

THE EMBER OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA: AN IMPEDIMENT TO GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Political corruption among other factors is one of the major clog militating against Nigeria's quest for growth and development. It is a paralysis on our economy. We all know it exists. We birthed and nurtured it. It now stood unconquered in our social and economic lives despite all the fights against it. It is the fundamental reason for Nigeria's poor economic performance in spite of our globally acknowledge economic potentials as one the largest economy in the world in the mist of massive corruption, increasing rate of graduates' unemployment, infant and child mortality, poverty, and so on. The fight must be won to enable Nigeria take her rightful place among the comity of nations. This paper examined political corruption, growth and development in Nigeria. It focused on the 2nd republic (1979-83); 3rd and 4th republic (1999-2007); 5th and 6th republic (2007-2014). The method adopted is historical research, and analysed from the platform of Bongers' economic theory of crime. The paper finds that political corruption has eaten deep into the fabric of our society. It is also systemic and militating greatly against Nigeria growth and development derive. The paper recommend the welfarist/socialist alternative economic system for Nigeria against the capitalist alternative; bridging gaps in our constitution on sections that aid and abet corrupt practices among other.

Keywords: corruption; political corruption; growth; development and poverty.

Introduction

Corruption has become our national attitude, our national anthem, and the ballad of our nation. Every aspect of our life – from the home, to the school, to the work place, to the seat of government, and in the corridor of power – is polluted with corruption. Corruption

is a major paralysis on our economy (Tomori, 2013). It is not practiced systematically; it is systemic. With this harsh reality one is forced to ask: is honesty an iroko tree in the mangrove swamps of Nigeria? Is probity a rare commodity in the halls of our National Assembly? Is integrity an unwanted stranger in our government house? Is corruption the blood that runs in the arteries and veins of our ministries? Corruption has been an abrasive cankerworm that eaten deep into the fabric of the nation.

Corruption includes bribery, rent seeking extortion, and embezzlement. It is the misuse of public office for private or group gain. Growth on the hand is effective and efficient provision of physical, essential services and amenities by the government for her citizens. While development is the ability of the people to harness both human and natural resources for the welfare of the society and by the owners of that society; investment in infrastructure enhances growth and it is a key index and panacea for development. Endemic corruption reduces growth rate and increases incidences of poverty, unemployment, infant and child mortality, the percentage of low-birth weight babies in total births as well as the rate of school dropouts which culminate into criminal activities.

Nigeria is a country of extreme paradoxes, with widespread and endemic poverty in the midst of plenty. The country is richly endowed with human and natural resources, particularly oil and gas, as well as plentiful mineral deposits such as coal, gold and sulphur. With a real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US \$58.4 billion and a population of 140 million, Nigeria is among the four largest economies in Africa and is by far the continent's most populous country (APRM Country Review Report No 8, 2009). As stupendous as all of these endowments are; Nigeria still remain one of the poorest, chaotic and fragile country in the world due to monumental waste, thievery and direct looting of public fund by our scrupulous and corrupt public officials. Corruption has posed a major hindrance to Nigeria's growth and development. Nigeria has some of the worst human development indicators in the world and is not on track to meet most of the health and education Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Adedeji, 2009). Corruption can undermine growth, development and poverty reduction in a nation's economy. Many Nigerian youths, whose development potentials are at their peak, remain unemployed and thus have no access to the material means of survival. Over 74 million

Nigerians are unemployed according to the Federal Government Source (FOS, 2011). Consequently they take to any means available to ensure survival.

As sixth largest producer of oil in the world, Nigeria is unable to translate the huge earnings from oil to the improvement of her citizens' living standard. The massive revenue from oil has been a source of sorrow to her citizens, due to poor governance by our political elite. The poor governance or its more virulent manifestation, political corruption, is, of course, the fundamental reason for Nigeria's poor economic performance despite our globally acknowledged economic potentials to have become, not just of the largest economies of the world, but in fact, one of the prosperous of those countries (Salaudeen, 2013).

