

Politics and the Adoption of the Policy of State of Emergency in Nigeria: Explaining the 1962 and 2013 Experiences

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Abstract

This article examines the politics of state of emergency in Nigeria in which conflict and instability is the trigger. In general, there are two broad perspectives within which conflict and violence occur in Nigeria; conflict between groups or communities within the country, and conflict between groups against the state. The first is driven mostly by issues of religion and political balancing while the second is driven by issues of distributive politics national policy making. The study reflects an effort to make the case that contrary to generally held opinion, the dynamics for declaration of state of emergency is not engendered by its multi-ethnicity, but by more of politics. The paper argues that internal politics within the ruling party and the idea of strengthening and retaining state power in the run up to general elections play important roles in adopting the policy of state of emergency in Nigeria. The paper concludes that what Nigeria needs for enduring peace is inclusive politics and good governance.

1. Introduction

The proliferation of conflicts in Nigeria in the post-independence (1960s) and post-military period(1999-date) engenders proposition that link ethno-religious conflict to democracy or implicate regimes in democratic transition as being unable to manage such conflicts. In the wake of African democratization, Carol Lancaster (cited in Ake 2000: 94) predicted that political divisions would increasingly fall along ethnic or regional lines, heightening tensions and ultimately threatening national unity. The high velocity of ethnic or religious strife remains a big problem to national unity and development in Nigeria. Transitions from colonialism to independence and autocratic military rule to democratic one create such conflicts. This can be traced to the fact that democratic transitions are episodes of profound institutional transformation. Such transition from autocracy to democratic governance involves not simply a change in the rules of the game, but it requires a fundamental reconfiguration of the rules to craft a totally new game (Mozaffer, 1995:33-4).

In the same vein, the process of transition creates threatening uncertainties for groups and opens up a range of transitory political opportunities for ethnic entrepreneurs (Gurr, 2000: 85). Such opportunities are created because the 'prior existence of a legitimate political unit', indispensable for democratization, is absent. In the absence of a nation, 'before', 'during' and 'after' democratization, actors manipulate boundaries and identities to create constituencies favourable to their respective purposes (Schmitter, 1996:84-5). The result is the advent of what Horowitz (2000:293-4) calls ethnic parties thrown up by the fact that in electoral politics, voters, while desiring to get representatives for themselves as individuals, in practice pitch their tents with political groups that purport to represent them as components of rather bleakly perceived potential action groups.

The declaration of state of emergency in Nigeria is always predicated on conflict situation in the states where it has been declared. However, this brinkmanship is situated within the realm of politics. Politics is defined as all activities that are directly or indirectly associated with the emergence, consolidation and use of state power (Nnoli, 2003:12). The state, therefore, forms the distributive channel for allocation of resources. To be sure, in this type of politics, there is a frantic and very great struggle by political competitors to have a firm control of the state power at all cost. Monopoly tendencies according to Ake are highly significant features of the post-colonial economy. They affect the character of accumulation, the prospect of liquidating under-development, and the character of politics. However, the ruling class in Nigeria is fractious in nature and understood that political power offered opportunities for economic power, and therefore the opportunities inherent in their political power were the best and perhaps the only way they have to create an economic base for themselves. Consequently, the ruling class engages in grim factional battles for the control of state power. This is because the possession of state power leads directly to economic power, and who hold positions in the power structure determine the location and distribution of economic resources and political rewards. Exclusion from this position is

unfortunately very costly. Where the struggle to ascend to state power fails, politicians and other social groups resort to violence and in trying to stem the rising tide of violence, the policy of state of emergency is usually employed.

A state of emergency is seen as governmental declaration that suspends certain aspects of normal functions of government of the executive, legislative and the judicial powers of government. In this sense, it provides the government with the powers to do whatever is necessary to ensure the safety of people and the protection of property and the environment. The declaration of state of emergency in some parts of the country has generated heated debates about its desirability, constitutionality or even its potency to resolve the lingering conflicts and violence bedeviling such parts of the country. The western Nigeria crisis of 1962 and the widespread violence that were prevalent signified a looming possibility hanging like Damocles' sword over the nation.

