

**TERTIARY CATEGORY**

**Question 1. What, in your opinion, is the greatest threat to peace in Nigerian? Proffer a preventive strategy for the federal government.**

**SELFISH INTEREST AND CALLOUSE DISPOSITION OF OUR POLITICAL OFFICE HOLDERS ARE THE GREATEST THREAT TO THE PEACE IN NIGEREIA.**

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**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 16 DECEMBER, 2016**

**Year of admission 2013/2014**

**Year of graduation 2018.**

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“The drumbeat that wrestled the grip of sound politics introduced through our nascent independence by the welcomed patriotic and the nationalistic spirit of our founding fathers rose to a deafening height that the ‘savory arrest’ of the situation by the Nigerian military and the atrocities that followed will continue to leave the country with trembles and shocks of pocket of crisis of aggrieved members of ethnicities and others”. This catching piece on the preface of Dr. Orjiakor in his book will never stop blowing like the whistle in the sense of any Nigerian who sees the rising terror of the terrorists in the North-East and the scary operation grappling the innocent and defenseless people in Niger- Delta region.

The benign situation notwithstanding the resonance for the independence of indigenous people of Biafra does not speak well for the peace of this country. “These pocket of crises” can, in the words of Chinua Achebe in his book, **“the trouble with Nigeria”**, be attributed “... to the insensitive politics in a political system where the interest of the people comes second”. It therefore means that national peace dangles on the pendulum of the political sensitivity of our political office-holders, failure of which aggrieves the public will. While we are not in doubt that terrorism and want of secession are enemy of peace of mind, the greatest threat to the peace of Nigeria is the lack of moral certitude and rape of public confidence by our politicians. The misgivings of their mistakes become a burden on the fair-minded Nigerians who in confidence gave their votes to them. Therefore, the violent type who do not have the grace of

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perseverance like other disenchanted people resort to arms and vent their anger on government properties, nature or even lives.

However, it is the physical wounds sustained from this violence, the difference emerging therefrom that stalls the emergence of peace even longer.

In the far run, the government sick of this agitation falls to what it calls the last measure: force them to stop or show them the exit from this world. In providing reasons for its action, the government says what Plato clearly captured in his work Crito:

*“He who disobeys us is, as we maintain, thrice wrong; first, because in disobeying us he is disobeying his parents; secondly, because we are the authors of his education; thirdly because he has made an agreement with us that he will duly obey our commands”.*

The peace in Nigeria has been run aground because of the manipulation of political technicalities.

This has often drawn the people and the authority apart. Terrorism therefore becomes the explanation of this insensitive manipulation. We have been meddling on a time-bomb ever since and the wishes of the people continually misrepresented in such haggling manners that the pocket of crises impeding the enabling playing ground for the existence of peace and its trendy flavor has remained endless.

But what is terrorism? The Advanced Oxford Learners’ Dictionary puts it as thus: “the unofficial or unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims”. Sadiq defined

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it as “an indiscriminate violation of every safety laws of human society occasioned by wanton violence, proliferation of lethal weapons to threat of lives, stability of the nation and government policies for the achievement of certain political demands”. Interestingly, the broader definition given by Sadiq by implication, has encapsulated every form of movement capable of endangering human lives without the backing of laws, which in effect threatens the safe structures of that society either by violence, proliferation of dangerous weapons, threat of lives and stability of the nation and government policies as terrorism. Meanwhile, just recently on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 the “**UN global counterterrorism strategy**” was adopted by the UN General Assembly with also, the necessary formation of counterterrorism implementation task force (CTITF). Of the various objectives of the UN resolution is a strategic and operational approach to fight terrorism, not only sending clear message that terrorism is unacceptable in all its form and manifestation but also resolving to take practical steps individually and collectively to prevent and combat it.

This is a clarion call impeaching all facets of terrorism as enumerated by Sadiq in his definition.

At this point, it is no more a gainsay that any activity to shaken the governance and peace of Nigeria that by the effect of such activity, the comfort and safety of the people will likely stand on a wicket is a terror and the perpetrators of such terrors are terrorists.