Understanding Political Corruption, Corruption, Growth and Development

Political corruption can be broadly understood as unethical behaviour which violates the norms of the system of political order (Heidenheimer & Johnson, 1993:6). Broadly, political corruption can be private or group enrichment and for power preservation purposes. Often these two forms of political corruption are connected. It usually encompasses abuses by government official such as embezzlement and cronyism, as well as abuses linking public and private actors such as bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud, to, mention but a few. In this regard, political corruption threatens good governance, sustainable development, democratic process, and fair business practices (Ogbeidi, 2012).

Corruption on the other hand involves the injection of additional but improper transaction aimed at changing the normal course of events and altering judgement and position of truth. It consists in the giver and receiver use of informal, extra-legal or illegal acts to facilitate matters. It is in this sense that one sees corruption as an indicator of the social system, a means by which to overcome economic obstacle and bureaucratic red-tapism, hence the ambivalence and inconsistency in the theory and practice of corruption (Dauda, 2012). Akerman (1999) also defined corruption as symptom that something has gone wrong in the management of the state. Institutions designed to govern the interrelationships between the citizens and the states are used instead for personal

enrichment and the provision of benefits to the corrupt. In an elaborate definition Otite, (1986) conceptualized corruption simply “as the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour or moral depravity.”

Alatas (1990) and Obayelu (2007) see corruption in forms of its distinct types, viz: defensive, extortive, investive, nepotistic, supportive, autogenic and transactive corruption. The defensive corruption is when a person who is in dire need of a critical product or service bribe his/her way through in order to avoid the unpleasant consequences on that interest. Extortion corruption is when a person demand for personal compensation in exchange for services he has to render. While the investive corruption is to offer goods or services now but in anticipation of a favour that would be needed in the future. Then the nepotistic corruption is the preferential or unjustified appointment of friends or relations to an office and so on, in complete violation of stated procedural guidelines. Autogenic corruption is self-generating and involves only the person involved in the act, such as insider abuse in trading on the stock markets, banks etc. All of these distinct forms of corruption abound in contemporary Nigeria and poses a severe threats to Nigeria quest for growth and development.

Development is essentially a form of differentiation between regions and countries measured in bipolar and dichotomous criteria. These differential criteria ranges from Gross National Product (GDP) and per capital income, to the consumption of meat, kilowatts of electricity consumed. Other criteria are birth, death, illiteracy, unemployment, poverty rate etc. (Alubo, 2012). Development according to Obasanjo & Mabogunje (1991) is the process concern with the people’s capacity in a defined area over a defined period, to manage and induce change (i.e. to predict, plan, understand and monitor) and reduce or eliminate unwanted change. Deducing from these the change from these understanding, one can defined development in a clearer terms, as the ability to harness both human and natural resource for the welfare of a society and by the owners of that society.

Growth on the hand is the increase in social, physical artefacts such as: roads, bridges, schools buildings and so on, which does not reflect in the standard of living of the people

living in the society. Development and growth are therefore not the same but related. As succinctly differentiated by Alanana, (2012), while development is inclusive of growth, growth is not inclusive of development, even s there has to be growth before development. Growth is quantitative increase or change in certain economic indices. Increase or change in economic variable is an indication of growth, and not development. But if these increases translate into improving the physical quality of life index (PQLI), conclusion can safely be drawn that development has taken place.

Theoretical Framework: Bonger's Economic Theory of Crime

Bonger (1905) a Dutch criminologist founded or propounded the economic theory of crime. Bonger believed in a causal link between crime, economic and social conditions. He asserted that crime is social in origin and a normal response to prevailing cultural conditions.

He made an intensive study of economic conditions prevailing in different socialistic countries in the first half of the 20th century. He was of the view that the modern age is a period of 'capitalistic economy.' Bonger concluded that criminality (or corrupt practices in this sense) is a product of capitalistic system which, instead of promoting altruistic (welfare of all) tendencies among members of the society, created selfish or egoistic tendencies.

