba ethnic group in Kwara and Kogi states has demanded a merger with their kith and kin in the South-West region through boundary adjustment. The group, which occupies seven local government areas in Kwara South senatorial zone and five LGAs in Kogi State, in a statement on Friday, said it had forwarded a memorandum to the National Assembly on the platform of Kwara South Consultative Forum.

According to the National President of the forum, Pa Joseph Aderibigbe, who was the first Secretary to Kwara State Government when it was created in 1967, the group submitted a memorandum to the 9th National Assembly's Committee on Review of the Nigerian Constitution, with a demand for the merging of the Yoruba of Kwara and Kogi with their kinsmen in the South-West through boundary adjustment. The group added that the Yoruba in the group should have their own administrative units like others within the proposed Region. It further demanded that the rest of the Yoruba in the remaining five LGAs of the state should be part of Kwara Yoruba to be merged with the proposed Western Region through a referendum. This was reported by Punch newspaper.

In this case, is the creation of more states the most rational and sensible option for building our society? If the identities are right will the temptation of having

own states not die out? If the right things are done most of the time will this be necessary?

d) Read Chief Audu Ogbeh in an interview: But I saw it because my worry is that for a very long time now, since the end of the 70s, the only industry in the North is either politics, armed services or civil service. Before now, we had industrialists in Kano, Benue, Jos, etc. So, we are declining. The most tragic thing that happened which nobody mentions when we complain about marginalisation is the fact that under President Olusegun Obasanjo, the so-called banking reforms took away every bank in the North. How do you develop a region where there are no banks? We shouldn't pretend, we are all very ethnic and regional in our thinking. Many of these other banks are not willing to finance anything up here no matter how hard you try. As at today, there are no northern banks. There is a new one now called Taj coming up. We can't take a loan. Even when Yar'adua launched the N200bn commercial agricultural scheme credit programme and put the money in the hands of two big banks, everyone of us who applied from up here was denied; the argument being that we were politically exposed. But I know some friends of mine, active politicians, who got the loans in other parts of the country. How do you build a farm worthy of mention? How do you expand the agricultural industry which was our strong point before if you can't access credit from the banks? So before our very eyes, we lost 126 industries in Kano alone and the rest of us went down? I remember vividly that Senator Abdullahi Adamu

tried to borrow from that commercial credit scheme but he was denied; Professor Jerry Gana was denied; the current Governor of Katsina State, Aminu Masari, (he was not governor then) was denied; I was also denied. These are some of the issues. Again, the question is, if we are living a consistent identity, will a current forefront critic now earn trust for nationalism after such an opportunistic damage?

With these characteristic setting, will any president or governor be denied the inclination to be either confused or pretend to be even after being a critic earlier or turning into a venomous critic after his tenure?

CONCLUDING INVITATIONS

If we truly and sincerely CARE, we must begin with and keep educating ourselves and the younger generations on what things constitute RIGHT for our identities and the fitness of these to our pursuit of collective safety and prosperity.

The bridges that we now have, like the principles and practices of Federal Character representation and Zoning should within a given period become mere COLOURS as against being development strategies. The same should become of tribal and regional masquerading into the politics and economy of our collective safety and prosperity.

We shall then be saved from the ambitions of religious rascality by those who manipulate religion to appear as sleeping pythons.