The large scale violence in Nigeria with the advent of democratic rule in 1999 has been explained as a result of grievances bottled up under military rule which are suddenly finding expression with the new-found freedom under civil rule. Expressingly, the military made conflicts and tensions remain latent but potent. The exit of the military and the subsequent decentralization of political power provided all sorts of elixir, as it were. The Boko Haram insurgency is happening in a civilian dispensation (Soyinka, 2013). In the same vein, Plateau, Ekiti, Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states witnessed the policy of state of emergency. Again, the Niger Delta militants, the Sharia riots in the North, all emerged in the current civilian era. Internally, allegiances and group affiliation from nationalism and religious identities to ethnic and kinship ties, powerfully affect attitudes and behavior. Consequently, Nigeria's politics is importantly shaped by the attributes of its religious and ethnic diversity of its citizens. The impact of such diversity is additionally affected by the status of, and the political relations between and among various groups in society, especially political parties.

Although the Nigerian constitution provided for this use of emergency powers, the way it has been used suggested more politics than the issue of national security. Emergency powers comprise two distinct powers, viz (i) power to declare a state of emergency; and (ii) power to make laws and execute them with respect to matters within the exclusive state competence in normal time, and to overstep, with some exceptions, the limitations on power arising from the constitutional guarantee of fundamental rights in chapter IV of the 1999 Nigerian constitution. Section 305 of the 1999 constitution, relied on by both Presidents Obasanjo and Jonathan for their actions in Plateau 2004, Ekiti 2006 and Adamawa, Borno and Yobe in 2013, grants only the first power, but not the second. It only empowers the President to declare a state of emergency in situations specified in the said section of the constitution.

It is against this backdrop that the proliferation of violent ethno-religious conflicts and the adoption of the policy of state of emergency in Nigeria can be appreciated. This article adopts an analytical framework that holds that the interface between ethno-religious conflicts and declaration of state of emergency is found in politics. Beyond the veneer of democracy, the state remains ambushed, privatized, repressed, and unpopular. There is frustration, and people who already feel alienated from the state are vulnerable and likely to be mobilized around counter-elites who exploit existing popular alienation from the state by whipping up sectional and sectarian sentiments into conflict situations. The violence in Adamawa, Borno, Plateau and Yobe states is illustrative of such regrettable situation.

Table 1.1: State of Emergencies in Nigeria

S/No	State/Region	Year	Reason	Trigger Factors for the Declaration
1.	Western Region	1962	Action Group Crisis	Politics of Alliance: NPC Quest for Support at the National Legislature through the Western Legislature
2.	Plateau State	2004	Ethno-Religious Conflicts	The Struggle to Remove Governor, Joshua Dariye by Obasanjo.
3.	Plateau L.G.As	2008	Ethno-Religious Conflict	-
4.	Ekiti	2006	Executive-Legislative Conflicts in the State	Politics of Third Term by Obasanjo
5.	Adamawa	2013	Boko Haram Violence	The Politics of who Becomes the President in the Run up to 2011 and 2015 Presidential Elections (Intra-PDP Politics)
6.	Borno	2013	Boko Haram Violence	√
7.	Yobe	2013	Boko Haram Violence	√

2. State of Knowledge on the Links Between Conflicts and State of Emergency

There are two contending and opposing perspectives on the link between environment, conflict and security in Nigeria, namely environment and conflict perspective and the Political Ecology Perspective (Ibeanu, 2005: 2). The Environmental and conflict perspective hinges its understanding of this link on the idea that rising environmental scarcity/natural

resource scarcity, triggered by among other things, environmental changes, over population and over consumption in the context of low technological capacities, lead to decreased economic activity, migration and weakening of states thereby causing conflicts (Homer Dixon, 1991). Kaplan, (2001: 7) sees in West Africa a premonition of a world characterized by demographic, environmental and social stress, in which criminal anarchy emerges as the real "strategic danger".

The Political Ecology Perspective has labeled the analysis of Environment and conflict alarmist neo-Malthusian (Ibeanu, 2005). On its part, Political Ecology posits that environmental conflict is an extension of the class struggle. As such, "the environment is an arena of contested entitlements, a theatre in which conflicts or claims over property, assets, labour, and the politics of recognition play themselves out" (Peluso and Watts, 2001: 25). What should be included here is religion. However, both environment and conflict and political ecology separate environment and social processes and then try to reconnect them through the labour process, social relations, institutions, powers and conflicts (Ibeanu, 2005: 3). So, political environment conflict is human construction. Consequently, scarcity, access, deprivation and entitlements are not absolute or natural categories. They are socially constructed and historically determined. Indeed, the role of "collective perception" according to Ibeanu (2005) should not be under-played in the link between environment and conflict, especially in Africa where communal and religious feelings are still quite deep. The collective memory of the community or group in its relations with other communities/groups and the state is crucial in perceiving scarcity, deprivation, access and entitlements and the triggering-off of conflict.

