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RESTRUCTURING THE NIGERIAN STATE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE VALUE CHALLENGE

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Abstract

This paper seek to argue that the underlie maxim behind any reform in any given social structure is to provide a sound collective framework that will lead to improvements in the social welfare of the aggregate people in the society. Thus, the role of the state as constituting the engine of growth and development of the country in this regard cannot be overemphasized. States like social system is an entity made up of interconnected and interrelated parts, be it political, economic, cultural, family, educational etc, in which each part affect the other in some way and the system as a whole. It therefore follows that if the state must survive and be an active catalyst in driving development, its various parts must have some degree of fit or compatibility on the basis of value consensus, where every members of society agree on certain definable ethos of individual liberty, freedom, discipline, probity, accountability etc enshrined in the various parts of the social structure of the society to shape and guide our collective behaviours, attitude and motivation. The paper further emphasizes that development that is sustainable can only arise when there is a revolutionary change in the institutions of society and economy that brings about change in attitudes and behaviours of the state in promoting and protecting the public good and not one bent on regulating the status-quo. The paper finally concludes on the premise that for development to thrive, a nation must be driven by a philosophy of internalized, pragmatic collective values that is highly supportive of hard-work and enterprise and a developmental state that is manned by a highly skilled technocratic bureaucracy and a close cooperation between major economic groupings such as agriculture, business and labour, and not values that reflect goals and aspirations formulated by the governing class for society at large.

Keywords: State, Social Structure, Values, Development.

Introduction

To embark on a dialogue of the role of the Nigerian state and its capacity to provide the mechanism that can galvanize the process of ensuring sustainable development for the improvements of the overall social welfare of the people, we must begin with an investigation of the basis of its origin, structures and dynamics. It is significant to stress here that the Nigerian state like most other African states is a clone of its colonial progenitor which still retains many of its features having been established in the course of the expansion of western capitalism in order to facilitate their primary goal of exploiting the natives, their labour and natural resources. Given this state of occupation, its structure and operations has been absolutely arbitrary given its illegitimate domination on the people without their consent.

Thus it could be understood from this standpoint that the colonial state from its origin was an alien, dishonest and hostile creation which did not follow the due process of state formation as a derivation of "social contract" by the people, and which has not been subjected to any quantitative restructuring after independence. This is because the social structure of any society defines the web of patterned relationships that holds a community together. It refers to a collective reality (a social system) that exists apart from individuals but forms the context in which they interact (Beth, Markson and Stein 1996:73). Whilst those elites who inherited power during the post-colonial state have taken these patterns of interaction and relationships among the collectivities of the people that constitute the Nigerian nation-state for granted, wherein the fragility and strength of such foisted ties have repeatedly come to the fore in times of conflict and crisis i.e., the 1967 civil war, 1993 June 12 presidential elections, and the 2005 national political reforms conference.

It thus become glaringly regrettable that the post colonial state of Nigeria has retained the major features of the colonial state and also acquired its own unique features on account of the specificities of its origin. It is within this context therefore, that this paper seeks to address itself with the need for us to engage in the process of restructuring the state to provide the platform for instituting the process of promoting sustainable development taking into cognizance the relevance of values as a key catalyst for enforcing pragmatic and holistic development. To accomplish this

purpose therefore, the paper is divided into the following sections: Part one deals with the origin of state and its functions. Part two looks at the importance of social structure and values in promoting societal development. Part three addresses itself to concept of development and sustainable development. Part four examines the theoretical framework that underlies the state and its role in advancing development. Part five deals the crisis of values in advancing development, and finally, Part six sums up the conclusions.

The Origin of the State and its Functions

In analyzing the position of the state in Third World nations, it is important to focus on its role regarding the functions of its political structures and processes such as government and its apparatus regarding the contributions they make to the goal attainment, integration, and stability of the social system of which they are a part. According to Evans (1995:18) states are the result of complex historical forces and relationships, but they are also actors or agents potentially capable of shaping and influencing the on-going process of historical evolution. The emergence of the state marks a distinctive transition in human history, because the centralization of political power involves in state formation introduces new dynamics into processes of social change.

