

An Assessment of the Relevance of Adekanye's *The Retired Military as Emergent Power Factor in Nigeria to Contemporary Nigeria*

LE MILITAIRE A LA RETRAITE EN TANT QUE FACTEUR DE PUISSANCE EMERGENTE AU NIGERIA POUR LE CONTEMPORAIN NIGERIA: UNE EVALUATION DE LA PERTINENCE DE L'ADEKANYE

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Abstract

This article assessed the relevance of Adekanye's book titled "*The Retired Military as Emergent Power Factor in Nigeria*" to contemporary Nigeria. The eight chaptered book examined the growing power and influence of top retired military officers in Nigeria in every sector of the economy due to their wealth, ex-military connection, skill, prestige and experience. It posits that the military retirees are grouped into two contradictory categories, the growing rate of military retiree has been on the increase since 1966, the retired military are found virtually in every aspect of human endeavour and compete with those in the social group in political scene, and are fast emerging as new elite of power, with considerable influence in decision making that deals with issues of high politics. All these assumptions were correct except that few top military retirees have since 1999 emerged as the ruling elite and even though they are not physically in power now have to a great extent determined who occupied the site of power. The Peoples' Democratic Party which is the leading political party have been greatly influenced by these rich and influential retired military officers who at all cost ensure that their candidates win the elections. With the appointment of a new INEC chairman, the review of the electoral act, and the campaign for free and fair election, it is believed that a new set of elite will emerge that will awaken political development in Nigeria.

Key words: Adekanye; Nigeria; *The Retired Military as Emergent Power Factor in Nigeria*; Political development

Résumé

Cet article a évalué la pertinence du livre Adekanye a intitulé "Le militaire à la retraite en tant que facteur de puissance émergente au Nigeria" pour le Nigéria contemporain. Le livre a huit chaptres examiné le pouvoir et l'influence des croissantes des meilleurs officiers à la retraite au Nigeria dans tous les secteurs de l'économie en raison de leur richesse, l'ex-militaire de connexion, la compétence, le prestige et l'expérience. Il pose en principe que les retraités militaires sont regroupés en deux catégories contradictoires, le taux croissant de retraité militaire a été en hausse depuis 1966, les militaires retraités se retrouvent pratiquement dans tous les aspects de l'activité humaine et de rivaliser avec ceux du groupe social sur la scène politique, et sont en passe de devenir la nouvelle élite du pouvoir, avec une influence considérable dans la prise de décision qui traite des questions de haute politique. Toutes ces hypothèses étaient correctes, sauf que quelques top retraités militaires ont émergé depuis 1999 que l'élite dirigeante et même si elles ne sont pas physiquement au pouvoir maintenant dans une grande mesure déterminée qui occupaient le site de la puissance. Les peuples «Parti démocrate qui est le principal parti politique ont été fortement influencés par ces riches et influents officiers à la retraite qui, à tout prix veiller à ce que leurs candidats à remporter les élections. Avec la nomination d'un nouveau président CENI, la révision de la loi électorale, et la campagne pour l'élection libre et équitable, il est estimé que d'un nouvel ensemble de l'élite émergera qui va réveiller le développement politique au Nigeria.

Mots clés: Adekanye; Nigeria; Militaire à la retraire comme puissance émergente au Nigeria; développement politique

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SUMMARY OF THE BOOK HIGHLIGHTING ADEKANYE'S POSITION

The primary objective of the book is to study systematically the growing power and influence of retired military officers in Nigerian society. According to the study, the traditional concept of civil-military relations in Nigeria as one involving the separation between the civil society and the military organization is outmoded, and must be replaced by a new one that view the lines between the two spheres as increasingly blurred. This is due to the growing size and the role of Nigeria's military population in the society.

There is an increase in the number of retired military officers taking over key positions in the society especially in areas such as government and politics, the bureaucracies, business corporations, the world of trade and commerce, and agriculture. This is due to the wealth, ex-military connections, skill, prestige, and the experience they have acquired. They are fast emerging as new elite of power, with considerably influence decision-making regarding major issues of "high politics". The book thus studies the role and influence of retired military officers most especially the retired top military officers in Nigeria.

