

### **3. Development of Political Parties in Nigeria (II)**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

During the First Republic, there were three major political parties: the NPC, the NCNC, and the AG. The minor political parties were NNDP, NEPU, UMBC, NDC and UNIP. These minor parties emerged as a result of different political climates and circumstances. One feature of the Second Republic political parties which did not exist during the First Republic was the need for registration by the Federal Electoral Commission which greatly reduced the tendency for splinter parties to emerge.

Thus from the beginning of the Second Republic to its collapse in December 1983, there were six registered political parties. These were the National Party of Nigeria, the Unity Party of Nigeria, the Nigerian Peopleâ€™s Party, the Great Nigerian Peopleâ€™s Party, the Peopleâ€™s Redemption Party and the Nigerian Advance Party. The first five were registered at the beginning of the second republic while the NAP was registered only in 1983 as the sixth.

The six political parties which were registered in the second republic had some relationships with the political parties of the first republic. For instance, at the wake of the military intervention in 1966, there were two major political alliances — the NNA and the UPGA. The NNA was made up of the NPC, Akintolaâ€™s NNDP, Mid-West Democratic Front, and Chike Obiâ€™s Dynamic Party while the UPGA was made up of the NCNC, the Action Group and the Northern Progressive Front. The military presence in government merely silenced their leaders who only emerged immediately the doors to political activities were opened in 1978. Thus a strong member of the defunct NPC Alhaji Shehu Shagari emerged as the presidential candidate for the NPN, Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the Action Group emerged as the presidential flag-bearer for the UPN, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe of the NCNC emerged as the presidential candidate for the NPP and Alhaji Ibrahim Waziri a former member of the NPC emerged as the presidential candidate for the GNPP. In an effort to usher in the second Republic, most of the participants in the first Republic re-emerged as party leaders or supporters but their new political organizations were forced by the electoral laws to have a national outlook.

At the beginning of the Second Republic, it was the responsibility of the Federal Electoral Commission to register and regulate the conduct of the political parties. These became necessary because the political parties were considered as forces for national integration. The ban on political activities was lifted on September 21, 1978 which enabled the Federal Electoral Commission to set out guidelines for the formation of political parties.

After the guidelines were given, the ban lifted, 52 political associations emerged seeking registration out of which only 5 were registered. Thus a multi-party system was introduced into the Nigeria arena.

### **3.2 THE NATIONAL PARTY OF NIGERIA (NPN)**

#### **Origin**

The National Party of Nigeria was one of the five political parties registered by the Federal Electoral Commission in September 1978. It emerged as a reincarnation of the Northern People's Congress. The party, was essentially the brain child of Northern mutual understanding political groups which were initially separate in the Constituent Assembly. Those who planned to establish this political party started by calling it National Movement and they were from Bauchi, Gongola, Borno, Niger and Sokoto States.

The National Movement had matured in August 1978 when five representatives from each state joined to formally agree to work together as a political party. Thus the movement was transformed into the political party with the name of the National Party of Nigeria.

#### **Party Objectives**

The National Party of Nigeria had the following objectives:

- (i) To maintain and protect the unity and sovereignty of Nigeria as one indivisible political entity;
- (ii) To promote unity, solidarity, harmonious co-existence amongst all Nigerians irrespective of their religious, tribal and other differences;
- (iii) To uphold federalism as a form of government for Nigeria;
- (iv) To ensure the practice and maintenance of democracy, the rule of law, and social justice in the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (v) To promote mutual respect for religions, culture, tradition and heritage of all the various communities in Nigeria;
- (vi) To preserve, promote and safe-guard Nigerian cultural heritage;
- (vii) To eradicate illiteracy and promote learning, science and culture;
- (viii) To achieve and consolidate real political and economic independence and self-respect for Nigeria;
- (ix) To build and sustain a strong modern economy under the control of Nigerians;
- (x) To promote the principle of equal opportunity and treatment for every citizen of Nigeria;
- (xi) To co-operate with progressive African and other nationalist movements and organizations working for the eradication of colonialism, imperialism, neocolonialism and racism from the African continent;
- (xii) To co-operate with all members of the OAU and UNO and any regional groupings that shall be in the best interest of Nigeria;
- (xiii) To help find just and peaceful settlement of international problems.

The NPN however emphasized three of its objectives as the most urgent and crucial. These are provision of shelter, food and qualitative education. These three areas, the NPN aimed to use as the instrument for transforming the country in five years.

## Ideology

The NPN believed strongly in capitalism. Its reformist manifesto was towards protecting the interest of the elite and the wealthy, especially the ruling class. The party shunned state's participation in the economy. In that wise, the party discouraged state's control, management and ownership of companies such as the Airways, the Railways, the National Electric Power Authority, Shipping etc. It in fact exerted pressure on government to sell these organizations to private citizens. In spite of this orientation, the party did not oppose mixed economy.

The party's slogan was One Nation; one Destiny, One God.

## Organizational Structure

The organization of the NPN was influenced by three major factors:

- (i) the origin of the party;
- (ii) the electoral laws; and
- (iii) the aims and objectives of the party and membership.

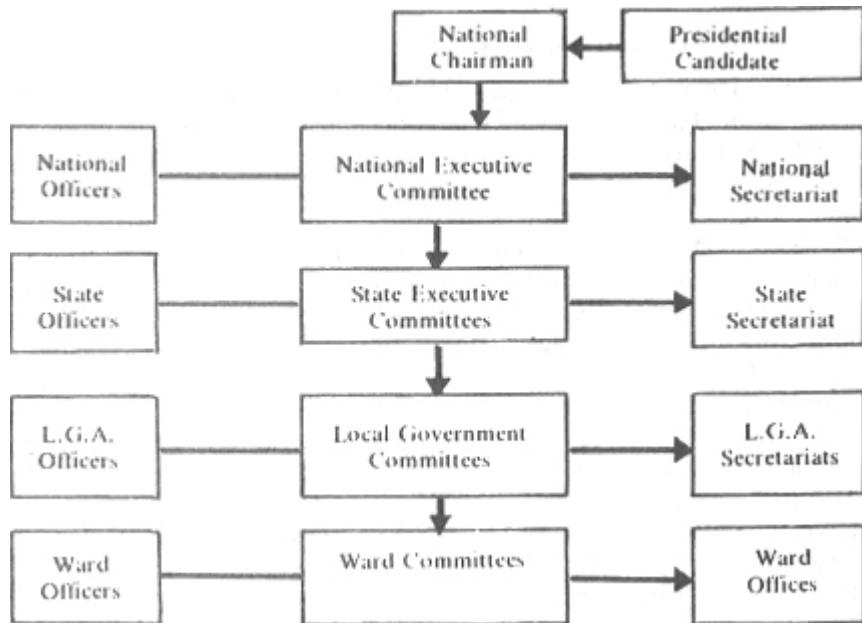
The origin of the party was closely connected with the defunct NPC. The National Movement which later became the NPN was predominantly northern. Indeed the whole arrangement of a political party had been concluded before non-northerners were brought in. The northern group had set up several committees and sub-committees to deal with a variety of issues. One of such committee, the Steering Committee which was chaired by J.S. Tarka had Ibrahim Tahir as Secretary. When the party came into existence, groups were encouraged to join through nominated individuals. For instance, states' representatives were treated and accepted as such. Thus no party member was admitted except if he was affiliated to a group. This group representatives also aided or enhanced the *zoning system* for which the NPN was noted. Four zones were established viz — North, East, West and the minorities, and positions were also to be rotated according to the zones. As a result, the North was to have the Presidency, the East, the Vice-Presidency, the West had the Chairmanship of the Party while the minorities had the Senate Presidency. Other important positions were similarly zoned. The Secretary General of the Party was zoned to the North as well as the Financial and Publicity Secretaries. It is therefore true that even though the NPN wore a national appearance in name and outlook, it was essentially a northern party in association with scattered southern sympathizers.