As such, a state is a political apparatus (government institutions like a parliament or congress, plus civil service officials) ruling over a given territory, with an authority backed by law (legal system) and by the capacity (ability) to use military force to implement its policies (Giddens 2001:700). Its major hallmark is that it makes binding decisions within defined borders and over a population. However, not all societies are characterized by the existence of the state i.e., hunting and gathering cultures. But all modern societies are nation-states, in that they are legally recognized government that provides services such as protection, law enforcement, transformation and the regulation of commerce etc for the great mass of the population who regard themselves as part of a single nation. As such, nation-states have come into existence at various times in different parts of the world and it has gone from a rarity to become the chief form of government in the world (Skocpol,1979:22). It developed in Europe and was later exported and imposed on the Third World through colonialism.

Be that as it may, the main characteristics of a modern state include sovereignty, citizenship (members having common rights

and duties and regarding themselves as part of a nation) and nationalism (a set of symbols, common language and beliefs providing the people the sense of being part of a single political community which gives them a sense of satisfaction and belonging). Nationalism thus however made its appearance with the development of the modern state which gives people feelings of identity within a distinct sovereign community. This need for identity is certainly not just born with the emergence of modern industrial society; it also draws on sentiments and forms of symbolism such as cooperation and collaboration geared toward solving common problems that goes back much further into the past. Accordingly, nations tend to have direct lines of continuity with earlier communities known as ethnics, which is a group of people who share a common ancestry, a common cultural identity and a link with a specific homeland.

Given the foregoing, it becomes significant that the main *raison d'être* of the state coming from the standpoint of the propositions of the social contract theory is apparently to nurture and cater for the general interest of individuals and group without regard to class origin. According to John Locke, the "inconveniences" and "insufficiencies" characteristics of the state of nature are rectified through mutual contractual obligations and consent, as between the state and specific components of the civil society (Seligman 1992:22). Similarly John Locke believed that men formed a contract among themselves to establish a government or state in order to better protect their natural rights, maintain peace, and protect themselves from foreign invasion. The social contract which established government made it for the purpose of providing safe and peaceful living for the enjoyment of one's life, liberty, and property. Thus the ultimate legitimacy of government derived from a contract among people themselves, and based upon the consent of the governed (Dye, 1975:191).

Since government was instituted as a contract to secure the rights of men, government itself could not violate individual rights. If government did so, it would dissolve the contract establishing it. Revolution then was justified if government was not serving the purpose for which it had been set up. However, according to Locke, revolution was justified only after along period of abuses by government, not over a little mismanagement. The inference that could be gleaned from the foregoing would seem to suggest that the conditions of mutual recognition are basic desiderata for a sustainable relationship between the state and civil society for an

endurable quasi social equilibrium. By the same token, situations wherein there is mutual recognition and fulfillment of conditions of social contract between the state and civil society would augur well for the reproduction of legitimation for socio-political status-quo.

Within the same context, Hume (1948) stressed that the instrumentality of interaction between the state and civil society established by social contract is not without its own complications that are interpolated by human self interests. For him, the people in the pursuance of the terms of social contract follow the rules of justice only to the extent that doing it will satisfy their own particular interests. This therefore suggests that personal interests are quite often superimposed over public interests which directly typify selfishness and limited generosity. Indeed, the pattern of relationship between the state and civil society is, in concrete historical context characterized by the superimposition of particular interests over general interests. It is evident that the historical reality of vested interests that are often depicted through the expressions of conflict and crisis of legitimation which are immanent within the matrix of the state and civil society, is a derivative brought about by the ubiquitous configuration of the dynamic realities of class structures and relations in all stratified social formations (Ninalowo, 1996, 1990, 1988).

Following from this, Marx (1972b) noted that the assumptions of the universalization of interests by the state as epitomized by the provisions of social contract cannot but be vitiated by the realities of class structures and the social relations of production. For him, the idea of universalization of the public interests by the state as postulated by Hegel exists only at the levels of abstraction and idealism. Marx insists that in reality, the state itself including its various structures and apparatuses i.e. civil service bureaucracy is an instrument by which the ruling class exercises its domination over the rest of society. Furthermore, the state helps to reproduce and consolidate class demarcations and domination based on private ownership of property. Thus for Marx, conflicting interests are never resolved within the state, but rather preponderated and legitimized in law by virtue of almost a deification of privatization and its relations which is a reflection of the irreconcilability of conflicting interests by the state. It therefore becomes a contradiction in terms to envisage the state as representing universal interests contrary to earlier postulations.

