

The Impact of Corruption on Nigerian Democracy

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Abstract

Nigeria's nascent democracy will be undermined if its fundamental principles, including judicial objectivity, rule of law are not adhered to, if you have one set of laws for the elite and another set for the poor, you ultimately undermine the basics of democracy. One of the major principles which Nigeria must also abhor and tackle from the roots and not the surface, if democracy is to survive, is corruption. Corruption makes democracy dysfunctional, especially when it is institutionalized. Democracy is supposed to be a leveller when it concerns dividends of democracy. A situation where only the elites and a favoured few are seen to be enjoying its dividends and the large majority who actually did the voting to elect the leaders continue to wallow in poverty; with lack of infrastructure is an invitation to chaos. The spate of corruption in Nigeria has found expression not only in public offices and institutions but other critical social milieu namely, the family, schools, places of worship, electioneering activities, had had a fair share of corrupt practices bedevilling them. This study is a theoretical analysis of the concept and context of corruption and the survival of democracy in Nigeria.

Keywords: Democracy, Corruption, Institution and Governance.

Introduction

There are many unresolved problems in Nigeria, but the issue of the upsurge of corruption is troubling. And the damages it has done to the polity are astronomical. The menace of corruption leads to slow movement of files in offices, police extortion at tollgates and slow traffics on the highways, port congestion, queues at passport offices and gas stations, ghost workers syndrome, election irregularities, among others. Even the mad people on the street recognize the havoc caused by corruption - the funds allocated for their welfare disappear into the thin air. Thus, it is believed by many in the society that corruption is the bane of Nigerian democracy. Consequently, the issue keeps reoccurring in every academic and informal discussion in Nigeria.

One of the greatest development challenges of the so called Third world economies comprising the entire sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America, and even developed countries namely, Europe and America is corruption. The effects of corruption on the socio-economic, cultural and political landscape of any society can be so devastating that nothing meaningful works in the midst of this malaise. Corruption therefore becomes a clog in the wheel of progress of any nation state if the menace is not controlled. The inability of Nigeria's past and present leadership to consolidate on the gains of democracy has been attributed to corruption. In general terms, corruption has eaten very deep and hence, found its way into the body polity of the Nigerian state so much so that virtually all spheres of the nation's life stinks with the sores of corruption. This kind of development as pointed above compelled Preye and Weleayam (2011) ^[39] to argue that Nigerians no longer believe that honesty and integrity are not worthy principles since one can do very little or even do nothing at all to gain so much. The school of thought of Preye and

Weleayam on the high degree of ineptitude and indolence in the attitude of Nigerians further confirms the fact that corruption is not a thing of the leadership alone. The followership is also guilty as it is culpable for this misdemeanour. Thus, one finds corruption showing its face in the affairs of the family circle, schools (primary, secondary and universities and other higher structures of learning); worship places, the bureaucracy, security outfits, market places, main stream politics, village meetings, women organizations, electoral activities, appointment of persons into public offices; the manner and character in which funds are disbursed from the centre to states and local councils, rigging of elections, and many more. All of these stages and categories of corruption have over the years constituted themselves into a huge albatross bedevilling the Nigerian state. Corruption whether political, economic, judicial, familial, institutional or bureaucratic could by and large impede the progress of any society where such attitudes are widely tolerated and accommodated in the scheme of things.

Concept of Corruption

As a result of the complexity of corruption, its effects on the systemic existence of its victims as does its prevalence through the efforts of its perpetrators, its definition has continued to be shrouded by value preference and differences (Akindele and Adeyemi, 2011:8) ^[3]. This has to some extent complicated the attainment of a definitional uniformity on the concept within the academia and practicing world of administration.

Given this, the elusiveness of the definition of corruption (depending on the definer and perspective) within the parameter of intellectual discourse on m Nigerian State and beyond, was eloquently evoked by Gboyega quoted in Olasupo (2009:188) as thus:

Corruption involves the giving and taking of bribe, or illegal acquisition of wealth using the resources, of a public office, including the exercise of discretion. In this regard, it is those who have business to do with government who are compelled somehow to provide inducement to public officials to make them do what they had to do or grant undeserved favour. It is therefore defined as official taking advantage of their offices to acquire wealth or other personal benefit.

The above quotation was corroborated by McMillan (1969:183-184) when he defines corruption in the following way: A public official is corrupt if he accepts money or money's worth for doing something that he is under a duty to do anyway, that he is under a duty not to do or exercise a legitimate discretion for improper reasons.

Otite (1986:12) in his own explanation sees corruption as: Perversion of integrity or state of affair through bribery, favour or moral depravity. It involves the injection of additional but improper transaction aimed at changing the normal course of events and altering judgments and positions of trust. It consists in doers and receivers' use of informal, extra-legal or illegal act to facilitate matter.