However, (Ibeanu 2005) correctly states that the environment and conflict perspective or the so called Neo-Malthusians and their logic are flawed for its unwarranted environmental determinism. This is because it overlooks socio-economic and political variables that intervene to translate the interface of population growth and resource scarcity into violence. In addition, they seem to be mired in the old national security discourse that over looks the increasing internationalization of resource flows and increasing transnational character of production, consumption and exchange. Both Environment and Political Ecology are too concerned with understanding violence and conflict that they give little time to understanding peace and therefore opportunities for cooperation (Ibeanu, 2005:4). We need to understand how individuals, communities and states construct their security and how violence and conflict are inserted into that process.

In Africa, colonial state making which encompasses a post-colonial phase, is replete with contradictions, and that is what globalization is now exacerbating. These contradictions are embedded in both vertical and horizontal relations among groups constituting the post-colonial state and between them and the state itself (Ibeanu, 2005:8). Ake (1997) writes that vertical relations involve the imposition of domination over independent social formations by bringing them together into one polity dominated by a centralizing power. On the other hand, horizontal relations have to do with struggles for domination and subordination among constituent social forces (groups) in the emergent state. These relations find expression in renewal of primordial identities and solidarity, communal competition among subject communities for access to central power.

In Nigeria, the strongest manifestations of these primordial identities and solidarity are ethnic, racial and religious groups. The problem with these pristine forces is that they have a tendency towards exclusivism and authoritarianism. They invariably define people as "in-group" and "out-group", and lay claim to the total control of the lives of members of the "in-group" (Ibeanu 2005). Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in May 29th, 1999, the spate of conflicts has been on the increase, be it in Jos, Bauchi, Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Borno, Yobe or Adamawa.

3. The Western Nigeria Crisis of 1962 and the Politics of State of Emergency

When Nigeria got her independence in 1960, the constitutional arrangement of the regions that made up the Federation was similar, and each was a replica of the central government. In the Western Region, at the top of the hierarchy was the Governor in who was vested the executive power of the region. The Governor however, in the exercise of his powers acted on the advice of his ministers, who constituted the second tier of the hierarchy. The Western Region constitution also repeated the following provision in respect of the power of the Governor to dismiss the Prime Minister: *The Ministers of the Region shall hold office during the Governor's pleasure provided that: (a) the Governor shall not remove the premier from office unless it appears to him that the premier no longer commands the support of a majority of the members of the House of Assembly.*

In 1962, two years after Nigeria achieved independence serious disagreement arose on the interpretation of the latter. It started as internal problems of the Action Group, a party that controlled the Western Region. In 1962, the Action Group, the Party which has established unshakable hold in Western Nigeria fell into warring factions. For reasons internal to the party, Chief S.L Akintola, the regional leader of the Action Group and the Premier of the region was found wanting by the National Executive of the party. He was asked to resign his premiership as member of his party.

Instead, of adhering to the resignation option, on May 30, 1962 Akintola wrote a petition to the Governor, Adesoji,

Aderemi, asking for the dissolution of the regional legislature. In a separate letter to the Speaker of the House of Assembly, he asked for an emergency meeting of the House on May 23 1962 to consider a motion of confidence in him and his government. Both requests were refused. Drawing the attention of the Premier to section 38 (1) (a) of the Western Nigeria constitution whereby the Governor is empowered to act according to his own deliberate judgment when considering such a request for the dissolution of the regional legislature, the Governor observed that the premier had requested the Speaker to summon a meeting on May 23rd, 1962, in order to prove that he still had the support of the majority in the House. And so the Governor concluded, "In all the circumstances, particularly in order not to frustrate the holding of a meeting of the House next Wednesday, I must refuse the dissolution" (Odumosu, 1963: 290).

The plot thickened however, when on receiving a petition dated May 21, 1962, signed by the majority of the members of the House of Assembly (including the speaker) stating that they no longer had confidence in the Premier, the Governor then dismissed Akintola from the premiership and replaced him with Alhaji Adegbenro (Machintosh, 1966: 37). Akintola refused to abide by the Governor's orders, alleging that the process through which his removal was effected was wrong, since he was not allowed to test his popularity on the floor of the regional legislature. While all that was pending, a meeting of the House was summoned on May 25, 1962 to enable the new Premier, Alhaji Adegbenro to seek a vote of confidence. Twice that day the House met; twice disorder broke out, and on both occasions the police had to intervene with tear gas to clear the House.