Thus looking at the historical origin of the Nigerian state from inception, it is clear it has remained a foreign imposition both

in its conception and organization, as it was established in the course of the expansion of Western capital by the British Colonialist with the primary goal of exploiting the rights and resources of the people. As such, the nation-state of Nigeria emerged out of forced political amalgamations of extremely diverse ethnic groups and class configurations brought together as a colonial necessity in 1914. Since then the continued existence of the nation as a sovereign entity after independence in 1960 has proved to be a precarious balance between the dominant elements of the social structure, namely- institutions, ethnicity, religion and class etc. This condition has consistently had unmitigated consequences for the promotion of sustainable development and pursuit of the general well-being of the people of Nigeria following the lack of adequate capacity and political will on the inheritors of state powers after independence to restructure the colonial state that they inherited from the British colonialists which was alien, illegitimate and hostile to the people.

Since the post-colonial period, the configuration of social relationships among the people of Nigeria has been characterized by instability arising from distorted production and reward systems, where the various multiethnic groups that make up the nation-state have expressed their hue and cry about being marginalized and cheated in the distribution of the nation's available scarce resources, thus raising stringent agitation for self succession (i.e. the civil war experience vis-à-vis the emergence of several ethnic nationalities such as OPC, ACF, Ohaneze, Bakassi Boys, MASSOB etc), resource control and ownership or the incessant demand for equitable share of the nation's resources by the various ethnic groups.

The fallout from this form of social antagonism have resulted in the volatile state of activities as evident in the Niger Delta region following the intense abduction of expatriates by hostage taking, bombing and vandalization of oil flow stations and pipelines by the army of restive unemployed youths, inter-ethnic conflicts such as the Ife/Modakeke crisis in Osun state, the Urhobo/ Itsekeri conflict in Delta state, the continuous contest between the South and North over who control state power etc to mention just a few. These threats and general agitations thus raises the fundamental national question about the origin of the Nigeria nation-state, its systems of production and distribution, types of leadership and citizenship, democratic participation and defense of justice and human rights etc. It is this kind of state structure that has engendered instability and national crisis in the nation's political economy despite the enormous deposit of natural and mineral resources in the land.

The Role of Social Structure and Values in Promoting Societal Development

To fundamentally understand the place of the state or government and its functions which men have evolved to enable them avoid the state of nature in order to secure their peace, security and self preservation toward the advancement of human co-existence, it is essential for us to establish the platform upon which such arrangement was based. This therefore leads us to examine the social structure and value system that underscore the framework of the societies where states were formed, realizing that societies preceded the existence of the state or government.

Thus, fundamental to all societies in the world are cultural values (ideals) which define what is important, worthwhile and desirable which have far reaching effects on people's lives. To better understand human behaviour, we need to recognize that the framework of the society defines the patters of rules or codes that shape our daily interactions and relationship which ultimately affect who we are and what are like. Therefore the culture of societies which refers to the complex whole of a group's language, beliefs, values, motivations, habits and capabilities etc forms the broadest framework that determines what kind of people we become. It also shapes how we perceive and interpret our experience (Swidler, 1986). In general, the norms of any society are derived from basic ideas about good and bad, right and wrong which constitute the values of such a society. Values are basic beliefs about the ultimate good that form a standard against which norms are judged.

Values, therefore, embodies the rules of behaviour which shapes how members of a given culture behave within their immediate surrounding. It influences the way we think, how we act and operate as a form of "cultural capital" that affect the self concept we develop (Sowell, 1996). As such values of good conscience, hardwork, honesty, accountability, probity, integrity, achievement, selflessness etc are virtues that build up the personalities of individuals who are key catalyst in stimulating the process of development within the environment they have found themselves. Be that as it may, every society has its own values which direct the general conduct of its members in particular situation and reflects appropriate behaviours with which it is identified and these values vary from one society to another. Many norms of societies such as achievement, equality of opportunities, hardwork and respect for rules are reflections of shared values essential for the smooth

operation of human societies. Without these shared norms and values members of society would be unlikely to cooperate and work together to evolved a stable society. When therefore there are conflicting or differing values in any society, members of the society will be pulling in different directions and pursuing incompatible goals. The end result will be disorder, chaos and disruption in society.

