

# PHILOSOPHY AND THE QUESTION OF THE INDISSOLUBILITY OF NIGERIA: ADDRESSING THE CRITICAL ISSUES OF THE NIGERIAN STATE

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## ABSTRACT

*The Nigerian state has been an enigma of a sort since the country achieved independence in 1960 till date. It has been a nation in dire straits and plagued by so many challenges of diverse magnitudes and dimensions. Leadership has arguably been the country's greatest challenge and perhaps undoing. Poor political leadership has largely been responsible for the nation's numerous challenges and manifold underdevelopment and this manifests itself in various and diverse ways including but not limited to ethnicism, religious bigotry, brazen cronyism, political corruption, over-concentration of developmental programmes and action plans in particular regions to the detriment of others, lopsided political appointments that negates the nation's federal character principle, etc. When this happens, people from other ethnic nationalities naturally react and their reaction is usually in the form of demand for resource control, restructuring and in some other cases the unbridled clamour for self-determination among numerous others. More often than not, the response by the government in power is usually to chant the illusive and fading mantra that the unity of Nigeria is not negotiable. This old cliché has been used over the years especially since after the Nigerian civil war and has not in any critical way addressed the country's lingering and festering challenges. This paper argues that the issue of the indissolubility of Nigeria is a false narrative that has not done the country any good. This position is heavily predicated on the verifiable fact that some other countries of the world had disintegrated in the past. The paper opines that what will guarantee the continuity of the Nigerian state are good governance and a deliberate governmental policy of even development as well as less emphasis on religion, ethnicity and unnecessary cronyism. The paper is of the strong view that unless the nation's apex political leaders do the needful by providing good, effective, efficient, effectual, dispassionate and development-orientated political leadership, Nigeria will disintegrate with time and no amount of the false narrative about the indissolubility of the country can save her from disappearing from the political map of the world.*

**Keywords:** Philosophy, Indissolubility, Nigeria, Leadership, Ethnicity

## Introduction

From the period of its independence in 1960 till date, the Nigerian state has been in the eye of the storm. It has been bedevilled by challenges of various magnitudes and dimensions. Some of these challenges have been so widespread and threatening that they have threatened and continued to threaten till this very moment the continued and corporate existence of the

Nigerian state. Poor political leadership is the greatest bane of the Nigerian state. From its inception at independence in 1960 till date, the Nigerian state has struggled to find its feet among the comity of nations. It has grappled with one issue of governance after another. So fierce and threatening are some of these issues that they have threatened time and again the continued corporate existence of the Nigerian state. The nation indeed is at crossroad.

Philosophy continues to throw up its relevance in universal affairs on issues of diverse dimensions including governance. Philosophy is concerned about governance most especially good governance which continues to generate issues for healthy political discourses. One of the major issues that has been in the front burner in the Nigerian political terrain over the past couple of years bother squarely and majorly on the indissolubility or otherwise of the Nigerian state. This issue has been made largely relevant by the plethora of recent agitations by some sections of the country for self-determination. While such calls have been dismissed by some powerful elements in government as a non-issue and therefore not worthy of a public debate, others especially those outside the circle of government think differently opining that the furore being generated on daily basis by such deafening calls for self-determination by some parts of the country should be critically examined and all contentious issues bedevilling the nation holistically addressed to prevent the disintegration of the country.

This paper agrees entirely that the Nigerian state is sick despite the blatant denials of some major or minor stakeholders in the country especially the political class who do not see anything wrong with the present state of affairs in the country. This position will not baffle those who have been following critically the political happenings in the country from a dispassionate and non-partisan perspective. The Nigerian political class are myopic, egocentric and greedy and as long as they feed fat from the nation's huge human and material resources, the country is okay and no one has any reason whatsoever to complain about the style of government in place in the country. This paper strongly opines that the Nigerian state is very sick and redeeming the country from its present hopeless and hapless condition cannot be achieved through a soulless sloganeering of the un-provable theory of the indissolubility of the Nigerian state as being championed presently by the nation's apex political leaders. Nigeria can be redeemed from the current state of morass and political comatose it has sunk into by a conscious political rebuilding and regeneration centred on total political restructuring of the promotion of justice, equity, fair play and egalitarianism and a conscious programme to carry all sections of the country along in terms of equitable distribution of the nation's resources which will engender even development of the entire length and breadth of the country. It must be put on record that nations do not exist or continue in existence by empty sloganeering or decreeing but through good governance and the conscious recognition of the various diversities that constitute its enclave and the need to harness these diversities positively for proper nation-building. The Nigerian nation must recognize this critical fact that ethnic nationalities are not forcefully coerced to stay together under one indivisible political unit. This can only be made possible by the constant and continued provision of good governance and down playing of ethnicism and other political vices and woes that constantly and continually threaten the nation's continued existence as one political entity.