HYPOTHESES

The book under review aimed at achieving the following hypotheses:

1. that the traditional theory about civil-military relations in Nigeria, as one involving the separation between civil society and military has become outmoded and must be replaced by a new one that views the lines between the two organs of state power as increasingly blurred.
2. That the growing size and role of Nigeria's military population in society are a significant contributory factor to the latter observed trend.
3. That, beside their increasingly large size, retired military officers is fast assuming pivotal positions within the Nigerian society particularly in the government politics, the public bureaucracies and corporations of companies and even agriculture where such retired officers develop interest of tentacles at once inter-locking and interchangeable.
4. That many of the top retired military officers have available to them such resources as wealth, their ex-

military connection, skill, prestige and experience; and exploit them to the maximum as bases of new influence.

5. That even though as yet unorganized politically, pluralistic in their membership, and not the self-conscious as a group, Nigeria's class of retired military operating through a kind of "old boy" networks are fast emerging as a new elite of power, whose members considerably influence decision-making regarding major issues of "high politics."

To study the retired top military officers as an emergent power factor in contemporary Nigerian society, the writer divided the book into eight chapters.

Chapter 1 looked at the growth rate and size of military retirement in Nigerian, especially at the senior officer level (i.e. army Lt.-Cols and above, as well as their navy and airforce equivalents) and the major factors that explain the phenomenon, specifying in the process some of the important personalities involved.

The author grouped the military population into two contradictory categories- those who eagerly long for retirement without having it and those who are retired without wanting it. The first category, comprised of senior ranking military officers who have made enough contacts in government, commerce and industry, banking and finance to be able to set up their own private post-retirement businesses but are require to put in the statutory 15 years' active service in order to qualify for full pension benefits, including the initial gratuity payments needed as a post retirement working capital.

On the other hand, the second category consisted of the generality of the rank and file, re-enlisted ex-service men, and non-commissioned officers who being lower in remuneration structure, are ready to work till they are old or possibly die in active service because they are certain that their post-retirement benefits will amount to nothing. Yet they are the first to be affected in any general demobilization by national policy.

Fourteen factors accounting for the high rate of military retirement at the senior officers' level were identified with some of the major personalities involved. The factors include:

- Coups or counter coups, including attempted once;
- Thirty months' civil war;
- The retirement associated with the 1970 Special Board of Officers inquiring into the activities of ex-biafran officers;
- Oil boom of 1973/74;
- The "great purge" of November 27, 1975;
- Exacerbating effects of insecurity of tenure;
- Frustration due to promotion blockage and succession;
- Retirement time to coincide with the first return to civilian rule on October 1, 1979;

- Party political considerations and military loyalty;
- Federal character principle enshrined in the 1979 Nigerian constitution;
- Relative youth as a consideration;
- Normal retirement based on expiration of period of engagement;
- Disability, and injury and such other medical grounds; and
- The factor of economic recession.

The **second chapter** considered pension cost as an aspect of military expenditure though dealing with military activities in the past. The work is supported with facts and figures supplied by the *Recurrent and Capital Estimates* (of the Federal Republic of Nigeria). Most of the factors responsible for the high rate of military retirement, account for, though not fully, Nigeria's growing military pension burden. Other factors identified by the writer include the periodic increases in pay approved for the military among other public servants in the post-1970 era. The provision for pension and gratuities was made first in 1969 (Decree No. 49 of 1969) in order to motivate those fighting the civil war. Since then, that provision has become part of military decrees. The chapter specifies the number of years that the worker must put in order to get his pension and gratuity, the formula for calculating pension benefits and also the figures of expenditures on the pensions and gratuities for the Nigerian armed forces from 1966 to 1987.

The next chapter, **chapter 3** titled "Military-Business Complex" coined in 1978 by Lt-Gen Theophilus Yakubu Danjuma a former chief of army staff now retired discussed the role of retired military officers in the various private ventures, either as contractors to the defence establishment, in retail trade and commerce, large-scale farming, or as registered professionals (doctors, architects, lawyers, engineers, etc.). The writer identified thirteen major areas where retired military officers businessmen have become active in. They include:

- Defence procurement and contracts
- Large-scale farming and agro-allied ventures
- Import and export business, including shipping
- Distributive trade and commerce
- Building and construction
- Petroleum business, private mining and quarrying
- Motor industry, including transportation and haulage services
- Real estate or property development
- Manufacturing and industry (other than food processing)
- Banking and insurance
- Private security business
- Printing and publishing
- Law, medical and other professional practices and retainership

The book went further to give examples of each

business group and their owners in *Table 3.1* found on pages 58 to 60.

