



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**COURSE CODE: POL221**

**COURSE TITLE:  
NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, I**

***POL221COURSEGUIDE***

**CourseCode: POL 221**

**CourseTitle: NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, I**

**CourseDeveloper: Abdulrahoof Adebayo Bello  
School of Arts and Social Sciences National  
Open University of Nigeria  
14-  
16 Ahmadu Bello Way, Victoria  
Island, Lagos**

## NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

National Open University of Nigeria,  
Headquarters,  
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way,  
Victoria Island, Lagos.

Abuja Office,  
5 Dar es Salaam Street, Off  
Aminu Kano Crescent,  
Wuse II, Abuja.

e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)

URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

Published by:

National Open University of Nigeria

Printed 2015

ISBN: 978-058-951-1 All  
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## **Introduction**

### **Welcome to POL221: Nigerian Government and Politics I**

This course is a three-credit unit course for undergraduate students in Political Science. The materials have been developed with the Nigerian context in view. This Course Guide gives you an overview of the course. It also provides you with information on the organization and requirements of the course.

## **Course Aims**

The aims are to help you to understand the basis and foundation of the Nigerian nation and the politics before, during and after the colonial period. These broad aims will be achieved by:

- i) Educating the student about the process of colonization of Nigeria, the unification of the diverse peoples and the constitutional developments.
- (ii) Highlighting the prospects and challenges of the colonial policies and its implications on the Nigerian contemporary politics.
- iii) Acquainting the student with the contribution of the early nationalist leaders in the attainment of independence.
- iv) Analyzing the power game between the political and military class in the post-independence Nigeria.

## **Course Objectives**

To achieve the aims set out above, POL221 have overall objectives. In addition, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are at the beginning of each unit. It is advisable that the student read them before he/she starts working through the unit. Reference may be made to them in the course of studying this unit as self-assessment exercises.

Here are the wider objectives for the course as a whole. By meeting the objectives, the student should be regarded as having met the aims of the course. On successful completion of the course, he/she should be able to:

- a) Discuss the British colonial administration in Nigeria
- b) Explain the reasons for the introduction of Indirect Rule
- c) Explain the underpinnings of the 1914 amalgamation policy
- d) Identify the essential features of the colonial constitutions from 1922 to 1963
- e) Appreciate the strategies of the nationalist movements and their contributions
- f) Discuss the origin of and the nature of regionalism in Nigerian politics

- g) Explain the origin and the nature of the concept of federalism in Nigeria
- h) Explain the causes and effects of military interventions in Nigerian politics
- i) Discuss the evolution of party politics in Nigeria
- j) Decipher the workings of democracy and the rule of law in Nigeria
- k) Evaluate the different transitional programmes under the military rule
- l) Appreciate the current attempt at civil rule in Nigeria

### Working through this Course

To complete the course, the student is required to read the study units and other related materials. It is also necessary to undertake practical exercises for which the student needs a pen, a note-book, and other materials that will be listed in this guide. The exercises are to aid the student in understanding the concepts being presented. At the end of each unit, the student will be required to submit written assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, a final examination shall be written.

### Course Materials

The major materials needed for this course are:

- (i) Course Guide.
- (ii) Study units.
- (iii) Assignment file.
- (iv) Relevant textbooks including the ones listed under each unit.
- (v) Student may also need to listen to political programmes and news reports on electronic media.
- (vi) In addition, the student also needs to read newspapers, news magazines, academic journals and interact with computers and Internet resources.

### Study Units

There are 15 units (of four modules) in this course. They are listed below:

#### Module 1 Introduction to Nigerian Politics

- Unit 1 Background to British Administration (1861 - 1914)
- Unit 2 Sir Hugh Clifford's Constitution of 1922
- Unit 3 The Rise of Nationalist Movements in Nigeria
- Unit 4 Sir Arthur Richards' Constitution of 1946

**Module 2 Towards Nigeria's Independence**

- Unit 1 McPherson's Constitution of 1951  
 Unit 2 Oliver Lyttleton's Constitution of 1954  
 Unit 3 The 1960 Independence Constitution  
 Unit 4 1963 Republican Constitution

**Module 3 Post-Colonial Period**

- Unit 1 The Theory of Federalism  
 Unit 2 Evolution of Nigerian Federalism  
 Unit 3 Nigerian Government & Politics (1966-1979)  
 Unit 4 The Collapse of the First Republic

**Module 4 Military Leadership in Nigerian Politics**

- Unit 1 The Military Intervention in Nigerian Politics  
 Unit 2 Towards Military Disengagement  
 Unit 3 Achievements of Military Regime in Nigeria

**Textbooks and References**

Certain books have been recommended in the course. The student may wish to purchase them for further reading.

**Assessment File**

An assessment file and a marking scheme will be made available to the student. In the assessment file, he/she will find details of the works that must be submitted to the tutor/facilitator for marking. There are two aspects of the assessment of this course; the Tutor-Marked Assignment and the written examination. The marks obtained in these two areas will make up the final marks. The assignment must be submitted to the Tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadline stated in the presentation schedule and the Assignment file.

The work submitted to the Facilitator for assessment will count for 30% of the student's total score.

**Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs)**

The student will have to submit a specified number of the TMAs. Every unit in this course has a Tutor-Marked Assignment. A student will be assessed on four of them but the best three performances from the TMAs will be used for his/her 30% grading. When the student has completed each assignment, such should be sent together with a Tutor-

Marked Assignment Form, to his/her Tutor. The student is advised to make sure that each assignment reaches his/her Tutor on or before the deadline for submissions. If for any reason, he/she cannot complete the work on time, contact should be made with the Facilitator for a discussion on the possibility of an extension. Extensions will not be granted after the due date unless under exceptional circumstances.

### Final Examination and Grading

The final examination will be a test of three hours. All areas of the course will be examined. The student should find time to read the unit all over before the examination. The final examination will attract 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions, which reflect the kinds of self-assessment exercises and Tutor-Marked Assignment previously encountered. And all aspects of the course will be assessed. He/she should use the time between completing the last unit, and taking the examination to revise the entire course.

### Course Marking Scheme

The following table lays out how the actual course mark allocation is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignments (Best Three Assignments out of Four marked)	30%
Final Examination	70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Course Overview/Presentation Schedule

The dates for submission of all assignments will be communicated to you. You will also be told the date of completing the study units and dates for examinations.

Unit	Title of work	Weeks Activity	
Course Guide		Week 1A	assignment 1
<b>Module 1 Introduction to Nigerian Politics</b>			
1	Background to British Administration in Nigeria (186-1914)	Week 1	assignment 2
2	Sir Hugh Clifford's Constitution of 1922	Week 2	assignment 3
3	The Rise of Nationalist Movements in Nigeria	Week 3	assignment 4





4	Sir Arthur Richards Constitution of 1946		
<b>Module 2 Towards Nigerias Independence</b>			
1	McPhersons Constitution of 1951	Week 3	Assignment 1
2	Oliver Lyttletons Constitution of 1954	Week 3	Assignment 2
3	The 1960 Independence Constitution	Week 4	Assignment 3
4	1963 Republican Constitution	Week 5	Assignment 4
<b>Module 3 Post Colonial Period</b>			
1	The Theory of Federalism		Assignment 1
2	Evolution of Nigerian Federalism	Week 6	Assignment 2
3	Nigerian Government and Politics (1966-1979)	Week 7	Assignment 3
4	The Collapse of the First Republic	Week 8	Assignment 4
<b>Module 4 Military Leadership in Nigerian Politics</b>			
1	Operation Damissa of 1966	Week 9	Assignment 1
2	Towards Military Disengagement	Week 10	Assignment 2
3	Achievements of the military	Week 11	Assignment 3
	Revision	Week 11	
	Examination	Week 12	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Week 13</b>	

### How to Get the Most from This Course

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; the student can read and work through specially designed study materials at his/her own pace, and at a time and place that suit him/her best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give students some reading to do, the study unit tells the distance learner where to read, and which are his/her text materials or set books. Distance learners are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give the students an in-class exercise. Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let the student know what he/she should be able to do by the time the units have been completed. These learning objectives are meant to guide the student in his/her study. The moment a unit is finished, he/she must go back and check whether he/she has achieved the objectives. If this is made a habit, then the student will significantly improve his/her chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides the student through the required readings from other sources. This will usually be either from the

students set books or from a reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If the student runs into any trouble, he/she should telephone the tutor for assistance. Remember that the Tutor's job is to provide such help. The students should not hesitate to call and ask for such assistance when needed.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organize a Study Schedule. Design a Course Overview to guide you through the course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason why students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late to help.
4. Turn to Unit I, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
6. Keep in touch with your study centre. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.
7. Well before the relevant due dates (about 4 weeks before due dates) keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination. Submit all assignments not later than the due date.
8. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
9. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you can keep yourself on schedule.
10. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
11. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved

the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

### **Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials**

Information relating to the tutorials will be provided at the appropriate time. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties, you might encounter and he will provide assistance to you during the course. You must take your tutor-marked assignments to the study centre well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor if you need help. Contact your tutor if:

- you do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings
- you have difficulty with the exercises
- you have a question or problem with an assignment or with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending tutorials. You will learn a lot from participating in discussions actively.

### **Summary**

The Course Guide gives you an overview of what to expect in the course of this study. The course teaches about the attitude of the people, politics and Nigerian politicians. It also acquaints you with the political configuration of Nigeria as constructed by the British colonial government.

### **REFERENCES**

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**Module 4 Military Leadership in Nigerian Politics.....**

Unit 1 The Military Intervention in Nigerian Politics. Unit 2  
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## **MODULE 1      INTRODUCTION TO NIGERIAN POLITICS I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The political structure and the superstructure built and left behind as relics by the colonial masters are often cited by scholars as the source of the problems and prospects for the country.

Issues such as the lopsidedness of the political geography, unification of people who are diverse in history, culture, anthropology and level of economic development are mentioned as defects in the colonial policy of the Nigerian nation. The amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates and the subsequent establishment of the Nigerian Council in 1914 by Lord

Lugard no doubt, opened a floodgate of criticisms from the African elites and some colonial officials alike. One of such non-African critics

was Sir Hugh Clifford who was later to succeed Lugard in 1919. Therefore, in this first Module, we will examine the background to British Administration (1861 - 1914), Sir Hugh Clifford's Constitution of 1922, the Rise of Nationalist Movements in Nigeria, and Sir Arthur Richards Constitution of 1946

- Unit 1    Background to British Administration (1861 - 1914)
- Unit 2    Sir Hugh Clifford's Constitution of 1922
- Unit 3    The Rise of Nationalist Movements in Nigeria
- Unit 4    Sir Arthur Richards Constitution of 1946

## **UNIT 1 BACKGROUND TO BRITISH ADMINISTRATION (1861-1914)**

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  - 3.2 Towards Unification
  - 3.3 Criticisms against Amalgamation
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

One of the challenges facing Nigeria as a nation-state is political leadership which is a product of the nation's colonial antecedent spanning almost a century. The political structure and the superstructure built and left behind as relics by the Colonial masters are often cited by scholars as the source of the problems and prospects for the country. Issues such as lopsidedness of the political geography, unification of people who are diverse in history, culture, anthropology and level of economic development are mentioned as defects in the colonial policy of the Nigerian nation. Conversely, the unity in diversity, economies of large scale, large market and the psychological advantage of the strategic location of Nigeria in the international arena, are flash points in the amalgamation of the country.



## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

The intention of this course is to take you through the political and constitutional developments of Nigeria from 1900 through the period of independence 1960 to the first Republic which collapsed in 1966.

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain pre and post-colonial era as it affected the socio-political structure of Nigeria.
- describe how the problems inherent in the Nigerian Constitution since 1922 up to the current 1999 Constitution.
- identify the rise of nationalism, the role of the press and influence of some early Nationalists in the past, on contemporary political situation.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Historical Background to Nigerian Politics

The process of the British colonial administration in what is now known as the Republic of Nigeria started with the annexation and proclamation of Lagos as the Crown Settlement in 1861 (GABC 1892:14). According to Okafor (1981:18), Lagos was not called a Colony until 1886 the British Settlement Act of 1843 enabled the British Government to establish a Crown Colony System of government there. Before the coming of the British, different ethnic nationalities in the Northern and Southern Areas of River Niger were living in the world of their own. The Yorubas, Hausa-Fulanis, Igbos, Ijaws and other minority groups were either, in an Empire, Emirates, Kingdoms, princedoms and all other forms of native administrative systems.

In 1851, Lagos was attacked by the British forces. It was claimed to be in consonance with the Crown Settlement Treaty. King Kosoko was defeated and deposed but some scholars believed there were some political and economic underpinnings to it. Ajayi (1961:32) opines:

It is at best only a half-truth to say that, Lagos was bombarded in 1861 because it was a notorious slave depot. The anxiety of Britain to intervene in Lagos was not just philanthropic desire, to destroy the slave trading activities of the Portuguese and Brazilian there, but also the economic desire to control the trade of Lagos from which they had, hitherto been excluded and from where they hoped to exploit the resources of the vast Country stretching to and beyond the Niger.

Effectively, the territory of Lagos became a British Colony on August 6, 1861 when King Docemo signed the Treaty of cession with the British authority. Thus, marking the beginning of the British conquest of the area of geographical expression now called Nigeria. While Lagos was a Colony, the other areas were Protectorates. The Colony of Lagos did not enjoy autonomy under a distinct Governor until 1886. Hitherto, the territory was placed under the control of the West African Settlement then resident in Sierra Leone and later, between 1864 and 1866, the territory was administered from the Gold Coast (now Ghana).

### 3.1.1 Clarification of Terms

#### a) Crown Colony

These were territories that were acquired by the British either by settlement, by cession, by purchase or by conquest. The British authority was unquestionable over the territories domestic or international affairs. The Crown not only controlled the foreign relations of the protected state but its domestic affairs were left in the hands of its native rulers (Price 1967:14). This was the status of Lagos and the areas surrounding Freetown and Bathurst (Wight 1947:8).

#### b) Protectorates

These were the territories surrendered to the British by the traditional authorities through Treaties. In many cases, they were administered as one, that is, as a contiguous colony (Wight 1947: 9).

#### c) Anglophone

This concept is the general term used to describe people of the territories colonized by the British who were known as Anglophones while their counterparts in the French territories are called francophone. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia says: In a narrower sense, the notion of "Anglophone" reaches beyond the mere dictionary definition of "English-language speaker. The terms specifically refer to people whose cultural background is primarily associated with English language, regardless of ethnic and geographical differences. The Anglophone culture is largely the legacy of the British colonial empire.

### 3.1.2 Indirect Rule Policy

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Sir Frederick (later Lord) Lugard became the Governor-General of the Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1906 and he ruled the two Protectorates (the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria) separately until 1914 when they were

amalgamated by him (Post, Kenneth and Vickers, Michael 1973:1). Before he assumed office, Lord Lugard had introduced the Indirect Rule Policy in the Northern Protectorate which was to be, later extended to the Western and Eastern parts of the country.

Indirect Rule was a colonial administrative system in which the local Chiefs were used by the colonial officers to control the colonized people. Under the system, it appeared that the native Chiefs/Obas/Emirs were ruling their people, but in the actual sense, it was the colonial masters who were actually ruling. Lord Lugard defines Indirect Rule thus:

Rule through the native Chiefs who are integral part of the machinery of Government, defined powers and functions recognized by the government and by Law, and not dependent on the caprices of an Executive Officer (Kirk-Greene 1918:68).

The following reasons, among others, were advanced for introduction of the Indirect Rule Policy in Nigeria.

a) **Administrative Convenience**

The size of the country was too large and diverse with a large and scattered population about which the Colonial ruler had little knowledge. Lord Lugard met well-established traditional institutions, with a system of government in the Northern and Western parts of the country which made the decision to introduce the Indirect Rule more attractive. He created Warrant Chiefs in the Eastern part

of the country where the people were republican in nature and therefore had no traditional institution of leadership.

**b) Economic Factor**

Another reason for the introduction of the Indirect Rule was the fact that direct administration would have cost the British Government a large sum of human and material resources. This system came about the time Britain herself was facing acute shortage of skilled personnel at home. Both money and manpower needed for her development at home would have had to be deployed to rule directly in Nigeria if the direct rule option was chosen.

**c) Language Barrier**

By the time Lord Lugard came there was a language problem because only a few Africans could understand and speak English Language.

Conversely, the British colonial masters could not speak African languages which made communication with the people very difficult. Therefore, the best option opened to the colonialist was to rule the people through their native rulers.

#### **d) Sustenance of African Culture**

The need to sustain African culture by the British was another factor for the introduction of Indirect Rule. Unlike the French colonial policy of assimilation of her African subjects, the intention of the British policy of association was to sustain and preserve African culture in her colonial territories. Lastly, Laggard's past experience in the East and Central Africa where he had successfully established Indirect Rule also informed his decision to repeat the same in Nigeria.

#### **3.1.3 Assessment of Indirect Rule**

The Indirect Rule was successful in the North and partially successful in the West but was a failure in the East. The reason for the policy's failure in the East was largely due to lack of a central authority or recognized traditional institutions in that part of the Country. The policy recorded a huge success in the North because of the existence of a centralized traditional system of government headed by the Emirs who enjoyed absolute and unquestionable loyalty from the people. This was in contrast to the West where although there was a centralized traditional system of government headed by the Obas, however the powers and authority of the Obas could be challenged by another traditional institution or directly by the people.

#### **3.1.4 Merits and Demerits of Indirect Rule**

Although the Indirect Rule was a colonial invention which was criticized as an undue interruption of the African native traditional administrative system that had existed many centuries before the coming of the colonial masters, it was not without some advantages as well as some drawbacks worth mentioning in this regard.

1. The introduction of the system brought about physical development hitherto alien to the people who engaged their energies in inter and intra-tribal wars.
2. Through the taxes collected from the people, the British officials used part of the proceeds to provide and spread western education, roads, pipe-borne water and hospitals.
3. It opened up many rural communities to economic activities resulting in the production of farm produce for export and local consumption.

4. The system also taught the traditional rulers the art of modern administration and accountability of public fund. For the first time, then native rulers accounted for the taxes and royalties collected from the people and explained how the public funds were used. This minimized cases of corruption and embezzlement of public treasury.
5. This period could be regarded as the zenith of relevance of the traditional institution because monarchs were made to play the roles of politicians and thus, became the pivot around which the decision-making processes revolved.
6. Indirect Rule system gave quasi-autonomy to the people in the art of self-government and made Africans to be alive to their civic obligations and also to be conscious of their civic rights by introducing a modern judicial system for adjudication and arbitration of disputes between individuals, communities and traditional institutions.
7. It preserved the native customs, laws and traditions which made the British subjects think, talk and behave like Nigerians unlike their neighboring Francophone Africans that had their culture subsumed by the French Policy of Assimilation.

### **The Demerits of Indirect Rule**

Conversely, there were arguments against the British Indirect Rule in Nigeria, among which were the followings.

1. It was argued that the system was shrouded in deceit and pretence by the British for making it appear that the native rulers were ruling but in the actual fact they took instructions from the colonial masters from the Governor-General through the Residents to the District Officers who, in most cases, turned the traditional rulers to puppets and stooges because they were stark illiterates. Then native rulers could not use their position to get what they thought was good for their people but were rather used by the British officials to implement their colonial policies.
2. The deliberate alienation of African elites from the Indirect Rule system was another sour point against the system. The educated elites who were better placed to run the judicial system, the public service and manage the public treasury were excluded to the advantage of the illiterate native rulers who were susceptible to taking instructions from the colonial master's hook, line and sinker to the detriment of their people.
3. The Indirect Rule was also criticized for giving too much powers to traditional rulers beyond what their communities accorded

them thus, the new status led to an unhealthy rivalry among communities over supremacy and territorial jurisdiction to augment their aggregate revenue and consequently, their aggregate salaries.

4. There were cases of arbitrary use of powers by the traditional rulers against their opponent either over wives, land or chieftaincy titles in their domain.

5. It is also argued that the system had a negative toll on the myths and sacredness surrounding the traditional rulers in the context of African society. For instance, in the Yorubaland, Obas were rarely seen in public except when occasionally, they sat in judgment or had to perform traditional rites or declare annual festivals open. Most of an Oba's functions were performed by the Chiefs. In Ghana, the traditional rulers do not speak directly to the people but through a Palace interpreter. With the Indirect Rule these traditional conventions became a thing of the past as Obas, Emirs, Obis became ubiquitous in the sense that they were seen everywhere in the community.

### 3.2 Towards Unification

The amalgamation of 1914 became imperative against the background that the North could not find sufficient funds to maintain its own administration in spite of the annual grants from the Imperial Treasury and also, from the Southern administration. The financial situation of the Southern administration was buoyant because of the rapid development of trade. Therefore, Ojiako (1981) posits that: amalgamation was aimed at relieving the Imperial Treasury of its annual contribution towards the upkeep of the North.

For the purpose of achieving that objective, Lord Lugard amalgamated the Lagos Colony and the Southern Protectorate and the Northern Protectorate in 1914 and he created a Central Legislature which he called The Nigerian Council as an advisory and deliberative body. The Council was a creation of three Constitutional instruments: Order-in-Council (1912), the Letters Patent (1913), and the Nigerian Protectorate Order-in-Council (1913) (Report of constitutional conference 1995:43). The composition of the Council was as follows:

i) Official members	23
ii) Unofficial (European) members	7
iii) Unofficial (African) members	6
TOTAL	36

The constitutional instruments provided for six unofficial African members who were to be nominated by the Governor and the composition was as follows: Two Emirs from the North; the Alafin of Oyo; One member from Lagos to represent business interests; one from Calabar and one represented the Warri-Benin Area (Olawale 1980:44). The official members were made up of the following officials: The Governor-General, the Executive Council members, Residents and Commissioners, the Secretaries for the Central Government and the Northern and Southern Provinces respectively, the Political Secretary to the Governor-General (if any), and any other official whom the British Government might appoint.

This could be regarded as the first attempt at Constitution making in Nigeria. Although, the Constitution created the Legislative Council, only the Governor, who was also a member, possessed both Executive and Legislative powers which could only be checked by the Secretary to the Colony. Another feature of the Council was that the Governor who stood for the whole territory maintained two different policies and concepts of administration for both the North and the South. This is because while the Legislative Council could legislate on issues affecting the Southern part, the North was ruled directly by proclamation. Also, the fact that Nigerians were neither consulted before the constitution of the Council nor were they involved in the governance coupled with the isolationist policy maintained against the Northern part made the Constitutional instruments a subject of criticism by the nationalists.

However, the Nigerian Council created by Lord Lugard fell short of his expectations. Members (especially the nominated Africans) showed little or no interest about it as they hardly attended its meetings. Lugard regarded the nominated Africans as not capable of being effective in representing their people. There was also lack of interest on the part of the people themselves about the relevance of such Legislative Council with such limited influence and power under the colonial administration.

This led to the agitation for constitutional representation by the African educated elite in the coastal areas, especially Lagos and Calabar who were later to find their voice in the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) jointly formed by Messrs Caseley Hayford and Dr. Akinwande Savage - a Nigerian medical doctor practising in the Gold Coast (Okafor 1981:74).

### 3.3 Criticisms Against Amalgamation

The unification policy introduced by Lord Lugard in 1914 was received by Africans in the North and South with mixed feelings. Both sides seemed to have concluded that it would bring about a fundamental

change in the official outlook which some believed would not be a pleasant one (Okafor 1981:51).

