NIGERIANITY MOVEMENT

NIGERIANITY

◆ Regeneration ◆ Democracy ◆ Progress

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NIGERIANITY MOVEMENT: A NEW VISION FOR NIGERIA



• *A cross section of the Vanguards of the new vision*

Contemporary historians agree with a degree of unanimity and certainty that long before the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria in January, 1914 a lot of interaction was already going on among all our peoples. The same economic interest that, pre-occupied the British throughout the 19th Century in Nigeria and West Africa subregion is said to have caused substantial contact between our people. As it is always the case, where economic interests and exchange coalesce, social and political interaction begin to emerge. Despite the various dimensions introduced to the life of Nigeria as a geographical or political entity by Christianity and Islam, no one needs to fear any contradiction to the affirmation that interaction and interconnection among all our peoples would have continued with substantial intensity and force even if the British had not forcefully amalgamated Nigeria in 1914.

The 1914 amalgamation, in spite of the many regrets that the clashes, confrontations and especially the diminished national regard and honour has caused in us, as we struggle for the second independence from politicians and military, string rule was a natural development brought about by an unnatural foreign dominion. The 1914 amalgamation gave Nigeria a common ad-[illegible]istrative head but [illegible] a common politi-[illegible]vision or mission. [illegible] preoccupation of [illegible] British was not to [illegible]d a national consensus or constituency for Nigeria unity contrary to British's national geopolitical interest. This was not the responsibility of the British. Nigeria was not British, Nigeria was merely a British colony. The responsibility to mould peoples of any nation into a mighty state with common pride in the nation emphatically belongs to her citizens not foreigners or mercenaries. Regardless of the repetitive complaints against the British Colonial administration in the sad ethnic divisiveness prevailing since 1914 amalgamation, the colonial government served British in promoting her majesty's government to which it owed allegiance, than we, children and citizens of the great Nigeria nation. It follows, therefore, that instead of establishing theories and proposition, why the amalgamation as the beginning of national emergence should not and ought not to have taken place, we ought to have worked with this beginning to build a truly patriotic citizenry that believes in and works for Nigeria and not many Nigerians avoiding the high level suspicion, intolerance and ethnic disharmony that has dominated our lives as a people since 1914. If the four decades following the 1914 amalgamation was dominated by British misuse of Nigeria and we could not substantially help the situation, as the citizens of Nigeria got over their helplessness especially in the decades of the 1950 to 1990, their preoccupation should have been the emergence of a great nation and how to raise such a nation in a world that was already in high speed in the previous decades. It should not have been disharmony among her already separate peoples.

As it is now so clear to us, many avoidable mistakes were made, intolerance, disunity and misconception graduate to enemity. The gulf between our people in the various ethnolinguistic regions got wider than necessary. So serious was this intolerance that it took much energy or wasted energy to build unity in a central government with national focus especially among the three dominant ethnic groups. Thus, the crisis of 1956 motion for Nigeria independence was no less significance than the crisis of nationality of Nigerians today. When one looks at the sources of the problem, if we had been truly preoccupied with Nigeria instead of the east, West, North or South we would have done with some forgetting of simple sins and ethnic prejudices that we enlarge with so much emotion to the detriment of our cohesion and unity. The reality of the matter is that modern Nigerians are just tired of hearing of the East, the West, the North or South. They are fatigued by the dominant and disturbing discourses about Yoruba, Ibo or

"The reality of the matter is that modern Nigerians are just tired of hearing of the East, the West, the North or South... They want to hear more about Nigeria, feel more of Nigeria, know more of Nigeria and live much more as proud Nigerians"

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