### **Philosophy: A Concision Introduction**

Philosophy is a major bedrock of this paper, as a result, it becomes inevitably imperative to bring to the fore the subject matter of philosophy here even if it means doing so from a peripheral perspective. The mere mention of the word philosophy elicits some level of curiosity among individuals, especially non-philosophers.

Defining philosophy is a herculean task or responsibility which even trained philosophers shy away from doing from time to time. Many philosophers do not agree on a single definition of philosophy. In this context, Uzodinma Nwala (1997:1) opines that:

No-one definition is adequate or sufficient to express the meaning of philosophy. This is because its meaning has varied over the course of its history. Moreover, different philosophers have different views on what philosophy is, its subject matter and method. It is not surprising that those who engage in philosophical inquiry do not agree as to the essence of that activity because by its nature, this is bound to be so.

Oladipo seems to agree with Nwala on the above assertion for according to him:

The intellectual endeavour called philosophy is not easy to define. This is the case because it is difficult to identify the subject matter of philosophy the way we can specify the concerns of economics, sociology, biology and political science, for example. Also, we cannot pinpoint a method as the philosophical method the way we talk of scientific method, Oladipo (2008:11)

Onigbinde (2009:3) discusses the utilitarian and intrinsic values inherent in the philosophic enterprise. According to him:

Most people probably have never bothered to know how philosophy can, and does touch their lives. Some simple examples may help to show some connections between philosophy and human life. When someone in anger, blames the world for his misfortunes, he states unconsciously basic belief. When someone declares his love of life, in some joyous moments, he too expresses a view of the world in general. Of course, statements like these need not be final as they might later be modified or totally abandoned.

Nwala (2007:74) clearly states that:

Philosophy is the child of its circumstances, so philosophers emerge from the bosom of their society. Though philosophers may transcend their environment ideally in thought, it is not easy for them to do so in practice.

### **The Nigerian State: An Historical Exegesis**

The Nigerian state could be rightly said to be a creation of Lord Fredrick Lugard, the then governor-general in-charge of the Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1914. Lugard's aim in carrying out the amalgamation of the two protectorates which by extension was the aim of the British colonial masters was to merge the two regions into a single colony merely

for administrative convenience and improved economic fortunes for the British colonial masters. It is stated that the name Nigeria was coined by Flora Shaw, a British citizen who was widely believed to be Lugard's acquaintance or wife as many people speculate. The country's long journey towards political independence began with the enactment of the Clifford's constitution of 1922. One of the fallouts of the constitution was the conduct of the first ever election in the new territory. The second constitution known as the Richard's constitution came on board in 1946. It sought to promote Nigeria's unity, to provide adequately within that desire for the diverse elements that make up the country, to provide greater participation of the citizens in the determination of their own affairs. After the Richard's constitution, there were two other constitutions namely the Macpherson and Lyttleton constitution before the independence constitution of 1960 came on board with the nation attaining her independence.

In 1963, the Nigerian state attained the republican status and there was the republican constitution of 1963 which eventually made way for the constitution of 1979 which ushered in the presidential system of government into the country. Apart from the constitutional evolvments, one of the events of note in the country was the military coups that brought in the military to power at various stages of the country's growth and development. First, it was the January 15<sup>th</sup> 1966 coup which terminated the government of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. Other coups followed which helped to keep the military in power until the country was returned to democratic rule in 1979. This democratic rule barely lasted for four years and the military once again took over power on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1983 and held on to it till power was eventually returned to civilians on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1999. Ever since the country returned to democratic rule in 1999, there has been no further military coup or intervention and the nation has witnessed 19 years of uninterrupted democratic rule, the longest ever since the country became independent. The Nigerian state has witnessed turbulence of multi-dimensional proportions and the citizens have been subjected to various degrees of deprivations. Many Nigerian citizens live in abject poverty and regret and many do not realize their full potentials.