It therefore follows that for the state as social system to survive in any society, its various parts such as the organs of government, civil service bureaucracy, civil society and social institutions etc must have some degree of fit or compatibility or integration between them on the basis of value consensus where members of the society agree on certain core values or ethos expressed in the various part of the social structure which guides and shapes our daily interaction. This is very fundamental when we recognize that men are influenced by the norms and values of their society. It therefore becomes important to examine the social forces that influence them in order to identify values with which they are identified. As such nations are characterized by major goals that drive their collective aspirations.

Furthermore, it is also instructive to note that it is the values that shape the social structure of society from which groups are formed, which consists of people who consciously interact with one another. The members of these groups therefore share similar values, norms and expectations. It is these groups to which we belong to that makes us yields our rights to make decisions about our behaviours, wherein we assume an obligation to act according to the expectations of other members of the group. It is from these set of enduring expectations (in built values and norms) that guides the behaviours of individuals that social institutions such as the family, politics, economics, science, law, religion, education etc are developed as a means to meet its basic needs that vitally affect our lives. As such, every society should be governed by certain core values that shape the behaviour of members of that society. Also the content and importance of any set of values orientations do change over time

For example, Williams (1970) presented the dominant values representing the conception of the good life and the goal of social action that characterized the American ethos to include: achievement and success, hardwork, prudence, science and rationality, technological advances, equality, freedom, material comfort, nationalism, democracy, individualism etc. These

continuities also reflect the underlying strength of the particular value system of hardwork, worldly asceticism, striving for success etc that emerged in Western Europe in the sixteenth century, which Weber described as the Protestant ethic, but now simply called the work ethic, which provided the groundwork for the rise of modern industrial capitalism. The same can also be said of the rich economic successes that characterized the East Asian nations like Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan etc whose dominant culture were defined by shared social values of hardwork and enterprise, family based entrepreneurship, respect for authority, the role of government in promoting and protecting the public good, and a benevolent state staffed by people based on competence and proficiency are factors that affects the state's political economy (Pye and Pye, 1985:125).

Conversely, the same cannot be said of a number of Third World nations including Nigeria where the state's political economy are characterized by people whose primary interest is to corner state power as an instrument of primitive accumulation of private fortunes and class consolidation. For example, the case of the Babangida and Abacha's regimes in Nigeria and Mobutu in the Congo are pointer to the reckless plunder of the collective commonwealth of a nation for personal aggrandizement at the expense of the public good.

Conceptual Framework: Development and Sustainable Development

While we recognize that the purpose of government or state is to provide for the welfare of the people as well as ensure the protection of their lives and property, it becomes paramount to examine the degree and extent to which Nigerian state has discharge these responsibilities for the greatest good of the Nigerian people when measured within the context of what the concept of development and its sustainability represents in today's contemporary world. Accordingly, Guolet (1973:10) asserts that development deals with the improvement of human beings through the expansion and adequate provision of educational, health, housing and employment opportunities etc that would raise the quality of life of persons in order to create an egalitarian, just and peaceful society. Also Obasanjo and Mabogunje (1991:119) assert that:

Development (is) a process concerned with people's capacity in a defined area, over a defined period, to manage and induce change, which is to predict, plan, understand and

monitor change. The more people develop, the more they become instruments for further change.

Moemeka (1994) explains further that: "Development is a movement (change) from existing conditions that are no longer conducive to societal or group goals and aspirations to those that can meet those goals and aspirations. It is a multi-dimensional process that involves major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions as well as accelerations of economic growth, reduction of inequality and eradication of poverty which have become political rhetoric of most Nigerian governments. It involves the movement away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory, towards a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better (Todaro and Smith, 2003). It transcends as well as encompasses growth and embraces such aspect of the quintessence of living and social justice, equality of opportunity for all citizens, equitable distribution of income and the democratization of the development process. In all objectivity development is a process of self realization, and it is so only in so far as the people are the means and end of development.