Consequently, on the 29th May, 1962, the Federal Parliament passed a motion declaring the Western Region to be under a State of emergency. Under section 65 of the Federal constitution then in operation, such a motion allowed the government to legislate on any matters in order to secure peace, order, and good government. Hence, the Federal Parliament approved regulations which relieved the Governor, Premier, speaker of the House etc. of their duties. Subsequently, a sole Administrator Dr. Majekodunmi was appointed to rule the region at the Federal Prime Minister's Measure ((Adigwe, 1979:253).

The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) was the party that controlled the Federal Government during this period. The party was dominated by the House/Fulani. It was based in the Northern Nigeria then. It became the senior partner, together with the NCNC in the 1960 coalition government in Nigeria. As from 1962, there were strains in the alliance between the NPC and NCNC which led to the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) breakup of the coalition in 1963. The Action Group mounted an effective opposition on both the federal and regional levels.

The declaration of state of emergency was predicated on the fact that the ruling party, NPC which also controlled the Federal Government, had no political hold on the Western Region since the alliance between it and the NCNC has been strained and broken up. The NPC after the end of the six months that the emergency rule lasted reinstated S.L. Akintola as the premier of the Western Region. However, at this time, Chief Awolowo who was the leader of the AG, was charged with plotting to overthrow the Federal Government and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. On his return to power, Akintola formed a new party known as the United Progressive Party (UPP) and later the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). Akintola and the NNDP depended on the Federal Government for its survival and obliged the Federal Government by approving the legislation for the creation of the Mid-Western Region in 1963.

The chief beneficiary, however, of the power play was the NPC which used it to strengthen its political balance. After the state of emergency had been declared or even at the end of it, it would have been possible to hold an election in order to decide which of the parties or factions had the support of the electorate. This was not done. On the contrary, the emergency lasted for six months, and when it was finally lifted, Chief Akintola was reinstated Premier of the Western Region. And so on June 3, 1963, the Federal Parliament approved the amendment to the constitution of Western Nigeria, consequently confirming Akintola in power, in the build up to 1964 elections.

Furthermore, the result of the emergency rule was that it increased the threat to national unity and stimulation to centralizing tendencies with the consequential abolition of duality in the executive as well as perhaps duality in the legislature and in the parties. The Action Group as a political party became emasculated to such a point that in December 1962, the Federal Prime Minister withdrew official recognition of its role as the opposition party in the central government arguing that a handful of 13 members could not be expected to provide an alternative government". Secondly, the take-over destroyed two of the cardinal objectives of federalism (a) enabling each group in a plural society to look after its own internal affairs free from outside interference and (b) as a device for constitutionalism in limiting the powers of the centre, so as to prevent it from becoming an instrument of domination and tyranny.

The Federal Government declaration of state of emergency in Western Nigeria led to eventually to the alteration of the balance of power in the centre. One of the results accruing from the successful emasculation of the Action Group was that the NPC, thanks to the carpet-crossing to its ranks of certain former Action Group members, had an absolute majority in the Federal House of Assembly. Having the feeling that it could now do without the NCNC, its coalition partner in the Federal Government, the NPC became intensely arrogant towards its partner, since the NNDP led by S.L. Akintola

has been confirmed in power in the Western Region, even though Akintola enjoyed little support among the people.

It was interesting to note that following the widespread violence that was associated with the 1965 elections in the Western Region, the Prime Minister rejected demands that the Federal Government should declare an emergency and take over the Government as it did in 1962. Yet, while maintaining that the widespread killings and arson in the region were the internal concern of the regional government, the Prime Minister did not hesitate to send in the police and the army to help bolster up the tottering Akintola government.

The fore-going reveals that whenever a state of emergency is declared in Nigeria, the ruling party's interest is the foremost consideration. This is because the ruling party is tied to strong interventionist state dispensing privileges to all its members and friends. Given that both the ruling class and the party in power are unproductive types, at best it derives its state-centric character to pursue its interest from using state power as means of production. Due to the fact that they are economically weak, there is excessive pursuit of narrow (individual, sectional) interests which is epitomized in the serious struggle for the capture of state power. This fraudulent declaration of state of emergency in Western Nigeria in 1962 was an obvious means by the NPC led Government to save an ally, Chief. S.L. Akintola, the Premier from falling from power, and to decimate the political opposition, the Action Group. Consequently, conflicts and succession of coups and counter coups followed.