It is the social environment according to him that determines whether individuals develop egoistic or altruistic tendencies. In the pre-modern society, everything had to be shared and everyone had to be help his neighbour to ensure survival (reciprocity). But in modern society, the man was more egoistic hence more capable of (corruption) crime. The mode of production based on private profit and individual profits, was essentially unsuitable or harmful to the development of social instincts. Since economic interests of all are in eternal conflict among themselves, compassion for others inevitably becomes blunted, and a great part of morality thus disappears. Each member tries to get the maximum from others in return of the minimum from him (Jain, 2012).

Viewing the massive political corruption in Nigeria from the compass of Bonger's economic theory of crime, the economic system in Nigeria thus provides climate of motivation for corruption and corrupt practices. The acquisitive tendency and continuous acquisition of wealth by the political elites for gaining more and more individual wealth at the expense of the masses has not only led to the emergence of massive corruption in Nigeria but also its prevalence, continuous increase and spread.

Highlighted Cases of Political Corruption in Nigeria (1979-2014)

The history of political development of the Nigerian state since independence has been pathetic. The reins of government has always fallen into the hands of a class of political leaders who are more interested in their private, group or ethnic gains than the general interest and wellbeing of the Nigerian state. They have succeeded in enriching corruption by providing a fertile ground and an environment conducive for the phenomenon to thrive incurably at the expense of natural socio-economic, cultural and political development. A search light into the second and the short lived third republic under President Shehu Shagari captured a resurgence of corruption. The Shagari administration was marked by spectacular government corruption. Rampart looting of public funds by elected officials that the president did nothing to stop it. Corruption among the political leaders was enormous due to the greater availability of funds. It was claimed that over 16 billion dollars in oil revenue could not be accounted for between 1979 and 1983 during the reign of President Shagari. It was common for Federal buildings to mysteriously go up in flames, most especially before the onset of ordered audits of government accounts, making it impossible to discover written evidence of embezzlement and fraud (Dash, 1983). One popular and widely spread story of corruption under Shargari's administration was the mismanagement of four billion naira of public fund meant for the importation of rice by his Combative Transport Minister, late Alhaji Umaru Dikko.

The same search light into the forth public also captures some cases of political corruption. Through the Obasanjo's administration kick-off in 1999 after sixteen

unbroken years of military era from the fall of third republic in 1983 and the restoration of democracy in 1999, represent an era in the country's history when corruption was practically institutionalized as the foundation and essence of governance. The Obasanjo's administration was entirely entrapped in the snare of corruption from top to the grass root which made the anti-corruption posture of the administration an obvious paradox. Throughout the eight (8) years of Obasanjo's Presidency, he was fully in-charge of petroleum Ministry, where high-level corrupt practices took place with impunity. The over \$400 million invested on the Turn-Around Maintenance (TAM) and repairs of the refineries failed to yield any positive result, and the contractors awarded the contracts were never brought to book (Adekeye, 2003: 30).

Furthermore, the report by Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) in 2002 indicated that 445, 000 barrel of crude oil sold by the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC) between January and July 2002 was not accounted for in its financial report. The report further indicated that within the seven month period, there was a short fall of N302 billion as undeclared revenue. The request by Haman Tukur, the then Chairman of RMAFC, to the presidency to compel Jackson Gaius-Obaseki, former Group Managing Director of NNPC, to refund the remaining money into government coffer was never heeded. The joint panel of the National Assembly set up then to probe the matter was also hindered by the presidency and hierarchical officials of the People's Democratic Party on the ground that the probe would sent negative signals abroad about corruption in Nigeria, particularly because the presidency directly oversees the Petroleum Ministry (Adekeye, 2003:30-31; Shettima, 2009). One wonders if hindering the probe on this ground will eradicate corrupt practices in Nigeria and send the supposed positive signals abroad.