The NPN also made a distinction between party officers and party government functionaries. Thus there were two lines of administration — those holding party positions such as the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary General, Publicity Secretary, Legal Officer, States' Chairmen their deputies and local government officers. The NPN had a chain of National Officers and State officers. Those appointed to government position were ex-officio members of the National Executive of the party. Essentially the affairs of the party including distribution of government patronage were in the hands of the Party Executive while party government functionaries were just the instruments through which the party functions were carried out.

The organizational structure of the NPN encouraged participation of all members of the party in decision making.

The organizational structure of the Party is shown in the chart below:

**Organizational Chart of the NPN**



### **Leadership and Membership**

The leadership of the NPN was mostly those associated with the defunct NPC whose members were themselves mostly from the North. Important names associated with these political parties included Alhaji Shehu Shagari who was a Minister in the Federal Government between 1959 and 1966, Commissioner under the military government of General Gowon till 1975 and had served in all leading ministries and Boards of Corporations. Shagari is from Sokoto State and was the first President. Alhaji Maitama Sule was a liberal and perhaps represented the progressive majority in the party. He was also a Minister in the Balewa government as well as a State Commissioner and was the Chairman of the Public Complaints Commission before resigning in 1978. He was Nigeria's permanent representative at the United Nations.

Alhaji Kam Salem was from Borno State. He was the Inspector-General of Police under the military.

J.S. Tarka, a Tiv from Benue State was the leader of the UMBC during the first Republic. He was strongly opposed to the NPC policies in the North. He never held any ministerial position until the advent of the military administration. He was an NPN Senator.

Dr Sola Saraki, from Kwara State had no political experience. He was a local baron and used his wealth immensely to win support and install in Kwara State an NPN government. He was the Senate Leader.

Professor Iya Abubakar until 1978, the Vice-Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University was from Gongola State. Adamu Ciroma, also from Borno State was once the Managing Director of the *New Nigerian* and later the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. Central to the

formation of the party was Dr. Ibrahim Tahir from Bauchi State. He was until the formation of the party the Head of the Department of Sociology, Ahmadu Bello University.

The Southern leaders included Chief A.M.A. Akinloye who was the party Chairman, Chief M.K.O. Abiola who was the Deputy Chairman, Dr. Joseph Wayas who was Senate President, Dr. Alex Ekwueme who was the Vice President, Chief Anthony Enahoro, C.C. Onoh, Chief Richard Akinjide etc all featured in the political leadership in different capacities. The states' leaders were mostly the Gubernatorial candidates. Prominent among whom were Tatari Ali for Bauchi, Kangiwa for Niger, Adamu Atta for Kwara, Okilo for Rivers, Clement Isong for Cross-River, Aper Aku for Benue, and others.

The NPN enjoyed elitist membership in the country especially as most of its supporters were the political overlords in the first republic. Every Nigerian citizen was qualified to register as a member of the Party. In spite of its democratic tendency the NPN did not as a matter of policy embrace the masses, it was more protective of the capitalist interests in the party. The party had massive support in some Northern states while in the South its supporters were mostly urban dwellers. As a result of the varying support which the party enjoyed in the various parts of the country, the NPN adopted a zoning principle and used this to distribute amenities after elections.

### **Political Manifesto**

The political manifesto of the NPN was strongly determined by the party's ideology, and objectives. It had two simplified slogans and images. The slogan of "one Nigeria," was depicted by the raising of a single forefinger while "green revolution" was the NPN political trade mark. Its emblem consisted of a house flanked on its two sides by two robust green maize plants, which represented the food and shelter aspects of the party's programmes.

The party claimed to be pre-occupied with making things work well so that the country could become great. It also promised to give everybody a chance. All these stemmed from the party's singular claim of holding consultation before its formation.

In summary the party's programme included the following:

- (a) to ensure a strong united Nigeria;
- (b) to ensure and preserve the security of the state, life and property through strong external defence and internal law and order;
- (c) to seek prosperity for Nigeria and guarantee self-reliance through strong agricultural policies, rapid industrialization and equal opportunity without discrimination as to age, sex, religion or ethnic origin;
- (d) to make Nigeria self-sufficient in food production;
- (e) to uphold the constitutional principles relating to fundamental objectives and Directive Principles of State policy;
- (f) to improve the conditions of the rural areas through small scale industrialization, marketing, co-operatives;
- (g) to harness the resources of Nigeria by taking leading roles in the manufacturing sector without rejecting foreign investors.

- (h) to increase housing stock while encouraging owner-occupied houses in the urban areas;
- (i) to work towards the provision of free and qualitative primary, vocational, secondary and university education as soon as practicable;
- (j) to lay adequate infrastructure for health care and delivery services;
- (k) to enhance Nigerians' expertise in management of public utilities with a view to making them autonomous and self-accounting.
- (l) to guarantee free and democratic labour movement;
- (m) to reinvigorate the armed forces in terms of equipment, training and re-organization including the modernization of the Nigeria Police;
- (n) to uphold the fundamental principles entrenched in the Constitution;
- (o) to respect the traditional institutions;
- (p) to inculcate a sense of belonging and participation in the youth;
- (q) to pursue an independent foreign policy and maintain cordial relationships with friendly countries while respecting the charters of ECOWAS, OAU and UNO.

### **Sources or Finance**

The NPN got its funds from five main sources. The first was registration fees and annual dues from members. This constituted a very small part of its revenue. The second was levies on party members. The Party had the power to levy its members any amount for the execution of specific party projects. The third was donations within or outside the Party. The Party realized very substantial amount from this source. It is important to note that political parties were not allowed to get any financial assistance from outside Nigeria. The fourth, was Federal Government grant. This was given during elections. It was based on the performance of a political party during an election. The fifth source of finance was investment in commercial ventures. The NPN got heavy sums of money from party patronage e.g. contract awards which had attached to it the payment of a certain percentage of the total cost to the coffers of the party.