The Lagos Press and a section of the educated elite were vocal in their criticisms of the new administrative structure introduced by Lugard. In its editorial comment, The Lagos Standard had this to say:

For the purpose of administration this vast territory of Nigeria is now divided into three areas, which are the Colony and the Northern and Southern Provinces. This would be an excellent arrangement if the principle was also laid down that each division shall be autonomous. Each area shall have within it a perfect machine for effective government, subject nevertheless to a central control. This central authority should have the power of dealing with matters peculiar to each. They would thereby become a federated State in which the Governor-General would be as it were a Foreman of works, but not the fountain from which all authority and powers should emanate for them (see Lagos Standard).

The amalgamation of a diverse people who were at different levels of social, educational and economic development into a unified, powerful, and centralized authority was seen as lopsided and unthinkable by the educated elite. They also condemned the over-concentration of powers in the Governor-General over a vast territory, over which he had little knowledge. It is inconceivable how much authority can be effectively exercised by him, at any moment, in every part of the country. The system was also criticized for alienating the progressive public opinion from the political processes of the country.

But in a tacit response to the criticisms, Lugard, in a write-up a year after the amalgamation, stated that he did not consider it as a geographical, political or more especially a financial expression, rather a means whereby each part of Nigeria might be raised to the level of the highest plane attained by any particular part. See

*Confidential Letter from F. D. Lugard*). As regards the isolation of the North in Lugard's Nigeria Council, Sir Hugh Clifford who succeeded him saw, while on tour in the Northern Provinces, how the policy had kept that area (North) backward. He made the observation while travelling from the North to Onitsha, in the South. He submits:

The presence of a detachment of Boy Scouts and a number of children from the neighbouring mission schools emphasized the fact that we had passed from the Northern to the Southern Provinces of Nigeria. Until I reached Idah, which I have said, has only recently been transferred to the Northern Provinces, during my whole stay in the latter, I



had not seen a body of school children drawn up in order, singing God save the King and other patriotic songs, which is a ubiquitous feature of all public occasions in most parts of West Africa. In a fashion, these contrasted results of the British occupation epitomized the rival systems and ideas prevailing in the two sets of Provinces (Okafor 1981:86).

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How did the British penetrate what is now known as Nigeria?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the British colonial administration in Nigeria began with the policy of mercantilism in Europe under which the colonial powers used transnational companies trading in African territories as stepping stone towards achieving the territorial ambition. In June 1885, the Royal Niger Company was charged by the British Government with the responsibility to control the administration of the Oil Rivers (Niger Coast) Protectorate and the Niger Territories.

The advent of the British colonialism in Nigeria could be traced to three major different but not mutually exclusive factors: the British Traders; the British Missionaries and the International forces. The British Traders were attracted to Nigeria and other African countries by the prospects of trade in Gold, Ivory, Guinea Pepper, etc. With the growing need for cheap (slave) labour in the emerging industrial world, the British commercial interest became expanded to include the slave trade which was later to cascade to full-blown colonization in order to get raw material to feed her home industries.

The Nigerian political and constitutional developments began with Lugard's experiments with the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1914. The perceived defects in the administrative structure laid for the country led to the agitation for reforms by African elites who operated under different nationalist movements until the attainment of independence in 1960. The aftermath of the critiques shall be discussed in the subsequent Modules.

### 5.0 SUMMARY

No doubt, the British influence in the Nigerian political development cannot be overemphasized. The colonial policies which were put in place by the first Governor-General, Lord Frederick Lugard were essentially based on conjectures (experimental) rather than a

well-articulated programme. This fact was corroborated by his immediate successor - Sir Hugh Clifford when he reminded the British Government that the system of government was recognized as purely experimental and had failed to realize the expectation entertained concerning it. (See Confidential Letter from H. Clifford).

From the Indirect Rule system to the creation of the Nigerian Council through amalgamation, Lugard's conception and vision of the colonial territory had great influence on his policies which formed the basis upon which the colonial masters built the modern nation-state now known as Nigeria.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the colonial policy of indirect rule and justify how it shaped the structure of Nigeria.
2. What are the reasons for the 1914 amalgamation of Nigeria by Lugard?
3. Would you agree with the statement that, the 1914 amalgamation of Nigeria was an amalgamation without unification?

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**UNIT 2 CLIFFORDS CONSTITUTION 1922****CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Nigerian Council
  - 3.2 Composition of Official Members
  - 3.2 Criticisms Against the Constitution
  - 3.3 Merits of the Constitution
  - 3.4 Defects of the Constitution
  - 3.5 Major Improvements of the Constitution
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates and the subsequent establishment of the Nigerian Council in 1914 by Lord Lugard no doubt, opened a floodgate of criticisms from the African elites and some colonial officials alike. One of such non-African critics was Sir Hugh Clifford who was later to succeed Lugard in 1919. In a confidential letter dated July 7, 1922 (See Draft Confidential Letter), he made some scathing observations and later, recommendations on the Central Legislative Council and other administrative policies of Lord Lugard.

Therefore, on assumption of office, Sir Hugh Clifford introduced a new Constitution with some striking provisions that distinguished his administrative system from that of his predecessor.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list the political reforms introduced by the Clifford's Constitution of 1922
- describe its characteristic features and its effects on the political and constitutional development of Nigeria.

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**3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

Following the perceived drawbacks in the Lugard's administrative and constitutional arrangements for Nigeria, the educated Africans especially in the coastal towns mounted agitations for political reforms that would give Africans rights to participate in their own affairs. The National Congress of British West Africa with its headquarters at the Gold Coast (now Ghana), made representation to London with a petition calling, among other things, for greater representation of Africans in the Legislative Council throughout the British West African Territories.

(Price 1967:37).

In 1919 Lord Lugard was posted out and was to be replaced by Sir Hugh Clifford who assumed office in 1922 following the passage of a new Order by the Nigerian Legislative Council which came into effect in 1923. What was later to be known as the Clifford's Constitution of 1922 opened the epoch of constitutional development in Nigeria. Clifford merged the Legislative Council meant for the Colony of Lagos with the Nigerian Council to become a new one under the new ordinance. The Constitutional Order (See Royal Order-in-Council) provided for the following membership.

### 3.1 The Nigerian Council

i) Official members	27
ii) Unofficial members (Non-Africans)	09
iii) Unofficial members (Africans)	06
iv) Elected unofficial African members (Lagos)	03
v) Elected unofficial African members (Calabar)	01
Total.	46

#### 3.1.1 Composition of Official Members

The official members were composed of:

1. The Governor (as the President)
2. Executive Council members
3. The Ten Senior Residents in Nigeria
4. The Deputy Chief Secretary to the Government
5. The Secretary to the Northern and Southern Provinces
6. The General Manager of the Railways
7. The Director of Public Works, and
8. The Post-master General

The Legislative Council was to make laws, subject to the Governor's veto and reserved powers, for the Colony of Lagos and the Southern

provinces while the power to legislate for the Northern protectorate were vested in the Governor. (See Report of 1994/95 Constitutional Conference). Other important provisions of the Clifford's Constitution were:

- a) The Governor had power to veto or give consent to any law passed by the Legislative Council subject to the instruction given to him by the British Government. No law took effect until he or the British Government had assented to it.
- b) Unofficial members who were nominated by the Governor were to hold their seats for five years which, subject to approval of the British Government, was renewable for a period not exceeding five years.
- c) The Governor was also empowered to suspend any member of the Legislative Council with the approval of the British Government.
- d) Members of the Legislative Council could either jointly or severally, propose any Ordinance Bill except such Ordinance on finance which was the prerogative of the Governor.

### 3.2 Criticisms Against the Constitution

1. Although the elective principle introduced by the Constitution was commendable, it came under heavy criticisms by the African elites on the basis that it limited the franchise of Africans. According to the Constitution, only the British subjects or protected persons who met the condition of possession of properties and annual gross income of 100 Pound Sterling were qualified to vote, or be voted for (See Tamuno, 1966:33-40). These conditions made it difficult for many Nigerians in Lagos and Calabar to be qualified. The outrageous income was fixed at a time when an average worker earned about 25 pence a day.
2. Another drawback of the Constitution was that the Executive Council was predominantly white officials to the exclusion of Africans. The Council exercised wide powers on policy formulation and implementation with far-reaching effects on the lives of Africans.
3. Another defect of the Constitution was that the North was excluded from the purview of the Legislative Council. The Northern provinces were ruled by proclamation as was the case under Lord Lugard. This isolation had adverse effects on the political development in the area as Nigerians in that part of the country were indifferent to the Nationalist struggles like their Southern counterparts. African elites regarded this as a divide and

rule policy of the British Government to slow down the awareness of the people.

4. Finally, the retention of casting vote and veto power on policy issues by the Governor did not make the new Legislative Council any better than the one it sought to replace. In addition, the nominated members were at liberty to act at the whims and caprices of the Governor when matters came to voting.

### 3.3 Merits of the Constitution

1. Perhaps the most striking feature of the 1922 Constitution was for the introduction of Elective Principle which, first time, provided opportunity for Africans to elect their representatives and participate in the Legislative process. This was commendable because it provided an impetus for the early rise of nationalist movements in Nigeria and also the evolution of political parties in the Country. It was during the period that the first Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) which was led by Herbert Macaulay was formed. Also, the Nigerian Youth Movement and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens were formed. The political parties joined forces with the nationalist movements to give the British Government a stiff opposition.
2. Another important merit of the Constitution was that it encouraged the establishment of newspapers to further the cause of the struggle for decolonization. For instance, Late Samuel Herbert Macaulay founded The Daily News in 1925 while Sir Kitoye Ajasaf founded The Nigerian Pioneer in 1926. Others were The Nigerian Daily Times by Sir Adeyemo Alakija, a Lagos lawyer and the West African Pilot by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. The debut of the Newspapers contributed tremendously to the awakening of the political consciousness of Nigerians.

### 3.4 Defects of the Constitution

- i. The continued retention of isolation policy of the Northern provinces retarded the process of political and constitutional developments of the area.
- ii. The elective principle, limited to Lagos and Calabar, disenfranchised many Africans because of the obnoxious qualification requirements attached to it.
- iii. The composition of the Executive Council was predominantly Europeans. Africans were not represented in the Council despite enormous powers it wielded.

- iv. The wide powers given to the Governor by the constitution to veto the laws made by the Council, coupled with the fact that majority of its members were nominated by the Governor made the Legislative Council a caricature of the Lugard's Nigerian Council which was criticized by Clifford.

### 3.5 Major Improvements of the Constitution

The Clifford's Constitution of 1922 recorded the following improvements on that of Lord Lugard's Constitution.

- i) It merged and enlarged the Legislative Councils for better effects.
- ii) For the first time, it introduced elective principles.
- iii) It stimulated the political awareness of more people in the colonial territory.
- iv) It accelerated the evolution of Nationalism and formation of political parties.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How was the administrative reforms carried out by Sir Clifford different from that of Lord Lugard?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

Since the revival of the Legislative Council by Sir Hugh Clifford in 1923, efforts were mainly concentrated on linking the native authorities in the South with the Council as the Northern colonial administrative officials were averse to and therefore repulsed any attempt by the Council to interfere with the North (Okafor, 1981:131).

The activities of the newly emerged political parties and the nationalist movements precipitated debates on the future of Nigeria. There were agitations for political reforms to give Africans prominent roles to play in their own affairs.

Although some provisions of the 1922 Constitution were criticized, it provided some elixir for Africans to take more than passing interests in the colonial administration and policies in their country.

In the subsequent units, we shall discuss the role of the early nationalists and the political parties in the development of the Nigerian nation.



## 5.0 SUMMARY

The Clifford Constitution of 1922 was a watershed in the political and Constitutional development of Nigeria. It brought about the development of early political parties that worked paripassu with the Nationalist Movements that fought the colonial government in Africa.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. The 1922 elective principle was not without some limitations. Discuss.
2. How will you distinguish between the 1914 Nigerian Council and the Legislative Council of 1922?

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## UNIT 3 EARLY NATIONALIST AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Map in Content
  - 3.1 Conceptual Clarifications
  - 3.2 Emergence of Nationalism in Nigeria
  - 3.3 Early Nationalist Groupings
  - 3.4 The First Political Movement
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Under this unit, we intend to take a look at the nationalist struggles leading to different Constitutional conferences and reforms that culminated in the granting of independence in 1960 by the British colonial government. The emergence of early political parties during the period was a product of the activities of the nationalist leaders. From the Lagos Youth Movement which was later to change to the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM), to the Hubert Macaulay-led Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), through to the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) that was later led by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. These were the major political platforms used by the Nigerian leaders to confront the British colonial administration.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the events leading to constitutional conferences in Nigeria
- explain the meaning of nationalism, nation and state
- list the factors that encouraged nationalism and its effects on the colonial administration
- mention the dynamics of politics under the colonial era.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Conceptual Clarifications

##### Nationalism

What is nationalism? This is somewhat a complex concept to grasp in terms of definition because there is no single factor to which it could be traced. Nationalism is usually a passion for unity, community of tribes, geographical contiguity, religious and cultural affinity and, to crown it all, political and historical aspirations. It is, therefore, a phenomenon derived from the word nation which Price (1967:24) defines as an association of men and women who have or believe that they have the following things in common: common ancestry; common history and tradition; common language, common culture, common religion and shares common boundary.

Nationality is another word very close to nationalism but Appadorai (1968:15) defines it as a spiritual sentiment or principle arising from amongst a number of people usually of the same race, resident on the same territory, sharing common language, the same religion, similar history and traditions, common interests, with common political associations and common ideas of political unity.

The word nationalism can also be explained within the prism of a State given the symbiotic relationship between the two concepts - nation and State.

In fact, the two concepts are often used interchangeably or as a compound word but going by the definition of a State, one would notice certain characteristics of it that cannot be attributed to a nation and vice versa. While it is true that a State is also a territorial association of men and women like a nation, they may not necessarily share common attributes of tribal affinity like a nation.

A State is an association organized for specific purposes with a clearly defined territory and an organized system of government. A nation may or may not have its territory as clearly defined as that of a State. For instance, Yoruba nation has its territory across two modern nation-states i.e. the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Benin Republic. The Hausa-Fulani nation also has its territory cut across many countries in West Africa. Many examples abound, even within the Nigerian States. The following are some similarities and differences between a Nation and a State:

Nation	State
Members share or believe they are in most cases an artificial creation, people are brought together. No inherent quality	It is in most cases an artificial creation, people are brought together. No inherent quality
Territory may not be clearly defined	A clearly defined territory over which it defines its sovereignty
May spread across many states	Exercises coercive powers over its territory
Modern nations lack sovereignty	States are sovereign over their territories and powers
May have organized government	It is a prerequisite to have an organized government with a system of laws
There is a feeling of nationality or oneness	May lack the feeling of nationality or oneness

This leads us to the myths and conceptual analysis of nationalism for the purpose of this course. To many people nationalism connotes a tendency of warfare between ethnic groups or a force that destabilizes multiethnic countries. However, this view is wide of the mark because of the fact that nationalism is a phenomenon that affects people's everyday actions in many positive ways without necessarily making them violent. Another misconception that must be cleared about this concept is that it is something fundamentally different from racism. The basis of nationalism could be influenced by religion, ethnicity, language, race among other factors.

Nationalism in the Twentieth Century could be perceived as the ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, cohesion and individuality for a social group, some of whose members conceive it to be an actual or potential nation. Nielsen (1998:253-95) contends that the term nationalism has a variety of meanings and encompasses the two phenomena noted as:

- i) The attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their identity as members of that nation, and
- ii) The action that members of a nation take in seeking to achieve (or sustain) some form of political sovereignty.

For our present purpose, let us align with the definition of nationalism in the context of the colonial politics in Nigeria as a policy designed to achieve national self-determination by the removal of alien rule. Although the goal of the early nationalist was initially not for self-determination, it was rather to demand for increased participation in the governmental process on a regional level. It also included a fight against inconsistencies inherent in the British colonial policies which ignited regional animosities by attempting to preserve the indigenous cultures of each area and introduced western political and social concepts all at the same time. This corroborates the opinion of Olawale (1980:45) that

nationalism is an act of political awareness or consciousness of the colonized people with the desire to achieving equal status, equal rights and equal opportunities with their white counterparts.

### 3.2 Emergence of Nationalism in Nigeria

The history of the emergence of early nationalism in Nigeria could be traced to the southern part of the country, spearheaded by those whose thinking was shaped by European ideas, they were also antagonistic to the policy of indirect rule which had entrenched what was considered to be an anachronistic ruling class (traditional chiefs) in power rather than the westernized elites. There were so many sources of the ideological and socio-political inspirations as well as economic factors responsible for the southern nationalists. Among the motivators were the prominent American-based activists such as Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. DuBois and Nigerian students who joined those from other colonies in pan-African groups, such as the West African Student Union (WASU) founded in London in 1925 (See Price 1967:24). They were later to become so critical of colonial rule that they started championing the cause for self-government, constitutional and social reforms and eventually, independence.

One of the social reforms demanded was the religious racism practiced by the European missionaries and public servants. The whites openly discriminated against Africans from attaining certain status in their churches which led to the emergence of independent African Christian churches at the end of the Nineteenth Century. Also in the civil service, education and business sectors, Africans suffered discrimination from their European counterparts. All these gave impetus to nationalist struggle in Nigeria. In the economic sector, the import and export trades were dominated by European traders and a few commercial firms. According to Ekundayo (1973:216), by 1917 there were 77 European trading firms in Nigeria which included: the United African Company (UAC); Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO); Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain (SCOA) and Peterson Zochonis (PZ), etc.

These firms came together with other European firms to form a cartel called Association of West African Merchants (AWAM) which was used to control prices of both manufactured goods they sold and the cash crops bought from African farmers. African farmers had no control over the prices of farm implements and other imported goods they bought from the European firms and at the same time, they had no control over the prices of their farm produce like cocoa, cotton, cash crops and others. To worsen the situation was the monopoly enjoyed by the Lebanese, Syrians and Indians over retail trading because they could

easily attract credit facilities from the European firms and loans from their banks. The banks were willing to accept deposits from Africans but when it came to borrowing, they ran into difficulties. The control of the economy was totally in the hands of expatriates, to the detriment of Africans who found it difficult to compete with the Europeans in the import and export business for lack of capital base.

Further, the wage employment opportunity was another factor that aided the early nationalism in Nigeria. The civil service, judiciary and the organized private sectors were almost closed against Africans. The few Africans employed suffered discrimination as they were prevented from rising to positions of responsibility to exercise control over expatriates, no matter the level of their education. Africans cannot rise beyond the level of a clerk which explained why early educated Africans took to professions such as Law and Medicine where they can be self-employed.

### 3.3 Early Nationalist Groupings

In the early 1920s, sequel to the Clifford's Constitution, there were several types of non-political associations consisting of professional and business men such as the Nigerian Union of Teachers, the Nigerian Law Association, which was later to provide trained leadership for such political groups and the Nigerian Produce Traders Association which was led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo. Also, ethnic and kinship organizations that often took the form of a tribal union were formed in the same period. These organizations were visible mainly in the urban areas and also sprang up as a result of rural-urban drift in search of white-collar job by Africans who felt alienated by the anonymity of the urban environments and were drawn together by ties to their ethnic homelands. By the mid-1940s, the major ethnic groups had formed such associations as the Igbo Federal Union and the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a Yoruba cultural movement, formed in London by Obafemi Awolowo in 1948. Another type of organization that was more politically inclined was the youth or student group such as the West African Students Union (WASU), the Lagos Youth Movement which became the vehicle of intellectuals and professionals. They were the most politically conscious segment of the population and stood in the vanguard of the nationalist movement.

In 1933 Dr. James Churchill Vaughan, Ernest Sise Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya (Odemo of Isara) were brought into the (LYM) by Eyo Ita and in 1937 the name was changed to Nigeria Youth Movement (NYM) with Barrister Hezekiah Oladipo Davies as the Secretary. Newspapers, some of which were published before World War I, provided coverage of nationalist views. The principal figure in the political activity that ensued was Herbert Macaulay, often referred to as the father of Nigerian

nationalism. He aroused political awareness through his newspaper, the *Lagos Daily News*, while leading the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), which dominated elections in Lagos from its founding in 1922 until the ascendancy of the Nigeria Youth Movement (NYM) in 1938 which first used nationalist rhetoric to agitate for improvements in education. Similarly, Macaulay's political platform called for economic and educational development, Africanization of the civil service, and self-government for Lagos. Significantly, however, Macaulay's NNDP remained almost entirely a Lagos party, popular only in the area with experience in elective politics. In addition, the rapid growth of organized labour in the 1940s also brought new political forces into play in the form of labour movements. But the proliferation of labour organizations, however, fragmented the movement, and potential leaders lacked the experience and skill to draw workers together.

### 3.4 The First Political Movement

According to Ojiako (1981:13), on August 26, 1944 the pioneer of militant nationalism in West Africa was born named the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons with the major objective to exert heavy pressure for accelerated political development in Nigeria. The following officers were elected at its inaugural meeting held at the Glover Memorial Hall:

i) President	Herbert Macaulay
ii) Vice President	J. O. Lucas
iii) General Secretary	Nnamdi Azikiwe
iv) Financial Secretary	A. W. Howells
v) Treasurer	L. P. Ojukwu
vi) Auditor were Messrs:	L. A. Onojobi & A. Ogedegbe
vii) Legal Advisers were Messrs:	E. J. Alex Taylor, J. E. O. David, E. A. Akerele, A. Alakija, Ladipo Odunsi and J. I. C. Taylor.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What were the factors responsible for opposition to colonial administration in Nigeria?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

Students of Nigerian Government and Politics should appreciate and learn more about this background to the Nigerian nationhood so that they can analyze the contemporary issues in the current Nigerian politics. They should understand the dynamics and the environmental

factors leading to the emergence of the early nationalist movements and political parties and see whether there is any symbiotic relationship with the modern nation.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

It would be noticed that the membership and activities of the nationalist leaders were limited to the southern part of Nigeria. This could be as a result of the British inconsistencies in the policy implementation. For instance, the elective principle of 1922 was restricted to Lagos and Calabar while the northern Nigeria was ruled by proclamation by the colonial Governor. This dichotomy also had historical and cultural dimensions, which the British government intended to preserve.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is nationalism? Compare and contrast nation and state.
2. Carefully analyse the evolution of nationalists and political movements in Nigeria.
3. What do you think were the factors that aided the nationalist struggle in Nigeria?

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**UNIT 4 SIR ARTHUR RICHARDS CONSTITUTION 1946****CONTENTS**

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- 2.0 Objectives
  - 3.0 Main Content
    - 3.1 Background to the 1946 Constitution
      - 3.2 Composition of the Central Legislature
    - 3.3 Composition of the Regional Assemblies
      - 3.3.1 The North
      - 3.3.2 The West
      - 3.3.3 The East
    - 3.4 Main Provisions of the Constitution
    - 3.5 Criticisms of the Constitution
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the last unit, we discussed the Clifford constitution of 1922 and the attendant political developments it brought to the entity called Nigeria during that period. In this unit, we are going to discuss the constitution introduced by Sir Arthur Richards in 1946 and its implications on the structure and superstructure of Nigeria. We shall also examine why the educated elites continued to demand for further reforms despite some merits inherent in the 1946 constitution.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- List the objectives and the provisions of the 1946 constitution
- List the drawbacks of the constitution and the contentious issues raised by the nationalists.