Again, the audit report released by Vincent Azie the then Acting Auditor General of the Federal cannot be easily forgotten. The audit report shows that, during the four years of the Obasanjo's administration, Federal Ministries allegedly stole more than N23 billion from the public coffers. The amount according to the audit report, represent financial frauds ranging from embezzlement, payment for jobs not done, over-invoicing, double-debiting, inflation of contract figures to release of money without the consent of the

approving authority in ten major ministries. Instead of cautioning the ministries whose ministries were named in the fraud or invite the Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC) to further investigate the veracity of the alleged fraud, Vincent Azie was hastily retired by the presidency for procedural offence (Haruna, 2009) by an administration that have vowed to stamped out corruption in all facets. What a country whose political leaders have vowed with their blood to loot the public treasury with arrogance and impunity.

The National Identity Card scandal is another high profile corruption of the Obasanjo's administration that cannot be easily forgotten as well. It was widely spread in the news both print and the electronic media. It was perpetrated by the top echelon of the nation's political leadership then. In 2001, the Obasanjo's administration awarded the \$214 million National Identity Card project to SAGEM S.A, a French company, under controversial circumstances because the Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Company (NSPMC) which bided for the same contract at a lower rate, was not obliged. It was alleged that seven prominent public servant collaborated with SAGEM S.A to scuttle the \$ 214 million project. Record of the investigation indicted Hussaini, who until December 4, 2003 was Nigeria's Minister for Labour and Productivity, late Chief Sunday Michael Afolabi who later died in a Germany Hospital and Mahmud Shata, former Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister of state in the same Ministry respectively. R.O Akerele, Permanent secretary of the same Ministry of Internal Affairs, Okwesilieze Nwodo, former Governor of Enugu state and erstwhile secretary of the ruling People's Democratic Party, Niyi Adelagun, a business partner of SAGEM S.A in Nigeria and Jean-Pierce Delerue, the Regional Area Manager, identification systems of SAGEM S.A. It is now in the pages of history that the huge sum released for the National Identity Card Project was not fully or properly executed and a better part of this sum was shared among the suspected culprits (Asaju, 2003:38-41).

The Obasanjo's administration was succeeded by Musa Yar'Adua's administration on the 29th May, 2007. The administration started on a strong positive path with its seven points agenda which covers; transportation, power and energy, food security, wealth creation, land reforms, security and education. Yar'Adua would have been the best thing that had

ever happen to Nigeria. But his administration was bedevilled by his ill-health and the emergence of the cabals headed by the first lady as they strived to hold on to power despite the president's incapability to govern the country on health ground. Pressure from Nigerians, civil liberty organizations, International communities and the eventual announcement of the death of the president on the 5th of May 2010 barely three years after his inauguration as the 13th head states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria led to the swearing-in of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (GEJ) as the 14th head of the states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the 5th civilian president of Nigeria. He pledges his allegiance to continue with the seven (7) points agenda of his boss. Following his re-election in 2011, his pledge of allegiance to adhere to the seven (7) point's agenda was over shadow by his "Transformation Agenda."

Under the Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's or (GEJ's) administration, political corruption was highly tolerated. The Administration never made any concerted effort to fight corruption, even the ones taking place right under her nose. The house committee on petroleum report in 2014, reveal massive fraud, corruption and inefficiency on the fuel subsidy scheme to the tune of N1.067 trillion. A civil right organization (The Crusader for Good Governance) also alleged the Petroleum Resources Minister, Mrs. Dieziani Allison-Madueke spending a whopping sum of N2billion in two years on private jet rent charge when all available evidence shows she owned the jet, travelling around the world on both official and personal engagement. The report of the N6.6 billion phantom contracts in the Ministry of Niger Delta Affair is also another public corrupt case under the GEJ's administration. Not to forget the Aviation Minister, Princess Stella Oduah massive corruption and abuse of office on the purchase of two armoured cars for N255 million without following due process (Omatseye, 2013). Her eventual removal from office not on the ground of the corrupt charges but to pursue her political ambition as asserted by the president without any prosecution is a pointer to the GEJ's administration friendliness and romance with corruption.