### **Election Performance**

The NPN took part in the 5 elections — Presidential, Senate, House of Representatives, Gubernatorial and States' Houses of Assembly in 1979. The elections were held on different dates.

The elections were conducted to choose, for the Senate: 95 Senators, the House of Representatives: 449 candidates, the States' Assemblies: 1347 Representatives, 19 Governors, and one President.

The turn-out for the elections were very low. For the House of Representatives it was 30.6%, for the Senate it was 27.51%, and for the Presidential it was 33.04%. Absence of partisan activities for more than a decade might have been responsible for this. Furthermore, political campaigns were mostly concentrated in the urban areas.

In the 1979 elections, the NPN emerged as the most popular party controlling a total of 7 states: 5 states out of the 10 Northern states:— Bauchi, Kwara, Benue, Sokoto, Niger States; and 2 out of the 9 Southern states:— Rivers and Cross River States. The party had 36

Senators and 168 House of Representatives members as a result of the 1979 General Elections. The Presidential election which it won made it the dominant party at the centre. The party ruled between 1979 and 1983. It also won the 1983 presidential elections at the centre while winning Governorship elections in eleven states, namely, Bendel, Gongola, Anambra, Kaduna, Sokoto, Niger, Benue, Bauchi, Rivers, Cross River and Oyo States. The army took over the reins of government from the party in December 1983.

### **3.3 THE UNITY PARTY OF NIGERIA (UPN)**

#### **Origin**

The Committee of Friends which started almost immediately after Chief Obafemi Awolowo was released from prison in 1966, transformed into what later became the Unity Party of Nigeria. The whole notion of the UPN was woven around Chief Obafemi Awolowo who was appointed leader of the Yoruba barely a week after he was released from prison. Some of his lieutenants such as Bola Ige, Lateef Jakande, Bisi Onabanjo, continued to meet. It was not until 1975, at the instance of Professor Sam Aluko, that the National Committee of Friends met as a whole at the Oke-Ado residence of Chief Awolowo at which Sam Aluko presided. The activities of the group made it possible for Chief Awolowo to announce the birth of the UPN on Friday, 22nd September 1978, less than 24 hours after the ban on politics was lifted.

#### **Party Objectives**

The main aim of the Unity Party of Nigeria was to make Nigeria a great nation in the comity of nations so that Nigerians would be economically comfortable and socially satisfied. The vehicle for these would be hardwork.

Secondly, the UPN regarded development as a first priority objective. It also sought to instil social justice.

In support of these ideals, the party's symbol or emblem (initially) was a giant torch with radiating rays, lighting the heart of a map of Nigeria after what was regarded symbolically as the years of darkness. The party's aims were condensed into what is usually described as the four cardinal principles of

1. Free education at all levels;
2. Integrated rural development;
3. Free medical care, and
4. Full employment of all labour.

The party made the restructuring of the economy the pillar for the transformation of Nigeria into a virile, self-reliant and great nation.

#### **Ideology**

The UPN never accepted to be associated with any ideological position. It left the people guessing what its ideological orientations were. Thus the UPN could not be regarded as capitalist or socialist. Some of its programmes dangled between socialism and capitalism-inclined. The tone of its political programmes and the interpretation accorded them during the campaigns made the UPN to appear as a socialist party. The socialist label was as a result of Chief Awolowo's declaration that he was a socialist. The party did not include nationalization as part of its programmes but it stated that UPN government would practise a

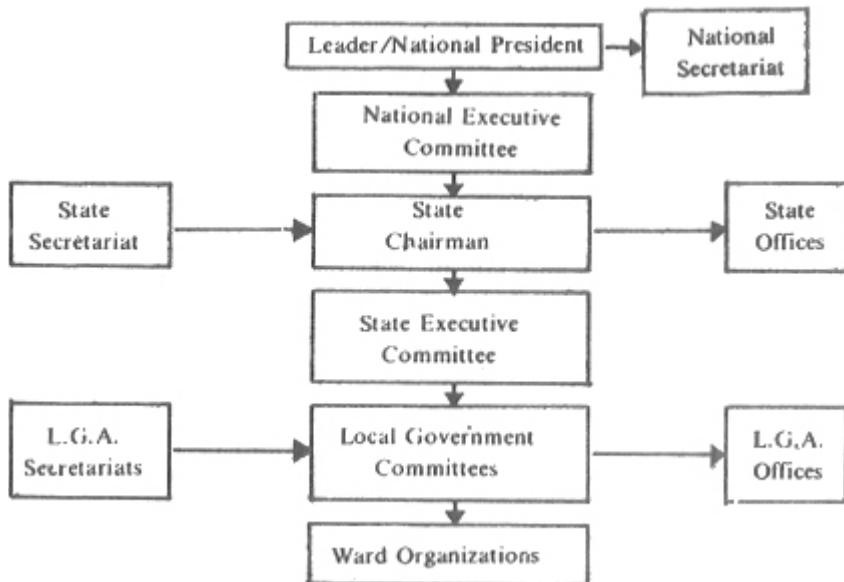
dynamic and progressive government which will intervene in economic and social welfare policies. To this extent, the UPN could be regarded as a party of the left.

In summary, the ideology of the UPN could be inferred to mean Welfarism. Its slogan was "UP Awo!"

### Organizational Structure

The UPN emerged from the relics of the defunct Action Group and it drew its supporters mostly from the Yoruba speaking people. Its supporters were essentially the wealthy class including professionals and businessmen of various shades. Its organization was largely dictated by the electoral law. The types of people in the party influenced the structure of its organization. Chief Obafemi Awolowo was the leader and Presidential candidate of the party. The UPN's gubernatorial candidates, also were the chairmen of the various states' branches of the party. The executive of the party was composed of the leader, the vice and the chairmen of the State branches in addition to five members each from the 19 states of Nigeria. It had a national secretariat which co-ordinated the activities of the party. Its organization also included local government branches as well as ward units. At the secretariat was Director of Organization and Research. This body was engaged in extensive organizational planning, research and propaganda. The organization of the party can be put in a diagram thus:

**Organizational Structure of the UPN**



From the diagram above, the position of the leader is eminent and dominant. This also shows that the party and the leader were synonymous. The Secretariat remained essentially the mouth piece of the leader and was preoccupied with projecting his image. For the two elections: 1979 and 1983, the Presidential candidate was no other person than the leader. It was never contested. Only the Gubernatorial positions were contested. These positions were highly teleguided. The whole organization of the UPN was such that its national leadership was the embodiment of everything the party stood for.

## **Leadership and Membership**

The leader of the UPN was Chief Obafemi Awolowo. He drew his supporters from many Yoruba teachers, lawyers, land speculators, businessmen, contractors, agents of multinational companies. In the UPN, the notion of collective leadership was absent. Chief Awolowo was like a monarch who bestowed honours on his citizens as and when he liked. His faithful lieutenants worshipped and adored him.