**3.0 MAIN CONTENT****3.1 Background to the Constitution**

The 1946 Constitution, which was named after its author, Sir Arthur Richards, was enacted by the British government as the Nigeria (Legislative Council) Order in Council in 1946 and came into operation on 1st January, 1947. It was based on the proposals (See Arthur

Richards Letter) sent on 6th December, 1944 by Sir Arthur Richards (later Lord Milverton) to the British government which was later approved with some amendments. His views as contained in the proposals were greatly influenced by the nationalist's agitations for administrative and constitutional reforms in Nigeria. Earlier, his predecessors Sir Donald Cameron and Sir Bernard Bourdillon were critical of the 1922 Clifford's constitution and saw the need for changes to be brought into the existing system.

By 1943 when Sir Arthur Richards became the Governor of Nigeria, there was a growing realization among the official and unofficial opinions that the 1922 Constitutional Order had outgrown its usefulness. Some of the bones of contentions were the use of the traditional rulers to the exclusion of the educated elites in the native administration and the segregation of the north from the rest of the country.

The Richards constitution for the first time, gave Nigerians a majority in both national and regional legislative assemblies. It was also the first time that the North was brought under the same administrative control with the South. The objects of the constitution were, among others: 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. See Awolowo, (1966:4-6). The main features of the constitution were as follows:

### **3.2 Composition of the Central Legislature**

a) The Central Legislature which was unicameral was presided over by the Governor and was made up of the following members:  
13 ex-officio members (heads of Ministries)

Three nominated official members  
24 nominated unofficial members  
Four elected unofficial members (Lagos 3, Calabar 1)

b) Regional Legislature (bi-cameral in the North, unicameral in the West and the East)

### **3.3 Composition of Regional Houses of Assembly**

#### **3.3.1 The North**

The constitution provided for the North, a House of Assembly and a House of Chiefs. The House of Chiefs was made up of all first class and not less than 2nd class Emirs. The House of Assembly was made up of:

SI

- a) 19 official members
- b) 20 unofficial members (14 were selected by the Native Authorities while 6 were appointed by the Governor to represent special interests)

### 3.3.2 The West

This region had a unicameral legislature, unlike the North which had a House of Chiefs. The Western House of Assembly was composed of the following:

- a) 14 official members
- b) 15 unofficial members (these included three Chiefs nominated by the Governor; seven members were selected by the Native Authorities while the remaining five members were also nominated by the Governor to represent some special interests).

### 3.3.3 The East

Like the West, the Eastern Region was also given a unicameral legislature which was made up of the following:

- a) 14 official members
- b) 15 unofficial members (these included 10 members selected by the Native Authorities and the remaining five members nominated by the Governors to represent special interests)

Generally, the following were the main functions of the Regional Assemblies:

- i) To serve as the electoral college for the Central Legislature
- ii) To consider a resolution on matters either referred to them by the Governor or introduced by a member
- iii) To deliberate on the annual budget estimates to be placed before them by the Governor

## 3.4 Main Provisions of the 1946 Constitution

1. It divided Nigeria into three regions – North, West and East – and established legislative councils in each of the regions, thereby allowing the people of each region to develop at their own pace.
2. For the first time, the northern part was brought within the same legislative authority. Before the integration, the Governor was empowered to legislate directly for the people in the Northern

provinces since they were not represented in the preceding Nigerian Legislative Council.

3. It gave power to the regional assemblies to elect members to the central legislature.
4. It retained the elective principle of the 1922 constitution with the limited franchise to Lagos and Calabar but increased the number of the unofficial members at the Legislative Council.
5. The constitution also retained the veto power for the Governor.

### 3.5 Some Criticisms against the 1946 Constitution

1. The nationalists were not completely happy with Sir Arthur Richards for the manner he introduced the constitution without consulting the Nigerian people for their inputs. Although the draft constitutional proposals were approved by the African unofficial members of the legislative council, the nationalists contended that they were not the true representative of the people hence, the proposals were passed in utter disregard of the people's opinion. Obafemi Awolowo (1966:7) opined: because he did not consult the people before he introduced his constitution, Sir Arthur Richards came under heavy strictures.
2. Another defect of the constitution was that it retained most of the objectionable features of the past. Though it aimed at securing greater participation of Nigerians in their own affairs, the new legislative councils created remained mere deliberative bodies with the retention of veto powers by the Governor. The constitution failed to provide for ministerial positions for Nigerians which the nationalists saw as a step towards self-government.
3. The Richards constitution also came under heavy criticism by the nationalists who felt that both the Chiefs and the unofficial members nominated by the Governor were colonial stooges who will always support the government.
4. The retention of the elective principle without increasing the number of Africans to be elected, coupled with the restricted franchise, was seen as a calculated attempt by the government to exclude the educated elite who were sufficiently conscious of their rights. Thus, the constitution was regarded as a year of further extension and consolidation of the British Imperial power.

rather than marking the commencement of imperial withdrawal See Olawale (1980:59).

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What changes can you notice in the composition of the Legislative Council under Richards constitution?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

Despite the shortcomings of the 1946 constitution, it should be commended for promoting unity in Nigeria by bringing the whole of the country under the same Legislation which was quite a radical departure from the past. The establishment of regional assemblies moved the government closer to the people and served as a leap towards representative government. These new innovations increased the tempo of political activities in Nigeria.

### 5.0 SUMMARY

The British government became convinced of the need for changes in her colonial policies by the developments after the 2nd World War. This was assisted by the increased tempo of agitations by the nationalists who took part in the war on the side of Britain. Therefore, the British parliament wasted no time in approving the proposals submitted by Sir Arthur Richards who became the Governor of Nigeria in 1945.

The 1946 constitution though, brought some changes in the sub-structure and superstructure in Nigeria, it was not without some objectionable features which were condemned by the nationalists and served as impetus for improvement in the subsequent constitutions.

### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What were the major provisions of the Richards constitution of 1946?
2. Despite the marked departure of the Richards constitution from that of the Clifford of 1922, it still suffered condemnation from the nationalists.

How would you justify their criticisms?

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Awolowo, Obafemi (1966). *Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press.

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**MODULE 2****TOWARDS NIGERIA'S INDEPENDENCE****INTRODUCTION**

In the last unit, we learnt that one of the major complaints of the nationalists against the Richards Constitution of 1946 was, among others, that Nigerians were not consulted before the document was imposed on them. Therefore, in introducing his own constitution in 1951, Sir John McPherson who too became the Governor in 1948, meticulously avoided his predecessors' error by giving the people across, all shades of opinion, the opportunity to ventilate their views on the constitution. Therefore, Sir John McPherson made a history of being the first colonial Governor ever to, allow Africans to have input in the document that explained, how they were to be governed. Series of other Constitutional conferences were organised and held between 1953 and 1953 to address the Constitutional crisis and we are going to address some of them in this module.

- Unit 1 The McPherson's Constitution of 1951
- Unit 2 The Oliver Lyttleton's Constitution of 1954
- Unit 3 The 1960 Independence Constitution
- Unit 4 1963 Republican Constitution

## **UNIT 1 THE MACPHERSONS CONSTITUTION OF 1951**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Evolution of Nigerian Federalism
    - 3.1.1 Regional Recommendations
  - 3.2 Main provisions of the Constitution
  - 3.3 Composition of the Regional Assemblies
  - 3.4 Merits of the Constitution
  - 3.5 Defects of the Constitution
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the last unit, we learnt that one of the major complaints of the nationalists against the Richards Constitution of 1946 was, among others, that Nigerians were not consulted before the document was imposed on them. Therefore, in introducing his own constitution in 1951, Sir John McPherson who too became the Governor in 1948, meticulously avoided his predecessor's error by giving the people across all shades of opinion, the opportunity to ventilate their views on the constitution. Therefore, Sir John McPherson made a history of being the first colonial Governor ever to allow Africans to have input in the document that explained how they were to be governed.



## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit explains the background to the 1951 constitution, its important features and the landmark revolution it made in the Nigerian political history.

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the evolution of federalism
- identify the prospects and problems of the constitution
- explain nationalists' agitation for self-government

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Evolution of Nigerian Federalism

Before this constitution was promulgated into law, Sir John Macpherson presented its draft and allowed Nigerians to debate it at conferences which took place at every strata of the society from the Central through to the District and village levels. According to Awolowo (1966:6) the colonial Governor, through his Chief Secretary Sir Hugh Foot, framed a number of questions to which people were recalled upon to apply their minds and give specific answers. The following were excerpts of the questions:

- Do we wish to see a fully centralized system with all the legislative and executive power concentrated at the centre, or do we wish to develop a federal system under which each different Region of the country would exercise a measure of internal autonomy?
- If we favour a federal system of government, should we retain the existing Regions with some modification of existing regional boundaries, or should we form Regions on some new basis, such as the many linguistic groups which exist in Nigeria?
- What changes should be made in the composition of the Regional Legislative Houses and Legislative Councils? Should the number of unofficial members be increased? Should the system of nominated members be retained?
- What functions and powers should be reserved to the Legislative Council in order to achieve the overriding of maintaining and strengthening the unity of Nigeria?

Central  
objective

SI

- Should the system to be introduced in all these matters and necessarily be the same in each Region, or should each Region be given freedom to decide on modifications to suit its own peculiar circumstances and needs?

At the end of the conferences, the following were the general consensus from each of the regions. (see Olusanya; 1973:130-32):

### 3.1.1 Regional Recommendations

#### 1. Northern Region

- A federal system
- A central Legislature
- Regional Legislature to legislate on specific subjects and others as maybe vested by the Central legislature.

#### 2. Western Region

- A federal system whose component units would be formed on ethnic and linguistic basis
- A federal parliament
- Regional parliaments competent to matters not specifically included in central the legislative powers of the parliament. legislate on all residual

#### 3. Eastern Region

- A federal system
- A central legislature
- Regional legislature that can legislate only on matters as the central legislature may delegate to them

#### 4. The Lagos Colony

According to Awolowo (1966:7), the recommendations of the Lagos Colony conference were substantially in the same terms as those of the Western Regional Conferences.<sup>3</sup> In response to the public opinion, Sir John Macpherson's constitution substantially reflected some of the views expressed at the conferences and contained in the recommendations submitted by each region.

### 3.2 Main Provisions of the Constitution

- a) It introduced a federal system in which the constitutional powers were divided between the central and the regional legislatures with the proviso that in the event of a clash under the concurrent legislative matters, the regional laws were voided to the extent of its inconsistency with that of the central legislature.
- b) The Governor had the reserved powers to refuse assent to any bill passed by the central legislature or to enact into law, bills rejected by the parliament.
- c) Flexible electoral laws at the central, regional and provincial levels.
- d) The number of the elected Nigerians into the legislative councils both at the central and regional levels was increased.
- e) The Governor was empowered to stop or propose amendment to any regional bill considered to be in conflict with the national interest.
- f) It maintained the three regional structures-North, East and West with Legislative and Executive Councils established in each. Both the North and the West had a bi-camera Legislature each while the East had a single-chamber Legislature.

### 3.3 Composition of the Regional Assemblies

#### The Northern Region

##### i) House of Assembly

- President appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor
- Official members 4
  - Special members 10
  - Elected members 90

##### ii) House of Chiefs

- Governor as President
- All first-class Emirs
- Other Chiefs 37
- Official member 3
- Adviser on Moslem Law 1

**The Western Region****i) House of Assembly**

- Governor as the President
- Official members 4
- Special members
- 3 • Elected members 80

**ii) House of Chiefs**

- Lieutenant-Governor as President
- All first and second class Obas 50
- Official members 3
- Special members 3

**The Eastern Region****i) House of Assembly**

- Lieutenant-Governor as President
- Official members 5
- Special members
- 3 • Elected members 80

**3.4 Merits of the Constitution**

1. This was the first constitution ever to be drawn with the full participation or consultation of Nigerians which was seen as an improvement on the previous exercises.
2. The constitution was also the first to introduce quasi-federalism in Nigeria and also to introduce Ministerial positions for Nigerians.
3. It was commendable because it introduced a Revenue Allocation formula based on the principles of Derivation, Needs and National Interest.

**3.5 Defects of the Constitution**

1. The constitution was condemned by the nationalists because it was only the government proposals that were eventually considered at the final stage.
2. In the same vein, the composition of the Constitution review committee was designed to suit the imperialist interests, giving

- more preference to the native Chiefs who had been serving the colonial interests.
3. The constitution was also criticized for not providing for the position of Prime Minister and Premier at the Central and Regional levels of government, which would have given the government a semblance of responsible leadership.
  4. The ministers were not in charge of given departments or a ministry that is, they were ministers without portfolios.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What were the contributions made by the existing political parties to the evolution of federalism in Nigeria?

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The introduction of enlarged membership at the Central and Regional levels by the 1951 constitution provided the opportunities for the formation of political parties that contested elections into the Regional Assemblies. While the Chief Obafemi Awolowo-led Action Group (AG) controlled the West, the Sir Ahmadu Bello-led Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) controlled the North, the Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe-led National Council and Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) controlled the East. The subsequent political intrigues led to the breakdown of the Constitution and gave way to another one in 1954.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Sir John Macpherson's constitution of 1951 was the first to be drawn with the inputs from Nigerians and it served as a catalyst for federalism in Nigeria. The constitution retained some of the old structures but introduced some modifications thereto. The constitution was rejected because of its inherent defects.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Critically examine Sir John Macpherson's Constitution of 1951.
2. Discuss some of the landmark innovations introduced by the 1951 Constitution.
3. Elucidate briefly on the processes and stages that the making of the 1951 Constitution took.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Awolowo, Obafemi (1966). *Thought on Nigerian Constitution*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press.

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## UNIT 2 THE OLIVER TYLLETONS CONSTITUTION OF 1954

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Constitutional Conferences
    - 3.1.1 London Conference 1953
    - 3.1.2 Decisions of the London Conference
    - 3.1.3 Lagos Conference 1954
  - 3.2 Main Features of the 1954 Constitution
    - 3.2.1 Central Legislature
    - 3.2.2 Composition of the Regional Legislature
  - 3.3 Other Important Provisions of the Constitution
  - 3.4 Merits of the Constitution
  - 3.5 Its Shortcomings
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

After about two years, it became obvious that the Macpherson's Constitution had become unworkable because what the system introduced fell short of what Nigerians desired. In the opinion of Obafemi Awolowo (1966), the Federation which existed under the Macpherson's Constitution was a very tight one. In the opinion of Awolowo (1966:11), it proved unbearably restrictive and obstructive in operation. The document contained some provisions that were patently contradictory to the principles and norms of federalism. This and some other factors such as: intra-party crisis, mutual suspicion by major ethnic groups, the Kano riots of May 1953 and the issue of self-government in 1956 precipitated the total breakdown of the Constitution in 1953.

Against this background, series of Constitutional conferences were organised and held between 1953 and 1958 to address the Constitutional crisis. The outcomes of which culminated in the Lyttletons Constitution of 1954 and the Independence Constitution of 1960.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

Under this unit, you will be educated about the processes, which the making of the 1954 constitution took, and;

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the main provisions of the constitution
- describe comparative ideas of the constitution and the one before it
- identify the merits and demerits of the constitution.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Constitutional Conferences

Constitutional conferences which agreed on a number of issues were held in London and Lagos as a means of involving Nigerians in the making of the new constitution.

#### 3.1.1 London Conference 1953

This constitutional conference was held in London under the chairmanship of Oliver Lyttleton, the Secretary of State for the Colonies between July 30 and August 22, 1953. It was attended by nineteen delegates who consisted of six from each of the three regions and one from the Southern Cameroons. Some of the important issues discussed were:

- i) The shortcomings of the 1951 Constitution
- ii) The motion for self-government in 1956
- iii) How to implement the changes

#### 3.1.2 Decisions of the Conference

- That the regions should be truly autonomous from the central government in respect of subjects under the residual powers
- That Lagos should become excised from the Western region to become a Federal territory
- That the official designation of the Lieutenant-Governors should be substituted for Governors in the regions while the Governor of Nigeria should be designated Governor-General.
- That there should be power sharing between the central and the regional governments.
- That self-government should be granted by Her Majesty to regions that desired it.



### 3.1.3 Lagos Conference of 1954

This was a follow up to the London Constitutional conference to finish the unfinished matters and was also to consider the advice of Sir Louis Chick, the Fiscal Commissioner appointed at the London conference. The conference agreed in principle with his recommendations on the allocation of resources between the Federal and regional governments and also settled on the following issues:

- That the police and public service be regionalized.
- That the Southern Cameroons become autonomous.
- That the judiciary should be regionalized.

### 3.2 Main Features of the 1954 Constitution

Since the making of this Constitution was preceded by series of conferences as enunciated above, little wonder then that its provisions were based on the issues agreed upon at the conferences. The constitution, among others, established a Central Legislative Council and Regional Assemblies in which both the Governor-General and Regional Governors ceased to be members respectively. The Legislative Council at each level was composed of the followings:

#### 3.2.1 Central Legislature

- A Speaker
- Ex-officio members 3
- Elected members represented as follows: -
- The Northern Region 92
- The Western Region 42
- The Eastern Region 42
- The Southern Cameroons 6
- The Lagos Colony 2

#### 3.2.2 Composition of the Regional Legislature

##### i) The Western Region (Bicameral)

- Speakers appointed by each of the Houses
- Elected members 80
- Members representing special interests 5

##### ii) The Northern Region (Bicameral)

- Speaker for the Assembly appointed by the Governor

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- The House of Chiefs was presided over by the Governor
- Elected members 131
- Members representing special interests 5

## iii) The Eastern Region (Unicameral)

- A Speaker appointed by the Governor
- No Official or special members allowed -
- Elected members 84

**3.3 Other Important Provisions of the Constitution**

- i) A Federal Supreme Court was established for the centre to replace the West African Court of Appeal while a High Court of Lagos and a High Court of the Regions, as well as that of the Southern Cameroons were also created.
- ii) It provided for the position of the Prime Minister at the centre and Premiers for the regions
- iii) The regions were made independent of the centre in that it transferred all the legislative and executive powers to the regions with some exclusively reserved for the centre.
- iv) The Lagos Colony became a Federal Territory having been excised from the Western Region.
- v) It regionalized both the public service and the judiciary
- vi) A unicameral Legislature for the centre.
- vii) Under the fiscal allocation, half of the proceeds from export duties and revenues from mineral resources were to be retained by the regions, thus emphasizing the derivation principle.

**3.4 Merits of the Constitution**

1. For the first time, the Constitution laid a foundation for a federal structure for Nigeria by providing for a clear division of both legislative and executive powers between the Central and the Regional governments.
2. It also paved the way for self-government which was later achieved by the Western and Eastern regions in 1957 while the Northern region attained the status in 1959.

3. The Constitution provided for direct elections to both the federal and regional legislatures unlike the previous Electoral College system.
4. The constitution also provided for appointment as ministers with portfolio for Nigerians, thereby giving Nigerians both authority and responsibility for the first time.

### 3.5 Its Shortcomings

However, the constitution had its own defects some of which were:

1. Its failure to provide for the second legislative chamber at the centre to guard against any possible tyrannical tendencies by a single-chamber legislature and also to ensure a balanced representation by Nigerians.
2. The appointment of the ministers which was based on the regional-based political parties made their allegiance and loyalty tilted toward their regions rather than to the entire nation.
3. Although, the Governor-General and Regional Governors were exempted from the legislature, they still held most of their traditional powers enjoyed under the 1954 constitution. For example, the approval of the Governor-General or the Governors must be obtained before any budget estimate could be laid before any of the legislature. They were also empowered to veto any legislation by withholding their assent.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What improvements were achieved on federalism under this constitution?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The Oliver Lyttelton Constitution came into effect on October 1, 1954 and the leaders of the three major political parties became the Premier of their respective regions viz:

- Northern region: Sir Ahmadu Bello, leader of the Northern People's Congress (NPC)
- Western region: Chief Obafemi Awolowo, leader of the Action Group (AG)
- Eastern region: Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, leader of the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), and
- Southern Cameroons: Dr. E.M.L. Endeley, leader of the Kamerun National Congress

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This constitution marked the end of the era of pre-independence constitution-making in Nigeria. The main provisions of the colonial constitution were very much similar albeit, with some modifications to satisfy the curiosity of the nationalist leaders. In general, the constitutions were meant to serve as an instrument of authority for colonial administrative policies in Nigeria.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What do you consider as the main achievements of the 1954 Constitution?
2. Discuss the preliminary step taken before the Lyttletons Constitution of 1954 was promulgated.
3. Examine the merits and deficiencies of the 1954 Constitution.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Awolowo, Obafemi (1966). *Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press.

## UNIT 3 THE INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION OF 1960

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The 1957/1958 Constitutional Conferences
    - 3.1.1 Main Focus of the Conference
    - 3.1.2 The 1957 Conferences Major Resolutions
    - 3.1.3 The 1958 Conferences Major Resolutions
  - 3.2 Major Provisions of the 1960 Constitution
  - 3.3 Major Changes in the Constitution
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This constitution marked the beginning of the post-independence era of constitution-making, a period between independence and the First Republic in Nigeria. The 1960 constitution contained most of the issues settled at the 1957 and 1958 constitutional conferences specifically organized to remedy some of the weaknesses inherent in the Lyttleton 1954 Constitution and also, the issue of independence for Nigeria.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the preliminary step taken before the promulgation of the constitution
- indicate the main provisions and the improvements in the constitution over the one it replaced.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The 1957/1958 Constitutional Conference

##### 3.1.1 Main Focus of the Conference

One of the major factors that accentuated the agitations for self-government and early independence for Nigeria was the fact that Ghana

was granted political independence and became a sovereign nation in March 1957. Therefore, in May 1957 the Nigerian Constitutional conference took place in London under the Chairmanship of Mr. Allan-Lennox Boyd, the Colonial Secretary with delegates from the regional governments and a cream of political leaders were also in attendance. The following were some of the major issues addressed:

- The question of independence for Nigeria
- The regional self-government
- The minority questions
- Granting additional responsibility to the political leadership
- Power sharing between the Federal and Regional governments.

### 3.1.2 The 1957 Conference Major Resolutions

- Sir Henry Willocks was appointed to head a commission to look into the ways of allaying the fear of the minority ethnic groups who had been agitating for separate region in Nigeria.
  - The political leaders, for the first time, unanimously agreed on October 1, 1960 as the date for Nigeria's independence.
  - Lagos to remain excised from the Western region and to be the federal territory.
  - Unified electoral system based on universal adult suffrage was to be adopted in the regions except for the North where it was to be restricted to adult male.
  - The West and the East were to be granted the status of self-government on 8th August, 1957 while the North was to attain the status in 1959.
  - It recommended a bi-cameral legislature for Nigeria A Senate and a House of Representatives.
  - The position of Prime Minister and Premier were recommended for the central and regional governments respectively.
  - The police should be centrally controlled even as the conference recognized its dual responsibility to both the Federal and the Regional governments.
  - It was recommended that the fundamental human rights should be entrenched in the 1960 Constitution to protect the liberties of the minority groups.
  - In the same vein, it was also recommended that the non-Moslems minorities in the Northern Nigeria should be given the option to have their litigations heard by non-Moslem Courts.
- 3.1.3 The 1958 Conference's Major Resolutions

This conference was attended by various categories of delegates from Nigeria and it was aimed at clearing some grey areas contained in the

recommendations by the 1957 London conference. It lasted between September 29 and October 27, 1958. See Ojiako (1981:53). Some of the following were the major issues around which its recommendations were centred:

- The minority groups problems
- Northern regional self-government
- Date of Independence
- The control of the police and the prisons
- Revenue generation/sharing arrangement
- The position of the Southern Cameroons at independence.