The \$49 billion oil scam revealed by the then CBN governor, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi as non-refunded fund by NNPC remain one strong corruption case under the GEJ's administration. Despite consultation with the stakeholders (Auditor General of the

Federation, CBN, Finance, Budget Office, NNPC, and Inland Revenue) which confirmed that the actual non-refunded or uncounted oil revenue sum to \$10.5 billion while Sanusi drifted to \$20 billion and his eventual removal for breach of procedure and abuse of office is laughable and questionable. In actuality, this fund was not refunded. The breakdown given later by NNPC on how the \$10.5 billion was spent; with 50% for replacement of vandalized oil pipelines, 15% for consultancy while the remaining 35% went into administrative cost. This breakdown cannot even convince a kindergarten child that the unremitted sum was not stolen. The later demand by the Finance Minister, Okonja Iweala for a forensic audit of NNPC account was never done as the issue was eventually swept under the carpet at the corridor of power.

Government Fight against Corrupt Practices in Nigeria

Nigeria has made some impressive body of laws and has taken other initiative in the war against corruption. The laws and decrees according to Owolabi (2000) include the following: i. Investigation of Assets (public officers and others persons) decree of 1968. ii. The corrupt practice decree of 1975. iii. Public officers (special provisions) decree of 1976. iv. Recovery of public property decree 1984. v. National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Act, 1990. This was the first law made in Nigeria that make money laundering a criminal offence. Vi. The promulgation of the Mutual Assistance in criminal matters within the commonwealth (Enactment and Enforcement) Act No. 13 of 1988, designed to bring Nigeria municipal law in line with the Harare scheme. The scheme contains provisions on how to deal with the proceeds of crime and laundering of such money. vii. The public Complaints Commission Act CAP 377, laws of the Federation 1990. viii. The Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act CAP, laws of the Federation 1990. x. The Penal Code, Northern States Federation Provisions Act CAP 345, laws of the Federation 1990. xi. Bank and other Financial Institutions Act 1990. xii. Recovery of Public Property (Special Military Tribunal) Act CAP 389 laws of the Federation 1990. xiii. The Failed bank (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices Act No. 18 of 1994. xiv. Failed Bank Act No. 16 of 1996. xv. Advanced Fee Fraud and other Related Offences Act No. 13 of 1995, intended to deal with the menace of the so-called “Nigeria

Fraud Letters” or “419”. xvi. The Foreign Exchange (Miscellaneous provisions) Act No. 17 of 1995. xvii. The Money Laundering Act of No. 3 of 1995.

Regardless of these plethora of anti-corruption legislations and decrees, corruption and corrupt practices still grew increasingly. This was perhaps why the international community saw Nigeria corrupt fighting laws as grossly inadequate in dealing with these crimes. There are significant gaps in terms of the coverage of the laws and the adequacy of penal, forfeiture and enforcement provisions (Owolabi, 2010). Odozi (2002) concluded that, the laws lacked diligence in implementation which they attributed to reasons including the following: a). Inadequate resources for designing and implementing various anti-crime measures b). Impediment imposed by the laws on bank secrecy which shielded the criminal and / or allowed them to frustrate prosecution c). Large and growing unregulated informal sector with varying degrees of opacity and criminality. d). Fragmentation of legal provision and arbitrage opportunities for criminals. e). Poverty in the country which provides excuses, if not justification for various forms of economic crimes. f). Cross-border porosity and protection for criminals. g). Lack of political will to resolutely implement tough anti-crime measure.

All of these formed the background to the establishment of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC) by the then Obasanjo’s led administration.