### **The Indissolubility of Nigeria: Myth or Reality?**

The present country known and called Nigeria was not in existence from the very beginning. This is an existential and verifiable fact. It was composed of different ethnic nationalities that had little or nothing in common with one another. The country's political fate was sealed by Lord Fredrick Lugard in 1914 following the unsolicited amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates. It must be stated here arguably though that prior to this amalgamation in 1914, there was no known affinity between the north and the south either from the social, political or economic perspectives. This view showed itself clearly during the struggle for the country's independence. While the rest of the country voted for independence and wanted it soonest, the north openly declared that it was not ready for independence but rather wanted it as soon as it was practicable which indeed was a vague and illusive expression that made no meaning at all.

The indissolubility or indivisibility or otherwise of the Nigerian state has been a very contentious discourse for quite a long time now. The debate has assumed a higher and more critical dimension since 2015 following the assumption of power by President Muhammadu Buhari who has displayed brazen, unwarranted and impetuous nepotism and tribalism in the

discharge of his responsibilities as the nation's apex political leader. Scholars of various schools of thought have largely agreed that the country's troubles began from its initial faulty foundation when the British colonial masters carelessly and callously weaved together incongruent peoples who have little or nothing in common into one country against their will and consent.

Nigerian leaders past and perhaps present have been the greatest obstacles to charting the way forward for the country. For example, one of the greatest apostles of the theory of the indivisibility of the Nigerian state, General Yakubu Gowon had publicly proclaimed in 1967 that there was no basis for Nigeria's unity. The same Gowon was to make a U-turn some months later advocating for the unity and continued existence of the Nigerian state. What a contradiction! Unfortunately, Nigerians have not taken this apostle of Nigeria's unity and indivisibility to task on his dubious role in the Nigeria Civil War and its catastrophic aftermath.

The present civilian administration in Nigeria has been very vocal about its conviction that Nigeria is indivisible. In June, 2017, the current Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo while heading the country in an acting capacity said Nigeria would remain a united country. Speaking at a meeting with the state governors in Abuja, Osinbajo told the governors that they “must ensure the security of lives and property” in their states, adding that “Nigeria is indissoluble” President Muhammadu Buhari has at different fora harped on the need for the continued existence of the Nigerian state stressing equally that Nigeria is indivisible. This position as innocent and patriotic as it may appear to be is clearly deceitful to say the least. With the plethora of agitations and cries of marginalization across the length and breadth of the entire country, Nigeria can disintegrate any day unless nothing is done to arrest the downward trend in the country. Indeed, there is nothing sacrosanct about the Nigerian state which is purely an artificial creation of the British colonial masters put together in 1914 through Lugard's forceful amalgamation purely for selfish economic reasons. Nigeria was not created because the British overlords wanted the country to be. It was created for other innocuous reasons which our nationalists who championed the cause of the country's independence didn't understand then.

Nigerian leaders both past and present have consciously or unconsciously worked for the disintegration of the Nigerian state through non-inclusive policies and programmes and poor governance. Non-inclusive and segregated policies and programmes do not unite. They divide perpetually and tend to keep the country perpetually divided along ethnic and religious divides. Even political appointments are given based on ethnic and religious considerations. The theory of the indivisibility or indissolubility of Nigeria should be subjected to a needful litmus political test of a referendum to truly and authentically determine and ascertain its veracity or otherwise. Nations are not coerced into existence neither are they coerced into continued existence as we are presently doing in the Nigerian federation which negates all known social, political and moral principles or norms. Let us redefine the Nigerian state through popular public opinion. If it is the will of majority of the citizens that the nation should continue to exist as one indivisible entity, then the process of nation-building devoid of the stranglehold of ethnicity and religious bigotry which has been non-existent in the

Nigerian state should begin unhindered without further delay, if not the process of peaceful and non-violent separation should not be hindered by any man-made bottleneck or unnecessary sloganeering and theorizing.

The sovereignty of any country is not sacrosanct. This is factual. No country is indissoluble or indivisible as history has shown. History is replete with countries that divided in the past. Czechoslovakia split on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1993 into two sovereign and independent states of Czech and Slovakia. In 1905, Norway and Sweden peacefully parted ways and became two sovereign nations. In 1944, Iceland split from Denmark with perhaps remarkable ease. Singapore split from Malaysia in 1965. In 1776, the United States of America split from the United Kingdom. The former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic dissolved in 1991 into so many countries including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia etc. Many other examples abound. The criminalization of the clamour and agitation for self-determination as it is being done presently in the Nigerian state is retrogressive and counter-productive and should be discouraged in the overall interest of the nation.