### 3.2 Major Provisions of the 1960 Constitution

1. It provided for a Cabinet, Westminster or Parliamentary system of government in which there was a Governor-General (representing the Queen of England) and a Prime Minister as head of government. Under the system, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe who was the Governor-General, a ceremonial head while Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister exercised the Executive powers in the day-to-day running of the government. The one (Governor-General) was a dignified or ceremonial head of state while the other (Prime Minister) was the effective head of government. Other essential features of the government were:

- Fusion of powers                      members of the Executive were also members of the Parliament
- Collective responsibility                      members of the Executive were collectively responsible to the Parliament in which case, no Minister of Cabinet rank should criticize the government in public otherwise the government will collapse
- Vote of No Confidence                      once the Parliament passes a vote of no confidence on the Prime Minister the government stands dissolved
- The status of the Prime Minister                      he was invited by the Head of State being the leader of the party with majority in the Parliament to form the government. Therefore, he was *primus inter pares*: first among equals.

2. It established a Federal parliament which was made up of two chambers      A Senate and a House of Representatives. The Senate was composed of 44 members, in which the three regions were represented by 12 selected members. The Federal Territory of Lagos had 4 members while 4 members were selected by the Governor-General in consultation with the Prime Minister. The

House of Representatives, on the other hand, was comprised of 320 popularly elected members from various constituencies across the federation.

3. The 1960 Constitution divided powers between the Federal and Regional governments into Exclusive, Concurrent and Residual Legislative Lists. It gave only the Federal government the powers to legislate on any subjects under the Exclusive Lists such as Defence, External Affairs, Customs and Immigration, Currency, Citizenship, Airway, Railways, etc. The Regions were empowered to legislate on any subjects under the Residual List which were matters not listed under the Exclusive or Concurrent Lists while both the Federal and the Regions were to legislate on any subjects under the Concurrent Legislative List which included Education, Judiciary, Agriculture, Industrial development, Census, Taxation, Elections, etc.
4. The Independence Constitution of 1960 enshrined in details, the Fundamental Human Rights as a measure to allay the fear of the minority groups and also to guarantee the liberties of the Nigerian citizens. It included: Right to freedom of speech; Freedom of association and movement; Freedom from discriminatory treatment on account of sex, religion, tribe or language; Freedom of worship; Freedom of expression; Freedom to privacy and life, etc.
5. The Constitution provided for emergency powers given to the Prime Minister with the approval of the Federal parliament to declare a state of emergency for the purpose of maintaining peace, order and good government. It defined the emergency period as a situation when:
  - a) The federation of Nigeria was at war
  - b) There was total breakdown of law and order in any part thereof
  - c) There was a resolution passed by two-thirds (2/3) majority members of the parliament declaring that democratic institutions were being threatened by subversive elements in the country.
6. In order to ensure the independence of Judiciary, the 1960 Constitution established a National Judicial Service Commission with the power to recommend for appointment, Justices of the Supreme Court and High Court Judges. The salaries and allowances of the judicial officers were recharged on the Consolidated Fund, which meant that government was no longer



in a position to control them through salaries. Other provisions in this regard were:

- Justices or Judges could no longer be easily removed by the government. Their removal was made a complicated Constitutional matter
  - The Federal Supreme Court was vested with the power of Judicial review to declare the action of either the Federal or Regional government illegal, null and void if such violated the Constitution
  - The Judiciary became decentralized under the 1960 Constitution, whereby the regions had the power over the regional Courts while the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal were under the Federal control.
7. Another important feature of the independence Constitution was the provision for its amendment, the procedure of which was made cumbersome to protect the federal union. The motion for amendment must receive a two-thirds majority vote in the federal parliament in concurrence with a two-thirds vote in at least two-thirds of the regions.

### 3.3 Major Changes in the Constitution

The 1960 independence Constitution introduced quite a number of major improvements over the previous exercise in the Nigerian constitutional development. Apart from the fact that its making was left entirely in the hands of Nigerians, it went further to entrench the federal system of government in Nigeria. Some of the major changes introduced were:

- For the first time in Nigerian political history, bicameral legislature whereby there were Houses of Assembly and Houses of Chiefs in each of the regions (especially in the Eastern region where there was no traditional institution) in the country. This was aimed at making the federal structure more meaningful in the post-colonial Nigeria. It was also necessary to make representation more equitable both at regional and federal level.
- Another significant improvement was the unified electoral system which brought the whole country together under the same electoral laws. Hitherto, the principle of universal adult suffrage was alien in the Nigerian electoral system, especially in the Northern part where women were not allowed to vote or be voted for.

**SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What were the main focus and resolutions of the 1957/58 constitutional conferences?

**4.0 CONCLUSION**

The 1960 Constitution made a tremendous improvement on the previous exercises in Nigeria. The electoral commission, judicial service commission and public service commissions were given some degree of autonomy from the federal executive in order to allow for fairness in their discharge of duties and also to ensure job security for the officers.

**5.0 SUMMARY**

The observable defects detected in the 1954 Constitution led the nationalists to demand for a reform which came through conferences in 1957 and 1958. The decisions reached at the two Constitutional conferences were incorporated into the Independence Constitution of 1960 which was in use in Nigeria in the First Republic.

**6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Critically examine the achievements and drawbacks of the Nigerian Independence Constitution of 1960
2. What are the features of the 1960 Nigerian Constitution?

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## UNIT 4 THE 1963 REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Prelude
    - 3.1.1 Main Features of the 1963 Constitution
    - 3.1.2 Some Defects of the 1963 Constitution
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Save for some of the defects of the Independence Constitution, one of the other contributing factors for the clamour for a change of the Constitution was the fact that Nigeria, at independence, inherited a weak and unprepared leadership, lacking in national consciousness and constituency due to lack of enough period for Nigerians in the management of their own affairs before granting of independence. There were a number of issues left unresolved by the British government before they left. According to Ojo (1985:12), it must be admitted that the British Government by sheer abdication of responsibility left some explosive issues for Nigerians to solve at Independence. Therefore, Nigeria inherited a weak socio-political structure, a defective and unbalanced federation, an intensification of ethnic consciousness and rivalries, a subverted indigenous ethos of government and culture, and above all, an inexperienced leadership (Ojo, 1985:12). When discussing the leadership problem in Nigeria, Eleazu (1977:245), is of the view that:

t:  
 that Most people taking a cue from their leaders did not

develop a commitment to the ideal of national unity. The values and symbols that loomed large in their political imagery were those of sectionalism and sub-national centres of power. Hence, any group that felt aggrieved immediately sought its own centre of power as a state within which it could protect what it has as unique to itself.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the process taken to effect the changes
- distinguish the amendments made
- explain the distinctive features of the Constitution
- make a comparison between the 1960 and the 1963 documents.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 The Prelude

In the second quarter of 1963, there was an All-Party summit where the issue of redefining the status of Nigeria from monarchy to republicanism was clearly manifested in the British Act of Parliament which served as the source of the legislative powers of the independent Nigeria. The All-Party conference was preceded by the meeting of the Prime Minister and the regional Premiers for the same purpose. Consequently, the Constitution witnessed some changes that led to the severance of the last vestiges of colonialism in Nigeria which enjoyed general acceptability by Nigerians. According to Obafemi Awolowo (1966:14): As for the 1963 Republican Constitution, it is on record that, save for the provisions relating to the Judicial Service Commission, the Privy Council and the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, it was jubilantly and eulogistically hailed by practically all sections of our community.

#### 3.1.1 Main Features of 1963 Constitution

The most striking feature of the Republican Constitution of 1963 was the removal of the imperial basis upon which the 1960 Constitution was defined in the Act of the British Parliament. This element was removed and substituted for the Federal Act of the Nigerian Parliament 1963, thereby granting full autonomy to the Nigerian Parliament.

Under the Constitution, the Queen of England ceased to be Nigeria's Head of State while the position of the Governor-General was replaced with the President who became the repository of the federal executive powers. Governors were vested with similar authority at the regional levels, although, this arrangement was just in theory since the real executive powers were exercised by the Prime Minister and his cabinet ministers. The President was to remain in office for a period of five years (See Sec. 36:1, 1963 Constitution) but the document was silent on the number of times he was eligible to contest. He was the Ceremonial Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (See Sec.

34, 1963 Constitution). The President could be removed from office if found guilty of misconduct or was unable to perform his duties (See Sec. 10, 1963 Constitution). He was to perform the following functions, among others:

- i) To invite the leader of the majority party in the Parliament to form the government
- ii) To convene or prorogue the Parliament when its tenure is expired or after fresh elections, as the case may be
- iii) To receive letter of credence from foreign ambassadors
- iv) To dissolve the Parliament if a vote of no confidence was passed on the government. By convention, the Prime Minister was expected to resign
- v) He must assent to bills passed by the Parliament to become laws
- vi) To declare a state of emergency in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

Another landmark in the Republican Constitution was the regionalization of the judiciary with the Supreme Court of the Federation as the highest appellate Court of the land instead of the Privy Council in London. The Constitution gave the President the power to appoint the Justices of the Supreme Court and the Judges of the Federal High Court on the advice of the Prime Minister.

In the 1963 Constitution, both the Senate and the Federal House of Representatives were jointly responsible for the selection and the removal of the President in consonance with the laid down procedure in the document. In 1963 Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was elected by secret ballot at a joint session of the Parliament. Other important functions of the Parliament (especially the House of Representatives) were to:

- i) make laws for the whole country; ii) control public fund;
- iii) approve budget and ratify important appointments; and
- iv) act as checks on the other two important organs of government - Executive and the Judiciary.

The Republican Constitution provided for the Police Force for the Federation and also for local authority Police in the regions. The Inspector-General was the head of the Federal Police while a regional Commissioner of Police who was subordinate to the Inspector-General controlled the local authority Police.

Like the 1960 Constitution, the Republican Constitution also divided powers between the Federal, Regional and Local governments. The

Exclusive Legislative List contained subject upon which only the Federal can legislate. Both the Federal and the Regional governments legislated on items under the Concurrent Legislative List while the Residual List was left for the regional government.

Finally, the Republican Constitution, 1963 also enshrined the Article of Fundamental Human Rights following the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights, 1950. Perhaps the most striking point in the Constitution was the provision for the process for State creation which gave birth to the creation of the Mid-West region in 1963, the only State to be created so far by the civilian government in Nigeria.

### **3.1.2 Some Defects of the 1963 Constitution**

#### **1. Dual Heads**

The Republican Constitution threw away the imperial status of Nigeria but retained the imperial Constitutional Monarchical system of government which provided for two people efficient and dignified heads to lead a government. The system may work well for the British people who practised a unitary system but it stood to reason why the system was adopted for a large, multi-ethnic and diverse country like Nigeria. The system gave room for confusion in the decision-making process where the two heads belonged to different political parties, different ethnic groups and different religious background.

#### **2. Collective Responsibility to the Parliament**

The principle of collective responsibility which underscored the supremacy of the Parliament to the President, the Prime Minister and the cabinet Ministers was a contradiction in Nigeria where the regions were autonomous of the central authority, more so, when the authority of the Parliament could be challenged at the law Courts. In addition, the Senate under the Republican Constitution cannot function as expected in a federal set up because its powers were limited by the Constitution. Thus the doctrine of checks and balances that was the hallmark of government became a lacklustre.

#### **3. Judicial Independence**

This concept was undermined by the Republican Constitution which placed the appointments, promotions and discipline of Judges under the control of the Prime Minister who was to advise the President on such issues instead of creating an independent Judicial Service Commission

to perform the functions. Hence, the fate of judicial officers became subjected to the whims and caprices of politicians.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What were the landmark achievements of the 1963 constitution?

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The Republican Constitution of 1963 was a milestone in the history of constitutional development in Nigeria. In the first place, it removed the stigma of imperialism from the Nigerian political landscape and it was the first document to give Nigerians the power to solve, though partially, one of the contenting issues left unresolved by the British colonial authority. However, the political leadership failed to be faithful to the letters and spirits of the Constitution, especially in the areas of violation of Fundamental Human Rights and sundry issues that led to the collapse of the First Republic in 1966.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The 1963 Republican Constitution was only slightly different from that of 1960 Independence Constitution. However, it contained some provisions that were lacking in that of the 1963 document, apart from the fact that it removed colonial relics the Queen's representative (Governor-General) and the Privy Council as the highest Court in Nigeria. The Constitution divided the legislative powers among the levels of governments and made the Regions co-ordinate and not subordinates to the Federal government.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Outline critically, the main features of the Republican Constitution of 1963. In what way(s) was it different from the 1960 Independence Constitution?
2. In the Republican Constitution of 1963 the President reigns but did not rule. Discuss.
3. Despite some landmark innovations in the 1963 Constitution, it had its own contradictions. Do you agree?

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**MODULE 3****POST-COLONIAL PERIOD****INTRODUCTION**

The post-colonial period in the annals of Nigerian political history started on October 1, 1960 when the British flag, the Union Jack, was lowered in Nigeria and the reign of government was taken over by the Nigerian leaders who emerged through the process of the 1959 general elections. Before we go into the nitty-gritty of the issues, it is pertinent to discuss the theory of federalism which is the foundation upon which the Nigerian polity was constructed. The module will acquaint the student with the political structure bequeathed to Nigeria by the British colonial government starting from the Theory of Federalism, Evolution of Federalism in Nigerian, Government & Politics (1966-1979) to the Collapse of the First Republic.

- Unit 1    The Theory of Federalism
- Unit 2    Evolution of Federalism in Nigerian
- Unit 3    Government & Politics (1966-1979)
- Unit 4    The Collapse of the First Republic



## **UNIT1      THE THEORY OF FEDERALISM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Conceptual Analysis of Federalism
    - 3.1.1 Federation and Confederacies
    - 3.1.2 Federal and Unitary States
    - 3.1.3 Principles of Federalism
    - 3.1.4 Essential Features of a Federal State
  - 3.2 Prospects and problems of federalism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The post-colonial period in the annals of Nigerian political history started on October 1, 1960 when the British flag, the Union Jack, was lowered in Nigeria and the reign of government was taken over by the Nigerian leaders who emerged through the process of the 1959 general elections. Before we go into the nitty-gritty of the issues, it is pertinent to discuss the theory of federalism which is the foundation upon which the Nigerian polity was constructed. The unit will acquaint the student with the political structure bequeathed to Nigeria by the British colonial government. To examine the rationale behind the decision to configure the political structure the way it was and also to see how well the system has been working for the country.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the origin of federalism as a form of government in Nigeria
- identify the genesis of the nation's political challenges
- explain the theory of federalism, among others.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Conceptual Analysis of Federalism

What is federalism or federal system of government? This is a political system whereby a group of autonomous states form an association with a central body and agree to surrender part of their sovereignty to the central authority in the area of external affairs and other domestic matters of common interest. A federation could also be defined as a union where the constitutional powers are divided between two or more levels of government and where the citizens are subjected to different levels of authority.

In a federal system, there is a central government and the component units that are not subordinate to but co-ordinate with the central body. But in the common interest of the union, the central authority has its ways when there is a clash of interest. Appadorai (1968:495) defines federalism thus:

A state in which there is a central authority that represents the whole, and acts on behalf of the whole in external affairs and in such internal affairs as are held to be of common interest; and in which there are also provincial or state authorities with powers of legislation and administration within the sphere allotted to them by the constitution.

#### 3.1.1 Federations and Confederacies

There is a distinction between a federation and confederation which are often confused by some people. A confederation is also a union of sovereign states but with a loose centre because the federating units retain their sovereignty in its original form and concept. The federating units sustain the central authority and membership could be withdrawn at will. Example of a confederation is Switzerland and quasi-government (associations) such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU), European Union (EU),

Commonwealth of Nations, United Nations (UN) and such other similar bodies. Though a union of States (like a federation), there is no constitutional division of powers between the centre and the component units in a confederacy. Individual citizens of the confederacy are responsible, primarily, to their home governments; the orders of the common authority only affect him as may be imposed by his/her home State because it is a league of sovereign States. Therefore, it is possible for any component unit to have a legal right to secede from the union in a confederation but secession in a federation may lead to civil war as was the case in America between 1861 and 1865 and Nigeria between 1967 and 1970.

### 3.1.2 Federal and Unitary States

A Unitary state is one in which there is a domineering central authority serving as the sole source of authority to the territorial units. All the governing authorities within the State are created; have their powers defined, and their form of administrative structure determined by the central government. In the opinion of Awolowo (1966:9), the distinguishing characteristic of a unitary state is that it has only one supreme legislative authority, whereas that of a federal state has within it a number of supreme legislative authorities which are co-ordinate with and independent of one another in the exercise of their respective powers.

### 3.1.3 Principles of Federalism

#### a) The Need for Union

For a federation to evolve there must be a compelling desire by smaller states to feel the need for a union and express such desire. Smaller states are vulnerable to encroachment by foreign powers which may be a compelling factor to form a federal union with other neighbouring independent states to enjoy common defence, common currency, free trade and other internal and external economies arising from such union.

#### b) Geographical Contiguity

Nearness to one another in terms of geographical boundaries, historical and economic opportunities is sine qua non for the success of independent States seeking to form a federal union. Appadorai (1968:499) opines:

The physical contiguity of countries which are to form a federation is certainly a favourable, and possibly a necessary condition for the success of federal government.

Ordinarily, the desire to form a union would not arise if the countries are widely separated and incompatible in some natural traits, the sacrifice to be made out of the union would naturally obliterate whatever advantages accruing therefrom.

### c) **The Desire for Internal Autonomy**

The desire for a federation by a group of independent states precludes the establishment of a unitary state or any arrangement that encroaches on their local sovereignty. A desire among the component states for the preservation of their independence in all but essentially common matters is a precondition for this form of political organisation. In his contribution, A. V. Dicey (1939) says federalism is a natural constitution only for a body of states which desire union and does not desire unity.

### d) **Principle of Equality**

There should be no marked inequalities among the federating states in terms of land mass, population, military power, economic resources, etc. If there is any of the federating states as powerful in the union as to be half, equal or double in size and other parameters than the rest combined, this may lead to domination and eventual collapse of the union.

## 3.1.4 **Essential Features of a Federal State**

### i) **A Written and Rigid Constitution**

To prevent the breakup of the union through secession, it is necessary for a federal state to have a constitution that is not only written and rigid but also emphasize the supremacy of the constitution in order to curtail the activities of the centrifugal forces and subversive elements (See Sec. 1:1-3, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999).

### ii) **Division of Powers**

The constitution should enshrine the division of powers among the central and component states. The legislative powers are divided into Exclusive, Concurrent and Residual Lists (See Second Schedule, Parts I & II, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999) and the cumbersome procedure for the amendment (See Sec. 9:1-4, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999) of the constitution is also stated. The Exclusive Legislative List contains the subject upon which only the federal government can legislate such as Defence, External Affairs, Currency, Stamp duties etc. The Concurrent Legislative List, on the other hand, are the items upon which both the federal and the state

## SI

governments can make laws such as Education, Agriculture, Trade and Commerce, etc. but in the event of a conflict, the Federal Law prevails and that of the State becomes void to the extent of its inconsistency. The Residual Legislative List contains items or matters on which the states can make laws. In most federal systems such matters include, Local government, culture, health and education.

### iii) A Supreme Court

Another important feature of a Federal State is the establishment of a Supreme Court (See Sections 232:1:2 and 233, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999) to interpret the Constitution and adjudicate in disputes between the Federal and the component units on the one hand, and between the Federal, States and individual citizens on the other. The Supreme Court should also have power of judicial review so as to prevent dictatorship or legislative rascality in the federation. It is the highest Court of the land and the last hope of the common man.

### iv) Bi-cameral Legislature

It is equally important for a federal union to have a two-chamber National Assembly to be composed of elected representatives of the people from different component units. For example, in Nigeria the Upper Chamber (Senate) has members selected on equal basis across the 36 States of Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja while the membership of the Lower Chamber (House of Representatives) is made proportional to the population of the component states.

## 3.2 Prospects and Problems of Federalism

Since there are no roses without thorns, federalism, in juxtaposition with unitary system of government, is either good or bad depending on the anthropological environment in which it is practised. At least in the developing democracies, the following are the common problems of federal system:

### i) Dual Allegiance

Allegiance is the citizen's loyalty which can be given at a time to a ruler or state but in a federal set up like Nigeria, a citizen's allegiance is dual - one to his/her state of origin and second, to the federal authority. Consequently, in most cases the citizens are subjected to multiple laws on taxation, environment, traffic, etc. In a situation where there is conflict between the federal and the component state, the citizens become the grass that suffers the clash between two elephants. This is

not the case in a unitary system where authority is centralized, uniform and easily recognizable.

## **ii) Conflict of Interest**

Another significant problem of a federal system is the occasional conflict of interest, duplication of duties and clash of authority between the federal and the component states since they both can legislate on subjects under the Concurrent Legislative List. A situation where the political parties controlling the central and the state governments are different, there is the likelihood of showmanship by either party to achieve a political interest. Some states may suffer persecutions in the hands of the federal authority while some others may have more than their fair shares simply because of political differences. The unhealthy rivalry leads to unequal, wasteful and inequitable distribution of national resources.

## **iii) Satisfactory Method of Amendment**

The procedure for constitutional amendment in a federal state is cumbersome since it requires the votes of not less than two-thirds majority of all members of the National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives in Nigeria) and also approval by the resolution of not less than four-fifths majority of all the members of the Houses of Assembly of not less than two-thirds of all the States (See Sec. 9:2-4, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999).

This tortuous process makes it difficult to have a consensus of opinion on the amendment of the Nigerian constitution in order to make the document reflect the current realities in the federation. This invariably accounts for why no civilian government has been able to create either a new Local Government or a State since 1963. This is not without some negative effects on the acceleration of development in the country.

## **iv) Threat of Secession**

As the component units in a federation are usually not identical in size, population, mineral resource, etc., it is not impossible that the larger units may have overbearing influence on account of their population to the detriment of the smaller units. The cries of marginalization may lead to the struggle for self-determination which is a euphemism for secession. The Nigerian federation was threatened to its very foundation between 1967 and 1970 when the Eastern region unilaterally declared secession from the federation over the claim of marginalization and maltreatment of Igbo in the North. The members of secession are still alive in view of the activities of the militant groups in the Niger Delta.

Area accusing the federal authority of neglect, marginalization and environmental degradation.

#### v) **Advantages/Prospects of Federalism**

Despite all these weak points, federalism as a political system has quite a number of advantages, some of which are enumerated as follows:

##### a) **Unity in diversity**

A federal system promotes unity among people of diverse culture, religion and history which make them put national interests beyond and above that of their individual ethnic groups. They blend, interrelate, inter-marry and speak with one voice which commands respectability in the international community.

##### b) **Healthy Competition**

Federalism encourages rapid growth and development among the heterogeneous people that constitute its component units that operate at different paces with different policies and programmes. Since resources are not equally distributed, there is the advantage of maximum exploitation and relatively equitable allocation of the national wealth according to needs and in the overall interest of the federation. The component units are tempted to emulate good programmes and exchange good ideas from one another in a healthy competition.

##### c) **Economies of Scale**

In a federation, resources are usually pulled together for maximum output with minimized cost for national productivity. Unlike small nations, union of nations in federalism has the advantages of availability of labour, raw materials, high level of consumption, savings and investment. These are catalysts for rapid economic growth and development.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Can you observe any difference between the theories and practice of federalism in Nigeria?

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

A unitary state appears stronger than a federation because the powers are centralized which makes decision making easier and quicker with the attendant accelerated rate of development. There can be no conflict of

interest or authority or divided loyalty by the citizens. This is why Willoughby (1963:117) opines: no conflict or confusion regarding responsibility for work to be performed, no overlapping of jurisdictions and no duplication of work, plant, or organization which cannot be immediately adjusted.