Chapter 4 analysed the role played by the retired military officers in the politics and government of the second republic (1979-83) under President Shehu Shagari under four areas:

1. participation of ex-officers in the 1976-79 electoral struggles preparatory to the first return to civilian rule on October 1, 1979;
2. the political pardon granted to the ex-“Biafran” leader Ojukwu, and its effects upon the Nigerian army, politics, and society;
3. retired military officer’s role in governance, both as public officer or party political office holders, and, if any, in the seamy side of politics of the time;
4. retired military officer’s involvement in the controversial elections of 1983 and the immediate aftermath.

The **fifth chapter** outlined the major areas of government services where retired military men seek re-employment with examples and details. Except for retired military officers with additional professional/academic qualification acquired while either in the service or prior to joining the force, the avenue of employment open to persons with an essentially military skill is very limited. Apart from the defence and security establishment of the state, there is no other agency or level of government that has the need for the use and hire of the military man’s special expertise. But with the government provision of resettlement scheme where most retire top military officers are automatically placed on the reserved list, it is very possible for them to be recalled to service by the Federal Government be it civil or military.

The chapter provided the major areas of government services in which retired military men seek re-employment with specific examples. The major areas include:

- Semi-Military public jobs such as Nigerian Police, Prison Service, the Customs and Immigration Departments, the Federal Fire Service, the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), the National Youth Service Corps (N. Y. S. C.). Other agencies known to prefer as job applicant retired persons with previous military , including naval and air force experience are the Airport Authority, Civil Aviation Department facilities such as the Civil Aviation Training School in Zaria; Nigerian Ports Authority; Nautical College at Oron and the Nigerian Shipping Line. They are also employed in the Posts and Telegraph Departments such as the Nigerian Postal Services and the Telecommunications Companies.
- Diplomatic Posting Abroad- this is the second area that has attracted the interests of retired senior military officers seeking re-engagement in public service because of the prestige, privileges, and level of remuneration attached to it.

- Employment in other Public Service Department such as the judiciary, National Sport Commission etc.
- Teaching and Research as Second Career; and
- Administration of Sports

Chapter 6 highlighted the fact that since 1966, retired military officers have been appointed to Corporate Boards and Other Interlocking Directorships. They are also on the Boards of Multinational Corporations while **chapter 7** pointed to the emergence of a new authority vacuum rising from the ban on the ex-politicians from participating in politics by General Babangida on June 28, 1986, and argued that the retired military are among the top social groups seeking to take over, if and when the present military administration leaves office. **Chapter 8** which is the concluding chapter examined the concept of elite and power, looked at the relationship between the military elites and other elites, and measured the retired military influence since 1975.

The application of elite in the military refers to “ a small proportion of men within the military profession (senior-officers nucleus) who have the greatest amount of actual and potential power, if power is defined as the control over the behaviour of others” (Janowitz, 1960, p.6-7).

The military, whether active, inactive, or retired is more or less synonymous with both “state power” and “group power”, that is in relation to other social groups competing on the political scene such as the political elite, the bureaucratic elite, the business elite, the intellectual elite, aristocratic elite, religious elite and the labour elite. The relationship of the military elite with the other elite groups has been one of interdependence, with the military merely competing with those other elite groups for a share allocatable resources or additional power bases. But since the beginning of 1980’s when a lot of retired military officers occupied various pivotal positions in the society as identified in chapter 7, the relationship has been described as one marked by structural penetration of other elite spheres by the retired military. We find the retired military official in other elite groups and sometimes they come together with other elite groups to pursue common goal, for example Maj.-Gen. Shehu Musa Yar’Adua and the late business magnate Chief M. K. O. Abiola.