3.1 *The Politics Of 2013 State Of Emergency In Nigeria*

One of the biggest post-independence crisis and debates in Nigeria centres on the struggle to control the state power. To be excluded from power means total destruction and to be included in the ruling party means ultimate prosperity. One contentious issue which has generated controversies and created the fertile ground for the declaration of state of emergency in Nigeria in recent times was the absence of the former head of state, President Umaru Yar'Adua from office in 2009. For nearly five months there was absence of the executive President which really undermined the stability of the executive branch and the policy-making capacity of public authority. His long absence and the purported return raised succession questions and the stability of the country.

However, the ailing President failed to fulfill his constitutional obligations by transmitting power to the vice president to act in his absence according to section 145 of the 1999 constitution. Due to the vacuum created by the absence of the ailing President, the politics of refusing the vice President to act as the Acting President began to manifest in national politics. Weeks after the President was flown to Saudi Arabia, Michael Aondoakaa, the then Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice said that President Yar'Adua could rule Nigeria from anywhere in defense of Yar'Adua's absence in office. His multiple lies about the health conditions of the President marked the watershed in denying Vice President from becoming the Acting President.

Due to the vacuum created by the President's absence since November 26, 2009 and the pressure mounted by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on the National Assembly to evoke the constitutional provision of making the Vice President the Acting President, the National Assembly relying on the "Doctrine of Necessity" passed a resolution on January 9, 2010 and made Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, the Acting President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The justification of this action by the National Assembly led to the polarization of the National Assembly into pro-Yar'Adua group and pro-Jonathan group. The intense competition and rivalries among the two groups both in the National Assembly and outside it resulted in the manipulation in interpreting the provisions of the 1999 constitution, especially sections 143, 144 and 145. It also changed the national politics especially the politics of succession.

However, the death of President Yar'Adua and the subsequent swearing in of the Acting President, Goodluck Jonathan as the President seems to be a trigger for serious intrigues, competition and instability as well as realignments in the political terrain. By the political arithmetic of the North, the death of Yar'Adua does not mean that the zoning system in the party has ceased to exist. Rather, their thinking was that the North will still produce the next president to complete the eight year tenure allotted to it.

The controversy arose from the claim of some Northern politicians and petty bourgeoisie that, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) had a zoning and rotation policy which allotted the position of the President to the North from 2007 to 2015 and that the death of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua had not vitiated that allotment. However, some other politicians both within and outside the party argued on the contrary, they posited that the circumstances that led to the adoption of the policy no longer existed and ought to be expunged.

Later, some Northern leaders, led by Alhaji Adamu Ciroma, wrote a lengthy letter to the Chairman of the party, seeking a review of the August 12, 2010 policy statement of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the PDP. The NEC had on that day formulated the zoning policy particularly with reference to the presidential ticket of the party. It stated that President Jonathan being a part of a subsisting presidential ticket which lapses on May 29, 2015 is qualified to

seek a renewal of its mandate. However, it said that other qualified Nigerians would not be excluded from the bid for the party's presidential flag (Adebisi, 2010: 62). Both Ciroma and Atiku groups within the PDP protested against the policy statement of the NEC and went to court.

Their claim that the aspiration of President Jonathan breaches the zoning and rotation policy of the party does not synchronize with the readings or provisions of the 1999 constitution because the party constitution cannot override the provisions of the Nigeria constitution which the party's constitution clearly subordinates itself to. It has been stated that the founding fathers of the party had a gentleman agreement that elected political positions and party offices should be zoned and rotated (Adebisi 2010: 62). This has been admitted by the party members even as the election of President Obasanjo and the transition of power to late President Yar'Adua as well as the allotment of party positions along zonal line clearly shows that in practice there was a power-sharing arrangement. Indeed section 14 (3) of the 1999 Nigeria constitution and Article 7.2 (C) and 13.24 of the party's constitution refer to and recognize this affirmative principle upon which this agreement was based; which is to foster equity, justice and fairness among its members from the various zones of the country.

Consequently, the politically powerful and strategic positions of the President and Vice President, the Senate President and Deputy Senate President, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and other important national offices, by established "federal character" convention, always took into appropriate account the distribution and rotation of offices among the six geo-political zones. However, the military rule did not recognize this rule especially in zoning the office of the president or head of state. In this area, the North had produced six military heads of state namely Gowon, Mohammed, Buhari, Babangida, Abacha and Abubakar. Part of the zoning system since 1999 within the PDP was informed by the need to better accommodate the interests of Nigeria's numerous ethnic groups, by rotational and zoning process to ensure fairer political distribution of key national offices.