At its first meeting, 2 October, 1978 many of those who attended the meeting included former members of the banned NPC, NCNC, AG and NNDP. Three delegations came from each of the 449 Federal constituencies. They included Chief Chia Surma from Benue, Alhaji Gulamo from Gongola, Clement Gomwalk from Plateau, Chief Kuti from Ogun, Alhaji M. Y. Ahmed from Niger, Bola Ige and Archdeacon Alayande from Oyo State, Madam Oyibo Odinamadu from Anambra, N.E. Kekeocha from Imo, Chief Alfred Rewane from Bendel, Yahaya Maigari from Kaduna, J.S. Olawoyin from Kwara, Wenike Briggs from Rivers, Maigari Nademasha from Bauchi, L.K. Jakande from Lagos, M.A. Ajasin from Ondo, Young E. Sidi from Kano and Chief Ambe Bassey from Cross River.

Although the list is impressive the party support was not as national as it was expected because Chief Awolowo never succeeded in penetrating the North and East effectively. In a bid to persuade the Easterners he chose his running mate Chief Philip Umehdi, an Ibo, which choice did not really move the Igbo to support the UPN.

## **Political Manifesto**

In pursuance of its goal to have Nigeria changed from the path of poverty, squalor and purposeless leadership, the UPN spelt out its manifesto based on its four cardinal principles of:

- (a) free education;
- (b) integrated rural development;
- (c) free medical care; and
- (d) full employment of all labour.

The UPN was determined to restructure the national economy which the party intended to modernize. It spelt out this programme through integrated rural development. It intended to make the village areas more liveable for the younger people while encouraging them to take to agriculture. It considered agriculture as the pillar of all development. On industrialization the party wanted industrial independence by mobilizing indigenous scientists to utilize local raw materials to satisfy national needs while only accommodating foreign investors in areas of very sophisticated production processes. The party's programme included improvement in roads. Telecommunication and postal services were to be modernized. The party intended to break the monopoly of NEPA to ensure efficiency supplemented by other sources of power. On education, the party promised ensuring free and compulsory primary and secondary education while education at post-secondary would also be free. The UPN promised free health care and better housing. It promised to reinforce the independence and integrity of the judiciary.

The UPN policy on national unity included the de-emphasizing of ethnic considerations, protecting the interests of minorities, making local governments truly local and economically virile in a reformed local government structure which was to be smaller territorially. As part

of the programme of unity, it intended to practise a federal system of government in which the rights and resources of states are protected. A UPN government was to ensure free movement of persons and goods, encouraging press freedom in order to guarantee freedom of speech and public expression. Its foreign policy was tied to its economic policies which designed to promote Nigeria's and Africa's interests in the world. In pursuance of this, UPN was to support the ECOWAS, OAU and UNO, intensify Nigeria's contributions to liberation struggle while maintaining friendly relations with all friendly countries.

### Sources of Finance

The finances of the UPN were from contributions and donations from members of the party and interests groups. It also got money by imposing percentage contributions on any contract awarded by its State Governments. This was supplemented by the Federal Electoral Commission's grants to political parties based on election performance. It also got its funds from donations from members and non-members. The party got revenue from earnings and profits from its investments on commercial ventures. The UPN just like the NPN got huge sums of money from party patronage in States controlled by the party.

### Election Performance

As was to be expected the UPN electoral gains followed the pattern of its support. It failed to win the 1979 and 1983 Presidential elections. Although Chief Awolowo, the Presidential candidate, came second on the number of votes cast, he challenged in court the result of the 1979 Presidential elections. It was obvious the UPN was not the most popular party in the country.

The UPN however won the gubernatorial elections in Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Bendel and Ondo States in 1979 while it gained Kwara in 1983 but lost Bendel to the NPN. The result of the 1979 General Elections showed that in the Senate the UPN won 28 of the 95 seats, while it had 111 seats in the House of Representatives. In the State Assemblies it had dominant majorities in the States it controlled while having a handful of seats in Gongola, Borno, Benue, Cross River, Rivers and Kaduna States.

In effect the UPN won elections and controlled states which were predominantly Yoruba.

## 3.4 THE NIGERIAN PEOPLES PARTY (NPP)

### Origin

The NPP was a product of the merger of three distinct political associations—Club 19, the Progressive Front and NCUS. Club 19 and Eastern Progressives were led by R.B.K. Okafor, M.T. Mbu, Obi Wali, Solomon Lar, Paul Unongo, Paul Belabo, Ayuba Kadzi and Mirenda Jibo. The group from the North was determined to demolish the northern hegemony as it existed under the first Republic and to pave way for the minorities to play effective role in the Nigerian political system.

The Lagos progressives were led by Chief Adeniran Ogunsanya and Femi Okunnu. The Lagos progressives broke up (Ogunsanya and Okunnu groups) on affiliation either with the National Movement or the Eastern Progressives and Club 19. Ogunsanya group and the Eastern Progressives joined Club 19, while Okunnu group teamed up with the National Movement.

In October 1978, there emerged the Party, NPP, comprising Club 19 and Alhaji Ibrahimâ€™s NCUS. But in November 1978, there erupted a split in the party. The cause of the split was whether the partyâ€™s Presidential candidate should also be the chairman of the party. This crisis led to the emergence of two political parties, one retaining the name NPP while the Waziri faction took the name Great Nigerian Peoples Party. The NPP later invited Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe to join as its Presidential candidate. The new NPP held its first convention in December 1978. Its members comprised former NCNC politicians such as T.O.S. Benson, Olu Akinfosile, M.T. Mbu, Adeniran Ogunsanya, R.B.K. Okafor, Jaja Wachukwu and Adeoye Adisa in addition to younger politicians of the Benue/Plateau States. The Party was predominantly Igbo.

### **Party Objectives**

The Party aimed to modernize Nigeria by fighting against poverty, disease, ignorance, intolerance, indiscipline, feudalism, racism, neocolonialism and unjust exploitation of man by man. In addition, it was to provide full employment and to mobilize the natural resources of the country to ensure or guarantee a self-reliant economy. The NPP was also to mobilize the rural people to take part in the development processes while the urban dwellers were to participate in the management processes. Finally the NPP hoped to ensure democracy, the principle of the rule of law, freedom and equality for all citizens and respect for human dignity.

The aims of the party can be described as radical and humanist. It is radical because it is anti-feudalism, anti-exploitation, anti-racism and anti-colonialism; while it is humanist because it posited anti-poverty, anti-disease and anti-ignorance. The partyâ€™s symbol is a family in a circle consisting of father, mother and two children (a boy and a girl).