The writer observed that Nigeria’s military officers do not have to conspire-neither do they have to hold formal governmental power- before they can be adjudged politically influential. Because of their high social status, they enjoy good access to the highest decision-making organs in government including the top political leadership whether civilian or military, the highest law-making organs in government, the upper levels of the executive and the bureaucracy, the top judiciary, and the top military establishment. The book concludes by saying that the problem posed by the rise of the retired military is institutional and structural. The retired military elite have performed visible prominent role in the society because of

their new wealth, ex-military connections, skill, prestige, experience, and “old boy” networks. They are a new force to observe on the emergent political scene. However, whether or not effective countervailing institutions can be devised to regulate its activities may well constitute the crux of the new civil-military relations, as indeed the democratisation project, for Nigeria in the coming 1990’s and beyond.

MY ASSESSMENT

I agree with the following points made by the writer:

- That the military retiree can be grouped into two contradictory categories-those who badly want retirement most especially the senior - ranking military officers who have made enough money to enable them establish their own private business without having it and those who have retirement without wanting it.
- That the growing rate of military retiree has been on the increase since 1966, when the first and second coup took place. The list keeps increasing as more officers are retired every year and as power changes hand.
- That the retired military officers are found virtually in every aspect of human endeavour assuming pivotal positions within the society more especially in government, business corporations, and agriculture. The list keeps increasing as more officers are retired every year and as new administration assumes office.
- That they compete with those in the other social groups on the political scene such as the political elite, the bureaucratic elite, the business elite, the intellectual elite, aristocratic elite, religious elite, and the labour elite for a share locatable resources or additional power bases. But since the beginning of 1980’s when a lot of retired military officers occupied various pivotal positions in the society as identified in chapter 7, the relationship has been described as one marked by *structural penetration* of other elite spheres by the retired military. We find the retired military official in other elite groups and sometimes they come together with other elite groups to pursue a common goal.
- That these top military retirees have available to them wealth, ex-military connection, skill, prestige, and experience which they exploit to the maximum as bases of new influence.

However on the assertion that although pluralistic in their membership, influencing major decision-making regarding major issues in “high politics” and operating through a kind of “old boy” networks they are fast emerging as a new elite of power, the situation has changed. They have since 1999 emerged as the ruling

elite and even though they are not physically in power now, they have to a great extent determined who occupies the site of power, and are warning up to take over power again completely.

It is obvious that the entire military retiree population is made up of two contradictory categories. On one hand, there exist a cabal of retired generals that constitute the power bloc in Nigeria and maintain the military tradition of seniority discipline. This cabal comprises 2, 3, 4 star generals. A significant number of this group are businessmen and emerging millionaires with minimal political activity. It is from this group that Obasanjo drew his power.

Even within this cabal is an inner chamber known as the “big five” comprising of Olusegun Obasanjo, Mohammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, and Abdul Salami Abubaka who are past grand masters or past Presidents of Nigeria. Among these five, the power of Gowon and Buhari are whittled down because their regimes were overthrown. Obasanjo is the de facto leader of the group being the most senior of the rest except for Gowon who has no political machine or structure and therefore adopts a very low key approach (Nwosu, 2005).

On the other hand are those who are still wallowing in abject poverty. They find it difficult to make ends meet because the little income (pension) that they depend upon is not regular. For example in 2000, the government owed railway workers and retired military pensioners’ eight and ten month’s salary arrears respectively (Zakari, 2004). This shows that even among these retirees, there is segregation based on class, ethnicity amongst others.

“The military has become the most unstable state institution in Nigeria” (Adejumobi, 1999, p.9). “No other country has promoted and retired its generals faster than Nigeria, where political imperative led to pensioning off potential opponents or officers of questionable loyalty” (Mongabey.com, 1991, p.3).

The list of retirees kept increasing as more officers are retired every year and as power change hands. For instance, Obasanjo shortly after his inauguration in 1999 ordered the retirement of former military governors and senior military officers who severed under the military regimes of Abacha and Abubakar (Adenmobi, 1999).