Dicey (1939:173-4), concludes that the comparative weakness of federalism is no accident; it is inherent in it.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

Federalism, confederalism and unitarism are political systems that need careful dissection for better understanding because they are so interwoven that the point at which one stops marks the beginning of another. The reason for the adoption of any of the systems varies from one country to the other. Essentially, history, anthropology, geography and other environmental variables are determining factors in the decision to adopt any of them.

Federalism is a political set up with a central authority and component states that are co-ordinates and not subordinate to one another. While confederacy is its direct opposite in that it relaxes the authority at the centre in favour of the confederating units. Unitary state, on the other hand, is diametrically opposed to a confederacy because the authority is highly concentrated at the centre, not sharing the powers with any components.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is federalism? Compare and contrast between a confederal and a unitary state.
2. Federalism promotes unity in diversity but not without its problems. Discuss this statement in details.
- 3a. What are the conditions for federalism as a system of government?
- b. Under what condition(s) would you give preference to a unitary government over federal arrangement?



## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## UNIT 2 EVOLUTION OF FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Historical Perspectives
    - 3.1.1 British Colonial Officials' Inference
    - 3.1.2 Colonial Office Thinking
    - 3.1.3 Nigerians' Views
    - 3.1.4 Debates at 1957/58 Constitutional Conferences
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a federal state forged by the British colonial administration through different experimentation of policies, coupled with the prevailing circumstances and inferences compelling a federal structure for the nation which was later to be translated into federal Constitutional developments, beginning with the Sir Arthur Richards constitution of 1946.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

In furtherance to the lessons in Unit One of this Module on the characteristic nature of Federalism in contrast to Confederalism and Unitarism, we wish to examine the evolution of federalism as a political system in Nigeria.

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the underpinnings of Nigerian federation
- outline the various steps taken by the colonial masters
- describe the role played by different dramatic personalities of the political leadership and the Nigerian people at large.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Historical Perspectives

The adoption of the federal system of government for Nigeria could not have been by mistake in view of the historical antecedent of the British

rule in the country. There were two contending forces on this issue viz: The Federalist and the Unitarian School of thought. They both advanced various views on the type of Constitution or political structure desirable for Nigeria.

But the question may be asked that why did we choose one of these two types of Constitution or administrative structure in preference to the other?

Apart from certain features such as geography, contiguity and economies of scale accruable, the issue of diversity is very germane to this discussion and should be given special mention.

There are ten principal national groups in Nigeria constituting about 80% of the entire population. See the table below:

Nationality	Population (millions)
Hausa/Fulani	13.6
Yoruba	13.0
Ibo	7.8
Effik/Ibibio	3.2
Kanuri	2.9
Tiv	1.5
Ijaw	0.9
Edo	0.9
Urhobo	0.6
Nupe	0.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44.9</b>

Source: Awolowo, O., (1966:24)

One historical fact that lends credence to the origin of federalism in Nigeria was that the conquest of each Nigerian nationality, kingdoms, empires, princedoms and village republics took different forms and at different times. Therefore, from 1900 to 1913, what is now known as Nigeria was ruled as two different colonial territories known as the Lagos Colony and the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria which were separately ruled and administered.

From the period of amalgamation (1914) to the Clifford era in 1922, there were two distinct Legislative authorities for Nigeria. For the Colony of Lagos, it was the Legislative Council that served as the Legislative authority while it was the Governor advised by the Nigerian Council for the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria. However, the North was ruled by proclamation because it was not represented in the Nigerian Council.

The only period when Nigeria was ruled as one country was between 1946 and 1951 during which the North became integrated and had delegates in the central Legislature under the Richards Constitution.

### 3.1.1 British Colonial Officials Inferences

A nearly official reference by the colonial officials, to the idea of federalism in Nigeria was made in 1928 at an Executive Council meeting, See Okafor (1981:131). H.R. Palmer, (See Proceeding of the Executive Meeting) the Lieutenant-Governor for the Northern Provinces, while contributing to the discussion on whether the Ordinances enacted by the legislatures should be applicable to the North held that:

The general assumption that Nigeria as a whole could be freely legislated for was wrong. In Nigeria, there were three separate units which more and more would require separate legislation for their different needs. To legislate on a steam roller basis for the whole country would result in eventual upheaval. In the end there would have to be a separate federal Council for each of the three units as in the Federated Malay States. The three units would consist of areas east of the Niger, the North and the Yoruba country.

Another colonial voice in support of federation in Nigeria was that of G. J. Lethem who wrote a confidential report, Impressions of a Tour in the Eastern Province (See Lethem, Memorandum). In it, he advocated for decentralization while ascribing the problem of Nigeria's development to its size, population, the dependency and the diversity in the social organization of the various communities.

Sir Donald Bourdillon, Governor of Nigeria (1935-1943) could not have concurred the more with Lethem when, in 1939 he divided the country into three administrative units North, East and West and summarized his views on the future relationship between the central legislature in a Memorandum on the Future Political Development of Nigeria (See Bourdillon, B., Memorandum) in which he postulated a building of a federal structure with regional legislatures in the North, East and West, and a central legislature in Lagos.

### 3.1.2 The Colonial Office Thinking

The Colonial office in London was not left out in the debates on future political arrangement for Nigeria. In 1939, its thoughts on the subject were put forward by J.B. Sidebotham, the Principal Secretary in the

office who based his argument for a federation on the premise that there were social and geographical differences between the three divisions Northern, Eastern and Western in Nigeria. He concludes:

any attempt to pour the constitutional future of a vast country into a single mould which the metal may either be inadequate or not sufficiently molten to fill may prove disastrous. (See Bourdillon, B., Memorandum)

Concluding, he argued that with the three divisions at varying stages of development, it would be both unreasonable and impossible to expect them to participate effectively in a unitary system.

### 3.1.3 Nigerians Views

On the home front, some political leaders in Nigeria either in writings or by political statements made their views known on the future political arrangement for the country. For instance, Obafemi Awolowo was regarded as a convinced federalist as he expressed the idea in some of his literary works namely: *My Early Life* (1960); *Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution* (1966) and *Path to Nigerian Freedom* (1966). His unmistakable position on federalism for Nigeria could be fathomed when he surmised that Nigeria is not a nation but rather a mere geographical expression, see Awolowo, Obafemi, (1966:47-8):

There are no Nigerians in the same sense as there are English, 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.

In the same vein, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the first Nigerian Prime Minister also made a statement that was heavily loaded with some grains of federal tendency in 1947. His words:

.....since the amalgamation of Northern and Southern provinces in 1914, Nigeria has existed as one country only on paper. It is still far from being united. Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country.

(Hansard, March 20 to April 2, 1947 at p. 208)

### 3.1.4 Debates of 1957/58 Conferences

The first practical step ever to be taken towards making federalism a constitutional matter was that of Sir Arthur Richards (later Lord Milverton) in 1946 that not only embedded federal ideas into his constitution but also divided the country into three distinct regions.

His conviction on the desirability of a federal system as a panacea for Nigeria's problems was illustrated when he stated thus:

.it is only the accident of British suzerainty which has made Nigeria one country. It is still very far from being one country or one nation socially or even economically, 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 states of culture. (See Lord Milverton's address)

Although, Richards Constitution of 1947 came under heavy criticisms by Nigerian nationalists on the ground that it was imposed, however, the elements of federalism introduced was accepted as demonstrated when Sir John Macpherson allowed debates which took place from the Central through Regional, Provincial, Divisional to the village levels before the Sir John Macpherson's 1951 Constitution was introduced.

Also, Nigerians minced no words on their preference for a federal system when another round of opportunities came handy during the 1957/58 Constitutional Conferences before subsequent Constitutions were introduced up to the 1960 independence Constitution. These were the sources and origins of federalism as a political system in Nigeria.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What were the colonial office and Nigerians' disposition to federalism as a political system in post-colonial Nigeria?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that the Nigerian federalism met the condition of desirability as one of the prerequisites but the structure, as it were, appears to have been constructed on a defective foundation. The obvious fear of domination expressed by the minority ethnic groups which led to the setting up of the Henry Willink's Minority Commission was not properly addressed as it did not accede to the demand for creation of more states as a solution to allay the minority fears. Thus, the British government failed to address this problem of the structural imbalance before it granted the country independence in 1960. Meanwhile, federalists argued that a federation of three regions such as in Nigeria where one of the regions is larger than the other two put together, is fraught with illogicalities. Other imperfections of the Nigerian federation could be summarized as follows:

- Lack of accurate and reliable census data
- inequitable distribution of resources
- Ethnic rivalry, suspicion and nepotism
- Resource control and allocation
- Too much power at the centre to the detriment of the component units
- Constitutional impediments

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The history of the Nigerian federation is as old as the history of the country itself. The British government and the colonial administrators in Nigeria were faced with the problems of differences in ecological and anthropological set up in the country which, coupled with other factors, probably dictated the need to forge a federation where there could be unity in diversity among other opportunities. The Nigerian nationalists understood the terrain and the nature of their country much more than the colonial authority which had brought together different nationalities to form a political entity now known as Nigeria.

The desire for autonomy by the pre-colonial ethnic groups in Nigeria made them to crave for a federal arrangement which came in tandem with the views of the British officials in the country based on their personal experience and empirical evidence. However, the federal structure bequeathed by the British felt short of expectation because of its observable lopsidedness and imperfections, hence the agitations for a restructuring and re-arrangement of the polity which had started since the colonial period still persist today.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain in detail, the sources and origin of Nigerian federalism.
2. How would you justify the calls for resource control or restructuring of the Nigerian polity?
3. What would you recommend as a panacea to the centrifugal or divisiveness tendencies in Nigeria?

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**UNIT 3 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 1960-1966****CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

As studied in the previous units in this course, self-government that led to the independence started as an experiment first, in the Western and Eastern Regions while the Northern Region was to follow suit later. The success of this test-run in governance appeared to have encouraged the British government to organize general elections in 1959 giving birth to the NPC/NCNC coalition government led by Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the Prime Minister in what is generally known as the Nigerian First Republic from October 1, 1960.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the basis and structure of the political parties in the period
- describe the political intrigues in the First Republic
- identify the remote and immediate causes of military intervention in the political process
- list the successes and failures of successive military regimes.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Political Parties in the First Republic

The three major political parties that dominated the Nigeria's First Republic politics were formed in response to the challenges posed by the Richards Constitution of 1946. The Constitution had introduced three regions, each with a Legislature and a House of Chiefs (with the exception of the Eastern region which had but only one chamber) and provided for electoral processes through which the members for the regional and central parliaments were elected.

However, the reforms reflected in the Macphersons constitution of 1951 attracted the formation of the major political parties that held sway in the First Republic which was terminated in 1966. The three political parties were metamorphosis of tribal unions of the major ethnic groups that dominated the political scene during the period.

##### 3.1.1 Action Group (AG)

This party which was formed in 1951 drew most of its members from the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (a Yoruba Socio-cultural group) and a splinter group of the Nigerian Youth Movement (See Sklar, 1963:101-11). The party was led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo who later became the first Premier of the Western Region on the platform of the party until 1955 when he moved to the Central to become the official Opposition Leader of the parliament. The main objectives of the Action Group party were, among others:

- To bring and organize within its fold, all nationalists in the Western Region, so that they may work together as a united Party, and submit themselves to party loyalty and discipline.
- To prepare and present to the public, programmes for all departments of government, and to strive faithfully to ensure the effectuation of such programmes through those of its members that are elected into the Western House of Assembly and the Federal Legislature (See Olusanya, 1973:139-40).

The following personalities were the pioneer officers selected when the party was launched in 1951 at Owo (See Ojiako, 1981:68-70):

President	Chief Obafemi Awolowo
Vice-President (West)	Dr. J. A. Doherty
Vice-President (East)	Dr. E. O. Awhuche
Vice-President (North)	Alh. Sule Maito
Federal Secretary	Mr. Ayotunde Rosiji

Federal Treasurer	Alh. S. O. Gbadamosi
Federal Publicity Secretary	Mr. S. O. Shonibare
Legal Adviser (West)	Mr. A. M. A. Akinloye
Legal Adviser (East)	Mr. A. Adeoba
Legal Adviser (North)	Vacant
Party Chaplain	Rev. E. O. Alayande
Party Imam	Mallam M. S. Yabagi
Father of the Party	Dr. Akinola Maja
Deputy Leader	Chief S. L. Akintola
Organising Secretary	Mr. S. T. Oredin
Party Manager	Mr. O. Agunbiade-Bamishe
Administrative Secretary	Mr. Olatunji Dosunmu

### 3.1.2 Northern Peoples Congress (NPC)

This party also started as a socio-cultural organization called Jamiyyar Muutanen Arewa which was one of the associations formed by the Northern educated elements in the 1940s. The organization became the Northern Peoples Congress when it became apparent that the North required a legitimate political party to lead the people and also work the new Constitution of 1951. The party adopted One North, One People as its motto and declared the following as its objectives:

- Regional autonomy within one Nigeria.
  - Local government reform within a progressive Emirates system based on tradition and custom.
  - The voice of the people to be heard in all the Council of the North.
  - Drives for education throughout the whole North, laying due emphasis on the improvement of the social, economic, and cultural life of the people.
  - Eliminate bribery and corruption in every sphere.
  - Eventual self-government for Nigeria with Dominion status within the British Commonwealth.
  - Membership of the Northern Peoples Congress to be open to all people of Northern descent, whether as individuals or as a union or as a political party.
  - Industrial and economic development of the Northern Region.
- (See Okafor, 1981:210).

The following personalities were its pioneer officers:

President General	Alh. Sir Ahmadu Bello
1st Vice-President	Alh. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa
2nd Vice-President	Alh. Mohammadu Ribadu

General Secretary	Abba Mohammadu Habib
General Treasurer	Alh. Aliyu Makama Bida
Gen. Financial Secretary	Alh. Issa Kaita
North Regional President	Mall. Ibrahim Musa Gashash
Organising Secretary I	Mall. Habib Raji Abdullah
Organising Secretary II	Mall. Mohammadu King
Publicity Secretary	Mall. Abubakar Tugar
Administrative Secretary	Mall. Garba Abuja

### 3.1.3 National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC)

In alliance with the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), this could have been the only nationally-oriented party (See Okafor, 1981:201) in the post-independent Nigeria having been jointly formed in 1945 by Herbert Macaulay and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe under the name: National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons which later became the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) when the Cameroons was excised from Nigeria. The party came into being after the demise of the NNDP which had dominated the Lagos politics until the domination was challenged by the Nigerian Youth Movement. However, the Earnest Ikoli and Oba Samuel Akinsanya (the Odeemo of Isara) crisis (See Azikiwe, 1957:7-8) that led to the disintegration of the Nigerian Youth Movement in the 40s paved the way for the NCNC. The leadership of the party consisted of prominent nationalists like Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe, L.A. Onojobi, A. Ogedegbe, E.A. Akerele, L. Odunsi, D.C. Osadebay and A.O. Olorun-Nimbe. Its cardinal objectives were stated thus:

- To extend democratic principles and to advance the interests of the people of Nigeria and the Cameroons, under the Mandate. of British
- To organize and collaborate with all its branches throughout the country.
- To adopt suitable means for the purpose of imparting political education to the people of Nigeria with a view to achieving self-government.
- To afford the members the advantages of a medium of expression in order to secure political freedom, economic security, social equality and religious toleration in Nigeria and the Cameroons, as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations (See Okafor, 1981:195).

### 3.1.4 Minor Parties

One of the notable minor parties that took part in the politics of the First Republic was the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) formed by the radicals in the leadership of the Northern People's Congress who were expelled from the NPC on the basis of irreconcilable ideological differences by the conservative elements in the party. Okafor (1981:210) opines:

NEPU on the other hand depended for its support mainly on Northerners, often called Yan Iska (Sons of the Wind), who had given up their traditional allegiances and taken up a new way of life. Most of them were petty traders or craftsmen. Generally, they lived in urban areas like Kano, Kaduna, Zaria, Minna, Gusau, Jos.

The party championed the cause of the talakawas (the poor masses) in the North which, according to Kurfi (1983:8), was one of the thirteen minority parties that managed to contest the federal election in 1959. Others listed were: United Middle-Belt Congress (UMBC), Bornu Youth Movement (BYM) in the North, Mabolaje Grand Alliance and Otu Edo in the West and the United National Independence Party and the Democratic Party of Nigeria and Cameroons in the East (See Post, 1964:102).

### 3.1.5 The Federal Election of 1959

The federal election that ushered in the First Republic in Nigeria was conducted on December 12, 1959 (See Ojiako, 1981:76 & 76). The elections outcome witnessed the movement of Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the Action Group and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe of the NCNC from their respective Regional Premier positions in the West and East to the Federal Legislature. On the contrary, the Premier of the Northern Region Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto decided to remain in the saddle as Premier of the Northern Region, seconding his Deputy, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to hold forth as the NPC Leader in the Federal Legislature.

The statistics of Voters Registration and voting pattern in the 1959 election were as shown in Table 1 below:

Region	Persons entitled to register	Actual Registrations	Percentage Registrations	Votes Cast	Percentage Poll
North	3,885,000	3,640,284	93.73	258,520	89.4
East	3,423,000	2,598,234	75.71	29,754	75.3
West	2,759,000	2,631,889	96.21	387,209	71.2
Lagos	177,000	144,000	81.61	10,072	76.2

Source: Nigeria Official Gazette, No. 15, Vol. 47, March 24, 1960, pp. 351-69

These seats won by Political Parties and Independent candidates are presented in table 2 below:

Political Party	Eastern Region	Northern Region	Western Region	Federal Territory	TOTAL
Action Group	1425	33173			
NCNC	58	2128	1		
NPC	1	34	13	4	
NEPU	8	8			
NDC	1				
Independent	78	15			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17462</b>	<b>3312</b>			

Source: Ojiako, 1981:77

### 3.1.6 NPC/NCNC Alliances

From the above tables certain things became obvious: Table 1 revealed the enthusiasm of Nigerians to participate in the historic election that ushered in independence. Also, the table presented a graphic picture of a voting pattern that confirmed the tribal and regional nature of the major political parties. From table 2, we could see that the parties only had good showings in their regions of influence thus, making it difficult for any single party to have the required majority to go it alone in the government at the Federal level.

One of the principles of Parliamentary system of government which was adopted in the First Republic was that the Leader of the party in the opinion of the Her Majesty the Queen, had comfortable majority in the Parliament, who could be invited to form the government. On the strength of this, Sir James Robertson, the then Governor-General invited Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to form a new government. Therefore, the three major political parties went into horse-trading and negotiation which resulted into a coalition government between the NPC and the NCNC.

On December 20, 1959 the government was formed with the following as members of the Federal Cabinet:

#### NPC/NCNC Coalition Government 1959

1966

Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa - Prime Minister  
 Alh. Muhammadu Ribadu - Lands and Lagos Affairs  
 Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh - Finance  
 Mr. Raymond Njoku - Transport and Aviation  
 Alh. Inuwa Wada - Works and Survey

Mr. Zanna. B. Dipcharima -Commerce and Industry Mr.  
 Joseph M. Johnson-Labour and Welfare  
 Mr. Aja Nwachukwu-Education  
 Mallam Maitama Sule-Mines and Power  
 Mallam Shehu Shagari-Economic Dev. & Natural Resources Mr.  
 Olu Akinfosi -Communications  
 Mallam Usman Sarki-Internal Affairs Mr.  
 Theophilus Benson-Information Mallam  
 Waziri Ibrahim-Health  
 Mall. Musa Yar Adua-Pensions and Establishment Mr. M.  
 T. Mbu -Minister of State  
 Mr. M. A. Olanrewaju-Minister of State

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How were the First Republic political parties formed? Did they have national outlook?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The first Federal Cabinet was exclusive of the Action Group, NEPU and other minor parties that were represented at the Federal House of Representatives. These parties constituted opposition to the NPC/NCNC coalition government with Chief Obafemi Awolowo as the Opposition Leader. However, by regional representation in these seventeen-member Cabinet, the North had ten members, the West had three, and the East had three while Lagos had one.

### 5.0 SUMMARY

The journey into Nigeria's First Republic started with the Federal Elections conducted in 1959 under Sir James Robertson as the British Colonial Governor-General. Parliamentary or Cabinet system of government was adopted with multi-party that was ethnic and regional-based. The turnout at the election and the results confirmed the enthusiasm of Nigerians to attain independence from the British and also the fact that voting was along ethnic lines. However, the participation of some minority parties and independent candidates at the election also attested to the fact that some electorates looked beyond party, ethnic or any other primordial sentiments.

### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Compare and contrast between the major political parties in the 1959 elections in terms of structure, membership and geographical influence.

2. How far was it true that the political parties in the First Republic were ethnic based?
3. Explain the consequence of the 1959 general elections in Nigeria.

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**UNIT 4 THE COLLAPSE OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC****CONTENTS**

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2.0	Objectives
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3.1	Background to the 1966 Military Intervention
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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Until the mid-sixties, the interest of academics in the African political change was concerned mainly on the role of political parties, pragmatic leadership, political and democratic institutions. There was no focus on the military as an alternative political force because of the peaceful manners by which most African countries were granted independence by the imperial powers. Oyediran (1979:1) posits: Unlike in many Latin American countries, independence in most African countries was granted through constitutional negotiation rather than through military action. This peaceful transfer of power gave considerable advantage to other political forces in the task of nation-building. The failure of these forces helped to prepare the way for the military. The systemic failure in the Nigeria's First Republic, therefore, paved the way for the military intervention on January 15, 1966.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES**

The intent of this unit is to look at the remote and immediate causes of the 1966 military intervention in the Nigeria's political process.

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the political and social issues that led to the first coup

- describe the circumstances that led to the counter coup in the same year
- identify the intricacies of Nigerian politics.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Background to the 1966 Military Intervention

The first military coup took place in Nigeria on January 15, 1966 when the five military officers in the rank of Majors led by Major Nzeogwu Kaduna, announced the military take-over of the civilian government led by Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. The young military officers claimed to have come, among others, to bring to an end, gangsterism and disorder, corruption and nepotism. However, with the benefit of hindsight, it has been revealed that there were more to it than the stated reasons for the military putsch.

In the opinion of A.H.M Kirk-Green (See Kurfi, 1983:23) the tragedy of 1966 (civil war) is that many of its seeds were not, as is often claimed, sown in October or even July 1966, but in the 1950s or, as some see it, in 1914 or maybe even in 1900 itself. There were remote as-well-as immediate factors responsible for the military coup of 1966. We shall examine them briefly one after the other.

##### 3.1.1 Remote Causes

###### i) Unbalanced Federal Structure

Political analysts are of the opinion that the genesis of the 1966 military coup was the 1914 amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria with one of the regions bigger in size and population than the other two put together. The bringing together of diverse people with different socio-cultural background, level of education and development is seen as an unbalanced structure which naturally provokes suspicion and fear of domination by the minority ethnic groups in the country. This phenomenon found expression in Oluleye (1985:p.xvii) that the Nigerian Army was Northern-dominated to the magnitude of 70% in both cadres, officers and other ranks. This structural dilemma of the Nigerian Army as an integral part of the body politic, made it difficult to be completely free from the influences of politics in the country.

##### 3.1.2 Tribal/Regional Parties

Another remote cause of the 1966 military uprising could be traced to the seed of tribalism and nepotism embedded in the formation of the

three major political parties by the three major ethnic groups that were later to control the regional governments of their origin. The ethnic rivalry which began in 1941 between the Ibo and Yoruba members of the Nigerian Youth Movement over the Ikoli-Akinsaya crisis resulted in the Igbo members leaving the party en masse and thus, reducing the NYM to a Yoruba organization. This, in the opinion of Schwarz Jr., (1965:51), was the beginning of the plague on Nigerian politics ever since. Between 1941 and 1950, the unhealthy rivalry between the Ibo and Yoruba became so intensified even beyond the political turf that by 1948 Azikiwe had ceased to be Zik of Africa but Zik of the Ibo nation. (Oyediran, O., 1979:7).