Consequently, being aware of the decades of systemic corruption perpetrated by the successive political leadership of Nigeria and the devastating effect it has had on the country in all ramifications of our national life. The Obasanjo’s civilian government strengthened existing anti-corruption laws and established two important anti-corruption institutions – The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) to tackle the phenomenon of corruption in public and private life squarely. The ICPC was inaugurated on the 29th September, 2000. The Commission was established to fight corruption in the public sector, especially cases of bribery, gratification, graft, and abuse or misuse of office (The Corrupt Practice and other Related Offence Act, 2000).

The EFCC on the hand, was established in 2003, partially in response to presence from the Financial Action Force on Money Laundering (FATF), which named Nigeria among twenty-three (23) non-cooperative countries frustrating the effort of the international community to fighting money laundering (EFCC Establishment Act, 2002). Unlike ICPC, the EFCC investigate people in all sectors who appears to be living above their means. The phenomenon as captured by Obasanjo's declarative speech at the inception of the new democratic administration:

Corruption, the greatest single bane of our society today will be tacked head on at all levels. Corruption is incipient in human societies and most human activities. But it must not be condoned. No society can achieve anything near the full-blown cancer it has become in Nigeria; the rampant corruption in the public service and the cynical contempt for integrity that pervades every level of bureaucracy will be stamped out (Obasanjo, 1999).

Corruption is still with us and striving in all facets. The virus is like malignant cancer whose growth and spread is now tough to control.

Why we must Addressed this Phenomenon

High level political corruption has inevitably become major clog in the quest for Nigeria sustainable growth and development. Like deadly virus, it has attacked vital structures and system that engender progressive functioning of the society. Like most developing countries or emerging economy, Nigeria is still grappling with the dilemma of corruption that has largely retarded social development, undermined economic growth, discourage foreign investment and reduce the resources available for infrastructural development (Finding, 1999). The cycle of poverty keep growing with all its attendant consequences even as the rate of unemployment remains perpetually high. Studies has shown that as much as quarter of Nigeria's working age population aged 15-65 years are not in the labour force (Treichel, 2010). According to this study, fully 70 per cent of Nigeria's 160 million population are 30 years of age or younger with evidence of rising unemployment. Intellectual capital, which is the bane or the hallmark of any development and advancement, has continued to drift abroad in search of greener pasture. Paradoxically, the scourge of corruption has left Nigeria straddling two economic worlds at the same time, as succinctly captured by Ogbeidi, (2012) 'to state the obvious, the country has

found itself in the quagmire of a country too rich to be poor and at the same time too poor to be rich.’

Despite our substantial oil earnings since 1970s, Nigeria still remain mired in poverty with high rates of adult illiteracy, maternal mortality, infant mortality and so on. Nigeria is one of the Sub-Saharan African countries that will not meet the much talked about Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) come 2015. Infrastructure is poor. In a more telling example, per capital consumption of electrical power is low (121 kilo watt per hour) compared even to the average of low-income countries (317 Kwh) and a fraction of consumption in South Africa (3,800 Kwh) (Abayomi, 2013).

Addressing this phenomenon and placing or getting Nigeria on a sustainable development path is not just important for Nigeria; it is also critical for West Africa (Nigeria countries two-thirdsof the sub-regions GDP) and for Sub-Saharan African (Nigeria constitute one-fourth of Africa’s population) (Iwala 2012). When Nigeria succeeds in addressing this issues and transforming herself, it will transform Africa and the vision of Africa as a fast-growing and emerging group of nations, compare to the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries, will become a reality (Akintunde 2013:8-9).

According to Kim cited in Sachs (2005) classification, Nigeria and India are among the poorest countries in the world, politics aside. According to him, two-third of the world’s extreme poor are concentrated in just five countries – India, China, Nigeria, Bangladesh and the democratic republic of Congo. Political and social development of any tolerable level cannot exist when corruption is the order of the day and the citizens are order of the day and the citizens are under the bondage of poverty. Unless we found a way to confront corruption and enhance transparency in our economic, political and social life in a consistent manner we would not be able to convince well-meaning Nigerians or the world that we are serious about our growth and development and the far beyond generalities and platitudes and podium talk. Rather, it is about action, transparency, impact service and accountability that would positively change the life of the people.