In 2005, 38 generals were retired-20 Major Generals and 18 Brigadier Generals. The Major Generals included Alexandra Mshelbwela, Tanko Abdul, M. C. Osahor, D. R. A. Ndefor, T.W.T Gbor, A. Adfolalu, Gandhi Ziddon, F. O. Iorshase, and Peter Unuade. While the Brigadiers General includes George Emdin, C. S. Emakawe, I. Emejuru, A. I. Etomi, J. O. Arogbofa, G. T. Pedro, C.O Adebiyi, M. Gambo, H. K. Oke, E. S. Ekhuda, M. A.Umar, E. Mai, M.O. Ibrahim, Oki Walter, I. Akinyemi, I. A. Mohammed, P. M. Atere, and J. K. Ayanwale (Nwosu, 2005, p.4-6).

When Yar’Adua assumed office in 2007, 40 senior officers of the Nigerian Armed forces were retired. The

list includes Major Generals S. Adewuyi; Major General R. Ihekire; Major General Lawrence Jokotala; Major General Joseph Oshanupin and Major General Maina Saleh (BBC, 2007).

Since the 1970’s the military has produced more millionaires than any other profession. Many of have become chairmen or directors of parastatals or private companies. Some have become contractors while some are eagerly sought by business because of their personal ties to the regime (Adekanye, 1999). Some have even set up their own businesses including educational institutions like Bells University owned by Obasanjo. These ambitious military officers who had tested power were pensioned off and rewarded in the private sector (as a result of government policy on resettlement of retired military personnel in the society) are able to advance economically from the loots which were unchecked and there by created business opportunities for themselves without been necessarily monitored.

In order to cover their loots and protect the many investments that have made within and outside the country they fought tooth and nail to remain in power and a vital part of the decision-making process of the country. Under Babangida’s regime, most public agencies ran unaudited account for over five years. The National Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Development in one of such agencies. During Abubakar’s reign (1988-1999), foreign accounts of Nigerian Maritime Services were completely depleted through dubious contracts rewarded on the instruction of General Abdulsalam (Anselem, 1999). Recently, the Governor of Edo state Adams Oshiomole, while presenting a paper titled “the Media, Leadership, Development and Good Government” at the Press Week Celebration of the Delta State Chapter of the Nigerian Union of Journalists said that 16.45 trillion naira was squandered by the three tiers of government under Obasanjo’s watch from 1999 to 2007 (Awolusi, 2010).

Because of government policy on resettlement of soldiers in the society, these few elite in the military retired and returned to power as civilians in order to protect their mostly illegally accumulated wealth, institutionalize and consolidate their power, control and hegemony over the state and society in Nigeria. They want to acquire more and protect what they already have (Adekanye, 1999). This and many more led to the choice of Obasanjo as the presidential candidate for the 1999 election.

The emergence of the retired soldiers in Nigerian politics is a powerful phenomenon that became more prominent under the Babangida political transition programme and under Abubakar’s political programme (1988/99).

During Abubakar’s political transition programme, nine political parties registered for the election out of which three parties survived the system for the commencement

of the fourth Republic, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and Alliance for Democracy (AD), and the All (Nigeria) People's Party (APP). These three parties were to be elite parties because they were composed of elites. Since then political parties have become elite parties.

The APP was composed majorly of all those that served as Abacha's aides. The AD was made up of Yoruba leaders, most of who believed in the June 12 mandate and had the objective of producing a presidential candidate of Yoruba extraction in 1999 (Zakari, 2006).

The PDP was the result of four elite associations, G-34 committee (those Abacha denied registration in his self-succession to power; former National Party of Nigeria (NPN) politicians; followers of the late General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua- People Democratic Movement and social democrats, with the name Social Progressive Party (SPP) (Zakari, 2006).

One hundred and thirty rich and influential retired military officers were members of PDP comprising mainly of colonels though there were 30 Major General (Nmodu, 1999). Obasanjo was chosen by the Northern elite to protect their interest with the belief that some "power shift" has to be made to prevent the Yoruba dominated area from pulling apart. His opponent was Samuel Falae an Economist and financial minister under Babangida representing All Peoples Party and the Alliance for Democracy. Both of them had Northerners as running mates (Adejumobi, 1999).

PDP won the presidential sit with 62.78% victory over the party. It also won majority of the seats in the National Assembly- senate 59 seats and the house 206 seats. According to BBC news, the elections were rigged. More votes were cast than the number of voters registered. Billions of naira exchanged hands as voters were bought and sold (Hawley, 1999).