### **Ideology**

The NPP adopted the ideology of welfarism. Its welfarism was like that of the NPN which guaranteed the individualâ€™s full benefits from his labour. The NPP accepted that the economic situation as it was, was in order and all that was needed was to make it more efficient. The import of this is that the ruling class should devise a more efficient way of exploiting the masses. Its welfarism was never to threaten capitalism. All that was needed was to co-opt workers into management. The Party saw nothing wrong in both foreign and indigenous entrepreneurs sharing profit.

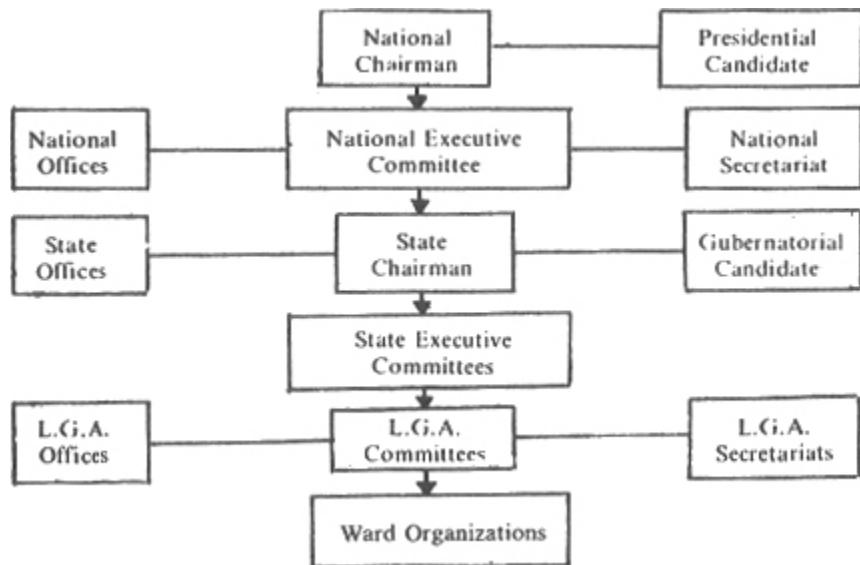
This ideology, though confused, was adopted because of the nature of the membership of the party. Most of its members were those who thrived on commerce and contracts. They were a group specially created to search for opportunity and can thus not be described as a party committed to any ideology. Its preoccupation was a share of federal power. Its slogan was â€˜Power belongs to the Peopleâ€™

### **Organizational Structure**

The main cause of the split in the original NPP was organizational. The new NPP held that it was proper for Party offices to be shared hence there was a Chairman — Chief Adeniran Ogunsanya and a Presidential candidate — Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. The same was to happen to the state structure — separate State Chairmen and Gubernatorial candidates. In accordance with the Electoral Decree, the Party also had State offices as well as local government

branches. Its organization was not as distinct as those of the other political parties especially the UPN. It can however be sketched out thus.

### The Organizational Structure of the NPP



### Leadership and Membership

Leadership of the NPP reflected its background of being a conglomeration of several groups forging a unity. It had bifurcated leadership through the separation of the Party's Presidential candidature and Chairmanship. This bifurcation traversed the lowest echelon of the party.

Members of the party were mostly in Anambra and Imo States as well as Plateau States. It made some impact in Benue and part of the Niger, Rivers and Kaduna States. Essentially it drew its members from men and women who had access to commerce, industry, economic and political power. They were people of lower bourgeois class.

### Political Manifesto

Although the NPP split with the GNPP, both retained the same manifesto.

The NPP was committed to democratic ethos which include service, unity, progress, free and fair elections, especially that practised through secret ballot and universal adult suffrage. It was committed to uphold to the letter all aspects of the constitution while accepting the notion of a secular state as well as the federal structure of government.

A government by the NPP would be bold to admit mistakes while striving to correct same. It promised a responsive government, a government committed to fairer distribution of wealth, amenities and power. It promised to recognize dignity of labour and hard work as the foundation for development and progress.

The party in its programme of action promised to

- re-order national economic priorities
- create incentives for foreign investment

- (c) establish more industries
- (d) diversify the economy to make it less dependent on oil
- (e) reduce high interest rates
- (f) adjust wages and income to cost of living and develop fair wage policies
- (g) promote good labour relations
- (h) ensure balanced development between rural and urban sectors
- (i) maintain effective price control measures
- (j) promote a secular democratic state
- (k) provide free and high quality education in due course or when feasible
- (l) promote and encourage domestic savings
- (m) mechanize agriculture and embark on large-scale farming
- (n) create a network of transportation linkages within rural and urban centres
- (o) expand, improve and manage all public utilities efficiently
- (p) evolve a strong defence policy so as to create an enviable place for Nigeria in the comity of nations.

On foreign policy the NPP promised consolidation of the independence of African countries, support of liberation struggles and upholding the policy of non-alignment.

### **Sources of Finance**

The NPP sources of finance were mainly five, namely: registration fees and annual dues, levies, donations, Federal Government election grants, and earnings and profits from investments in commercial ventures. Registration fees and annual dues were got from members. Levies were imposed on members when the party needed funds for the execution of certain items of its programmes. The Party got donations from both members and non-members. The Party earned a huge income from this source. The Party also acquired huge sums of money from party patronage in which the party received a certain percentage of total cost of inflated contracts and other benefits from State Governments controlled by it.

### **Election Performance**

The NPP came third in the 1979 Presidential elections, polling most of its votes from its Igbo-speaking home base. It won the elections for the gubernatorial positions of Imo, Anambra and Plateau States in the 1979 Elections. The NPP won in the same election, 16 Senatorial seats distributed thus 5 each from Imo and Anambra states, 4 in Plateau and 2 in Rivers States. It also had 78 House of Representative positions while having scattered representatives in the State Assemblies of the Rivers, Cross River, Kaduna, Benue, Niger and Kano States of Nigeria.

## **3.5 THE GREAT NIGERIA PEOPLEâ€™S PARTY (GNPP)**

### **Origin**

The GNPP was the splinter arm of the original, NPP. It was made up of Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim's NCUS which broke away from the NPP on the controversy about the Chairmanship and Presidential candidature of the party. Ibrahim held the view that both positions could be combined in one person while other party leaders like Paul Unongo thought otherwise. Apart from this disagreement, the NPP and the GNPP held the same views, objectives and the same approaches for the governance of Nigeria.

Because of the way it came into being — the slogan of the party was "Politics without bitterness". The reason for this was that the leader wanted to show that in spite of the break with the NPP, he had no bitterness against anyone. The party was like the NPP in all respects except name. A major reason for the establishment of the GNPP was the conflict between the Kanuri and the Hausa/Fulani aristocrats.

## **Party Objectives**

The GNPP had its objective as promoting national unity, building a dynamic economy and ensuring better living standards for all Nigerians irrespective of age, sex, ethnic or religious differences. The party was also poised to promote a dynamic foreign policy while striving to involve the masses of the people in all aspects of national development.

