

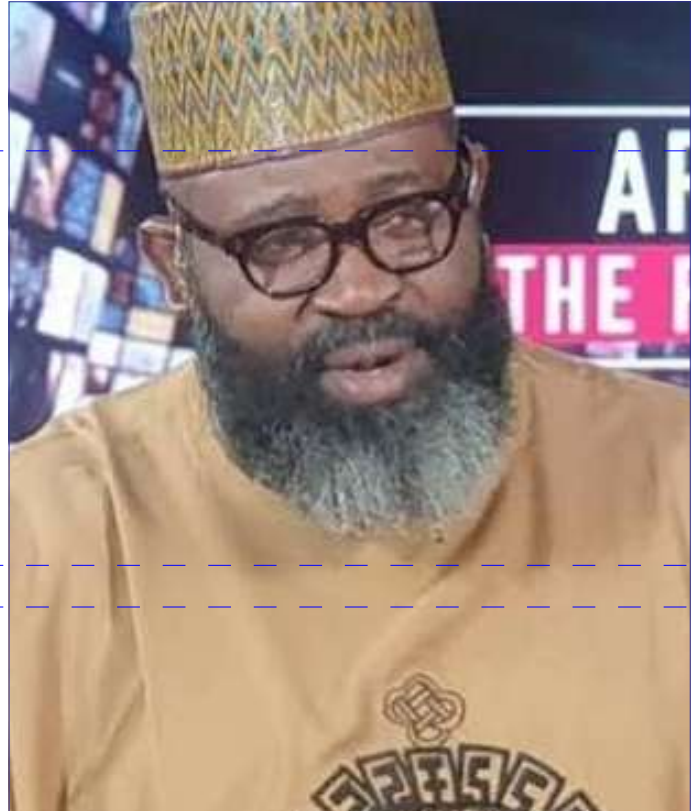
Now That the Campaign Is Here... III.

There Must Be Space for Wholesome and Peaceful Debate and Ventilation of Ideas. It MUST BE About Issues NOT Darts. WEEK THREE (3rd September - 9th September). If this campaign means anything, we must first insist on two things: a wholesome, peaceful environment, and the free ventilation of ideas. Elections are not wars. They are conversations. Any attempt to silence voices or intimidate opponents is an assault on democracy itself. Therefore, the show of shame orchestrated by the Governor of Benue State Reverend Father Alia who mobilized thugs to stop the convoy of the NDC Presidential Candidate Peter Obi from visiting a distressed Community is reprehensible, condemnable and lampoon-able. Week 3 of the campaign has been as interesting as the first two. However, Week Three was largely owned by the ongoing debate on the possible RETURN OF FUEL SUBSIDY which the

Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar put back on the table as one of the linchpins of his campaign, and Presidency if he wins. The incumbent insists the reforms will ultimately yield dividends, therefore there is no going back. The opposition's reply to the REFORMS ARE YIELDING RETURNS refrain of the Tinubu's Presidency is simple and brutal: "Nigerians will not eat reforms." This is the defining clash of the moment - ideology vs hunger, and projections vs empty pockets. The people are not looking for slogans. They want relief with a roadmap. The days ahead will be pretty interesting because Nigerians shall fiercely interrogate the candidates, we go drag una tire.

Must REFORMS and Policies of Government be without a human face? Must the wellbeing of the people be subjected to half-baked and poorly researched neo-liberal economic policies? When will macro-economic gains transform to micro economic dividends? What must be done to enhance national security and revive our national infrastructure? How must leadership be made accountable to the people? These are some of the many issues and questions seeking answers. There is something spectacular about the moment which calls for more research by the incumbent and his ideologues, merely wishing that your REFORMS will transform the nation and undermining the urgency of now would perhaps be your Achilles heel because evidently the Presidential Candidate of the ADC Atiku Abubakar is not the only one pillorying your lead reform policies (the Subsidy Removal and the Floating of the Naira). Gbenga Olawepo Hashim the Presidential Candidate of the Accord Party, Omoyele Sowore of the AAC, Adewole Adebayo of the SDP and Peter Agada of the YPP all insist that there is something fundamentally wrong with the Reforms of the present government, and that you cannot grow a nation with such brutal neo-liberal policies that favour only the rich. To them the policies that the present government hail as working are only good on paper, and they insist that Nigeria cannot afford another 4 years of the APC. May the debate continue!

Three cardinal issues line the pathway to 2027, they devolve on PERFORMANCE, PAIN AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION. On PERFORMANCE, has the Tinubu Presidency done enough to convince voters to reelect Mr President? We wait to see. On the PAIN across the nation, is the opposition ready intact and strategy to harvest the votes of a



nation in pain and distraught? We are curious. On POLITICAL ORGANIZATION is the opposition ready to coalesce behind one formidable candidate with a workable manifesto, or do they think that defeating an incumbent is a walk in the park? Indeed, we have got interesting days ahead.

DOWNSIDES: There are troubling downsides that we cannot overlook...

1. The Shame in Benue. I condemn, without equivocation, the deployment of thugs by Governor Rev. Alia of Benue State to frustrate Peter Obi's visit.
2. You do not meet ideas with violence. You do not meet a fellow Nigerian with thuggery. If we cannot guarantee safe passage for political opposition, then we have no business calling this a democracy.
3. Spending Public Money to Hide Public Facts. It is disgraceful that our collective wealth is being deployed to frustrate the release of FBI records on President Tinubu. Accountability cannot be a one-way street. A government that asks citizens to sacrifice must itself be willing to be transparent. Anything less is hypocrisy paid for with taxpayer money.
4. Politics Without Moral Margins. The actions, statements and conduct of Nyesom Wike in Rivers State during the week of Rotimi Amaechi's mother's burial was yet another low. There are times to sheath the sword. A burial is one of them. When politics has no moral boundaries, it becomes cruelty.

To other presidential candidates who have reached out directly, and those wondering how they can send their Manifesto to our Review Team, as well as those seeking our support, you can send a soft copy of your Manifesto to us via email address pointsmenprojects@gmail.com or WhatsApp 08111112719. Our commitment is to COUNTRY-FIRST.

Week Four Loading...

God Bless Nigeria.

Chris Mustapha Nwaokobia Jnr.

Convener COUNTRYFIRST MOVEMENT. A Good Governance Advocacy Group.