Foreign observers including Jimmy Carter and ex-military Chief Colin Powell pointed to significant vote rigging but Carter who was a friend of Obasanjo said that "there was no evidence that abuses would have affected

the overall outcome" making it clear that Obasanjo will be accepted by the US and Western government (Hawley, 1999). Even when the matter was taken to court, it took over three years for the court to give its verdict.

The 2003 election was rigged in favour of Obasanjo. Out of the 30 parties that registered for the election and the 20 parties that were finally approved to take part in the elections, PDP did not only win the presidential seat, it also won majority of the seat in the National Assembly. It won 76 seats in the Senate and 223 seats in the House of Representatives (Abati, 2008). The elections were marred by violence and cases of irregularity. About 105 election related deaths were recorded (EU Election Observation Mission Final Report, 2003, p.6).

Neither the government nor the Independent Electoral Commission INEC could explain the over 90% vote record for PDP in Delta and Rivers state and the 99.2% recorded in Obasanjo's hometown. In some areas, PDP recorded more votes than the local population in the same area (Aliagan, 2006). Godfatherism and incumbency were among the negative traits of the 2003 election. In Anambra state, we had people like Chris Mbah who sponsored Chris Ngige. After one month and 13 days as governor of Anambra state, Chris Ngige was adopted by armed police officers sent by his godfather for refusing to dance to his tune.

The 2007 election was not different from that of 2003 (Osinbajo, 2009). It was also rigged in favour of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua who was appointed by Obasanjo and his co-elites to take his place since he did not succeed with his third term agenda. Even at the state and local level, the ruling party made sure that it planted its people there.

The following tables are indications of the predominance of PDP in elections between 1999, 2003 and 2007. The founding fathers of the party were also retired military officers that strived to ensure their relevance in politics and to ensure the continued presence of "military" men in Nigeria politics.

Table 1
Election Results for 1999, 2003, and 2007 20 February 1999 National Assembly Election

Senate

Registered Voters	57,938,945
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	24,386,247 (42.1%)

House of representatives

Registered Voters	57,938,945
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	23,573,407 (40.7%)

Party	Senate		House of representatives	
	% of votes	Number of seats (109)	% of votes	Number of seats (360)
People's Democratic Party (PDP)	56.4%	59	57.1%	206
All People's Party (APP)	31.2%	29	30.6%	74
Alliance for Democracy (AD)	12.4%	20	12.4%	68
Vacant/Undeclared Seats	-	1	-	12

Table 2
27 February 1999 Presidential Election

Registered Voters	57,938,945
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	30,280,052 (52.3%)
Invalid/Blank Votes	431,611
Total Valid Votes	29,848,441

Candidate (Party) [Coalition]	Number of votes	% of votes
Olusegun Obasanjo (PDP)	18,738,154	62.78%
Olu Falae (AD) [AD-APP]	11,110,287	37.22%

Table 3
12 April 2003 National Assembly Election

		Senate		House of representatives		
Registered Voters				Registered Voters	60,823,022	
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)		29,995,171 (49.3%)		Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	30,386,270 (50.0%)	
Invalid/Blank Votes		965,064		Invalid/Blank Votes	1,153,200	
Total Valid Votes		29,030,107		Total Valid Votes	29,233,070	

Party	Senate		House of Representatives		
	Number of votes	% of Votes	Number of seats (109)	Number of votes	% of votes
People's Democratic Party (PDP)	15,585,538	53.69%	76	15,927,807	54.49%
All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP)	8,091,783	27.87%	27	8,021,531	27.44%
Alliance for Democracy (AD)	2,828,082	9.74%	6	2,711,972	9.28%
United Nigeria People's Party (UNPP)	789,705	2.72%	-	803,432	2.75%
National Democratic Party (NDP)	459,462	1.58%	-	561,161	1.92%
All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA)	429,073	1.48%	-	397,147	1.36%
People's Redemption Party (PRP)	204,929	0.71%	-	222,938	0.76%
Others	641,535	2.21%	-	587,082	2.01%
Vacant	-	-	-	-	-
					1