Lack of clear-cut ideologies by most of the First Republic major political parties was also identified as a remote cause of the 1966 coup. The NPC was feudalistic and aristocratic which contrasted to its political bedmate (the NCNC) that embraced, to some extent, egalitarian temperament while the Action Group preached democratic socialism. But it was only the latter that showed some degree of commitment to its avowed ideology through the populist programmes which the party introduced in the Western Region. Closely related to this was the role of the official opposition played by the AG which made the party's leadership become vulnerable for political elimination because opposition which was a core element in the Westminster system practised in the First Republic is alien to African politics.

### 3.1.3 Intolerance of Opposition

The AG literally became a thorn in the flesh of the ruling parties especially with the ferocious criticisms and eventual defeat of the Anglo-Nigeria Defence Pact of 1961 with the support of the students of the University of Ibadan. The NPC-NCNC foreign policy also came under the sledge hammer of the AG that also championed the cause of the minority ethnic groups who were agitating for additional state creation in the country. The party was doing these in order to gain the people's support so that it could win the next election and form the federal government. This threat, reasoned by the NPC-NCNC coalition government, had to be nipped in the bud somehow.

### 3.1.4 Controversies over Population Census

Yet another contentious issue identified by analysts as a remote factor for the 1966 crisis was the result of the 1962/63 population census. In Nigeria, census data are used as a basic determinant of Constituency delimitation, allocation of seats at the Legislature, sharing of revenue accruable from the federation pool and distribution of social amenities,

among other uses. Therefore, little wonder that census has been one of the sensitive political issues in Nigeria.

For instance, the 1952-3 census figure was used to allocate the 312 seats in the House of Representatives to the regions as follows (Oyediran, 1979:16):

Northern Region	174
Eastern Region	73
Western Region	62
Lagos	3

The census result which gave a total of 30.4 million, out of which 16.8 million were in the North, 7.2 million in the East, 6.1 million in the

West and 20 million in Lagos (See Kur, 1981:7), which was used for the above allocation of seats was seen by the southern political leaders as structurally defective and it was hoped that the 1962-3 head counts would be used to redress the perceived lopsidedness which was not to be because of the controversy that attended the result of the exercise from every section of the country except the North. The cacophony over the 1963 census led to a big crisis that led to the breakdown of the alliance between the NPC and the NCNC and paved the way for new political alignment and realignment.

### 3.2 Immediate Causes

#### 3.2.1 Action Group crisis of 1962

The Action Group, the party in the government in the Western region, was plunged into serious crisis early in 1962 over a number of irreconcilable differences between the Leader of the party, Chief Obafemi Awolowo and his Deputy, Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola who by then, was the Premier of the region after Chief Awolowo had assumed the position of the Leader of the Opposition at the federal level. The crisis blew open at the party's National Conference at Jos when Chief Akintola, Ayo Rosiji, the party's Secretary and a few others who were Regional Ministers in Akintola's government, staged a walk-out. They were summarily charged with anti-party activities and got dismissed from the party. This led to a vote of no confidence passed on Akintola as the Premier which led to his removal from office and his replacement with Chief Dada Soroye Adegbenro. This led to an open fracas on the floor of the Western Region House of Assembly in which the Mace (the House's symbol of authority) was broken.

The Federal government, under the pretext of exercising its powers to maintain law and order in the country, declared a state of emergency in

the region and appointed Chief Mathew Adekoko Majekodunmi (a Senator and Federal Minister of Health) as Sole Administrator with wide powers leading to heavy clampdown on the opposition party leaders which included the setting up of the Justice J.B. O. Coker Commission of Inquiry to probe certain parastatals in the Western Region.

### **3.2.2 The Trial of Action Group Leaders**

The report of the Cokers Commission of enquiry which indicted Chief Obafemi Awolowo but exonerated Chief S. L. Akintola, seemed to set the stage for a final showdown by the Federal authority against the opposition group and in particular, to sing the funeral dirge of the Action Group. During the emergency period, the Police was asked to search the houses of the opposition leaders in the Region, the outcome was that a large quantity of arms and ammunition which some AG members illegally imported into the country to be used, illegally, to overthrow the Federal government were found (See Iroanusi, 2000:38). This led to the arrest of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Chief Anthony Enahoro and other leaders of the AG. They were charged with treasonable felony and conspiracy to overthrow the Federal Government. They were sentenced to various prison terms, ranging from 10 to 15 years.

### **3.2.3 The Controversial 1964/5 Federal Elections**

The massive rigging of the 1964 Federal elections was the last straw that broke the camel's back because of the total breakdown of law and order and wanton destruction of lives and properties in protest against the results. The elections became a straight battle between two major political alliances viz: the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) which was a conglomeration of the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC); Akintola's Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP); Dr. Chike Obi's Dynamic Party and the Mid-West Democratic Front. The second alliance was the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) which was an amalgam of the NCNC, the AG, NEPU and the United Middle-Belt Congress (UMBC). On the eve of the election, December 8, 1964, the federal parliament which was elected on December 12, 1959 was dissolved to pave the way for a new House.

There were accusations and counter-accusations of political harassment in the North by opposition group (UPGA) during electioneering campaigns. This prompted UPGA leadership to direct its supporters to boycott the election to protest the unlawful arrest, persecution, kidnapping and in some cases, killing of its members. As a follow up, its members in the Federal Electoral Commission resigned but all these did not deter the election from holding. The results of the election showed the NNA sweeping the polls despite the alleged irregularities by the opposition.

### 3.2.4 The 1965 Western Region election riots

Western Nigeria is the cockpit of Nigerian politics particularly between 1962 and the time of military takeover of political power in 1966 (Mackintosh, 1966:550).

Western Nigeria can be regarded not without some justification as the problem area of the Nigerian federation. Even though it is the most homogeneous of the regions (after the creation of the Mid-West region in 1963); it has not been easy for the people to unite in the same way that the Ibo of the East or the Hausa of the North have done.

The tenure of office for the Western Region House of Assembly members had lapsed and the time for another election had been fixed for October 11, 1965. The reality on ground in the West proved that Akintola's NNDP cannot win in any free and fair election but with the assistance of the federal might, the NNA was hell-bent on retaining the control of the region to the exclusion of the AG and its allies. In any case, the NNDP members were busy boasting about whether or not the people voted for them, they were going to win the election.

Therefore, the ruling party resorted to rigging and political gerrymandering. After receiving nomination forms from one party, Electoral Officers deserted their offices to deny the opposition from submitting their nomination papers so that the government candidates could be returned unopposed. The swearing in of Chief S. L. Akintola as the Premier of the Western Region based on the flawed elections sparked off a violence of an unprecedented dimension. Arsons, maiming, killing and destruction of properties became the order of the day in what was called operation *we tie* which gave the Region the soubriquet *Wild, Wild West*.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Enumerate the remote and immediate causes of the 1966 military coup.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The remote and immediate factors responsible for the collapse of the First Republic are highlighted above. The Federal Government proved ineffective in maintaining law and order because it was helpless while the Western Region was burning over the election result. The attack on innocent people who had nothing to do with the election gave an ethnic coloration to the protest. The military also cited corruption and nepotism as reasons for the intervention on January 15, 1966. The Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Chief Samuel Akintola, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Premiers of Western and Northern Regions respectively and

number of political and military leaders were killed during the military coup.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The election that brought the First Republic into being was conducted in 1959 and the system of government practised was Parliamentary or Westminster system in which both the Prime Minister and all his cabinet ministers were members of the Parliament. Since there was no party that had the required majority members in the Parliament to form the government, a coalition was formed between the NPC, NCNC and some other minor parties. The build ups to the collapse of the Republic were traced beyond the immediate causes of oppression of political opponents, favouritism, corruption and election rigging. The violence that greeted the results of the Western Region Parliamentary election of 1965 sparked off a chain of events that led to the military coup on January 15, 1966.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Give detailed background to the 1966 military coup.
2. Explain the immediate circumstances leading to the collapse of the First Republic.

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**MODULE 4      MILITARY LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIAN POLITICS**

**INTRODUCTION**

It is quite arguable whether the collapse of the First Republic in 1966 was the fault of the 1960 Constitution or the attitude of the politicians but the fact remains that, the convening of a Constituent Assembly by the military in 1977 that produced the 1979 Constitution, was an acquiescence of the failure of the previous Constitutions. However, much as there were remote and immediate factors responsible for the military coup of January 15, 1966, the cumulative effect of these coupled with lack of deep-seated values within the military hierarchy snowballed into the thirty-month civil war in Nigeria.

- Unit 1 The Military Intervention in Nigerian Politics Unit
- 2      Towards Military Disengagement
- Unit 3      Achievements of Military Regime in Nigeria

## **UNIT 1 THE MILITARY INTERVENTION IN NIGERIAN POLITICS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Division in the Military
    - 3.1.1 The Northern Riots of May 29, 1966
    - 3.1.2 The July 29, 1966 Counter-Coup
    - 3.1.3 The 30-Month Civil War
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor -Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

It is quite arguable whether the collapse of the First Republic in 1966 was the fault of the 1960 Constitution or the attitude of the politicians but the fact remains that, the convening of a Constituent Assembly by the military in 1977 that produced the 1979 Constitution, was an acquiescence of the failure of the previous Constitutions. However, much as there were remote and immediate factors responsible for the military coup of January 15, 1966, the cumulative effect of these coupled with lack of deep-seated values within the military hierarchy snowballed into the thirty-month civil war in Nigeria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the events that led to the first military coup and the counter-coup of 1966
- explain the intrigues within the military that led to the civil war
- identify the military leadership in Nigerian politics
- list the contribution of the military to the growth and development of the country.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

What provided the immediate stimulus for the January 15, 1966 military putsch was, according to Luckham (See Oyediran, 1979:24), the superimposition of unfavorable environmental conditions from the civil violence in the Western Region, set off by the Regional election of October, 1965. The coup plotters (all in the rank of Major) were led by Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, others were: Onwuategu, Ifeajuna, Okafor, Chukwuma and Ademoyega, the only Yoruba. They struck on Saturday, January 15, 1966 by kidnapping and killing both political and military leaders, mostly of Yoruba and Hausa ethnic stock. Oluleye opines: They sprang by pulling the trigger in Lagos, Ibadan and Kaduna but Enugu was spared through fickleness and conspiracy (See Oluleye, 1985:27). Political analysts believe that the coup had been planned with the best of intentions, its outcome looked patently to the other ethnic groups, particularly in the North and West, like an Ibo conspiracy (See Oyediran, 1979:27).

After the killing of the Prime Minister during the topsy-turvy and the President Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe could not be found, the Acting President Dr. Nwafor Orizumadea broadcast to the nation at 11.30 p.m. that he had been advised by the Council of Ministers and that they had unanimously decided to hand over the government of the Federation to the Armed Forces in view of the present situation in the country (See Ojiako, 1981:226).

#### 3.1 The Division in the Military

The mantle of leadership fell on General Johnson Thomas Aguiyi-Ironsi who was the most senior military officer, as the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Military Governors were appointed for the Regions. Col. Adekunle Fajuyi for the West; Lt. Cols. Odumegwu Ojukwu and Hassan Usman Katsina for the East and North respectively while David Ejoor was appointed for the Mid-West. The new Head of State enjoyed the goodwill of the general public, even in the North the attitude was one of wait and see rather than of outright resentment. However, General Ironsi squandered his good luck and tolerability within a period of six months by his actions and inactions.

Firstly, he reneged in his promise to bring the January coup plotters to justice and to worsen the situation the Ibos in the North were engaged in taunting the Northerners in public over the killing of Sir Ahmadu Bello. Oluleye (1985:32-33) posits:

Every Ibo person paraded himself as the Ibo and displayed the photograph	Ironsi. Unwittingly, of Sir Ahmadu Bello,
--	---

the Sardauna of Sokoto, in a awkward position with his head under the jungle boot of Major Nzeogwu. It was displayed in homes and shops of the Ibos. Where people did not notice the photograph, they would invite their attention to it. To the Northerners they usually said, You see your papa under the foot of Major Nzeogwu.

Other allegations against Gen. Ironsi, according to Oluleye (1985:33), were that:

- a) He failed to release Chief Obafemi Awolowo and other politicians in jail in line with the demands of the opposition group in the country.
- b) In pursuance with Ibo ambition, he made some highly unbalanced promotions in the Army which favoured the Ibo officers and he got them appointed to key commands and political appointments as prefects.
- c) He promulgated Decree No. 34 (otherwise known as unification decree) which was a major constitutional and political issue, without consultation.

The unification decree sought to abolish the federal structure of the country and replace it with a unitary system. He also decreed the political parties and tribal unions out of existence. These actions were regarded as calculated attempts by the Ibos to dominate the other tribes in the country.

### **3.1.1 The Northern Riot of May 29, 1966**

The cloud of uncertainties which pervaded the nation later descended in torrential civil disturbances in some parts of Northern provinces where the Ibos were attacked and killed. As Dudley (1973:132) observes, The Ibo were attacked not because they were Ibo but because the name Ibo had become more or less synonymous with exploitation and humiliation. It was essentially an attack on a mental stereotype. The attack which was the preliminary action to the July 29, 1966 counter-coup led to the mass exodus of the Ibos from the North and even the West back home - the East. According to Kurfi (1983:38), the clarion call in line with the general mood in the North during the disturbances was *Araba or Aware* (Hausa word for secession).

### 3.1.2 The July 29, 1966 Counter-Coup

This coup d'état, unlike that of January 15, which involved civilian victims, was confined within the military circle. The soldiers of Northern origin rose to the call by Northerners to defend the honour of the Northern region by avenging the killing of Northern political and military leaders by the coup presumably masterminded by the Ibos. The Supreme Commander, General Ironsi who was on a nation-wide tour in Ibadan, and as well as his host, Col. Francis Adekunle Fajuyi the Military Governor of the Western Region were kidnapped and killed. Many senior military officers of Eastern origin were also killed in the putsch. This led to further migration of Ibos and non-Ibos alike from the Northern and Western parts of the country to their home land. Oluleye (1985:41), reflecting on the mood of the nation says: From the time of the kidnapping of Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi on the morning of 29 July, 1966 till 30 July, the country witnessed an interregnum. The whole populace was confused until August 1, 1966 when Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon assumed the leadership of the new military government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The new Head of State, in his maiden broadcast titled No trust or confidence in a Unitary System of Government said inter alia:

I had been brought to the position today of having to shoulder the responsibilities of this country and the Armed Forces with the consent of the majority of the members of the Supreme Military Council as a result of the unfortunate incident that occurred on the early morning of 29 July, 1966.

... The country was plunged into a national disaster by the grave and unfortunate action taken by a section of the Army against the public.

... was done by elimination of political leaders and high-ranking Army officers, a majority of whom came from a particular section of the country.

the last report was that the (the Supreme Commander) and the West Military Governor were both kidnapped by some soldiers. Up till now, there is no confirmation of their whereabouts.

I have come to strongly believe that we cannot continue in this wise, as the basis of trust and confidence in our unitary system of government has not been able to stand the test of time

.... the basis for trust and unity is not there

I intend to continue the policy laid down in the statement by the Supreme Commander on 16 January, 1966 published on January 26, 1966 (See Oluleye, 1985:41).

Above was the revised version of the planned speech by the leaders of the July 29 uprising because the original intention was to seize the reins of government and then announce the secession of the Northern Region from the rest of the country (See Kurfi, 1983:38). However, the military Governor of the Eastern Region, Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu was not satisfied with the new military leadership in Lagos as he contended that there were yet more senior military officers rather than Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon to succeed Gen. Aguiyi-Ironsi as the new Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. This marked the beginning of animosity in the military hierarchy until Odumegwu Ojukwu was forced to surrender in 1970.

### 3.1.3 The 30-Month Civil War

The brick-bat between Lt-Cols. Yakubu Gowon and Odumegwu Ojukwu continued while the latter convened a Consultative Assembly on May 26, 1967 where he delivered an address in which he took a retrospective look at the political development in Nigeria since 1914. He, therefore, sought the mandate to declare at the earliest practicable date Eastern Nigeria a free, sovereign and independent state by the name and title of the Republic of Biafra (Kirk-Green, 1966:427-44).

This prompted Gowon to address the nation on the 27 May, 1967 in which he condemned the action of the military Governor of the Eastern Region. He said that the citizens of Nigeria have not given the military regime any mandate to divide up the country into sovereign states and to plunge them into bloody disaster. He assured Nigerians that he would not run away from the onerous responsibility to keep the country as one. In the light of this, he declared a state of emergency throughout Nigeria with immediate effect and claimed he had assumed full powers as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Head of the Federal Military Government for the period of the emergency (See Oyediran cited in a Journal).

General Gowon further took the following steps as part of his programme of actions to address the emergency situation:

- Announced the reorganization of the country into twelve-state structure with new military Governors posted to each accordingly.
- Through an instrument of pardon, he released Chief Obafemi Awolowo and all the political prisoners from jail. He made Chief Awolowo the Vice-Chairman of the Federal Executive Council and Federal Commissioner for Finance.
- He formed a broad-based Federal cabinet which embraced politicians and top civil servants to allow the military to concentrate on the prosecution of the war.
- He declared a military action against the Biafran Army on July 6, 1967.

These steps made General Yakubu Gowon become popular and his government literally enjoyed legitimacy, having touched on many contending issues that bordered on the interest of the minority group and the opposition political class. Oluleye (1985:152) vividly captured the mood when he says: He had the mandate from the people right from the beginning of the war loudly proclaimed as GOWON, meaning, GO ON WITH ONE NIGERIA. The co-operation of the people by all assessments was total during his management of the military and political crises.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What were the events that led to the bad blood among two military leaders which later degenerated to civil war?

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

On January 15, 1970, General Phillip Effiong of the Biafran Army handed over the surrender note which was received on behalf of the Federal Military Government by Col. Olusegun Obasanjo thus, bringing to an end the three-year war. There were series of concerted efforts both within and outside Nigeria, to avert the civil war but all were to no avail because of the recalcitrant attitude of the Biafran Leader Lt. Col. Ojukwu who had started confiscating Federal Government properties in the Eastern Region. Biafran Flag, National Anthem and Currency were launched and appeal was made to the international community for recognition and assistance to prosecute the war. Efforts were also made by some African Leaders, notably, General Ankrah of Ghana and Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. Also, Presidents Ahmadu Ahidjo of the Cameroon and Amani Dior of Niger Republic played prominent roles in ensuring that the crisis was resolved on a round-table rather than on the battlefield. However, the secession move gained the recognition

of some African countries such as Gabon, Tanzania, Ivory Coast and Zambia.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The political instability which led to the military coup and the counter-coup in 1966 could be traced to factors beyond the immediate causes such as oppression of the opposition group, corruption, nepotism and the passivity of the Balewa government to the total break down of law and order in the Western Region which posed great insecurity in the country towards the end of 1965. We have explained in this unit that some of the underpinnings were: the imbalanced federal structure, fear of domination by the minority group, mutual suspicion by the ethnic groups in the country and a host of others that have continued to threaten the unity and stability of the Nigerian nation.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What, in your views, were the causes of political instability in the First Republic?
2. Account for the Military intervention in the Nigerian politics in 1966.
3. What were the major steps taken by General Gowon in 1967 which conferred legitimacy on his government during the emergency period?

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**UNIT 2 TOWARDS MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT****CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 General Obasanjo in the Saddle
    - 3.1.1 Elections into the New Local Councils and the Constituent Assembly
    - 3.1.2 Emergence of the Political Parties in the Second Republic
    - 3.1.3 The 1979 General Elections
  - 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

General Murtala Ramat Mohammed succeeded General Yakubu Gowon as the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed forces. However, his rule was short-lived as he was assassinated by coup plotters shortly after he had announced the creation of new additional States from 12 to 19 and the movement of the Federal Capital from Lagos to Abuja. He was succeeded by General Olusegun Obasanjo as the new Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed forces.

One of the major challenges of the regime was the disengagement of the military from the political scene, to the barracks. This was a promise made by his predecessor General Murtala Ramat Mohammed in 1975 which he pledged to implement to the letter in line with the mood of the moment. Moreover, the political environment both at home and abroad was no longer conducive for military rule, notwithstanding the barrage of criticisms from the academia and the Nigerian press calling for quick return to civil rule.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the transition programme leading to the Second Republic
- identify the challenges faced by the military in implementing the transition programme
- describe the attitude of politicians towards military disengagement
- list some intellectual materials that will enable you contribute to, discussions on transition to civil rule in 1979.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 General Obasanjo in the Saddle

On October 4, 1975, the Head of State Brigadier Murtala Mohammed had announced the committee of 50 wisemen charged with the responsibility of drafting a new Constitution to guide the conduct of government in the Second Republic. The wisemen were later to become 49 because one of the members, Chief Obafemi Awolowo declined his appointment on the pretext that he was not consulted before he heard his name in the media.

However, the committee held its maiden meeting on October 18, 1975 at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. Addressing the meeting, the Head of State, Brigadier Murtala Mohammed declared the military government's position on some settled issues and then went ahead to recommend the Executive Presidential System in which the President and the Vice-President would be directly elected by the people. Other issues included:

- Commitment to a Federal System
- Elimination of unhealthy competition among the political class
- Decentralization of power
- A good electoral system to ensure free, fair and credible elections in the country
- The country should remain a secular state. There should be no state religion
- The principle of federal character should be reflected in the federal, and state appointments.

The committee which was headed by Chief Frederick Rotimi Alade Williams submitted its report on September 14, 1976 to Lt-Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo. On October 7, 1976 the draft Constitution was launched for public debate by the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters Brigadier Shehu Musa Yar Adu to allow for a robust debate by the Constituent Assembly.

#### 3.1.1 Elections into New Local Government Councils and the Constituent Assembly

In line with its transition programme, the military government conducted elections into the newly created Local Government Areas throughout the Federation on the zero-party basis. That marked the first election to be conducted in almost a decade of political instability in the country. The exercise which was conducted in December 1976

witnessed the election of Council Chairmen and Councillors without any political party affiliations. This was aimed at giving the people at the grassroots the opportunity of having a bite at the apple of democracy.

Also, in August 1977 the Federal Military Government conducted elections to elect delegates into the Constituent Assembly which was charged with the sole responsibility of thoroughly debating the draft Constitution in order to have a workable document for the country. The Constituent Assembly had 232 members out of which only 203 were popularly elected from each Local Government Area in the country. Other delegates were appointed by the government to represent special interests such as: women, students, traditional rulers, labour, the press, commerce and industry, etc. The Assembly submitted its report in August 1978 and in September 21, 1978 General Olusegun Obasanjo lifted the ban on political activities in the country. This opened a floodgate of opportunity for the formation of political parties to contest the 1979 general elections.

### **3.1.2 Emergence of Political parties in the Second Republic**

According to Amadu Kurfi (1983:93), the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) had on its record 52 Associations that announced their existences since the ban on political activities was lifted. Out of this number, 35 applied for registration, but by 31st December 1978 which was the closing date, only 19 Associations considered themselves eligible and submitted application but only five were eventually recognized and registered.