From the foregoing, it is evident that Development in human societies by all intent and purposes is a multi-dimensional phenomenon consisting of economic, social, political, cultural and other aspects. At the individual level, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom and choices, creativity, responsibility and material well-being. An indisputable fact about this definition is that the achievement of any of those aspects of personal achievement is very much tied in line with the state of the society as a whole. It is therefore no mistaken the fact that since the 1990s the essence of development has transcended from the use of macroeconomic indices such as a nation's GDP economic growth and per capita income to focus on the process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy."(Sen, 1999:3). For him, development is achieved through human agency of which freedom is critical. Freedom is both an end unto itself, and as a means to other ends. Freedom itself becomes a means to more freedoms, such as political liberty, economic opportunities, or security. Its primary purpose is to treat men, women, children, present and future generations as ends (rather than merely as means) with the overarching purpose of improving their conditions in a holistic manner through the enlargement of their choices.

It was this line of thinking that led to the UNDP's initiative of instituting the human development reports (HDR) in 1990, which have become a powerful advocacy tool for development as developed by Mahbud ul-Haq. The focus on human development in the 1990s following the publication of the UNDP human development report was to point out the inadequacy of measuring economic development by income and output measures, and the need to lay emphasis on other measures of development such as health, education, gender, income distribution etc which led to the development of indices such as the human development index, the human poverty index, the gender development and gender empowerment index.

The basic philosophy underlying UNDP's work is that the ultimate aim of development must be human well-being, and the expansion of output and wealth is only a means to attain this end. Therefore income cannot be considered to be a good proxy for all human choices. Evidence from UNDP's work supports this conclusion. For the large number of countries the ranking on a "human development index" scale is lower than that on per capita GDP (measured in dollars of purchasing power parity), suggesting that these countries have failed to translate economic prosperity into corresponding better living standards for their people. This also indicates that there is no automatic link between income and human development, such link has to be consciously created and reinforced. For example, while per capita income increased faster in the 1990s in Nigeria compared to the 1980s, improvements in some health and education indicators was slower in the 1990s. Besides, in the UNDP human development report index for 2006, Nigeria has fallen into the ranking of low human development indicator occupying 159th position out of 177 nations, a life expectancy of 43.4 years at birth, human poverty index value of 40.6 percent, and 70.8 percent of the population living below the poverty line(1996-2004) etc.

It therefore become very important that for any country to attain sustainable socio-economic development and improve the welfare of its people, it must invest in people in order to bring about significant improvement in the stock of human capital, which is a key element, required for poverty reduction that has become a serious development challenge in the African continent. The development of human capital is therefore of importance as it affects productivity of labour through investments in population, education and health, which is a basic ingredient in the process of attaining sustainable development. The foregoing discourse therefore raises the pertinent question as to whether the Nigerian state since it

began the process of restructuring the economy through various forms of economic reforms in 1986 through structural adjustment policies incorporating privatization, deregulation, and liberalization etc have been able to deliver on the promise of alleviating the problems of poverty and hunger among the poorest groups, solving the increasing unemployment problems which stands at 48 percent (UNDP 2006) and reducing the widening gap between the rich and the poor in the society.

This is premised on the fact that today, GDP growth, per capita income and foreign exchange reserves are not the only important indicators of economic development, and that genuine development must be anchored on "investment in people and not just machinery, buildings and other physical assets" (Wilfred 1997:177) which must consider human development indicators such as life expectancy, health sanitation, literacy rates, malnutrition, the position of women and children, and rural-urban disparities. This is as fundamental as recent decades of experience have shown in sub-Saharan Africa that rapid economic growth does not necessarily enrich people's lives and may even enhance income gaps and poverty under certain circumstances. Thus the critical goal of development should be focused on human development and its sustainability as well as the reduction of poverty which raises important questions rooted in normative ideas about social justice and fairness in all societies.

Theoretical Framework

Thus the political economy of the Nigerian state could be understood within the context of relations between humans and nature which always manifests itself in a historical determined social form that involves certain relations of production usually expressed in social structures and institutions. In modern societies like Nigeria, social relations are invariably antagonistic as all groups strive to maximize their interests given available scarce resources. It is therefore the role and responsibility of the state as an impartial arbiter to rise above social contradictions and opposing conditions to the means of production to mediate the opposing relations by striving for consensus in order to keep them within the bounds of social order, equity, justice and also to protect the greatest majority of the people from poverty, exploitation, disease, injustice and the like (Ake, 1985).