Table 4
19 April 2003 Presidential Election

Registered Voters	60,823,022
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	42,018,735 (69.1%)
Invalid/Blank Votes	2,538,246
Total Valid Votes	39,480,489

Candidate (Party)	Number of votes	% of votes
Olusegun Obasanjo (PDP)	24,456,140	61.94%
Muhammadu Buhari (ANPP)	12,710,022	32.19%
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu (APGA)	1,297,445	3.29%
Jim Nwobodo (UNPP)	169,609	0.43%
Gani Fawehimi (NCP)	161,333	0.41%
Sarah Jubril (PAC)	157,560	0.40%
Ike Nwachukwu (NDP)	132,997	0.34%
Christopher Okotie (JP)	119,547	0.30%
Balarabe Musa (PRP)	100,765	0.26%
Arthur Nwankwo (PMP)	57,720	0.15%
Emmanuel Okereke (APLP)	26,921	0.07%
Kalu Idika Kalu (NNPP)	23,830	0.06%
Muhammadu Dikko Yusuf (MDJ)	21,403	0.05%
Yahaya Ndu (ARP)	11,565	0.03%
Abayomi Ferreira (DA)	6,727	0.02%
Tunji Braithwaite (NAP)	6,932	0.02%
Iheanyichukwu Nnaji (BNPP)	5,987	0.02%
Olapade Agoro (NAC)	5,756	0.01%
Pere Ajuwa (LDPN)	4,473	0.01%
Mojisola Adekunle Obasanjo (MMN)	3,757	0.01%

Table 5
21 April 2007 Presidential Election*

Registered Voters	61,567,036
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	Not Available (approx. 58%)
Invalid/Blank Votes	Not Available
Total Valid Votes	35,397,517

Candidate (Party)	Number of votes	% of votes
Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (PDP)	24,638,063	69.60%
Muhammadu Buhari (ANPP)	6,605,299	18.66%
Atiku Abubakar (AC)	2,637,848	7.45%
Orji Uzor Kalu (PPA)	608,803	1.72%
Attahiru Baforawa (DPP)	289,224	0.82%
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu (APGA)	155,947	0.44%
Pere Ajuwa (AD)	89,241	0.25%
Christopher Okotie (FRESH)	74,049	0.21%
Patrick Utomi (ADC)	50,849	0.14%
Asakarawon Olapere (NPC)	33,771	0.10%
Ambrose Owuru (HDP)	28,519	0.08%
Arthur Nwankwo (PMP)	24,164	0.07%
Emmanuel Okereke (ALP)	22,677	0.06%
Lawrence Adedoyin (APS)	22,409	0.06%
Aliyu Habu Fari (NDP)	21,974	0.06%
Galtima Liman (NNPP)	21,665	0.06%
Maxi Okwu (CPP)	14,027	0.04%
Sunny Okogwu (RPN)	13,566	0.04%
Iheanyichukwu Nnaji (BNPP)	11,705	0.03%
Osagie Obayuwana (NCP)	8,229	0.02%
Olapade Agoro (NAC)	5,752	0.02%
Akpone Solomon (NMDP)	5,664	0.02%
Isa Odidi (ND)	5,408	0.02%
Aminu Abubakar (NUP)	4,355	0.01%
Mojisola Adekunle Obasanjo (MMN)	4,309	0.01%

*The figures in the table are based on final results announced by Maurice Iwu, Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), on 23 April 2007.

Table 6
21 April 2007 National Assembly Election

Senate

Registered Voters	Not Available
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	Not Available (N/A)

House of Representatives

Registered Voters	Not Available
Total Votes (Voter Turnout)	Not Available (N/A)

Party	Senate	House of representatives
	Number of seats (109)	Number of seats (360)
People's Democratic Party (PDP)	87	263
All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP)	14	63
Action Congress (AC)	6	30
Progressive People's Alliance (PPA)	1	3
Accord Party (ACCORD)	1	-
Labour Party (LP)	-	1

Source: African Elections Database (2011)

Retired military generals and other high-ranking military officials have hijacked political politics in Nigeria. With quite a significant number of them serving in the government today, a number of others behind the scene define the fortunes or misfortunes of political parties (Aina, 2004).

