

Abdullahi Edward Presentation

Update on the last 45 Years in Nigeria

Spotlight on Recent Elections

You all served in Nigeria, in one capacity or another, from roughly 1964 to 1968. Most of you have never returned to Nigeria since you left and you want an update on the current situation in the country in light of the recent presidential elections. And, since I am the only former Peace Corps Volunteer from that era still living in Nigeria you asked me to provide the update.

As most of Peace Corps Volunteers served in the south-south and south-east, you are, for the most part, extremely uninformed about the north in general and General Buhari in particular. The prevailing school of thought regarding Nigeria in the USA today is one in which Buhari is known as a former “military dictator”, with all its negative connotations, a Muslim, with all its unknown characteristics in the USA and, certainly not, a democrat. Thus there is a keen interest in learning more about the ramifications of the elections and what it means for Nigeria going forward.

To begin with, as most of you don't know me either, I present this map showing all the travels that I have undertaken over my years of being here in Nigeria. The map doesn't include journeys made by air, nor is there any distinction between destinations I have visited more than once, like Abuja where I have visited more than 100 times and places like Lagos and Port Harcourt and Calabar where I have been more than 50 times each, and those I visited only once. All the journeys made by road were self-driven by me.



The Nigeria you knew in the mid-sixties, other than the geographic entity called Nigeria, no longer exists. Almost everything has changed – some for the good and unfortunately the majority for the bad. Electricity supply is too erratic and too undependable to even try calling it epileptic; water supply to urban residents leaves a lot to be desired in most major metropolitan centers; schools are a shambles of their former selves and government no longer supplies books, paper and writing instruments; hospitals, for the most part, are dysfunctional, as not only simple things like surgical gloves, gauze, bandages, syringes and medication are usually unavailable, most hospitals do not have the modern machinery and equipment required to adequately serve the sick and needy; roads are nothing but death traps with the number of potholes forcing drivers to make sudden and dramatic movements often ending in serious crashes and multiple deaths; etc., etc., etc. The following is offered as an illustration of the ingenuity of the average Nigerian in his attempts to survive under these oppressive conditions:-



A young entrepreneur using a portable generator to charge people's GSM phones due to lack of electricity for them to charge their own phones.

A common conceptualization of how the average Nigerian views his politicians.



A photo of a modern train system recently purchased from China by Brazil.



A photo of a train system recently purchased from China by the Nigerian Government.



The whole country is in the same state of affairs and this has caused a general disapproval of the policies and practices of the previous government and the entire population was totally unsatisfied with the direction the country had been taking since the return of “democracy” in 1999. The following illustrates the type and nature of the politicians that have been running the country:-

**Billahil-lazee, la ilaha
illahuwa Ni Malam
Ibrahim Shekarau Ko
kowa zai koma jam'iyyar
PDP A arewa ni bazan
koma ba BBC LONDON
2011 ELECTION.**



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Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau's famous quote that he made in 2011 regarding his swearing to Allah that he would never join the PDP which he subsequently did in 2015 and received a Ministerial appointment for doing so.

The infamous quote made in 2011 by President Goodluck Jonathan.



President Jonathan's obligatory campaign visit to the Emir of Kano, Mohammadu Sunusi II, the man he had recently sacked from his position as Chairman of the Central Bank of Nigeria.



This disaffection led to a groundswell of support for General Buhari as witnessed by the mammoth crowds that attended his campaign rallies throughout the length and breadth of the country. As witnessed by the following photographs from GMB campaign rallies in Maiduguri, Lagos, Calabar, Gombe, and Port Harcourt:-



Another scene from a campaign rally for GMB.



Compare these scenes from Buhari Campaign rallies to these taken at the Jonathan rally in Gombe:-





Picture of residents of Maiduguri washing the street that Jonathan had traveled on during his campaign visit to Maiduguri.

The majority of the population was firmly convinced that the previous government led by the PDP was the most corrupt in history. Some of the information reaching them came from reliable sources and indicated that there was adequate evidence to prove that those in government were siphoning off millions and billions of dollars. And pictures like this made it very difficult to convince people otherwise.



This image apparently shows President Jonathan packing away millions of US Dollars into steamer trunks for onward transportation to his home town Otuake, Bayelsa State.