Within this context, an examination of the Nigerian state shows that instead of appearing as the centre for the promotion,

representation and repository of the general interests and welfare of the people, the state has become "privatized" to advance prebendal and rent seeking interests of a vested few elite, thereby turning the state into a predatory or factional state that serve regional, ethnic, class and other interests rather than being a developmental state that is endogenous, able to stand alone, above the fray and beyond the controlling reach of vested interests who want to capture the power of the state to their specific advantage; and become broadly embedded in the civil society through a dense web of networks which involves institutionalized channel of communication and interaction where the state continually engages in the process of constructive negotiation and renegotiation of policies and goals intended to move a society toward a higher level of economic and social development (Pempel, 1999; Evans 1995:59; Krueger 1993:66).

For example, what we often find with the Nigerian state is the open display of aggression and intimidation of the people by the operators of state which repeatedly occurs in the routine business of projecting power, carrying out socio-economic policies without consultation or negotiation with the people that these policies are targeted at both in the medium and long term i.e. the incessant increase in the price of petroleum products severally by the Obasanjo administration without taking into cognizance the effects it will have in the overall standard of living of the people especially the vulnerable groups.

Similarly, the state has become instrument for the pursuit and prosecution of social conflicts and struggles for the soul of the nation among the political elites who in the quest of seeking for power engages in all sorts of immoral and corruptive tendencies and manoeuvring in collaboration with the institutions of the state like the electoral body such as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and other security agencies as shown in the just concluded 2007 general elections to subvert the will of the people to choose those who will govern them, just the same way they did in the 2003 general elections where in Anambra state to be specific Chief Chris Mba, a chieftain of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the erstwhile god-father and mentor of Dr. Chris Ngige, the then governor confessed openly to the whole world that the governorship elections in the state was rigged in favour of the party following the estrange relationship between them.

As such the transition from power to authority at the level of the state in Nigeria becomes impossible, right remains largely co-extensive with power and accountability and political participation is

highly lacking. The state is peopled by individuals and social groups who are essentially strangers to each other. Their relation rests mainly on an amoral calculus of strength and is characterized by unrelenting struggle for power (Ake, 2000:167). The operators of the state invest nothing in the state and so have no interest in it and no responsibility to it. In most Africa, the state is a contested terrain where different nationalities, sub-nationalities, ethnic groups and communities go to fight for the appropriation of resources including power. The state which is seen as a contested terrain in this context can only be an anarchy of self seeking and a theatre of war which has remain a formidable obstacle to Africa's quest for development.

On the economic front, the state from the radical Marxist analysis has been characterized to serve the interests of the dominant classes, and is a crucial agent for private accumulation. The state lacks autonomy and is dominated by particularistic interest groups controlled by an alliance of the domestic comprador bourgeoisie and foreign capital who plunder it for personal accumulation, thus rendering it ineffective and inefficient in pursuing genuine developmental goals (Booth, 1987; Joseph, 1983). Thus the characteristic and motive force of Nigeria's political economic position within the context of the international economic system of capitalism and in the international division of labour since the colonial times has remained that of a weak peripheral, dependent state producer of primary agricultural products (rubber, palm oil, tin, cereals, etc) which has now been replaced by one commodity oil for the world market. Foreign trade is still oriented toward exports of primary products to the major metropolitan powers upon whom the economy continued to rely for the importation of technology and capital intensive manufactures and know-how.

Thus, the Nigerian economy has come to conform to the classic profile of a mono-mineral dependent enclave that has evolved into a rentier state in the world market where it severs the link between production and distribution (Forrest, 1977). The country as a peripheral capitalist state is controlled by the political elites who are non-capitalists which exist mainly to guarantee the conditions for the reproduction and expansion of capitalist property relations and mode of production. Unlike the elites in the core capitalist state, it lacked the socio-economic 'base' to sustain and develop a relatively autochthonous capitalism and so intervenes in the economy, in collaboration with the external elements of this economic base to create the preconditions for, and to promote private accumulation.