The indivisibility or indissolubility of nations is not decreed through a fiat or meaningless sloganeering by political leaders. Nations are created and sustained through good governance by political leaders which help to give a true sense of belonging to citizens from all parts of the country. In so doing, such political leaders help to douse the various religious, economic, political and social tensions in the state and in so doing the citizens develop a deep sense of oneness and togetherness and patriotism naturally flows among the citizenry. Citizens can only develop a love for their fatherland when through good governance, the country ensures that they are well taken care of and are provided a good enabling environment to prosper in their various chosen endeavours. When citizens are comfortable through deliberate policies of government that affect their lives positively, the on their own become vanguards of unity in the country without being coerced.

### **Some critical issues bedevilling the Nigerian state**

There are myriad or plethora of issues bedevilling the Nigerian state, hindering it from achieving true and lasting greatness and standing tall in the comity of nations. One of the greatest banes of the Nigerian state is leadership ineptitude. It will amount to belabouring the obvious to say that the Nigerian state has lacked good leadership since its inception till date. When Nigerians especially the enlightened ones come together to discuss or argue, more often than not, their discussion or argument majorly centres on political leadership of the country which unfortunately is not a very wonderful tale but a tale of woes.

The venerable Chinua Achebe aptly summarized the leadership challenges in the country when he clearly stated that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership, Achebe (1983:1). He further opines that there is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, and the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership. Seteolu further opines that the leadership question has become a recurring issue in the discourses on the Nigerian project. The governing class has been target of pillory, vilification, condemnation and disdain in view

of the pervasive and persistent socio-economic and political crisis, Seteolu (2004:70).

Corruption is another major bane of Nigeria. It seems that corruption has become inexplicably synonymous with the Nigerian state. So rife is the challenge of corruption, especially political corruption in the country that the citizenry seem to have become helplessly helpless in the raging inferno of corruption in the country. It is corruption that is singularly responsible for the celebrated underdevelopments that have become legendary in the country. It should bother citizens of goodwill in this country that fifty eight years after the nation's political independence, the nation cannot boast of twelve hours of uninterrupted electricity supply despite the billions of Naira appropriated in that sector on yearly basis. The same can be said of Nigerian roads which have become death traps with thousands of innocent Nigerians losing their lives on these roads that are utterly dilapidated despite the billions of Naira that are budgeted for these roads annually in the nation's budgets. Other key sectors in the country have not fared better either. Corruption which is majorly rife in the country has a history. Perhaps it is in the light of this that Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah (2017:20) went rhetorical when he famously asked:

But can we really speak of corruption in Nigeria without a sense of history and how the military by its culture of coups and counter coups sowed the seeds for what we are reaping today? The immobility in the fight against corruption has made a pantomime.

Exploring the social and hydra-headed nature of corruption in the country, Kukah (2017:20-21) further avers that:

Technically, the war against corruption is unwinnable if we imagine that one day, we shall have a corrupt free society. Corruption is another word for poverty, injustice, insecurity, nepotism, a culture of might is right, a feeling of emptiness and helplessness. Corruption is not a disease from which we can be cured. Corruption can only be contained by development, strong institutions that serve as vehicles of restraint against human greed and infringement.

Akpotor (2003:355) seem to agree entirely with Kukah when he stated that:

Despite publicized opprobrium of this privileged crime, it is nurtured by both the agents of government and the civil society. It is therefore difficult to eradicate. This being the case, we contend that the inability of the civil society to discourage corruption is informed by the thesis that the state is usually against the interest of the people or is incompetent or corrupt or all three. The state is often indifferent to the welfare of the people; it neither provides for nor defends the citizenry.

In the light of this disturbing and challenging scenario, Victor Dike (2008) throws more light on the vexed issue of corruption in Nigeria. According to him:

There are many unresolved problems in Nigeria, but the issue of the upsurge of corruption is troubling. And the damages it has done to the polity are astronomical. The menace of corruption leads to slow movement of files in offices, police extortion tollgates and slow traffics on the highways, port congestion, queues at passport offices and gas stations, ghost workers syndrome, election irregularities, among others. Even the mad people on the street recognize

the havoc caused by corruption – the funds allocated for their welfare disappear into the thin air. Thus, it is believed by many in the society that corruption is the bane of Nigeria. Consequently, the issue keeps recurring in every academic and informal discussion in Nigeria. And the issue will hardly go away.