Of course no discussion about Nigeria would be complete without mentioning Boko Haram. A previous speaker, a Nigerian from the South-East or South-South, explained that one of the main reasons that President

Jonathan was finding it difficult to govern the country was the fact that he was not Hausa or Fulani and that it was the Hausa/Fulani who created Boko Haram to make the country ungovernable for Jonathan. This, apparently, was a popular belief in America. Primarily because Western countries find it easier to relate positively to countries that are governed by Christians. Hence, with Jonathan being a Christian and the Hausa/Fulani being Muslim, it was easy for Americans to accept that the North was causing the problems that prevented the Jonathan led Nigerian government from succeeding in developing the country and improving the lot of the average Nigerian.

Fortunately, the following photo opens the door to question the logic of this interpretation of who controls Boko Haram: -



No one has any idea of exactly who is controlling Boko Haram. Even at one point General Buhari himself was accused by a senior Jonathan government official of being the head of Hoko Haram. Also Boko Haram is not an “Islamist” movement because their methodology of carrying out their campaign was totally un-Islamic in nature.

Now we come to the issue of the election itself. In the 2011 election between the same two protagonists Jonathan had received 22+ million votes while Buhari had garnered 15+ million. At the time of the conclusion of the 2011 elections there was a tremendous outcry from the Buhari party that the election had been rigged. However, as usual, his complaints received no favourable ear amongst those who could have endorsed that conclusion. However, it did result in a clamour for the purchase and utilization of technical equipment that could be used for controlling rigging. The result of this was the decision to purchase and insist on the utilization of Card Readers, a hand held devise that could instantly process each voter's electronically embedded Permanent Voter Card. This time, the results were as follows:



These results show that there were approximately 7 million bogus votes cast in 2011, but this figure could be higher because the actual voter turnout this year was considerably more than it was in 2011 particularly in the North where the majority of the population was thoroughly determined to see the end of the regime that had so successfully marginalized their area of the country for so long. However, the Card Reader results were more than adequate to achieve this objective.

The results of the election were considerably enhanced by President Jonathan's decision to accept defeat as soon as it was mathematically impossible for him to overtake the sizeable lead that Buhari had developed throughout the country. There was not only jubilation nationwide with large crowds including children, taking to the streets to bang pots and pans and whatever they could lay their hands on to show their joy at General Buhari's victory: -



Meanwhile, a more sober demonstration of the jubilation at Buhari's victory took place at the Nigerian Stock Exchange where the following results on trading the day after the election displayed the enthusiasm for his victory in the business community: -

BUSINESS

By the Bureau of Statistics, Abuja. For more information, call 011-234-9000000. Email: business@dailytrust.com

Stocks record N906bn in biggest gain in 50 years

From Kayode Ojo, Lagos

The Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) made history yesterday as it recorded the first ever higher gain of 2.06 per cent, representing a 30 per cent increase in a single trading day.

The market index has been in a decline since 2007 as a result of more than 90 years of economic and political instability, but yesterday's gain was a sign of a turning point in the market.

Analysts said the index gain was the result of a number of factors, including the fact that the market was trading at a discount to its intrinsic value.

They said the market is now in a recovery phase, and the index is expected to continue to rise in the coming months.

Speaking with our correspondent, Mr. Ojo said that the market is now in a recovery phase, and the index is expected to continue to rise in the coming months.

He said there has been a lot of interest in the market, and the index is expected to continue to rise in the coming months.



U.S.A. Governor Stephen Ekechika

The governor said that the market is now in a recovery phase, and the index is expected to continue to rise in the coming months.

The All Share Index (ASI) rose 2,062.54 points or 2.06 per cent from 100,000 to 102,062.54 points to close yesterday at 102,062.54 points.

Market turnover also recorded a record gain of 22.17 per cent to N906.15 billion, up from N738.4 billion the previous day.

The NSE index of 100 stocks rose 2.06 per cent to 102,062.54 points, up from 100,000 points the previous day.

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I was approached by many of my training group participants at the official dinner on Friday night. Below is a photograph of me with some of the members of my group which was known as Nigeria XXV.



L-R, yours truly, Peter Stolzman, Mike Malaghan, James Porter, Clemmie Gilpin and Paul Willis. Peter, James and Clemmie I hadn't seen in 49 years. Mike and Paul had come to visit me in Nigeria separately, on their own in the interim.