3.2 Zoning In The PDP And The Struggle For The State Power In Nigeria

The principle of zoning and rotation of power is a philosophy of power sharing which is as old as man's existence on earth and is believed to be older than democracy itself. Zoning and rotation principle is part of a democratic culture used to address the problems inherent in a polyglot society. The Peoples Democratic Party employs this in order to rotate resources among the geo-political zones in Nigeria. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is unarguably the largest party in Nigeria and also the ruling Party. Any issue unresolved in PDP may however have a reverberating effect on the political landscape of Nigeria. What was supposed to be an internal arrangement by the PDP is actually impacting heavily on the political evolution of Nigeria (Okwenna, 2011:4). The Constitution of the PDP recognizes Nigeria as having six (6) geo-political zones. These zones have been the basis of power sharing and political participation, especially since the 1995 Constitutional Conference. The six geopolitical zones are designed to ensure equal participation of all the segments of the country in its administration.

However, from independence till 1999 the executive arm of the federal government has been dominated by the Northerners. This is an important arm of government and controls enormous resources. Table 1 below shows the political leadership in Nigeria since independence.

Table 2: President/Head of Government

S/N	Name	Period	Number of years	State	North or South
1	Balewa	Oct. 1 1960 – Jan. 1966	5 ¼ years	Bauchi	North
2	Ironsi	Jan. 15 1966 – July 1966	½ year	Abia	South
3	Gowon	July 1966 – July 1975	9 years	Plateau	North
4	Mohammed	July 1975 – Feb. 1976	½ year	Kano	North
5	Obasanjo	Feb. 1976 – Oct. 1979	3 ½ years	Ogun	South
6	Shagari	Oct. 1979 – Dec. 1983	4 ½ years	Sokoto	North
7	Buhari	Jan. 1984 – Aug. 1985	20 months	Katsina	North
8	Babangida	Aug. 1985 – July 1993	8 years	Niger	North
9	Shenokan	Aug. 1993 – Nov. 1993	3 months	Ogun	South
10	Abacha	Nov. 1993 – June, 1998	5 years	Kano	North
11	Abubakar	June 1998 – May 1999	1 year	Niger	North
12	Obasanjo	May 1999 – May 2007	8 years	Ogun	South
13	Yar'Adua	May 2007 – May 2010	3 years	Katsina	North
14	Jonathan	May 2010 – Date	4 years	Bayelsa	South

Source: By the author

Nine of out of fourteen leaders of National governments of Nigeria have come from one part – the north. Over fifty year's period of Nigerian independence, an expression has been created that northern Nigeria power brokers can only allow a Northerner to lead Nigeria, be it in a civilian or military government. Consequently, the question of competence of leaders and the correspondent ability to give positive leadership which can erect a virile and stable nation were made secondary to the primary decision to the northern hegemony. The pattern and history of political leadership in Nigeria is, therefore, the history of circulation of northern political elites in which the management of the state apparatuses have been alternating between them in the civilian and military governments. Out of the six successful military coup d'état in the country the north produced five heads of state or presidents.

Out of seven military rulers, the North had produced five. The Southern military leaders, who in fact came to power by default or accident, have been in charge for only four years, while the Northern military rulers have ruled for a total of 24 years. That the South should rule the country by the permission of the north especially when an incumbent dies in office or abruptly removed from office and is replaced by someone from the South as were the cases with Ironsi, Obasanjo, Shenokan and Jonathan is reprehensible. We saw pervasive political instability within the executive arm when President Yar'Adua took ill and the northern members of the Federal Executive Council made it difficult for the Vice President to step in as the acting president. It was pressure from civil society organizations that made the National Assembly save what would have been one of the controversial constitutional crises in Nigeria by the introduction of the 'Doctrine of Necessity,' by which Jonathan was made an acting president.

3.3 The Struggle for State Power and the Emergency of Boko Haram

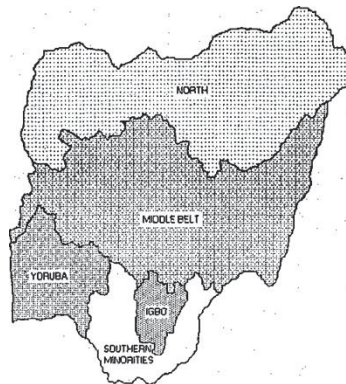
Nigeria is one of the peripheral capitalist formations and emerged as a production of the extensive growth of capital at its monopoly stage which thrives on primitive capital accumulation and corruption (Ekeke, 1986: 113). As such resources of the state follows so rigidly and crudely the geometry of power, the distribution not the production of wealth is badly skewed against other ethnic members outside state power. The ruling class in post colonial Nigeria is highly fractions. This class engages in grim factional battles for the control of state power. This arises from too high premium placed on political power. Consequently, as fractions this class has their particular interests served by the state and can only be conducive to exclusion and marginalization of groups and individuals, whether they are ethnic or sectional interests. For the Nigerian governing class, development was synonymous with personal enrichment and the use of state power for this process has been theoretically and practically accepted by them (Nnoli, 1993: 4). Once state power is achieved it is always used for personal economic enrichment of those who have achieved it and for their supporters.