## **Ideology**

The GNPP had no ideology as such. Its slogan of "Politics without bitterness" was mere cosmetics to justify the existence of the party. The party made "mixed economy" its ideology but it did not explain what it meant by it. The leader Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim equated politics with business. Hence the party was determined to make profit in politics rather than engage in bitterness at the expense of the profit. The leader saw the party as a business venture in which he was the proprietor.

## **Leadership and Membership**

The leader of the Great Nigeria People's Party was Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim who broke away from the NPP over leadership style. It is therefore not a surprise that his leadership style in the GNPP was that of sole financier and proprietorship. He saw his political followers as people he hired and could be fired at will. Alhaji Ibrahim did not tolerate any opposition. Because of his dictatorial tendencies, most of his lieutenants including two governors, abandoned him later.

Membership of the party was open to all Nigerians. However its membership was drawn largely from the Kanuris of North-Eastern Nigeria although there were a handful of supporters that included two old politicians — Kola Balogun and Alhaji Abdul Rasaq — who came from other parts of Nigeria.

## **Political Manifesto**

The GNPP manifesto was essentially like that of the NPP but its symbol was different. The symbol was essentially a modification of the NPP circle. Rather than have a family inside the circle, it had a giant palm tree dominating the centre and flanked on one side by a rooster and on the other by a cow. This symbol attempted to depict the party's emphasis on agriculture.

The GNPP described as "The People's Great Charter", its promise to accept mistakes, to be responsive while promising fairer distribution of wealth, amenities and power. Its recognition of the dignity of labour and hard work, its belief in the ideals of growth, efficiency, equity and self-reliance were parts of the "Charter". The GNPP was most brief in its foreign policy, as it upheld the principle of strict non-alignment without prejudice to Nigeria's commitment to fight racism and other forms of discrimination. The party promised to maintain Nigeria's national interest in the world.

## **Organization**

The party's organization revolved around its leader Alhaji Ibrahim who tried to exercise absolute powers. As the founder and financier, Alhaji Ibrahim was the leader and Presidential candidate. The gubernatorial candidates were his mere subordinates. The party never had the chains of organization that greeted the other parties because it was hurriedly established with no originality of purpose. Since its support came from a homogeneous group — the Kanuris, members of the party accepted without question the leadership until towards the end of their regime in 1983.

## **Sources of Finance**

The main sources of finance of the Party were membership registration fees and dues, donations, Federal Government Subventions for elections, levies on members and earnings. The founder and leader, Alhaji Ibrahim, was the main financier to the party.

## **Election Performance**

Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim was the Presidential candidate for the 1979 and 1983 elections. He lost the two elections. His party however won the governorship elections in Borno and Gongola States in 1979 Elections. It also won 4 of the 5 Senate seats in Borno and 22 seats in the House of Representatives in that state, 2 Senate seats in Gongola and 8 seats in the House of Representatives in the 1979 elections. It also won 2 Senate seats and 4 House of Representatives seats in Cross River in the same 1979 elections. In all, the party had 8 Senate seats and 43 House of Representatives positions at the 1979 election. The party also had a handful of gains in Rivers, Cross-River, Sokoto, and Kaduna Houses of Assembly. In 1983, however, it lost Gongola State executive to the NPN thereby reducing its holds on the Kanuri enclave of the country.

## **3.6 THE PEOPLE'S REDEMPTION PARTY (PRP)**

### **Origin**

The People's Redemption Party was formed by the former members of the banned NEPU and the leader of both parties was Alhaji Aminu Kano who, with S.G. Ikoku, were at first in the National Movement. They left the National Movement on ideological grounds. Aminu's inclination was socialism while the National Movement was capitalist-oriented. Alhaji Aminu Kano also recognized the need to mobilize the urban people for his political exploits by fraternizing with the artisans, the unemployed and the migrants. He also sought to identify with the rural populace especially the rural peasantry. The urban link had carried him through his NEPU days while the rural romance was to satisfy his new aspirations in Nigeria.

When Aminu Kano left the National Movement (NPN), he joined a group of young radicals which was opposed to the National Movement. The group included Abubakar Rimi,

Balarabe Musa, Ahmadu Jalingo, M.T.A. Liman, Dandatti Abdulkadir and Ibrahim Baran — all from Kaduna and Kano States. Most of his supporters were Northern and Southern intellectuals from Ahmadu Bello University. The group was without a leader of national status and when Aminu Kano left the National Movement, he was welcomed as a leader. The PRP was launched as a political party on 21 October, 1978 at Ahmadu Bello Stadium, Kaduna.

### **Party Objectives**

The aims of the PRP included the re-ordering of society so that the power and privileges of the rich can be shared by all, including the poor. It was the intention of the PRP to struggle to achieve true independence by giving the masses political power which they would use to get the economy of the nation from western imperialism. The party recognized the need to get rid of production based on exploitation and argued for state control of the economy in trust for the people.

### **Ideology**

The PRP adopted socialism as its watchword. The “Key” in its emblem was to help achieve a radical transformation of the society. The PRP was determined to alter a situation whereby only the few wealthy people were benefitting from the wealth of the nation while the majority were deprived and frustrated. The PRP regarded the existing situation as a struggle between the forces of conservatism and progress.

### **Organizational Structure**

The Party had a National Executive Committee, State Executive Committee and constituency offices. The Chairman of the Party was also the Presidential candidate. In the states, the Gubernatorial candidates were also the State party Chairmen.

### **Political Manifesto**

The PRP distinguished between programme and manifesto. The party promised to issue its manifesto as the elections came so that its manifesto would relate to particular offices at a particular election.

However the manifesto reflected its own revolutionary posture. Since its intention was to encourage an economic downturn, it was bound to evolve an economic system that tilted the economy in favour of the poor.

The PRP viewed its manifesto as statements of practical solutions to national, political, economic, social and diplomatic problems. The PRP was poised to eliminate foreign domination of the economy and exploitation, encourage state control of the economy, reduce inequality, maintain guaranteed income for every citizen, decolonize all aspects of Nigerian social life, and develop an ideology rooted in African socialism.

It promised enforcement of Fundamental Human Rights for all Nigerians. It also promised to create a new Nigerian citizenship and culture.

### **Sources of Finance**

The PRP is better described as a party of the poor. Its sources of finance were largely through membership registration fees, dues, levies and donations. It also benefited from the Federal

Electoral Commission's subvention to political parties for elections. It was also to get funds from investment in commercial ventures.

### **Election Performance**

The PRP contested both the 1979 and 1983 Presidential elections and lost. The party however won elections for the gubernatorial seats of Kaduna and Kano States in 1979 which positions it lost in 1983 to the NPN. The PRP Governorship candidate for Kaduna State in 1979, Alhaji Balarabe Musa, was impeached because the PRP did not control the State's House of Assembly. In addition, the PRP in the 1979 elections won 1 and 5 Senate seats in Kaduna and Kano States respectively while it had 49 House of Representatives seats. The party did not fare well in the State Assemblies *outside* its two States — Kaduna and Kano. Its support was basically Hausa-Fulani over which it had to slug things out with the NPN.