Another major challenge in Nigeria is ethnicism. Ethnicism can be defined as consciousness of or emphasis on ethnic identity or culture. Some nations of the world have been able to manage their ethnic diversities creditably to their utmost advantage. Unfortunately this has not been the case with Nigeria. Major political decisions including political appointments are most times taken based purely on ethnic considerations. Nwaorgu (2003:122) captures this fact very lucidly. According to his view:

The political entity called Nigeria is a federal union which came to be as a consequence of British colonial policy. The respective nations or linguistic groups that constitute it were not consulted before they were grouped together. For this reason, these nations do believe that this nation is dispensable. This is coupled with the fact that they are always suspicious of one another. The tendency for any ethnic group to support or be against a course, policy, etc in the country is always determined from the angle of whether it is favourable or unfavourable to her own corporate existence. As a consequence, no course has ever been supported at the same time by all the ethnic groups uniformly. It is usually a situation where the largest ethnic groups will say that this particular course is in the interest of the Nigerian state or condemn an act as inimical to the continued corporate existence of the polity of Nigeria. The loyalty of Nigerians especially those who masquerade as leaders with exception of a few, does not transcend their ethnic groups when the chips are down.

Arguing the case of ethnic pluralism, Dukor (2003:187) is of the view that:

Ethnic pluralism is a major factor in African politics. The process of nation building in African states has not been easy because of the diversity of ethnicities in the respective states. Historically speaking, ethnic pluralism has contributed more in negative terms to nation building. The ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversities among the people of African states created diversities of interests, opinions and political leanings as well as endemic and epidemic rivalries. Nigeria makes interesting and exciting example of a nation-state with multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic and multi-cultural groupings. Apart from the major ethnic nationalities like Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo, there are over one hundred other ethnic groups in Nigeria. In other West African states like the Republic of Benin, the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia and so on, there are also diversities of ethnic languages, dialects, and cultures. The peculiar characters of African states have not augured well for the political development and nation building in Africa.

Apart from these challenges already enumerated, there are still other numerous challenges militating against the growth and development of the Nigerian nation. However, it must be stated that one other great challenge of the nation is the inability of the country's politicians to provide proper, purposeful and cutting edge leadership that will engender even development in the country. Instead of providing the much needed positive political leadership, many of the

country's politicians are using the political platforms available to them to further their political nests by using politics as an avenue for personal aggrandizement and financial enrichment. This indeed is a total negation of what politics and politicking is all about.

While blaming the political class for their parochial nature and mode of operations, the Nigerian electorate have not fared better either. Good followership by the masses will ensure that the politicians, especially those who are elected and appointed into political positions perform optimally to the utmost benefit of the entire country. Unfortunately, this has not been the case as the Nigerian masses have demonstrated a good deal of unconcerned attitude towards the nation's politics, thus allowing the nation's politicians the leeway to milk the country dry unchecked and unchallenged. It is as a result of this nonchalant and lackadaisical attitude from the masses that the nation's political class especially those who hold political positions find it very easy to be accountable to no one. They are hugely involved in financial recklessness meddling with public funds with impunity without any atom of fear or trepidation. Nigerian citizens should hold their political leaders accountable. This will obviously make the politicians to see power as a trust and not as a birth right. This will make the masses to assume the centre stage in the power organogram since in political parlance, power belongs to the people. In popular democracy, power truly belongs to the people.

#### **The future of the country: addressing the major issues in Nigeria**

The fact that patriotism does not feature as a cardinal virtue and principle of the Nigerian nation, should worry every rational and right thinking Nigerian. Instead of loving the country and showing unalloyed loyalty to it, Nigerian citizens consciously or unconsciously show brazen loyalty to their ethnic nationalities thus negating the principle of true patriotism. Nigerians find it fanciful to identify themselves first and foremost with their various ethnic nationalities before identifying themselves as Nigerians. This more often than not does an incalculable harm towards efforts aimed at nation building. In this connection, Nigerian political leaders have a lot of work to do. They should always pursue policies and programmes that will ensure that less emphasis is placed on the various ethnic nationalities.

In this context the leaders of this nation have a lot of role to play. Political leaders especially those at the national level should work hard to enthrone a government that has a national character and outlook. They can do this by ensuring national spread in their policies, programmes and various political appointments. To achieve this, meritocracy should be a deliberate policy of the state whereby people of proven integrity, track record and ability are appointed into positions of responsibility irrespective of where they hail from or the religion they process. This is indeed the first process towards genuine nation building.