Consequently, the critical defining factors are clan, ethnic group, state, region or religion. However, ethnic identity remains the most politically important factor in politics. Still, often ethnic identity exists in complex relationships with other factors in defining politics in Nigeria. Sometimes politics is defined along the lines of ethno-regional identity as in the case of the North, South and Middle Belt, at other times it is defined in terms of ethno-religious groupings as in the Moslem North and Christian South; Other defining factors include minority versus majority ethnic groups, and numerous sub-ethnic identities (Ibeanu, 2005). Figures 1 and 2 show some of these divisions.

Fig. 1: Perceptions of the Old North – South Dichotomy



Fig. 2: Another Perception of the North - Excluding the Middle Belt



These perceptions of the North and South in Nigeria play important role in defining political positions and offices. The issue of Federal character explains this as the major plank on which the Nigerian petty bourgeoisie has framed the discourse of national unity. The principle seems to put zoning or geo-political affiliation ahead of performance and qualifications. It creates the impression that there is a balancing of geo-political representation at the federal level and ethnic or tribal at the state level. But the content of the character of the ruling class matters a lot.

So, behind the veneer of crisis in the ruling party is the ever strident demand for power shift in the party. The failure of Obasanjo's third term gambit, the paralyzing ailment and eventual death of his successor, Musa Yar'Adua threw up fresh challenges for the party. His deputy, Goodluck Jonathan, from the South-South geo-political zone, not only completed his term in office, but contested and won elections in 2011 against the zoning principles of the PDP. Then terror was unleashed on Nigeria, through killings, bombing and maiming of innocent citizens. Boko Haram was made an overt instrument in the hands of the Northern elites even though it has existed covertly before then.

Although it is difficult to say precisely when the Boko Haram sect emerged, however, media reports both internal and external trace its origin to 2002 when it was radicalized by Mohammed Yusuf. Undercover reports suggested that the former governor of Borno State Sherrif used the sect in 2002/2003 in the build up to his election as the governor of the state. It emerged in clear political alliance with mainly All Nigeria People Party (ANPP) governors in the North East region of Nigeria. Muhammad Yusuf's Boko Haram enjoyed a close relationship with the Borno State government under Ali Modu Sherrif. It was alleged that Yusuf actually nominated a member of Sherrif's cabinet. The group also played a political purpose as enforcers to ensure ANPPs defense against the Federal Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The ANPP as a political strategy adopted Boko Haram's intimidation as a bulwark against the PDP in Borno, Yobe, Banchi and Kano in 2003. Again regular payments were made to Boko Haram by the ANPP.

However, towards the end of Sherrif's administration, misunderstanding between the governor and Yusuf, the leader of the Boko Haram led to strained relationship between the two. Consequently, the group sought to destroy the creator that nurtured it. Hence, from 2010, the group turned into a pure terrorist group. At the same time, national politics was changing and a Christian Southerner was defying Northern intimidation and opting to contest the 2011 polls. This made the agenda of Boko Haram to transcend local and state politics into a national and international one. Thus, the attempted distraction by its estranged sponsors and the appropriation by new mentors and financiers; its transmutation from a locally-focused to a national political agenda as federal power went to Goodluck Jonathan, and its deployment as an instrument of undermining the creditability of the Jonathan Presidency makes Boko Haram an instrument of national insecurity and the subsequent declaration of state of emergency in places their activities are overwhelming.

Now as the country moves closer to the 2015 election campaign season, the declaration of state of emergency in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe and the on-going war against Boko Haram sect has taken centre stage. In order to demonstrate its supremacy over the insurgents, the president, declared a state of emergency in the three states where the sect has strongest hold. It is important to learn from the state of emergency and move beyond it to actually begin to tackle and address the problems within the PDP which are at the root of the manipulation of religion and poverty by the elite in fermenting organized violence. The direct and indirect implication of highly placed elite oftentimes utilizing state power and resources are essentially impetus for mobilizing the embers of violence in Nigeria. The declaration of state of emergency in the three states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states employs also emergency security operation as a

means to fight the insurgents and protect citizens.