## **3.7 THE NIGERIA ADVANCE PARTY (NAP)**

### **Origin**

The Association which Tunji Braithwaite formed was one of the 52 associations which filed papers for registration as political parties in 1979 but it failed to secure registration in 1979. On 24 May, 1982 however the NAP got registered as the sixth political party to contest the 1983 elections.

### **Party Objectives**

The NAP posited socialism. Its brand of socialism was never defined. Indeed a week after it was formed in 1978, it started to fumble when it claimed that it was poised to eradicate mosquitoes from Nigeria while other political parties were busy with problems of the country.

### **Ideology**

The party claimed socialism as its ideology. It never defined it.

### **Organizational Structure**

The NAP's organization revolved round its leader. There was no recognizable organizational structure. However, it had the Central Executive Committee and state branches.

### **Political Manifesto**

The NAP's manifesto can be appreciated through its socialist slogans, viz:

- â€˜freedom from exploitationâ€™
- â€˜eradication of unemploymentâ€™
- â€˜agricultural revolutionâ€™
- â€˜scientific and technological revolutionâ€™
- â€˜revolutionary educationâ€™

### **Sources of Finance**

The leader Mr Tunji Braithwaite provided the funds. Members also paid levies, contributions and donations. Since it never won any election, it was not entitled to Federal Government subventions to political parties for elections.

### **Election Performance**

The leader, Mr. Tunji Braithwaite contested and lost the 1983 Presidential elections. It did not win any seat in the 1983 General Elections which was the only election it contested. Thus it had no seat in the Senate, House of Representatives and Houses of Assembly. Neither did it win any gubernatorial seat throughout the Federation.

### **3.8 PARTY ALLIANCES/ACCORDS**

After the 1979 Presidential election Alhaji Shehu Shagari was declared the winner by FEDECO. The other candidates — Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim, and Alhaji Aminu Kano felt enraged and condemned the declaration. Chief Obafemi Awolowo later challenged the declaration in the Supreme Court where the decision confirmed FEDECO's declaration hence Alhaji Shehu Shagari retained his position.

During the process of challenging the Presidential election results, the NPN and NPP agreed on an accord to form the Federal Government. The NPN/NPP Accord later collapsed as a result of lack of trust and understanding.

But towards the 1983 elections, the situation had become more confused. The PRP was in a state of confusion, there were factions in UPN, the GNPP had lost grip of its support, thus making the 1983 elections more of alignment and realignment. As a result, there emerged too late a dominant group — The Progressive People's Alliance which was an alliance of the UPN, the NPP, the GNPP and the PRP. The National Party of Nigeria was alone. However this did not significantly alter the pattern of election results. The NPN emerged from the 1983 elections much stronger in most states of the federation. The 1983 election also declared Alhaji Shehu Shagari as the winner. The alliance of the Progressives collapsed on mutual suspicion and ambition.

### **3.9 INTRA-PARTY CONFLICTS**

The initial break in the original NPP, ushered in intra-party conflicts in the Second Republic. The other political parties — NPN, GNPP the PRP, the UPN had their own dosage of crises which however varied in magnitude and severe consequences to the parties.

#### **(a) The NPN intra-party conflict**

The conflicts in the NPN was associated with the zoning policy of the party. Zone A produced the first Presidential candidate while zone B — the Western zone thought it was its turn to produce the next, but before the middle of Shagari's tenure it became clear that Zone B would not be entitled since it had little support to justify its claims. There were other rivals to the zone B claims such as the Eastern Zone, the minority zone to which Dr Olusola Saraki belonged. The conflicts and disappointments made people like Chief M.K.O. Abiola to withdraw from the party. The party Chairman, Chief A.M.A. Akinloye, though was eyeing the Presidency, was complacent in holding firmly to the Chairmanship. However the NPN intra-party conflict had very minor effect on the party.

### **(b) The NPP intra-party conflicts**

The NPP crisis started with the break-up of the NPN-NPP Accord in 1982. Some leaders of the NPP, particularly NPP Federal Ministers, Senators and some members of the House of Representatives did not support the withdrawal of the NPP from the NPN-NPP Accord. Consequently when the NPP ultimately withdrew from the Accord and directed its members who were Federal Ministers to resign their appointments and its members in the National Assembly to stop formally associating with the NPN Federal Government, some top NPP members openly opposed the directive. These Were led by Senator C.C. Anah from Anambra State, Senator Tony Anyanwu and Senator Ojukwu from Imo State. These dissidents constituted a faction in the NPP and continued working together individually with the NPN. This internal crisis weakened the strength of the NPP and contributed to its low level of performance during the 1983 General Elections in Imo and Anambra States.

### **(c) The GNPP crises**

The crises in the GNPP were caused by the nature of its leadership. The leader saw his leadership as that of Managing Director who could hire and fire. Any disagreement with leadership was treated as rebellion. For this reason many of the GNPP followership had to desert him. The consequence of this was the loss of Gongola State to the NPN in 1983.

### **(d) The UPN intra-party conflicts**

The conflicts in the UPN were more as a result of personal ambition rather than leadership. As the 1983 elections were approaching, conflicts were brooding as to who was going to run the governorship races in the UPN-controlled states. The conflicts of succession to these positions were fired by the party's rigid adherence to the decision of its NEC (National Executive Council) on who should hold what position — problem of overcentralization. The Deputy Governors of Ondo and Oyo States nurtured the ambition to become governors in 1983. When the shadow elections were held, there were allegations of rigging, or manipulation in favour of the incumbent governors. The disenchanted groups then switched over to the NPN. In Ondo State, for instance, Omoborioro contested the governorship on an NPN ticket and was declared winner. This declaration set Ondo State on fire and the contest finally moved to the courts where Chief Ajasin was declared the winner. In Oyo State, the split also cost the party the loss of its control of the state to the NPN.

### **(e) The PRP crisis**

The crisis in the PRP had two origins — party leadership and ideology. Since the party leader never won any election, his hold on his lieutenants started to waver. Secondly, most of the people in the party were not in agreement with the party's interpretation of its ideology. For instance S.G. Ikoku did not believe that socialism was possible at that time and was prepared even to flirt with the NPN. The most radical group headed by Alhaji Balarabe Musa was wealthy enough to muster enough support. The leader, Aminu Kano, was caught between keeping his dilapidated house together or flirting with the NPN. The PRP intra-party conflicts cost the party the loss of its two states at the 1983 elections. The disagreement between Malam Kano and his party leaders on joining the PPA was also a factor in the disintegration of the PRP.