One of the five registered political parties was the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) which was announced by Chief Obafemi Awolowo within 24 hours after the lifting of the embargo by the Federal Military Government. The party was built on the ideology of democratic socialism with the four cardinal programmes viz:

- i) Free education at all levels;
- ii) Free medical services;
- iii) Full and gainful employment, and
- iv) Integrated rural development.

Membership of the party was replete with the old members of the defunct Action Group with the exception of a few like Chief Anthony Enahoro, Dr. Samuel Gumsu Ikoku who had disagreed with Chief Obafemi Awolowo on principle over continued participation in the military regime after the civil war and others who had gone with the Chief Akintola's NNDP during the 1962/64 Western Region crisis. The other four registered political parties were:

## SI

1. National Party of Nigeria (NPN)
2. Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP)
3. Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP)
4. Peoples Redemption Party (PRP)

**The NPN**

This party had Alhaji Shehu Usman Shagari as its flag bearer and actually won the 1979 election to become the first Executive President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The NPN was an incarnation of the defunct Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) of the First Republic. Although the party did not profess any ideology, it was inclined towards a free market economy and its major policy thrust was on agriculture for which it designed a term green revolution. Unlike the UPN, the party's Chairman was different from its flag bearer. While Chief Meredith Adisa Akinloye was the Chairman, the Presidential flag bearer was Alhaji Shehu Shagari which was in sharp contrast with the UPN structure where the two positions were combined by Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

**The NPP**

The founder and leader of this party was Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe who also led the defunct National Convention of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) in the First Republic. The Constitution, the manifesto, political philosophy and membership of the NPP was similar with those of the defunct NCNC. There was a dichotomy between the office of the Chairman of the party and its Presidential flag bearer. Like the NPN, while Chief Olu Akinfosile was the party's National Chairman, its Presidential candidate was the Owerri man, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

**The GNPP**

This party was a breakaway faction of the NPP under the leadership of Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim who was popularly known in the political circle as the apostle of politics without bitterness. Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim served as a Minister with Cabinet rank under the Balewa government. Like his UPN counterpart, the positions of the party's Chairman and the Presidential flag bearer were combined as the Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim and the party tilted toward progressivism.

**The PRP**

Mallam Aminu Kano who was the leader of the Peoples Redemption Party joined the National Party of Nigeria before he pulled out to form his own party. The PRP attracted a majority of members of the defunct

Northern Element Progressives Union (NEPU), a party of Nigerian radicals and Talakawas who are anti-northern oligarchy. Both Mallam Aminu Kano and the Waziri GNPP were later to form an alliance with the UPN and a faction of the Azikiwe SNPP to fight the 1983 general elections.

### 3.1.3 The 1979 General Elections

By January 1979 all the political parties have started traversing every nook and cranny of Nigeria canvassing for votes from the electorates. Parties held rallies, picnics and national conventions to mobilize, educate and enlighten the people about the programme of their parties and also about the election procedure. The five political parties fielded candidates for seats in the Senate, House of Representatives and the State Houses of Assemblies. The constituencies created for the election by the FEDECO were as follows:

Presidential Election	1
Gubernatorial Election	19
Senatorial Election	95
House of Representatives Election	449 State
Assemblies Election	1347

(Source: Kurfi, 1983:160)

The staggered elections which were by secret ballot were held in the following order as arranged by the FEDECO:

- |                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a) Senatorial Elections               | - Saturday, July 7, 1979 -  |
| b) House of Representatives Elections | c) Saturday, July 14, 1979  |
| State Assembly Elections              | - Saturday, July 21, 1979   |
| d) Gubernatorial Elections            | - Saturday, July 28, 1979   |
| e) Presidential Elections             | - Saturday, August 11, 1979 |
- (Source: Kurfi, 1983:169-70)

The summary of the results of the 1979 Senatorial and House of Representatives election released by FEDECO were as presented below:

#### House of Representatives

PARTY/REGION	EAST	NO	RTHWEST	TOTAL	
UPN	213	96	111		
NPP	601	62	78		
NPN	371	211	169		
PRP	49	-	49		
GNPP	43	9-	43		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>440</b>	

**Senatorial Elections**

PARTY/REGION	EAST/NOR	THWEST	TOTAL	
UPN-42	428			
NPP124	-16			
NPN629	136			
PRP-7-	7			
GNPP26	-8			
<b>TOTAL20</b>	<b>502595</b>			

(Source: Kurfi, 1983: 177-78)

The summary of the 1979 gubernatorial election results released by FEDECO showed the performance and strength of the political parties in each State of the Federation as shown in the tables below:

**1979 Governorship Election Results**

STATES	NPN	UPN	GNPP	PRP/TO	TOTAL	
Anambra	--1-	-1				
Bauchi1	---	-1				
Bendel-	1--	-1				
Benue1	---	-1				
Borno-	--1-	1				
Cross River	1-	---	1			
Gongola	---	-1				
Imo-	-1--	1				
Kaduna-	---	11				
Kano-	---	1				
Kwara1	---	-1				
Lagos-	1---	1				
Niger1	----	1				
Ogun-	1---	1				
Ondo-	1---	1				
Oyo-	1---	1				
Plateau-	-1-	-1				
Rivers1	---	-1				
Sokoto1	---	-1				
Total7	532	219				

**1979 Presidential Elections Scoreboard**

STATE	VOTERS	NPN	UPN	NPP	GNPP	PR	TOTAL
Anambra	2,601,548	1631649	0531002	0822022	8145001	20902	
8							
Bauchi	2,084,059	623989	299604	731415	421814	320299	868
3 Bende	12,376,410	2423203	5638157	6298242	2493966	9511	
Benue	1,563,413	411681	386463	097429	937277	538879	
Borno	2,753,400	246778	2388596	423842	784638	571096	8Cro
ss River	2,442,227	42581	577775	506711	001056	737661	103
Gongola	2,284,500	22705	71385	61278	562179	1427750	63913
8 Imo	3,465,198	10151	67385	99963	534616	1025211	53355
Kaduna	5,420,839	59630	29238	265321	190926	4477711	38171
2							
Kano	5,174,447	24364	314950	110411	846890	713611	95248
Kwarar	1,085,163	19014	214000	618302	025123	763456	05
Lagos	1,811,973	55515	68176	279320	394338	248283	64
Niger	1,040,753	28707	214155	429263	273145	553833	47
Ogun	1,603,004	46358	68965	52343	39742	338744	668
Ondo	2,422,714	57361	12946	66611	75235	612509	1384788
Oyo	4,520,120	17799	91197	98377	32802	94804	1396547
Plateau	1,618,378	19045	82902	92696	66637	40021	85254840
5							
Rivers	1,409,472	49911	47111	49875	41502	53212	687751
Sokoto	3,765,139	89899	43410	21249	93580	21449	771349593
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,433,757</b>	<b>5,688,857</b>	<b>4,916,651</b>	<b>2,822,523</b>	<b>1,686,489</b>	<b>1,732,113</b>	<b>16,846,633</b>

N.B. 48,279 votes rejected in Plateau

Source: Ojiako, 1981: 297 & 305

From the above results, it could be seen that the voting pattern along the ethnic lines of the 1959 elections continued in the 1979. The political parties that controlled the States in the Second Republic were members of the defunct political parties that controlled the Regions under which the new States fell. For example, the NPN which controlled majority of the States in the Northern part of Nigeria in 1979 was made up of majority of the members of the defunct NPC. The same was applicable to the UPN that controlled all the States in the South-western part of Nigeria which was the area of influence of the defunct Action Group in the First Republic. The case of the NPP which was the offshoot of the NCN covering the control of the South-eastern States was not different. However, there was a noticeable improvement in the performance of the parties over that of the First Republic. The UPN, NPN and NPP made some inroads into other parts of the country outside their traditional strongholds.

Finally, on October 1, 1979, General Olusegun Obasanjo handed over the reins of power to Alhaji Shehu Usman Shagari, the Presidential candidate of the National Party of Nigeria, having been declared the winner of the Presidential election by the Federal Electoral Commission and thus, marked the second attempt at democracy in Nigeria.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Enumerate some of the transition programmes implemented by Obasanjo military regime before the 1979 general elections.

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The election of the first Executive President of Nigeria in 1979 was controversial and in fact, contested at election tribunal up to the Supreme Court of Nigeria as provided for by the 1977 Electoral Decree.

The Progressive Parties Alliance (a conglomeration of the UPN, NPP, GNPP and a faction of PRP) led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo contended that the declaration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as winner was unlawful since he had not satisfied Section 34 A sub-section 1(c), (ii) of the Electoral Decree which stipulated that for a winner to emerge, he/she must have one-quarter of lawful votes cast in at least two-thirds of all the States of the Federation.

The election was, however, confirmed because the Court was satisfied that Alhaji Shehu Shagari met the constitutional requirement in 12 States of the Federation and two-thirds of the votes cast in the thirteenth State. The case was rested on the premise that it was impossible to have one-quarter of human-being and the two-thirds is greater than a half hence, the thirteenth State was regarded as a whole.

### 5.0 SUMMARY

The Military leadership of Murtala/Obasanjo regime was faithful with its transition programme and other corrective administrative measures promised on coming to power through a bloodless coup in 1975.

Therefore, the disengagement from politics in Nigeria in 1979 by the military was an epochal event in the history of African politics. It was the first time any African Military Leader would ever voluntarily hand over power to civilian rulers.

### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What are the factors responsible for the July 1975 bloodless coup in Nigeria?
2. What are the corrective measures taken by the Nigerian Military Government between 1975 and 1979?
3. The 1959 and 1979 elections in Nigeria were one and the same. Discuss.



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**UNIT 3 ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE MILITARY****CONTENTS**

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria was too young as a sovereign nation when, in 1966, the military truncated her first attempt at democracy. The military leadership was in the saddle for a period of thirteen years before it voluntarily returned power to the civilians on October 1, 1979. The circumstances that brought out the military from the barracks to governance cannot be blamed on the military, rather, it had lent credence to the notion that the military could serve as a balancing force in the power equation in the country.

Each time there was a military coup against a civilian government, the claim was usually that the military have come to correct the excesses, maladministration, corrupt tendencies and abuse of office by the politicians. However, political analysts have come to wonder whether the military itself could be said to be immune against these allegations that could merit its corrective posture, given the fact that there were coups against fellow military governments.

We have explained and analyzed causes of military interventions in Nigeria between 1966 and 1976 but this unit is aimed at examining the achievements and the demerits of military rule in Nigeria.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list the military contribution to nation-building
- identify the effects of military rule on the international scene
- explain the problems of military rule.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

It is a truism that the worst of a civilian administration is better than the best of a military regime no matter how benevolent. This is against the background that soldiers' rule by force while an elected civilian government rules by the mandate of the people. The first step taken by the military after a coup is to suspend the country's Constitution; promulgate decrees (military laws) abrogating the rights and liberties of the citizens. Since they were not elected, they do not owe any allegiance to the people nor do they feel obliged by the people's earnings.

Notwithstanding, the story of the military rule in Nigeria could be likened to a baby that could not be thrown away with bathwater. It would be a miscarriage of justice to ignore the Nigerian military's legacies that have contributed to the growth and development of the Nigerian nation.

### 3.1 Keeping Nigeria United

The Nigerian military deserves a pat on the back for successfully quelling a 30-month civil war to keep the nation united.

Although, many people may blame the Nigerian civil war on the personality clash between two military officers Lt. Cols. Yakubu Gowon and Odumegwu Ojukwu. That belief may be wrongly given that the genesis of the national crisis had been traced to a number of factors, both remote and immediate in the preceding units in this course. However, the men and officers of the Nigerian Armed Forces laid down their lives to defend the unity of the country otherwise Nigeria would have disintegrated like many failed republics in the world. Today everybody is proud that, all things being equal, Nigeria has everything it takes to become a world power and also a big player in the global politics.

#### 3.1.1 Restructuring the Polity

On the eve of the civil war, the military changed the geo-political configuration of Nigeria from a four-region to a twelve-state federal structure. Although, this could be a war strategy, it was a welcome development to the minority groups in the country who had been

clamouring for the exercise since the colonial period. Further, in order to assuage the fear of the minority ethnic nationalities in the country, another state creation exercise took place in 1975 which brought the total number of the Nigerian component units to nineteen. Also in the same year, Local Government Areas were recreated by the military in order to bring government nearer to the grassroots people. Up to date, the Federal Republic of Nigeria is made up of thirty-six States, seven-hundred and seventy-four LGAs and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT). No civilian government has ever been able to accomplish this feat successfully.

### 3.1.2 Provision of Social Infrastructure

The military after the end of the war, embarked on construction of network of roads to enhance the movement of people and goods which has improved the social and economic interaction among Nigerians. In addition, the military constructed Airports and Seaports in Lagos, Port Harcourt, Ilorin, Jos, Enugu, Kano and Sokoto and purchased aircraft to open the country to the international community for meaningful economic relations.

Because of the ease with which the military took decisions, it established many industries in the mining, oil, marine, aviation and automobile sectors of the economy as a means of creating job opportunities for Nigerians; to prevent the emergence of a monopoly and also to invest in less profitable ventures which may not attract the interest of private entrepreneurs. The construction of oil refineries in Warri, Port Harcourt and Kaduna was to the credit of the military. It was aimed at making the country depend less on imported fuel for domestic consumption. In the same vein, many River Basins were established to promote productivity in the agricultural sector.

### 3.1.3 Improvement in Education

By 1966 when the military made incursion into Nigerian politics, there were only four Universities in the country: Universities of Ibadan, Ife, Zaria and Nsukka. Apart from the University (College) of Ibadan which was established by the colonial government in 1948, the other three were established by the Regional Premiers in the First Republic but by 1999 when the military disengaged, the number of Universities established by the federal or state military government have increased tremendously. The military government established many specialized Universities for Agriculture, Science and Technology as well as many polytechnics across the federation.

On May 22, 1973 the military regime under General Gowon established the National Youth Service Corps scheme. Some of its objectives include to:

- develop common ties among the youths and promote national unity
- inculcate discipline in the youths by instilling in them the tradition of industry and patriotism and loyal service to the nation
- raise the moral level of youths by giving them the opportunity to learn about higher ideals of national achievement and social and cultural improvement

No doubt the scheme has come a long way in ensuring the national integration and cohesion of the diverse people of Nigeria.

### **3.1.4 War Against Indiscipline (WAI)**

In 1984 the Buhari/Idiagbon military regime made a conscious effort at reviving the dwindling social ethics in the Nigerian society by waging war against indiscipline which included: queuing culture, work ethics, and environmental sanitation. The military also waged war against drug trafficking, illegal foreign exchange business, examination malpractices and other misdemeanours that had eaten deep into the social fabric of the Nigerian society and which have cast negative aspersions on every citizen of the country in the international community.

### **3.1.5 Dynamic Foreign Policy**

Under General Murtala/Obasanjo regime, the Nigerian foreign policy was restructured to make Africa its centrepiece. This was the period when African countries were fighting against the last vestiges of colonialism in Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Soweto and the apartheid regime in South Africa. Nigeria became a Frontline State because of her leading role in the struggle which led to the granting of independence to all the aforementioned countries and eventually the collapse of apartheid policy in South Africa at the turn of the last century. Technical Aid Corps is another scheme designed by the military under General Babangida as a foreign policy instrument to assist African countries with the abundance of Nigeria's human resources. In addition, the establishment of a regional economic community called Economic Community of West Africa was initiated by the Nigerian military administration to promote trade and commerce beyond the tariff wall and diplomatic barriers in the West African sub-region.

Finally, the Nigerian military had the opportunity to prolong its stay in the political scene but was faithful with its promise to return the country to democratic rule which came to pass on October 1, 1979 and 1999.

### 3.2 Problems of Military Rule

#### 3.2.1 Human Rights Violation

Military rule is detestable the world over, because of its lack of respect for constitutionality and the rule of law in governance. The first task immediately the military takes over an elected government is to suspend the nation's constitution and resort to ruling by decrees conceived and promulgated by a few clique of officers who constitute themselves into a Supreme Military Council or Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council as the case may be. Military decrees are made superior to the regular laws of the land with retrospective effects which cannot be challenged in any Law Court. Citizens usually lose their fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, association, movement, privacy, etc. The Press, Trade Unions and Human Rights groups and such other democratic institutions are seen and treated as rebels by the military junta. They are either decreed out of existence or gagged from operation or get their recalcitrant members detained and humiliated for championing people's causes. The precision with which the military takes decisions, in most cases without properly digesting the facts at issue, usually lead to miscarriage of justice or outright injustice on innocent people in the society. Under Murtala/Obasanjo's regime many civil servants were wrongfully dismissed (with ignominy) or retired (without benefits) from the service. This affected the morale and work ethics in the civil service which some would argue as the genesis of corruption in the public service in order to save for the rainy days. In 1984 under Buhari/Idiagbon regime, some Nigerians were arraigned before a military tribunal rather than a regular Court for drug offences which they have committed before the advent of the regime. Despite the public outcry and protest by the Nigerian Bar Association, the offenders were sentenced to death by firing squad. In summary, dividends of democracy are completely absent under a military rule.

#### 3.2.2 Corruption

Each time the military comes onboard, one of the excuses it gives for seizing power is corruption in high places but this appears to be a case of the kettle calling the pot black as events in Nigeria has proved that the military itself is not immune against the social malady. This fact came to the fore during the probe panel set up by Gen. Murtala Mohammed in 1975 to ascertain how rich Gowon's Governors were, and how the wealth was acquired. According to Oluleye (1985:176):

The findings were an eyesore, as many of them were on the ladder to becoming millionaires. Except Brigadiers Mobolaji Johnson and Oluwole Rotimi, others were booted out via dishonourable discharge after they were divested of some of the ill-gotten gains.

In 1981, President Shehu Shagari, in response to public demand, set up a judicial panel of enquiry on the missing \$2.8 billion money under the military administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo. President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2002 also set up Justice Okigbo panel to investigate the alleged mismanagement of the oil windfall money during General Ibrahim Babangida's regime. The panel had since submitted its report but it is yet to be officially released. Similarly, the probe of the tenure of General Sanni Abacha's administration by the civilian administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo yielded fruitful results as billions stolen from public treasury by the late maximum ruler were recovered from his foreign bank accounts. As upright and honest as the Buhari/Idiagbon regime might have appeared to be, the scandal of the unchecked 53 suit cases imported into the country when the nation's borders (land, air and sea) were supposedly closed, cast a slur on the integrity and moral uprightness of the administration.

### 3.2.3 Sit-Tight Syndrome

Military leaders as well as their civilian counterparts in Africa are both guilty of the odious megalomaniac tendency which has become the bane of development in many African countries. General Yakubu Gowon's regime lost the confidence and esteem of Nigerians when he announced that his administration needed more time as the 1974 return to civil rule promise was unrealistic. The lust for power also led General Babangida to become obsessed with sit-tight agenda by annulling the June 12, 1993 general elections which was generally acclaimed as the freest and fairest in the annals of Nigeria's election. If not for divine intervention, Gen. Sanni Abacha had almost succeeded in transmuting from military to civilian President in 1998 when the five political parties (described as five fingers of a leprous hand by Chief Bola Ige) created by him had adopted him as their candidate for the 1999 presidential election.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the merits and demerits of military rule in Nigeria?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

Military government attracts adverse reactions from international community because of the uncivil and undemocratic manners by which

it rules. For many years Nigeria was regarded as a pariah nation and thus, ostracized by industrial nations in retaliation to the draconian rule by General Sanni Abacha between 1993 and 1999.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

As there are no roses without thorns, so goes a saying, military rule has some advantages as well as some disadvantages, given the level of our development as a nation. There are instances where military were given heroic welcome against a civilian dictator in a country or a military junta had intervened as a corrective measure to restore democracy shortly after. This was the case in the Ghanaian revolution under Ft. Lt. Gerry Rawlings in 1979 and 1981.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Military rule is an aberration and should be treated as a social leper. Discuss.
2. How do you account for military contribution to Nigeria's development?
3. Military regime, no matter how benevolent, cannot be a substitute to democratic rule.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this unit is to examine the nature and dynamics of the relationship between the military, politics, and public administration. It seeks to do this by reflecting on the Nigerian experience. The questions that suggest themselves and which should be addressed here are: what is meant by military? Why military intervenes in politics? What is the role of the military in Nigerian politics and administration? To what extent is the military capable of meaningfully transforming the state and society in a way that makes for consolidation of democratic order?

### Objectives 3.0

At the end of this unit, the student should know;

1. the military in Nigeria is a product of the colonial system and carries the legacy of its past.
2. that as the coercive arm of the colonial state, it was used principally as an instrument of local control and not as an agency for fighting external battles.
3. the relative isolation of the military from the rest of the society and failings of civilian regimes made it possible for the military to present itself as opposed to the system in which it participates and therefore in the survival of which it has a partial interest.
4. the theories of military intervention in politics
5. and whether coups solve any problems or not in the polity.

### 3.0 Main content

#### 3.1 The Meaning and Mission of the Military

The military is the collectivity of trained, armed personnel available to the government for taking part in armed conflict. In the past this meant land and sea forces. Today, of course, the military includes submarine, amphibious, airborne as well as special and air forces. The nature of military participation in politics depends on the type of political system that exists in a given society. In feudal society, there was no standing army, so the army participated in politics only during the time of crisis. With the emergence of modern nation-states, the role of military in politics changed dramatically. Though the extent and degree of military involvement in politics vary from one state to another, generally there is no state in the world where the military is in existence and is not involved in politics. For instance, defending the state against external aggression and suppressing internal subversion. These, however, are functional roles, and the military can undertake them only when asked to do so by the political regime.

It is a matter of the gravest consequence that in Nigeria, the military has no well-defined mission. It has been responsible for both operational and policy control over defence and political matters. More fundamentally, there is no effective oversight in place that could make for scrutinizing its decisions and actions thereby holding it accountable, and submitting it to ultimate civil control. The threat of a military without a well-defined mission therefore becomes real in a country where the military is preoccupied with dual responsibility for political and defense matters. Without a clearly defined mission, after all, there is likelihood for the military to poke its nose into forbidden areas. This brings us to the important phenomenon of military intervention in politics.

### 3.2 Military and Politics

The occurrence of coup d'état was very common and regular and the incidence of military government universal in the third world. But the question should be raised: what factors prompt military intervention in politics? When an army sets itself up as an independent political organization and ceases to obey the government, there is clearly a profound disorganization of political power. This presupposes the phenomenon of military intervention. When the military initiates a seizure of power, there has been a coup d'état. Therefore, one talks of military intervention when the military assumes formal political power. Here it formulates and executes government policies.

#### 3.1 Theories of Military Intervention

A number of theories were advanced to explain the abnormal phenomenon of military intervention in politics. Some of these theories are: international conspiracy theory, demonstration effect theory, personal and corporate interest theory, institutional fragility theory, and modernization theory. Other explanations put forward to account for military intervention in politics include political culture explanation, organizational structure explanation, elite crises, and class action theory.

According to international conspiracy theory, military intervention in politics is usually engineered by foreign power or capital whose interests have been threatened by the existing regime. This theory views military as political surrogate for external capital. For instance, if any leader goes against the interest of any foreign power or that of a transnational corporation operating in his country a coup will be sponsored to remove him. The removal of Mossadeq of Iran provided the best example of this. The idea of "regime change" currently being peddled by the United States of America under President George W Bush is also a good case in point.

Demonstration effect or contagion theory is another explanation put forward to account for military intervention in politics. The general thrust of this theory is that the institutionalization of the military coup as an important means of regime change stems not only from the internal characteristics of each country but also from the phenomenon of contagion. This is known as the theory of imitation behaviour: since they did it, we too can do it. Some people call it 'bush fire effect theory'. The theory suggests that military coups usually have spill-over effects. It was speculated that Soglo's success in Dahomey (Benin Republic) probably affirmed the resolve of Nigerian officers next door. It was also believed that the 1966 coup in Ghana was due to the success of the Nigerian coup.

