

CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF NIGERIA AND CHALLENGES OF NATION BUILDING

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ABSTRACT

The year 1914 has been significant and contentious in Nigerian history. It was the year that the British imperialism convoluted and foisted the entity Nigeria upon many repository ethnic nationalities, which were independent or semi-independent kingdoms. The British imperialism and colonialism disregarded the capacity and wills of these various nationalities, and without passing through the stages of nations state to nation state. Consequently, the present Nigerian government is rolling out programmes with fanfare, pomp and pageantry to celebrate one hundred years of Nigeria's existence by 2014. This exercise calls for diametric examination and review of Nigeria's historic experiences and political development assessing whether it is necessary to undertake the celebration with huge and elephant expenses. This study articulates and examines several problems, issues and challenges bedeviling the polity. These issues examined under the rubrics of this include: electoral violence, ethnic nationalism, political corruption, identity crisis, sectarian political behavior, human right abuses and violations, democracy and democratization, federalism and functional constitution and development rhetorics. The paper adopts the theoretical framework of group/elite theory in the explanation of the labyrinth issues that are albatrosses to Nigerian Statehood. Finally, the paper makes efforts in suggesting ways that these issues and problems can be addressed rather than setting up a Presidential committee with whooping sum for 100 years celebration.

Keywords: Centenary, Corruption, Ethnicity, Nationalism.