Money has become the determinate factor in Nigerian politics making it impossible for citizens to exercise their democratic right. The country's constitution and the electoral act have also facilitated this. The electoral act, which is the referral document on all elections, leaves so much to the discretion of the parties as regards to how

candidates for the general elections are to emerge from party primaries. These elites utilize the loopholes in the electoral act to their advantage.

Genuine party members are seen as those who have contributed financially to the cause of the party, which means that it is only those with the financial muscle that have access to leadership and the entire party machinery. These influential party members change the party rules in order to favour specific candidates and those who have met with unscrupulous bidding (Orji, 2005).

The media and press reports support these parties by not emphasizing on the negative aspects of the elections. They overlook the irregularities in the elections thus assisting in nurturing a flawed democracy. This was because the presidential and gubernatorial candidates pay for access to the media. Even the federal and state newspapers tend to favour candidates of their choice (Sadeeq, 2008).

The evidence of elitism is also in the type and nature of developmental projects executed by the federal and state government. "In 2000, the federal government allocated N50 billion towards the building of a stadium and sports village for the All-Africa Games festival that was to last for four weeks. This was while the government owed railway workers and retired military pensioners' eight and ten month's salary arrears respectively". The same government also appropriated N2 billion for the hosting of a world-class Meeting of Common Wealth Heads of Governments few months later. These projects had no direct bearing on improving the living conditions of the common person (Zakari, 2006, p.166).

The legislature has been very slow in its constitutional and political duties. They are busy pursuing self-aggrandizement. Hence, capacity building has fallen below 40%, over 30% of industries have shut down nationwide, unemployment rate has risen to 30%, inflation to 20% annually, and over 70% of the population is living below poverty line (Dangiwa, 2005).

One of the most nagging issues that have kept the need for constitutional review on the front burner is the deficiency in Nigeria's electoral laws, which comprise the Constitution and the Electoral Act. Electoral reform is one pressing issue on which virtually every Nigerian - the electorate, pro-democracy activists and civil society organisations, political parties, elections monitors/observers and friends of Nigeria across the world have achieved a consensus.

The grave deficits and weaknesses of the country's electoral processes were most conspicuous during the 2007 general elections. In addition, some ambiguities and contradictions have also been detected in the Constitution. "For instance, to qualify for chairmanship and membership of the Independent National Electoral Commission, the candidate, according to Section 156 of the Constitution, must possess the same qualifications as a candidate aspiring to the House of Representatives

as stipulated in Sections 65 and 66. Incidentally, one of such qualifications is membership of a political party. It definitely could not have been the intentment of the Constitution for members of the INEC charged with the task of organizing and supervising free and fair elections to be card carrying members of political parties" (Imam, 2010, p.12).

With the historic passage of the amendments to the provisions of the 1999 Constitution, Nigerians now have a document which some say has the input of elected representatives of the people. The major amendments where that presidential/governorship elections are to hold 120-150 days to the expiration of the tenure of the incumbents. There will be no tenure extension for a sitting president/governor who wins a return election. Only court judgement will be used to disqualify candidates from running for elections. There will be financial autonomy for judiciary, INEC and National Assembly among others (Imam, 2010).

The removal of Maurice Iwu INEC Chairman who presided over the last 2007 election which was widely seen as chaotic and fraudulent by the President Goodluck Jonathan (Duffield, 2010) is another move to insure that there is free and fair elections and that the right people gain access to power, some Nigerian's belief that this may not be the solution to the problem. According to Donald Duke, former Governor of Cross Rivers State, the outcome of the election does not depend on the Chairman of INEC. Elections are rigged at the polling booths, which mean that the electoral officers at the states level are the most crucial link in the election chain. This means that there is the need to transform electoral system from the ground up. The irony according to the Governor is that majority of the Nigerian politician, including those making the pledges to the international community do not believe in free and fair election (Amaechi, 2010).

CONCLUSION

Indeed the retired military have emerged as the ruling elite in Nigeria. This is limited to a few of them as there is segregation among them. This group from time to time recruit new members but will always want to be in charge. With the registration of 57 political parties so far for the 2011 election, the appointment of a new INEC chairman, the review of electoral act and the campaign for free and fair election, we believe that a new set of elite will emerge that will awaken political development of the country.

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