

in the north and by the equally unsettling example of improving conditions in the south. Those northern leaders who were committed to modernization were firmly connected to the traditional power structure. Most internal problems within the north--peasant disaffection or rivalry among Muslim factions--were concealed, and open opposition to the domination of the Muslim aristocracy was not tolerated. Critics, including representatives of the middle belt who plainly resented Muslim domination, were relegated to small, peripheral parties or to inconsequential separatist movements.

The NPC continued to represent the interests of the traditional order in the pre-independence deliberations. After the defection of Kano, the only significant disagreement within the NPC related to the awareness of moderates, such as Balewa, that only by overcoming political and economic backwardness could the NPC protect the foundations of traditional northern authority against the influence of the more advanced south. In all three regions, minority parties represented the special interests of ethnic groups, especially as they were affected by the majority. The size of their legislative delegations, when successful in electing anyone to the regional assemblies, was never large enough to be effective, but they served as a means of public expression for minority concerns. They received attention from major parties before elections, at which time either a dominant party from another region or the opposition party in their region sought their alliance.

The political parties jockeyed for positions of power in anticipation of the independence of Nigeria. Three constitutions were enacted from 1946 to 1954 that were subjects of considerable political controversy in themselves but inevitably moved the country toward greater internal autonomy, with an increasing role for the political parties. The trend was toward the establishment of a parliamentary system of government, with regional assemblies and a federal House of Representatives. In 1946 a new constitution was approved by the British Parliament and promulgated in Nigeria. Although it reserved effective power in the

hands of the governor and his appointed executive council, the so-called Richards Constitution (after Governor Arthur Richards, who was responsible for its formulation) provided for an expanded Legislative Council empowered to deliberate on matters affecting the whole country. Separate legislative bodies, the houses of assembly, were established in each of the three regions to consider local questions and to advise the Lieutenant governors. The introduction of the federal principle, with deliberative authority devolved on the regions, signaled recognition of the country's diversity. Although realistic in its assessment of the situation in Nigeria, the Richards Constitution undoubtedly intensified regionalism as an alternative to political unification.

The election of the House of Representatives after the adoption of the 1954 constitution gave the NPC a total of seventy-nine seats, all from the Northern Region. Among the other major parties, the NCNC took fifty-six seats, winning a majority in both the Eastern and the Western regions, while the Action Group captured only twenty-seven seats. The NPC was called on to form a government, but the NCNC received six of the ten ministerial posts. Three of these posts were assigned to representatives from each region, and one was reserved for a delegate from the Northern Cameroons. As a further step toward independence, the governor's Executive Council was merged with the Council of Ministers in 1957 to form the all-Nigerian Federal Executive Council. NPC federal parliamentary leader Balewa was appointed prime minister. Balewa formed a coalition government that included the Action Group as well as the NCNC to prepare the country for the final British withdrawal. His government guided the country for the next three years, operating with almost complete autonomy in internal affairs.

Lesson learnt from Sarduana's Politics and Philosophy

Sarduana was a Nationalist, a pan-Nigeria politician who never compromised the unity of Nigeria. Indeed from his political and philosophical standpoint, three basic lessons can be learning points. These are the principles of compromise; the principles of negotiation; and the principles of accommodation. As a nationalist he was aware of our differences - the multi-ethnic complexion of our federal arrangement, the plural mosaic of our religious and cultural diversities. He was not blind to these differences. But he was convinced that Nigeria could rise beyond these inhibiting factors to forge one united nation. The Sarduana's principles of compromise, negotiation, and accommodation, serve well in his time and would continue to serve us in these times. By the will of the colonial master, Nigeria inherited a federal system. Unlike in the United States and elsewhere where federalism grew naturally out of the political experience of nation states, Nigeria found herself foisted with a skewed federal structure from the onset. Nearly a century of colonial administration has combined with decades of military rule to define as at today, the basis of Nigeria's federalism. Today the issues that dominate national debate include Sovereign National Conference, Resource Control, and balance of interests among the ethnic nationalities that constitute the Nigerian polity. And at the core of the exchange is fiscal federalism, revenue allocation, and sharing the national cake. Federal finance is politics; it is also economics - matters that evoke much passion and emotion among Nigerians. In our national experience, historical antecedents have placed the issue of revenue allocation and resource control on the front burner of national debate and discourse, and it has often seemed that the future of Nigeria's federal experience could depend on the twin factors.

Nwokedi (2004) described Nigerian federalism as having, the unique origin ...which evolved through devolution from virtual unitarism. He identified the problem of resource control as springing primarily from the fact that oil resources come mostly from the small states within the ethnic minorities which lack the political and economic clout to push through their

political demands. Nowhere in a federation the world over other than in the Nigerian federation does the system of revenue allocation completely negate or ignore the taxable capacity, tax effort and nature of resources of the component governments.

Concluding Remarks

For a strong and united Nigeria in the context of modern state system, and learning from the basic principles of the Sardhana - Compromise, Negotiation, and accommodation, are all cardinal attribute of federalism. And that the principle of derivation is one of the most potent instruments adopted to achieve autonomy among the federating states. Between 1946 and 1977, the derivation principle had enjoyed the pride of place in the Nigerian revenue allocation format. In the days of military rule, successive military regimes in the country found the oil wealth a sure source of financing for the profligacy that became synonymous with those administrations, and so began to diminish the importance of derivation. As derivation took a bashing, the states where these resources originate from had little or nothing to show for their natural resources. The derivation principle continued to lose ground until the Abovade Technical Committee on Revenue Allocation put the final nail on its coffin in 1977. on the recommendation of that Committee, the Obasanjo Military Administration deleted the principle completely from Nigeria's revenue allocation formula. Thus, in the hey days of the agricultural boom - the days of the groundnut a pyramids in the North, the cocoa boom in the West and the palm oil windfall in the East - derivation was the predominant basis for allocating national revenue. But when oil came on stream, notwithstanding the environmental degradation and devastation that came with it, derivation faded away from the nation's economic calculus. Any wonder then at the level and stridence of the agitation for resource control which has compelled a return in recent times to a consideration of this principle in revenue allocation. The Abubakar Administration in mid-wiving the 1999 Federal Constitution of the Federal Republic, stipulated at least 13% of national revenue to be

allocated on the basis of the principle of derivation. Without doubt, the agitation for resource control stems from the criminal and callous neglect of the past, and the impoverishment that has been visited on the area that has generated much of the resources on which modern Nigeria is built. It does appear that Europe was built out of the colonial exploitation of Africa in the 17th and 18th centuries; modern America was built on the sweat and tears of slaves who were transported across the Atlantic in inhuman and dehumanizing conditions. And modern Nigeria is built on the rape and abuse of the South-East and South-South regions where much of the oil resources that have transformed the nation come from. Only equity, fairness and natural justice in the allocation of the nation's abundant resources, will enable the land and her people be in peace, united and stronger.



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