The core evidence to establish that the Boko Haram insurgency was politically motivated consists of two statements made by Major Mustapha Jokolo (Rtd), the first in 2005 when he was the Emir of Gwandu, and the second in 2012, after he had been deposed from that high caliphate office. In response to what politicians perceived as the President Obasanjo's 'menace', the caliphate Emirs on March 28, 2005 in Kaduna under the auspices of the Nigerian Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, of which the Sultan of Sokoto is the traditional chairman, Major Mustapha Jokolo, the Emir of Gwandu complained bitterly that Northern Muslims had been marginalized by President Obasanjo. He argued that in today's Nigeria, the Northern Muslims and politicians have no banks and construction companies; that their soldiers were compulsorily retired from the Army shortly after Obasanjo came to power, and that their children are being denied recruitment in the army. He concluded by saying that the Emirs (the north) must decide what to do now (Insider Weekly, May 2, 2005, p17). He posits that we (Muslims) have been pushed to the wall and it is time to fight and that Obasanjo is trampling on our rights and Muslims must rise and defend their rights. The more we continue to wait, the more we will continue to be marginalized (Insider Weekly, May 2, 2005 p19). In fact, the Senate former minority Chief Whip Kanti Bello described Jonathan's ascension to power as a "slap on the face of the Northerners".

For this fight (Jihad) they had to find another military instrument, hence, their adoption of Boko Haram. Consequently, Boko Haram became well-funded and powerful in the mid-2005, a few months after the Emir of Gwandu, Major Jokolo called for a fight to end what the caliphate perceived as its marginalization by the Obasanjo government. Then in 2012, Jokolo again stated that Northern politicians created Boko Haram (<http://elombah.com/jndex.php/articles/mainmenu/10385>). It was a few months after Jokolo's call for a fight in 2005 that Boko Haram began to show evidence of better financing and increasing capacity. It is also important to note that the implementation of the emergency policy is not only a battle to win the war against insurgents; it is also the battle to win internal 'war' within the PDP as well as the inception phase of the battle to win the peace.

Boko Haram, therefore, is the manifestations of consequences of desperation of the politicians to ascend to political power. It seemed to be created and sustained by some members of the PDP. In fact, the former National Security Adviser, General Azazi shocked many Nigerians when he boldly admitted that Aliyu Mohammed Gusau, Ibrahim Babangida, Atiku Abubakar were behind Boko Haram's sponsorship. All these people contested the PDP 2011 primaries and failed. He obviously had the details surrounding Boko Haram as the National Security Adviser. Explicitly, General Azazi narrowed it down to the result of the PDP convention regulations, which were used to decide who could and could not run for president. Therefore, the common suspects that are presented to explain the Boko Haram insurgency are not only religion and poverty but also the die-hard-to-be-president factor. (www.osundefender.org). This explains also why those who are captured consistently say that they have sponsors but cannot mention their names even with a knife on their throats.

4. Conclusion

The central strand of our analysis is that the declaration of state of emergency in Nigeria is associated with the struggle for state power and to maintain that power at the federal level of governance. This is also tied to religious and ethnic politics in which conflict and insecurity becomes the trigger for the adoption of the policy of state of emergency. Although, conflict and insecurity are organically linked to broader issues of conflict and insecurity in society, the struggle to state power has usually exacerbated them in the run up to elections. This is not new for it is rooted in the evolution of the country's political economy, which also shapes the character of the Nigerian state and its ruling class. At a general level, the making of the Nigerian state was marked by the rise to political pertinence of the petty bourgeoisie. The nature of petty bourgeois class rule focuses on social contradictions directly on the state, making it difficult for the state to express a relative autonomy from specific class interests and, therefore, to appear and be accepted as representing the collective interests of the people-nation (Ibeanu and Mbah, 2012:41). The state, instead, is seen as the expression of private and sectional interests variously defined in partisan, ethnic, religious, and regional terms. Since state power provides the bases and the quickest means to wealth, the struggle to ascend to it becomes so charged and prone to violence. It is this character of the Nigerian state and its ruling class that explains the adoption of the policy of state of emergency in Nigeria. Consequently, what the country needs for enduring peace is inclusive politics and good governance. This would restore the security of the nation, governmental legitimacy and inter-ethnic and religious harmony.

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