Another theory put forward to explain military intervention in politics is personal and corporate interest. The general thrust of this theory is that coups are due to either personal or corporate ambitions of military officers. This means the ambition is sometimes personal to individual officers and at times corporate to the whole military. Putting this in another way, the military intervenes to protect its own interest or interests of certain group or party. Moreover, competition to become officers often prompts military intervention, especially when a particular ethnic group feels that not many of its people are either in power or in senior ranks in the military. More to the point, the military may intervene when it is not in favour of the policies adopted by the regime in power. The first and second coups in Nigeria can be explained from the standpoint of this theory.

Modernization theory is one of the most prevalent theories on military intervention in politics. A number of explanations were subsumed under the modernization theory. One of such theories is "institutional fragility" theory. The general thrust of this theory is that political institutions if ever they exist in African states such as Nigeria are fragile or weak in nature as such cannot cope with the demands for political and socio-

economic transformations. In consequence, there is always a gap between demands and supply which results in crisis. Hence the military intervenes to mediate between demand and supply by creating institutions that could receive demands from the environment and convert these demands to policy output.

Political culture explanation posits that politics needs some myths, code of conduct, pattern regularities or psychological variables that help define political behaviour and unite the rulers and the ruled as well as create legitimacy for the rulers. By legitimacy, we mean popular perception of a justifiable and acceptable use of public power. It denotes congruence between the beliefs, attitudes, actions and values of the political system and those of the people it governs. Political Culture is the cluster of distinctive shared political values, attitudes, beliefs and orientations and can be divided into three main types: "participatory" or civic, "subject" and "parochial" political cultures. Participatory or civic culture exists in states where people are oriented positively towards most aspects of the political system. "Subject" political culture exists in states where "the citizen is expected to have a passive or obedient relationship to the system". On the other hand, "parochial political culture exists in states where the average citizen "hardly relates himself to politics and is unaware of its existence". Nigeria is believed to lack civic culture which is well disposed toward the mental and spontaneous attachment to political community coupled with a committed consciousness to fight for and defend the nation and its form of government and policies. In a situation whereby, this attachment to civilian regime is low, the military is more likely to intervene. However, in most cases, it is not the whole military that will intervene. Rather a section of it intervenes to overthrow the civilian government. This sums up the crux of the matter: the model argues that Nigeria lacks civic political culture that defines how political leaders are to be recruited and removed from offices, and who should occupy what position in the political system. In absence of defined code of behaviour what usually prevail are corruption, tribalism, nepotism and federal character syndrome in the appointment of administrative and political office-holders. As such the general level of political culture of a country could make the military to intervene in politics.

Elite crisis model is another theory put forward to explain the phenomenon of military intervention in politics. The model contends that in third world countries such as Nigeria, political elites were enmeshed in fierce and unprincipled competition among themselves. In their struggle for political power and economic resources the elites always rely on their various groups for support. Having acquired power, the elites tend to give much loyalty to their various groups which might be ethnic or religious. Hence the resources of the nation are always allocated on ethnic, religious or regional basis. The military, therefore, intervenes to mediate between the various elites that are competing among themselves for the scarce resources.

Organizational structure explanation for military intervention in politics is based on the assumption that there are a number of qualities associated with the military training and profession that are compatible with an active and vigorous role in politics. These include aspirations for positions of power and skills useful for coping with the special nuances of politics. Moreover, military officers have often found themselves propelled to the forefront of organized effort to change simply because there are no other groups that might assume the role.

Specifically, the model posits that the military training had imbued the Nigerian armed forces, with certain features which distinguish them from the rest of the society. First, the recruitment is open to all irrespective of ethnic or religious background who can fulfill the entrance requirement at every stage. This makes for the emergence of non-tribal, completely de-ethnicized national unit. Second is that the long training and the organized hierarchy of military schools which funnels the candidates through a highly unified educational system provides a very strong esprit de corps for the officers and men of the military compared to any other comparable group in the society. Thirdly, the military is a highly organized, cohesive, disciplined, hierarchical and centrally command unit within the society. Fourthly, the military are repositories of bureaucratic and managerial skills. They also believe in rationality, efficiency, secularism, patriotism, discipline and achievement. Because of their belief in these values whenever the military see corruption, mismanagement of resources, intra-elite conflict and abuses of power by political leadership, they are always forced to intervene in order to tidy up the mess and create a new political order.

The class action theory is advanced to explain the occurrence of incidence of military intervention in politics. The general thrust of this theory is that the profound dependence of Nigeria on capitalism and imperialism is the main cause of military intervention in politics. The central thesis of this argument is that Nigerian State is being exploited by international capitalist system and Nigerian leaders are the conduit pipes that serve to perpetuate this situation of dependence and exploitation. More specifically, the military is

the class that helps to perpetuate the situation of exploitation and dependence. The military in Nigeria, after all, is a product of the colonial system and carries the legacy of its past. As the coercive arm of the colonial state, it was used principally as an instrument of local control and not an agency for fighting external battles. The military controls the state using it both to guarantee the neo-colonial presence of transnational corporations and to gain privileged access to surplus for itself. "Generally speaking, noted, the military is the political instrument of privileged classes and minority groups, which need rifles, machineguns and tanks to maintain their domination over exploited classes that threaten to submerge them by sheer force of number". It is a matter of the greatest consequence that the military was primarily designed as an instrument to guarantee the ruthless exploitation of human and material resources of the country. Nigeria society, after all, is a class-ridden society; a sack of potatoes" so to speak. The military is socially part and parcel of Nigerian society and therefore reflects the class structure as well as its tensions and contradictions. The military intervenes to prop up the existing socio-economic order. Hence it replaces one political leader with another in order to guarantee the continuity of the phenomenon of exploitation and dependence. Hence military coups are reactionary in nature and their sole *raison d'être* was to maintain the existing class structure in the society. The overthrow of President Morsi of Egypt (in 2013) who was democratically elected and military intervention in Algeria to prevent Islamic Salvation Front (ISF), which was poised to sweep the polls from coming to power provide the best examples of this.

Each of these theories of military intervention has its weak points. It provides plausible explanation for military intervention but it also leaves a lot of questions and issues unexplained. One thing to note about them, however, is that they are interwoven and none is exhaustive in itself. Taken together they test each other and balance each other. The theories can be broadly categorized into two main premises: systemic cause theory and system based on class structure. The systemic causes of military intervention are ethnicity, lack of national feelings, weak civilian institutions, and decline in the legitimacy of the political elite attendant upon their inability to agree on the basic rules of the game, failure to solve fundamental socio-economic problems, widespread corruption, maladministration and disrespect for the rule of law and sanctity of human person. While the system based on class structure argued that the reasons for military intervention in politics are to be found in the socio-economic formations of Nigeria.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Name and explain at least five theories of Military intervention in Politics.

#### **3.2 Do Coups Change Anything?**

The military in Nigeria had been drawn into the political arena because of the failure of politicians to put their own house in order. But a question should be raised: Do coups change anything? Do they lead to socio-economic transformation of Nigerian society in a meaningful way? The experience of military rule in Nigeria has shown that coups did not result in any meaningful, fundamental transformation of the society. The military regimes in the country have failed both in the economic and political fronts. In the economic sphere each military regime had exhibited similar symptoms implying that each suffered from similar diseases. The symptoms include declining production of major export crops, deterioration in the balance of payment, declining government revenues that coupled with increasing expenditure lead to inflation, budget deficits and a fall in value of national currency as well as inability of the state to provide electricity to power country's industries. More fundamentally, the country economy is a captive of International Monetary Fund (IMF) who dictates what policy to follow in the domestic and international arena.

The military had failed to provide high levels of housing, education, welfare and employment. Vast majority of Nigerian people live in squalid conditions. Massive growth of shanty towns adjacent to many urban centers is a proof enough of poor housing conditions in the country. The education system, which had been hampered by shortage of basic school supplies functions only in name. Basic social services have virtually disappeared while medical services have ceased to function effectively because of non-availability of vital medical equipment and medicine. Unemployment grows at an alarming rate while majority of people live below the absolute poverty line; that is income level below which a minimal nutritionally adequate diet plus essential non-food requirements are not affordable.

In terms of politics, the military has failed to re-usher viable political order and substantive democracy. Military rule has fostered an authoritarian culture in the country which is inimical to conditions necessary

for the workings of a democratic system of government. Such threats to democratic tradition include the phenomenal rise of ethnic armies, muzzling of press, suppressing of dissent, curtailing of independence of the judiciary and harassment of workers and students' organizations. More to the point, the military tended to dictate the tune of political debate and impose false consensus on the people. If anything, the military had only succeeded in privatizing the state by turning it into their own private property. The privatization of the state", together with the resulting failure to fulfill the people's aspiration for democracy and economic development has led to the erosion of legitimacy of the Nigerian State and a reduction in its capacity for good governance. The military always sees itself as a corrective regime and comes up with a litany of woes which the civilians wrought on the nation. The experience of Nigeria, however, had shown that if the military hops into political platform as physician, it soon discovers itself as a patient infected by the disease of its predecessors it had set out to cure and prevent. Most often than not, the military also discovers that instead of dampening crises, it heightens them. This situation, therefore, begs the question, as to whether the military regimes had fared better than the civilian regimes they had replaced.

The phenomenal rise of corruption in our national life provided the best example of the above-mentioned problem. Corruption became so endemic in the national life that most people in the country have to do something illegal just in order to survive. The system we operate encourages everyone who can to grab as much as he can from whatever source. Interestingly, privileges multiply and corruption triumphs while morality declines, under so-called corrective regime. The military rule gave rise to materialism, meaning the tendency to attach too much importance to matter and regard its manifestations the be-all and end-all of everything. Materialism rejects all forms of higher moral qualities, and prefers immediate over the ultimate gain. A resultant effect of such an outlook is glorification of material gains over principles: ideologies, code of ethics and morality - all are sacrificed at the altar of minutest profits and personal gains. The significance of materialism is that it liberates the realm of public life from moral restraints and thereby turning it into an arena not of service and dedication to the nation but of quenching the thirst for material gains. Public resources and public trust would in these circumstances naturally be diverted to the procurement of material gains and promotion of selfish interests. In consequence, corruption persists and thrives under a corrective regime.

A question should be raised: why corruption persists under a military regime that presented itself as a corrective regime whose mission is to eradicate corruption from the national life? Corruption persists simply because it is pertinent to continuity and functioning of the Nigerian political system and its removal would have many consequences for diverse types of people whose support and effort are needed to avert threat to stability and continuity of the system. Consequently, the political incumbents would find it extremely difficult to take appropriate measures that may fundamentally transform the system in which they participate and therefore, in the survival of which they have a partial interest. Logically, corruption persists not only because it satisfies a number of functions but also because many of the functional alternatives to corruption would be quite dysfunctional to political incumbents and their constituencies.

The persistence of corruption constitutes a serious threat to the tenure of political incumbents and exposes them to the necessity of legitimizing their power through anti-corruption efforts. Hence military rulers have seen anti-corruption efforts as a good political cry. A vigorous anti-corruption campaign, after all, may save them from the suspicion of having a soft spot for corrupt elements like the politicians they replaced. Such anti-corruption efforts, however, will only be made up to the point where the needs of political incumbents to legitimate their power are satisfied, rather than satisfying the great variety of public needs and demands. Consequently, anti-corruption policies will turn out to be, in terms of their implementation; lopsided cosmetic exercises which do not go against the existing political and economic reality.

Anti-corruption campaigns in Nigeria are no stimulus to high standards of probity in the realm of public life but a legitimizing principle in the hands of political incumbents. Paradoxically, the idea of probity to which the political incumbents pay lip service in order to stem the tide of legitimation crisis becomes fetters on them. This is because it becomes a standard for evaluation of regime performance: a standard which must ultimately show them in a bad light because they cannot meet it. In consequence, this provided those who are bent on capturing power through extra constitutional means with a legitimizing principle. They will, after all, use the failure to put an end to corruption in the national life as compelling reason for military intervention in politics. The pity of it is that, the new rulers will turn out corrupt those they replaced. The dialectics of the human society is such that any revolutionary force, upon coming to power, runs the risk of becoming a conservative force. This may help to explain why the military in Nigeria did not bring the

society up to a qualitatively new level of socio-economic and political development. After the military takeover there was a reversal in observance of fundamental human rights, accountability and transparency, investment, education, health and welfare. There was stagnation of agriculture and industry. So, all in all, the military governments in Nigeria appeared to be in unenviable mess. The pity of it, however, is that much the same could also be said about the so-called democratically elected regimes in the country and there seems to be no easy and viable way out to such a political cul-de-sac.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISES**

Critically discuss the Nigerian military and the introduction of corruption in the Nigerian polity.

### **3.3 Military and Public Administration**

The influences of the military on public administration in Nigeria can be broadly categorized into two main types: positive and negative impacts. First positive influence of the military on public administration is the seriousness with which they handled the annual budget exercise. By and large, the military rulers displayed a serious consciousness of the importance of the annual budget exercise far more than the case under the civilian regime. Budgetary process under the civilian regime was often little better than farce. For the so-called civilian regime, a budget is not an accounting instrument that holds government officials responsible for the expenditure of funds with which they had been entrusted. The political incumbent subjectively determines which provisions of the budget he has to implement and how to implement them irrespective of what the legislature might do. Little wonder, poor budget implementation has assumed the status of an established tradition under civilian regime. Right from the advent of the current civil rule in 1999 to date, there has never been a financial year in which capital budget attained up to 75% implementation. The whole essence of budgetary exercise has been reduced to furthering the political and financial interests of the political incumbents rather than promoting the public good. Provisions of the budget meant for promotion of the common good were seldom implemented while those that provided vast opportunities for kickbacks and backhanders were eagerly implemented.

Another positive impact of the military rule, was the speed and thoroughness with which they usually read their files. The civilian regime both prior to and after the military rule compared very unfavorably in this respect. The civilian politicians were so preoccupied with political squabbles and constituency problems that there was hardly any time left for them to attend to departmental files and memoranda. More fundamentally, the military infused a sense of urgency into governmental processes and machinery. In a sense, they attached a note of urgency to practically all matters requiring action. From calling for information or advice to the construction of a road or bridge, from the preparation of policy memorandum to the submission of the report of a committee or commission, everything was demanded with haste and urgency. Much the same cannot be said about the civilian regimes both before and after the military rule. This, however, is far from saying that the influences of the military rule on public administration are salutary.

The military usually maintains a hierarchical or pyramid structure with a chain of command running from the chief of staff to the lowest recruit in the army. This is the normal pattern of day-to-day military operation and organization. When in government this pattern is duplicated, administration tends to be centralized no matter whether a state being run is a federal or unitary one. Centralization of authority and crucial decisions in the centre leads to a sort of imperialistic system in the organization with the centre (federal government) dictating to the colonies (state and local governments) the rules, the actions and values to be followed. Putting this in another way, under military rule the machinery of government tends to be run by centralized methods of management. State and local governments were granted little discretionary authority; therefore, they have little or no administrative and financial latitude. Every policy question major or minor has to originate from the centre. Such a rigid centralization and command system was impermissible in tackling the problems of a multi-ethnic nation like Nigeria. This is because it mocks the autonomy of the state and local governments as well as that of government departments and Parastatals. It also institutionalized an extreme form of upward referral which stifles initiative, independence and creativity. Such centralization far from facilitating managerial effectiveness in the public sector serves only to accommodate poor management, low efficiency and out-of-the-date methods. The by-product of all this would be an unmanageable and faceless bureaucratic machinery doing little else than pushing paper around between in-trays and out-trays and discouraging people to render a contribution of their own in solving their

own problems. The end-result is apathy, constant criticism of the government and no involvement. No doubt this does not make room for meeting the needs for recognition, participation, and involvement and autonomy of different tiers of government.

The military is incapable of manning the institutions of civilian regime and dealing with inherent conflicts in the civilian system of administration. Hence it left the day-to-day administration in the hands of a few higher civil servants. These higher civil servants such as the so-called "super permanent secretaries" of the General Yakubu Gowon's era provided a good example of this. They initiated, formulated and executed policy. This politicization of the civil servants increased their power and led to usurpation of the power of political class. The preponderance of the civil servants in the military government transformed such a government into what Balogun (1987:76) called "administocracy" meaning "rule by administrators". This is because the military left both policy making and policy implementation in the hands of senior bureaucrats. Bureaucracy is a potential Frankenstein's monster in need of firm check on its power. Under the military this check appeared to be lacking or ineffective where it existed.

The military rule contributed greatly to the erosion of executive capacity in the public sector. The inefficiency and ineffectiveness that characterized every aspect of the public sector is enough proof of this. Executive capacity arises from better training, higher standards of recruitment, faster communication with other parts of the organization, and a more dynamic outlook generally. The merit, the reputation and the achievement capability of any organization depend on its leadership at all levels. The pity of it, however, is that under the military the cult of the amateur is highly praised in Nigeria. Consequently, little is done to cultivate executive personality active and full of initiative, creativity, and competence and capable of being in touch with contemporary reality. The military reduced the function of the public sector to that of providing patronage to their retired and serving colleagues, friends and relatives. Hence senior administrative personnel who owed their appointment to such a patronage often lack relevant skills. They had no professional training, after all, to equip them to carry out the tasks of modern administration in the public sector.

In a sense, appointment in the public sector tended to be based most often than not on association with the military regime than on technical expertise, managerial skills and educational qualifications. Consequently, the well-connected obtained position for which they were often intellectually ill-equipped. These new recruits were often not suited to work which they were required to do. Their education and training did not fit and equip them to deal with conditions of modern administration in the public sector. Recruitment of personnel on the basis of patronage; meaning a system of personal favourites is an extremely dangerous precedent. More fundamentally, it involves a huge cost on socio-economic and political well-being of the nation. It is interesting to note that such personnel who lacked adequate training and relevant skills are not likely to see the value of staff training and development. Consequently, there was a lack of adequate training of administrative personnel and too little attention was paid to their career development. Too much reliance was placed on connection rather than the demonstrated ability so that overall structure of the public sector and training of its personnel were out of keeping with modern conditions. Moreover, junior officers found their promotion blocked when an outsider was brought in to fill a senior vacancy. Many of them had become alienated from their work. The posts were filled by people with untested talent, and the result was overall loss of efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

What has become obvious from the foregoing discussion is that the ways and manners the military sometimes made appointment to top posts in the public service made the mockery of public service rules and regulations governing appointments and promotions. It is a matter of gravest consequence that the military rulers tended to brush aside well-established and clearly recognized rules and regulations and made use of personal and subjective criteria regardless of consequence on the system as a whole. Besides frustration and irritation, appointments of this nature destroy esprit de corps, the spirit of comradeship among the senior officials in the civil service. Not only was the spirit of comradeship destroyed in the civil service by the presence of "favorites" but discipline was also seriously impaired. A relatively junior official who happened to be a personal friend of the military ruler through games, drinks, or some other social connections did not waste time in letting his fellow civil servants know of this fact. He would brag around, was often insolent to his seniors and largely behaved as though he was above the law. This state of affairs, Adebayo (1994:199) concluded, is not conducive to good discipline in the civil service.

Unlike the classic conceptualization of legislature, executive and judiciary as the three branches of government, Nigeria was faced with the situation in which the military, judiciary and bureaucracy were the three branches of government. The military rule tended to be characterized by cynical disregard of democratic principles in both making and implementation of policies. The military rulers viewed democratic process which subjects governmental policies to scrutiny, debate and negotiation as an unnecessary cog in the wheel of rapid development. Consequently, law and order is the clarion call of the military rulers and their obsession with this makes them impatient of the due process of law when dealing with criminals. They seemed to prefer administrative justice to normal legal system with its long and windy litigations and appeals. Therefore, the military ruled by decrees which are not bound by or subject to legal or judicial constraints. Perhaps, this explains why the military rule is characterized by phenomenal rise of tribunals. This certainly deprived the ordinary courts of their jurisdiction and independence. Experience of many countries suggests that independence of the judiciary is vital for the predictability of the latter. Predictability means following objective criteria when making decision so that others following the same criteria would arrive at similar decision.

#### 4.0 Conclusion

The military is usually politically untrained and naive and its personnel therefore unable to undertake long term political management. This lack of political sophistication is attributed to peculiar organizational characteristics, command structures and pattern of socialization and training in the military. This put severe limitations on the ability of the military to produce those skills in bargaining and political communication that are required for sustaining political leadership. This may be especially true in developing countries such as Nigeria, where the intensity of political conflicts is great and new political forces unleashed by the processes of socio-economic change are agitating for an enhanced role in the political system. It is on the basis of those assumptions that military regimes are believed to be inherently unstable. Social and political stability will continue to elude the country until political debates and administrative activities have taken place within democratic setting which encourages search for peaceful ways of settling differences, mutual tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and inclusion.

It goes against the grain for the military to assume democratic character. Democracy is a product of rich harvest of views and voices and this is alien to the military by nature and inclination. Democracy is an all-embracing mechanism for expressing and regarding opinions, positions and various interests in a society. It can only develop in the process of constructive debate and clash of opinion. It implies discussions, debates, deliberations, and dialogues until people arrive at consensus. Democracy entails that government should be based on an agreed set of values about the way government should make decisions and how they should be administered. Government must be subject to a high degree of control by the citizens, take into account public opinions and does not act in an arbitrary manner towards the individual or groups. Unlike democratic government a military government is characterized by an inherent lack of normative basis of support and legitimacy, and it is usually unstable and therefore unabashedly repressive. Corruption and repression are the tools the military rulers tended to use to maintain themselves in power. They have no qualms about resorting to cooptation, preemption and adaptation to widen their power base. This explains why the military rulers distributed positions in the government and public corporate sector even to their open critics. Those who refused to be lured into accepting government posts or opposed its repressive policies become target of every form of repression. Abacha regime is a good case in point. Part of the reason why the military keeps intervening in Nigerian politics is that many a military officer has realized that state power can be used to amass wealth. In Nigeria, there is nothing which those who control state power cannot do or cannot get. By the same token, there is nothing which those who have no access to state power cannot suffer.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

But a question may be asked: what must be done to encourage the military to steer clear of partisan politics and dedicate itself to consolidation of democratic order? This question does not have a clear-cut answer due to the dynamics and character of the Nigerian State. Perhaps, the solution to military intervention lies in the sincerity and commitment with which Nigerians address the key issues of state reconstruction and political reforms. First of all, Nigerians must recognize the urgency and necessity to reconstruct the state with a view to making it efficient, accountable, democratic, responsible, sensitive and responsive to citizens' needs and grievances. Second is the need to educate the political elites to realize the significance of demonstrating in their conduct integrity, accountability, responsibility, transparency and willingness to respect the rules of the



game. Third is to educate the military to willingly accept the reality of being subjected to control by the civil order. Fourth is to encourage a culture of constitutionalism, rule of law and dialogue, which makes for rational democratic politics of accommodation, inclusion and tolerance. Fifth is to open lines of dialogue, understanding and accommodation among the military, the political class, and civil society in the long-term interest of the larger society. Sixth is to develop professional ethos among the military in a way that strengthens their faith and confidence in democracy. Seventh is to establish institutional mechanisms which have the capacity to address the genuine fears and concerns of the military. Last but not the least is to recognize the urgency and necessity of the need to come up with anti-corruption measures capable of dealing with cases of proven corrupt enrichment.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

The military should stick to the barracks. Critically discuss and give reasons why.

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