## **Consequences of Party Crises**

The consequences of the crises in the various political parties were as follows:

- (a) The NPN increased in strength. The number of states it controlled increased from 7 in 1979 to 12 in 1983 by adding Kano, Kaduna, Gongola, Bendel, Oyo, Anambra States while it lost only Kwara to the UPN. In effect the NPN sowed the seeds and reaped the fruits of disagreement in the various parties.
- (b) There emerged two political groups in the country during the 1983 election — Progressive People's Alliance (PPA) and NPN.
- (c) Politics in the country started to have some ideological base, no matter how crude.
- (d) It led to political instability and contributed to the military intervention of 31 December, 1983.

## KEY POINTS

**Introduction** — Six political parties were registered and operated during the Second Republic. These were

- (1) NPN (2) NPP (3) UPN (4) GNPP (5) PRP (6) NAP

### 1. NPN

*Origin:* Formed in September 1978 with Alhaji Shehu Shagari as the leader.

*Objectives:* The objective was to maintain national unity, promote social justice and social welfare, maintain democracy, eradicate illiteracy, build and sustain a strong economy.

*Ideology:* The NPN believed in capitalism.

*Organizational structure:* The Party leader was the Presidential Candidate who wielded more powers than the National Chairman. The National Executive Committee was the governing body of the party. The Party believed in zoning principle. It had State and local branches.

*Membership:* This was open to all Nigerians. However, the Party had its main body of supporters from Northern States and minority areas of the South — Rivers and Cross River States.

*Manifesto:* To ensure

- (a) strong and united Nigeria
- (b) self-reliance through agriculture and industrialization
- (c) increase housing stock
- (d) qualitative education
- (e) rapid rural development
- (f) an independent foreign policy.

*Electoral performance:* The NPN produced the President of Nigeria from the 1979 and 1983 elections. It had the greatest number of Senators and Representatives in the National Assembly and controlled 7 states as a result of the 1979 elections and twelve states as a result of the 1983 elections.

## **2. UPN**

*Origin:* Formed in September 1978 by Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

*Objectives:* These were based on its four cardinal principles namely

- (a) free education at all levels;
- (b) integrated rural development;
- (c) free medical care; and
- (d) full employment of all labour.

*Ideology:* Although the party was not socialist, it was inclined toward socialist ideals.

*Organizational structure:* Chief Obafemi Awolowo was both the National Chairman and Presidential candidate. Much power was concentrated on and exercised by him. It had state and local branches.

*Membership:* The party was open to all Nigerians. However, its members were mainly drawn from the Yorubas.

*Manifesto:* The manifesto was the four cardinal principles as given in its objectives.

*Electoral performance:* The Party controlled five states as a result of 1979 election. These were reduced to 4 states in 1983.

## **3. NPP**

*Origin:* The NPP was formed in September 1978.

*Objectives:* It was aimed at modernization of Nigeria through fighting poverty, disease, ignorance, indiscipline, feudalism, racism, neocolonialism and exploitation.

*Ideology:* It adopted the ideology of welfarism.

*Organizational structure:* The Party had the Presidential candidate as distinct from the National Chairman like the NPN. The National Executive Committee, like in other parties, was the governing body of the party. It had state and local branches.

*Membership:* This was open to all Nigerian citizens. However, it had its main support in Imo, Anambra and Plateau States.

*Manifesto:* The party promised, among others, to

- (a) re-order national economic priorities;
- (b) establish more industries;
- (c) promote good labour relations;
- (d) provide free and high quality education when feasible;
- (e) ensure balanced development between rural and urban sectors.

*Electoral performance:* The party controlled three states as a result of 1979 elections. These were reduced to two states in 1983 elections.

## **4. GNPP**

*Origin:* It was formed in September 1978 following internal crisis in the NPP at its formation. The founder of the Party was Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim.

*Objectives:* The Party's objectives were to promote national unity, build a dynamic economy and ensure better living standards for all people.

*Ideology:* The party made mixed economy its ideology. Its slogan was "Politics without bitterness."

*Membership:* It was open to all Nigerians. However its members were mainly drawn from Borno and Gongola States.

*Manifesto:* The party's manifesto was essentially like that of the NPP

*Organizational structure:* It revolved around its national leader.

*Election performance:* It controlled 2 states as a result of 1979 elections. These were reduced to one state in the 1983 elections.

## **5. PRP**

*Origin:* It was formed in September 1978 by Malam Aminu Kano.

*Objective:* Its main objective was to re-order the society to the benefit of the common man.

*Idology:* Its ideology was socialism.

*Organizational Structure:* Malam Aminu Kano was both the National Chairman and Presidential candidate. The Party, like others, had national executive, state executive and local committees.

*Manifesto:* The party promised to re-order the social and economic order in Nigeria.

*Election performance:* It controlled 2 states from 1979 elections. These were reduced to 1 State in the 1983 elections.

## **6. NAP**

*Origin:* It was formed as a Political Association in September 1978 and was not recognized as a political party by FEDECO until May 1982. Its founder was Tunji Braithwaite.

*Ideology:* The party claimed socialism as its ideology.

*Organizational structure:* It revolved round its leader.

*Election performance:* The party lost all elections. It did not win a single seat throughout the federation.

## **7. PARTY ALLIANCE/ACCORD**

1. NPN and NPP formed an Accord in 1979 which later broke down.
2. The UPN, NPP, GNPP and a faction of PRP formed the Progressive People's Alliance for the 1983 elections when it was too late for effectiveness.

## **8. INTRA-PARTY CONFLICTS**

All the five parties – NPN, UPN, NPP, GNPP and PRP had intra-party conflicts. The NPN gained significantly out of the UPN, NPP, GNPP and PRP intra-party conflicts.

## **SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS**

### **Essay Questions**

1. Compare the political programme of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) with that of the Nigerian People's Party (NPP).
2. The Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP) was a product of intra-party conflict. Discuss this statement.
3. To what extent did the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) political programme affect its election performance?
4. Compare the election performance of the NPN with that of the UPN.
5. What were the consequences of the crises in the various political parties of the Second Republic for the NPN?

### **Objective Questions**

1. Which one of the following political parties was *not* registered in 1979 and thus did not contest the 1979 elections:
  - A. NPN
  - B. NPP
  - C. GNPP
  - D. NAP
  - E. UPN.
2. The first executive President of Nigeria was the leader of the
  - A. NPP
  - B. NAP
  - C. GNPP
  - D. UPN
  - E. NPN.
3. The UPN had its main support from
  - A. Kanuri
  - B. Yoruba
  - C. Tiv
  - D. Igbo
  - E. Hausa/Fulani.
4. Chief Obafemi Awolowo was the founder of the
  - A. UPN
  - B. PRP

- C.** NPP
  - D.** NPN
  - E.** NAP.
5. The founder of the Peopleâ€™s Redemption Party (PRP) was
- A.** Alhaji Shehu Shagari
  - B.** Tunji Braithwaite
  - C.** Malam Aminu Kano
  - D.** Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim
  - E.** Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

### **Answers**

- 1. D
- 2. E
- 3. B
- 4. A
- 5. C