Terrorism of course, cannot be a threat to peace, but an instrument Terrorism of course cannot be a threat to peace but an instrument through which the threat is conversed. The major purpose for the broader discussion of terrorism is to paint a picture that has a clear design of

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the danger assumed by this instrument of terror. However, it has been stated earlier that the greatest threat to the peace in Nigeria is the 'soured' attitudes of our politicians who have constantly fanned the embers of tribalism and religions to the detriment of the peace of the country. In the long run, the masses who have been brainwashed put on the cloaks of wither tribal or religious sentiment in the exercise of their political rights.

It will be interesting to say that besides this sentimental exercise of rights, there is a jealous attention of every tribe who will quickly frown against the seizure of political powers by any other tribe, which is not theirs. It becomes a chain of occurrence through time because politicians will always continue to create divides among tribes and the obvious gullible people appearing too ready to do anything with the mistaken belief that in following the voice of the politician, the sanctity of their tribes will be protected and projected.

Sadly, in the event where the minds of the people are blurred by accepting the ambitions of their regional politicians in the bead to give them a price to their high expectation turns into frustration. By utilizing their unsettled minds, the politicians point accusing fingers at a particular system, or group of people as obstacle standing between the intention he never had to deliver on his promise to his people and a favorable political system is to achieve stable governance.

### **STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS.**

Having looked through the eye of things and the large discussions of the pocket of crises from different regions, which at first will appear to become the obvious threat to the peaceful existence of the country, i.e terrorism, tribal sentiment, religion etc are mere diseases from the

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Pandora's Box brought by our politicians to rubbish fair play and justice in our nation's political settings. But in the words of Aristotle " ... that a state in its noblest extreme, must strive for the mean ", it raises a hope that in a true precise search, prudent and shrewd in judgment some remedies can be preferred. Below are some of them viz:

***One, strict adherence to political debate by political aspirants:*** during the birth of democracy in the ancient Greece , the aristocrats loosened their holds to power complacently when the liberals with their fiery arguments before the people introduced for the first time an opportunity for the people to speak their minds and make contributions in the political processes of their land. Core vital in his book "**the creation**" reported:

" It became an era in Athens that submitted the patriarch to wrench. The excesses of powers exercised by the aristocrats started giving way for a new regime embroidered by the power of oratory of the democrats who had seemed to have lifted the common people over and above the existing system"

The pure sense in subjecting political aspirants into a political debate is that it gives the people a wide range of time and scope of choices that will scale close to objective analysis of the personality of the person seeking their consents and strength of his insight. Usually it is a basic characteristic of a competition that the audience is quick to develop passion and love for an excellent performance. Equally, against all odds, they are always forced in the game of equal competition to take side with that person who has a better thing to say or do than the other. In

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the American “ **Federate: countdown and analysis of the American debate system** “ Donald Harrison Concluded:

... the Republican in sunken mood failed to understand the American way in the nick of time and they are left in the wood. It is not the effect that the Democrats were delighted in their candidate as much, but the fact that in the debate system of United State of America it is who hits the right words that wins the day... and the American people know that “.

This is a report from the New York Time, 2009, after President Barack Obama won the 2008 presidential election. Therefore, it is very pertinent to say here that political debate shifts the people from the sentiments of tribes and religion. The entertainment the debate will offer provides certain unity in judgment that in the words of Roberts Frost we give them “a cause to pause and ponder.” just like Harrison said, such debate, properly conducted begins the success or failure of a political aspirant. Thus the importance of a political debate in curtailing the excesses of our politicians during campaign and in fulfilling other pre-requisites to achieve their ambition cannot be over- emphasized.