The issue of restructuring the country has been highly politicised by politicians who have gained political currency through it, scoring cheap political points and at the end of the day doing nothing about it. Prior to the January 15, 1966 military coup that introduced unitary system of government in the country, the Nigerian state was structured in such a way that the various regions were semi-autonomous and operated in a similar fashion. There was less dependence on the centre. There was real democracy in action at the various regions that constituted the Nigerian federation then.

Unfortunately, the January 1966 coup altered the status quo and turned the country on its head, introducing a unitary system of government with so much concentration of power on the federal government, thus weakening very significantly the various regions of the federation. The subsequent creation of states by the Gowon's administration in 1967 in the heat of the Nigerian civil war which was a strategy to weaken the opposition did little or no favour to the already beleaguered Nigerian state. Ever since that unfortunate episode, the country has been run under a unitary system whether by the military or civilian leaders at various times.

Most of the challenges of the Nigerian state can be located in this costly error of the military which has not been corrected by the various civilian regimes in the country. However the unfortunate thing about the scenario is that both the military that ruled this country for very many years and the civilians who took over from them time and again did not see anything wrong with the nation's faulty system. One cannot build a solid house on a faulty or shaky foundation. Nigeria as it is presently politically configured is standing on a very faulty and dangerous foundation which can crumble at any time if not reconfigured urgently in line with existential reality and the rhythm of the times.

The real enemies of the Nigerian state are those who oppose the restructuring of this country irrespective of the arguments they profess. The current system in the country is not sustainable. Cracks have started appearing to prove the unsustainability of the current structure. One of the major cracks is that majority of the states in the country can no longer pay salaries to their civil servants. Many of these states owe civil servants in their states arrears of salaries running into several months. The present federal government have turned into 'Father Christmas' in recent times giving bailout funds to the states on several occasions to enable them solve the perennial problem of arrears salary they are owing to their civil servants and yet the problem has stubbornly persisted.

Curiously, the present federal government under the All Progressive Congress party (APC) came to power in 2015 and one of their cardinal programmes which they sold to Nigerians was that they will restructure the country. However, they have since changed the tune upon assumption of power over three years ago. In fact, the President, Muhammadu Buhari did say some time ago that those who were canvassing for restructuring were pursuing a personal agenda. What a statement of fallacy coming from a country's number one citizen who ought to understand fully the salient issues in the country's murky polity. Restructuring this country will surely put it on a sound and strong political pedestal as it will grant the various federating units the ample opportunity to develop and grow according to their latent ability and this will translate into beneficial growth and development for the entire country. Those who oppose the concept of restructuring should come up with a superior argument or keep quiet forever.

### **Conclusion**

It is sheer naivety or perhaps mere mischief for any person or group of persons no matter how highly or lowly placed to argue that Nigeria is indissoluble or indivisible. History has proved beyond every reasonable doubt that no country in the world is indivisible or indissoluble. This fact has been copiously highlighted in the paper. States are mere human creations and are

therefore imperfect from an ontological perspective.

What sustains the various nations of the world is good governance which provides their citizens a near perfect and enabling environment to excel in their various areas of human endeavour. Unfortunately for the Nigerian state, good governance has been in very short supply and in some cases totally absent thus making bad governance look like an entrenched and enduring political culture in the country's polity. It is indeed a very deep manifestation of leadership failure and political ineptitude for the apex leaders of this country to be telling the citizens that the country is indissoluble or indivisible. It is a very deceitful campaign that is founded on a false premise. Telling Nigerians that God brought us together and we cannot thwart God's purpose for bringing us together is very shameful, uncritical and naïve. God did not create the Nigerian state. Lord Lugard did and it was mainly to serve the economic and narrow interests of the British colonial masters that they created the Nigerian state the way they did and which unfortunately subsequent political leaders of the country have refused to recreate it to suit current and prevailing existential and political realities.

What can unite the country is a well-structured system sustained by good governance mainly characterized by an egalitarian system which will give a sense of belonging to all sections of the country. An orchestrated and purposely schemed alienation of some sections of the country by those in power through vicious policies of exclusion can only keep the country perpetually divided and make the task of nation-building very difficult if not impossible to achieve or attain. This is indeed the sad reality of our time.

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