SIX GEOPOLITICAL ZONES, THE ORIGINS OF NIGERIA’S PROBLEMS.

The idea of six geopolitical zones in Nigeria is ill conceived and was not well thought out. What parameters were used for demarcating the geography and politics? Was it grasslands, Sahel, mangrove forest, rainforest, plateau, hills, rivers, or ocean? Was the politics based on feudalism, republicanism, socialism, tribe, or communism? As it will become obvious, no thought was given to these factors. These six geopolitical zones – North West, North East, North Central, South West, South East, and South South were determined haphazardly and lopsidedly.

Yorubas were grouped in the South West, Igbos in the South East, and Hausa Fulanis in the North East, North Central, and North West. The South South has a predominance of Ijaws, the Kanuris in the North East, and the Tivs are in the North Central. There are other tribes but you get the picture? Tribe may not be significant in a real country, but in a tribal country such as Nigeria, the more your tribal numbers, the more clout your tribe has.

With the regional system, the predominant tribes – HausaFulani, Igbo, and Yoruba served as counterbalances. Under the zoning system, If a position calls for one member from each geopolitical zone to decide the fate of Nigeria, a HausaFulani President will appoint a HausaFulani from the North West, a HausaFulani from the North East, a HausaFulani from the North Central, an Igbo from the South East, a Yoruba from the South West, and an Ijaw from the South South. The HausaFulani have three votes and the rest of Nigeria has three votes. With the right financial inducement, an Igbo, a Yoruba, or an Ijaw can be “convinced” to vote with the HausaFulani and a HausaFulani agenda becomes a Nigerian agenda. This is the origin of Nigeria’s current problems.

Under the geopolitical system, one tribe, HausaFulani decides the fate of Nigeria. The Northern Region, the Eastern Region, the Western Region, and the Midwestern Regions anchored the old federal system. Minorities in each region can ally with other minorities or with a major tribe to upset the cart.

Obafemi Awolowo exploited this to make inroads in the Middle Belt and Eastern Nigeria, while neglecting minorities in his own Western Region. The fear of Awolowo made the Regions responsive to their minorities. This fear factor has been lost under a geopolitical
The geopolitical system instead of fostering unity has accentuated tribalism and nepotism. A return to a federal system with five regions, Eastern, Middlebelt, MidWest, Northern, and Western with a weak Central Government charged with currency issues, external defense, foreign affairs, customs and excise, inter regional trade, immigration, federal taxes, and licensing of radio spectrum for communications.

The Federal Government should not be “dashing” oil blocks to individuals or mining licenses to girlfriends and concubines. Resources found on private lands belong to the landowners, those on state lands belong to the state, and those on federal lands belong to the nation. The various governments collect tax revenues. Other areas of governance can be concurrent.

There must be safeguards in the new constitution to prevent a repeat of the “Operation Wetie” episode. The “Operation Python Dance” is another Operation Wetie. Fortunately, IPOB is a non-violent group.

Next a Presidential or Parliamentary system may suffice if there are adequate safeguards. An independent judiciary is a sine qua non. President Buhari hounding the Judiciary with the EFCC and DSS is most dastardly. It is the people running the system that is paramount. A parliamentary or presidential system is immaterial if the Nigerian political orientation, value systems, and need for instant gratification are not changed.

The idea of executive immunity for criminal acts by governors and presidents must be thrown into the dustbin.

Security votes must be abolished and the designers of that provision in the current Constitution must be imprisoned for life without parole.

Restructuring of Nigeria is “a task that must be done.” Does this slogan sound familiar? If to “Keep Nigeria one is a task that must be done,” then “To restructure Nigeria is a task that must also be done.”

Africastallestman hopes that this message goes to the right people and hits the right chord.
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