Therefore the Nigeria state has thus become the platform for the creation of a bourgeoisie class whose role is to promote the interests of the state class in the distribution, management of investment, accumulation and hence capital formation. In a sense, therefore, the state has become the "means of production" in peripheral society in so far as it monopolizes the means of exploitation, appropriates a large part of the surplus value, and acts as the fundamental source of accumulation and hence of class formation. Thus the on-going struggle for state power by the elites is nothing but a struggle for the means of distribution and consumption which only the state power can confer (Graf, 1988:224-225).

The Question of Value Challenge in the Nigerian State

While it is well known the states in the now industrialized nations of the world whether in the United States, Western Europe and the New Industrialized Economies (NIEs) of East Asian nations of Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong-Kong, Taiwan etc the role of the state or government in stimulating the processes of socio-economic development in there various countries was based on viable and valued fundamental values that was all embracing and inclusive, such that it cut across the various segments of the society. For example, the East Asia nations successes in economic advancement was built on the platform of an autonomous state apparatus whose leadership did not allow itself to be capture by any vested interests (whether internal or external) but by the ultimate will of nurturing a nation toward attaining the goals development and industrialization on the platform of integrity, loyalty, openness, accountability and cohesiveness.

It was a developmental state whose vision for economic transformation was internally conceived and driven without any handouts from any multilateral institutions like the IMF/World bank as is the case with Nigeria and other sub-Saharan nations, but through the efforts and resolve of a highly competent groups of state managers who have achieved their power, status and positions via proven performance and professional competence which undergird the merit based hierarchy of state employees. The state managers were not only visionaries, but people who were driven by the altruistic capacity to deliver technological entrepreneurship to selected sectors of the economy (Evanis, 1995:59).

This is very much in contrast with what obtains in the Nigerian state structure where mediocrity, patrimonial and

particularistic and patronages has been enthroned as the prevailing values that guides the nation's bureaucracies at all levels such that persons are appointed to positions on the basis of quota-system, federal character and zoning mechanism which lacks the basic values of competence and meritocracy and are alien to the spirit that provide the requisite catalyst for industrialization such as hardwork, patriotism, thriftness, achievement, moral orientation etc that are required to provide the overarching values agreement that guides the behaviours, beliefs of the various multi-ethnic groups as well as binding everyone to the society. These were dominant values whose continuities reflected the underlying strength of a particular values system that emerged in Western Europe that generally laid the foundation for the emergence of modern capitalism.

Furthermore the Nigerian state since its existence is yet to evolve an ideological or cultural hegemony that provides the pivotal base for the production of values and norms which defines the *raison d'être* that will guide the actions and dispositions of those who occupy and exercise the powers of the state. The Nigerian bourgeoisie are not given to any ideological fidelity, they are simply power fetishists. They lack the discipline and strength of character to pursue any ideological line consistently. What is always overriding to those who have access the power of the state is power, power for money and not for service, neglecting the primary responsibility they have in providing for the livelihoods of the people they have chosen to "lead". Besides, the values that is prevalent and pervasive in the Nigeria state and other African countries are the traits of corruption, inefficiency and mismanagement which are apparent barrier to the quest for development (Turner, 1980; Usman, 1984). These are the traits that underlie predatory state which thrives in the appropriation of unearned income via rent seeking is endemic and structural.

In this kind of state, office holders at various levels of governance uses their authority to maximize the accumulation of wealth through "directly unproductive profit seeking" (DUP) activities such as lobbying, bribery, smuggling, or any other activity which generates profits, but produces no goods or services. Political offices are held not for the reason of providing service to the nation, but for the purpose of individual gain in a society which may offer few alternative avenues to wealth accumulation. The money laundering and official corruption saga of Abacha, Alamieyeseigha, Dariye and Tafa Balogun etc aptly epitomizes these rent seeking activities. It is also a state that operates under the whims of a leader who functions

in the traditional tradition of an absolutist ruler who display the vitriolic mixture of traditionalism and arbitrariness characteristic of pre-capitalist societies (Evans, op cit: 12; 248). This formation closely fits and describes many states in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

The tragedy of the Nigerian state today is that while the government of the day is talking about reforms in every other sectors of the society such as banking, ports, insurance, aviation, pensions etc, it has obviously neglected to address urgently the need to restructure the Nigerian state itself which forms the focal base upon which the other sectors are anchored. In the contemporary Nigerian nation there are demands from the various multi-ethnic groups that constitute the state clamoring for the restructuring of the country along the line of "true" federalism. While recognizing that the emergence of the nation-state was a contrived arrangement by our erstwhile colonial master to meet their economic exigencies of the time, the various governments we have had since independence have not deem it fit and wise to renegotiate the basis structure of the various multi-ethnic groupings agreeing to associate together as one people pursuing a common agenda.