Conclusion

We are where we are today as a nation, because we have both competent and incompetent people occupying leadership position without character and promoting corruption and corrupt practices in all facets. They birthed it, natured it and is striving at the moment in various public offices. We all know what this challenge is, a dependent on oil and political corruption that has threaten and continue to threaten the future existence of our country. We know it; we have talked about it for years. What has stopped us from stamping it out and placing our country on the path to economic growth and development? It is not the absence of sound policies and sensible plans. What has stooped us is the political will to apply and implement appropriately, the constitution when it is appropriate. The failure of leadership, the sameness of our politics, and greediness of the highest level are some hindrances militating against our quest and fight to overcoming political corruption in Nigeria. A reversed of all these will not only kill political corruption perpetually in Nigeria and transport us to the nation of our dream, it will equally make Nigeria and transport us to the nation of our dream, it will equally make a Nigeria a force to reckon with among the comity of nations. As citizens of this great nation, we must continue to seek and support people with competent character and leadership ability to be at the aim of affair in our country. When competent, leadership ability and character work together, the result is always a masterpiece.

Curbing this Phenomenon/Recommendation

The paper recommends welfarist/socialist alternative economic system that have promoted altruistic tendencies among her citizens. The country has not fared well under the present capitalist economic system. The welfarist/socialist economic system has benefited countries like: Cuba, Canada, China to mention but a few, to a large extent. A historical retrospect of the western region of Nigeria would further showcase the strength of this system against the capitalist economic system, years after its adoption and practice by this region. Though practiced in the 50s to late 60s, the system has placed this region economically, socially, intellectually and otherwise, more viable and advantaged than any other region in the country. A consideration of this economic system, its adoption and remoulded to fit modern techniques and realities and applied to modern Nigeria, will

bridge our large divide and addressed to a large extent the cases of political corruption in the country.

Our constitution need to be amended, sections that have created gaps which aid and abet corruption directly or indirectly must be out rightly remove from our constitution especially the immunity and continuous immunity clause. Political office holders found guilty must be arrested made to face the law any time irrespective of their offices. We cannot claim to be waging war against political corruption while supporting and nurturing it systematically.

Furthermore, our leaders must garner the much needed political will to apply the constitution without fear or favour, smoothly appropriately without controversy and delay, in cases of corruption and corrupt practices. It is not just claiming zero tolerance for corruption as mantra for their administrations, it must be acted upon. Again, political office must be seen as service delivery to the people and not a profession.

In addition, a non-violent revolution via non-violent protest, concrete petitions to the appropriate authority and objective criticism of our leaders activities backed up with facts is expedient. We must learn to hold our leaders accountable for their stewardship. Their manifestos, allocations, aids and grants received while in office, projects executed among others should be placed on the front burner for critical evaluation and assessment. Leaders who have done well should highly be rewarded and given a place of pride in our history for upcoming and successive generations to emulate. The reverse should be the case for leaders found wanting. In this light, every citizen should have access to information on how they are been govern by the governed.

Finally, the paper recommends integrity, values, and virtues orientation and reorientation in our citizens. As a people that make up the entity called Nigeria, there is an urgent and heavy need for us to begin to address the big question of integrity, values, and virtue in our individual lives that should not be traded for anything else in this world. Without this attributes inherent strongly in our lives, we cannot confront this phenomenon called corruption and defeat it from our national life. The National Orientation Agency (NOA) and other constituted agencies charged with the functions of promoting these attributes in

our citizens' lives, must discharged this duty with vigour and utmost urgency. Hard work, transparency in our public and private lives, living within ones' means and earnings, must equally be promoted and rewarded. We cannot afford to fold our hands and watch our dear country sink down beyond the level of recovery due to corrupt practices.

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