***Second, cross-carpeting theory in our party system:*** According to Appadorai, “cross carpeting in a party structure is one inevitable practice in a federal multi-party system that would have achieved a perfect party system in such a federal character if it were absent. The reason is that the attitude of politics is one of interest depending on every available means. This in its character devolves Machiavelli’s Lion and Fox metaphor from the citadel of power to the seekers of it, giving every man an opportunity to play his tricks: and one desirable means for

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the sake of functional politics that these tricks can be played is the vexed system where a member of a party has a whole world of chance to leave his frustrated party where he once made a name to another which suddenly has grappled power. The danger of this system i.e cross-carpeting is the lack of co-ordinate spirit by virtue of members' integrated sense of brotherhood, a political confraternity that allows the need for excellence, brainstorming and such a thick skin that will rather keep members stronger even in hard times than to break them apart when the stake is high".It is the danger of cross-carpeting in the words of Appadorai that has made its existence a bigger threat than the absence of it. Bringing it down to the context of Nigerian party system, we are one of the greatest victims of the danger of cross-carpeting. The wisdom in this is that in the act where people have chosen to belong to a given political party and the fact that in accepting the membership of the party of his choice, which he knows will not be allowed at any point in time while his party is still existing whether or not he resigns from the party, to leave that his surviving party to another, such person will be battle ready for his party both in mind and in practical vision for the sustenance and progress of his party.

Although defection of a member while his party still subsists should be frowned at but the defection will not be disturbed if the survival of the party is such that by its structure or the situation for which the party is to resolve provides a reason that the prohibition of the defection of members will deny the society of the opportunity of having progressive and articulate people in sensible political offices. There has to be need for the restraint that can make every plan of defection a difficult necessity. This, no doubt will provide the bond needed to strain party members into one mind and one course. The desire of a member to leave his

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party might be ordinarily necessary but not necessarily ordinary. The essence of this is that members from different tribes in a particular party, with the problem of cross-carpeting at will, will support its flag-bearer like brothers. Third, a broad-based university system: the constitution of Nigeria provides: "Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels". It goes further to state "... government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end government shall as and when practicable provide... free adult literacy programme". The drafters of our laws were optimistic of the power of learning and the providence in the womb of education.

Therefore, our universities and other places of learning must preach peace; they must prepare the minds of the students to accept one another as brothers and sisters regardless of tribes, sex or religion. They must know that it is by divine providence that they have come together to watch each other's back; to see in the action of one another a blessing not a curse; and above all, that sense of fulfillment that in our diversity we are even more united. Our teachers must tell us this! It is only when this is done that another beautiful provision of the constitution that the state has a duty to "... promote or encourage inter- marriage among persons from different places of origin or of different religious, ethnic or linguistic associations or ties" can ever be possible. In this case, when people are educated in the direction already mentioned above, they will be difficult to deceive by political actors. They will become watchers of their rights and very ready to defend their democracy in time of crisis. A highly educated people do not sell their conscience for money and when in politics it becomes obvious that people are no more gullible but follow the dictates of reason; political players will become responsible and sensitive of their

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promises. They will argue logically and will think twice before they speak. At this juncture, we need universities that will place objectivity ahead of sentiment; and practices ahead of theories.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is now obvious that factors like tribalism, religion, terrorism and secession` are not the fundamental elements that pose threat to the peace of Nigeria. There has been a debate hovering around the above factors as the stakes around which the ceaseless challenges of the country are tied. But it is noteworthy that the source is spotted in order that any solution proffered will have a sustainable background.

It won't be completely wrong to cast mind on things like tribalism and religion as threats but cannot be greatest before the mind numbing and nefarious facet of mind of our politicians that have reduced to decay the political system of the nation. The shortsighted views of our political men and women resulting in shutting out their eyes from values and ethics have become our greatest problem. I have led it bare in this article the damage they have caused us.

The peace of this nation is hanging in the balance today because of the spacious freedom of our politicians to achieve their ambitions by any means possible.

It is time we turn our searchlight to the political processes of this country; a close examination of our various political parties and most importantly, thorough re-orientation of the masses that is devoid of sentiment and tribal tones. Taking practical steps to utilize the solution discussed in this article will be promisingly helpful

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