The present federal structure is characterized by a centralized political management and revenue allocation where all functions have been concentrated in the centre, where the federal government has assigned to itself a greater proportion of the nation's wealth than was the case before 1966 given the diverse make-up of the country. Since then the federal government had continued to dominate revenue raising powers and retained the lion's share of national revenues till date which are contrary to the true ideal of federalism. This structure has overtime generated cries of marginalization and domination by the various multi-ethnic groups in the distribution of political and top bureaucratic appointments, social services, economic amenities etc leading to series of agitation for resource control and derivation particularly among the people of the Niger Delta region.

The resultant effects of these happenings is that the nation is characterized by ethnic nationalities who have consistently sought to articulate and defend the interests of their groups such as the Ogonis, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), Ohaneze, Afenifere, South-South peoples Forum etc, and presently as it stand the nation-state is more polarized than it was in 1966 prior to the civil war, maintenance of law and order is poorer; the civil service institution are a shadow of the strong and confident institution that it was in

1966 (as it suffered severe battery in 1975 and 1984 under the military), infrastructural facilities are comatose, institutionalized corruption and serious dislocations in the social and moral fabrics of society. For example the recently concluded general elections in 2007 clearly depicted how more disunited we are as a people as the elections were flawed with electoral rigging and manipulation, ballot snatching, killings and outright subversion of the will of the populace to make their informed choice about those to govern them.

Also associated with the value dilemma of the state in the Third World nations like Nigeria which make it unable to evolve and advance developmental progress is the social conditions under which the people live. There is so much inequality and socio-economic differences that one may speak of a dichotomy of two societies, one in which the elite who are than 10 percent of the population live in, where they enjoy comparatively high real income, exotic living standards organically linked and oriented to the living conditions in the industrialized societies. In contrast, the rest of society suffer numerous vulnerabilities which reinforces each other: poor health, lack of education, crushing poverty, limited employment opportunities etc with more than 70 percent of the population living below the poverty line, a human poverty index of 40 percent and with a life expectancy of 43.4 years at birth (UNDP, 2006). This situation makes the ordinary individual disempowered, manipulated and exploited by the elite through patron-client chains to imbibe amoral values that is anti- development and demean their sense of self worth. For economic stagnation and rigorous austerity tend to nurture conflicts, restiveness and mistrust which are not conducive to development, not to talk of one that is sustainable.

Conclusion

In the light of these reflections it seem useful to project measures which may be conjectured regarding the practicalities of making development possible in Nigeria. Firstly, the state and its apparatuses must live up to their statutory role of meeting with strong commitment the social welfare needs of the people irrespective of class, religion, status or position. This is fundamentally so because development is a process of self-realization, and it is so only in so far as the people are the means and the end of development. It is what development is and how it should be conceived in the first place. Because this has not conceived and actualized in the country, the nation-state has faltered over the years.

Secondly, the state operators and its institutions must be guided by the values of good governance characterized by transparency, accountability, openness, honesty etc which are the hallmark that provide the platform for the pursuit and attainment of development. Good governance must supply the political and administrative correlates for the operationalization of the law of values which comprises achievement, professionalism, hardwork, enterprise that will cut across all sectors of the society. Also the present state structure must be restructured along the path of true federalism where the power of the nation-state will be devolved. The purpose of political restructuring should be to establish autonomous self governing nationalities or groups of nationalities within a federal union with a small coordinating central government. A devolved federation will create conditions that will make fragmentation undesirable . . . cultivate an overall national image that is so appealing that it makes separation unattractive.

Conclusively, it is only the goal of devolution that can unleash the forces for consolidating democracy that will accommodate the multi-ethnic divisions and achieving accelerated socioeconomic progress in Nigeria. In all, the quest for development is futile if the people are poor and miserable. The key to complete restructuring is for the institutions of the state to face up with the business of the eradication of poverty from the lives of the over 70 percent Nigerians living below the poverty line of one dollar per day.

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