Corruption, according to Harsh (1993) ^[19], is a practical problem involving the outright theft, embezzlement of funds or other appropriation of state property, nepotism, and granting of favors to personal acquaintance. It has been argued that corruption involves behaviors which deviate from the moral and constitutional requirements.

Kalu (1991) ^[21] conceives corruption as the conscious and well planned act by a person or group of persons to appropriate, by unlawful means, the wealth of another person or group of persons. Corruption can also be seen as diversion or resources from the betterment of the community to the gain of individuals at the expense of the community.

Odey (2002) contextualizes corruption in Nigeria as the air which every living person breathes in and out. According to him, nobody makes any effort to breathe in the air; it comes naturally. Corruption, in Nigeria, has become so naturalized that many of us simply becomes corrupt without making any effort and often even without knowing it.

Olopoenia (1998:17) put this definition in a broad perspective of three categories as thus:

Theoretically, the literature distinguishes among political, bureaucratic and economic corruption; practically however, these three typologies are no more than different perceptions of the same monster. But all these manifestations are motivated by the desire to use the instrumentality of office for private gains for the benefit of the official, his relations, ethnic group or friends at the expenses of the general good.

Nwabueze (2002:128) in his own contribution adopted a sociological approach to the definition of corruption. He conceptualized corruption in the following way: "A form of social deviance in some cases, of criminal deviances, the result of failure or lack of will to respect the norms of social interactions. It is an extra-legal or normative approach to gaining access. It is a form of mal-adaptation involving the acceptance of society's cultural goals and the rejection of the socially approved means of attaining the goals. It is an indictment on the ineffectiveness of society's socialization function; a sign of some defects in the development of citizen's personality system. It indicates the existence of weakness in agencies of social control which should punish rather than reward the perpetuator of corruption"

Corruptions, according to him take several forms on one hand, if a public officer embezzles public funds kept in his trust that is corruption. In the same view, if he does unauthorized spending or exceeds approved limits for dubious ends, this is corruption. If he, in deviance of the rules, allocates government land to himself, his wife, his child or friends or otherwise appropriates his position to his or other person's unfair advantage it is corruption. If he over values a contract so that he could earn a kick-back, this is corruption (Nwabueze, Ibid).

The Concept of Democracy

The Nature and Characteristics of Corruption

Some studies have taken a *holistic* (broader) approach in the discussion of corruption by dividing it into many forms and sub-divisions. These are:

- i) Political Corruption ('*grand*');
- ii) Bureaucratic Corruption ('*petty*'); and
- iii) Electoral Corruption.

Political corruption takes place at the highest levels of political authority. It occurs 'when the politicians and political decision-makers, who are entitled to formulate, establish and implement the laws in the name of the people, are themselves corrupt.' It also takes place when policy formulation and legislation is tailored to benefit politicians and legislators. Political corruption is sometimes seen as similar to 'corruption of greed' as it affects the manner in which decisions are made, as it manipulates political institutions, rules of procedure, and distorts the institutions of government (NORAD, ch.4, Jan. 2000; *The Encyclopedia Americana*, 1999).

Bureaucratic corruption occurs 'in the public administration' or 'the implementation end of politics.' This kind of corruption has been branded 'low level' and 'street level.' It is the kind of corruption the citizens encounter daily at places like the hospitals, schools, local licensing offices, police, taxing offices and on and on. Bureaucratic 'petty' corruption, which is seen as similar to 'corruption of need,' occurs when one obtains a business from the public sector through inappropriate procedure (see NORAD, ch.4, 2000).

Electoral corruption includes purchase of votes with money, promises of office or special favors, coercion, intimidation, and interference with freedom of election [Nigeria is a good example where this practice is common. Votes are bought, people are killed or maimed in the name of election, losers' end up as the winners in elections, and votes turn up in areas where votes were not cast]. Corruption in office involves sales of legislative votes, administrative, or judicial decision, or governmental appointment. Disguised payment in the form of gifts, legal fees, employment, favors to relatives, social influence, or any relationship that sacrifices the public interest and welfare, with or without the implied payment of money, is usually considered corrupt (*The Encyclopedia Americana*, 1999).

Other forms of corruption include:

A) Bribery: The payment (in money or kind) that is taken or given in a corrupt relationship. These include *kickbacks*, *gratuities*, *pay-off*, *sweeteners*, *greasing palms*, etc. (Bayart et al 1997, p.11) ^[8].

B) Fraud: It involves some kind of trickery, swindle and deceit, counterfeiting, racketing, smuggling and forgery (Ibid. p.11).

C) *Embezzlement*: This is theft of public resources by public officials. It is when a state official steals from the public institution in which he/she is employed. In Nigeria the embezzlement of public funds is one of the most common ways of economic accumulation, perhaps, due to lack of strict regulatory systems.

D) *Extortion*: This is money and other resources extracted by the use of coercion, violence or threats to use force. It is often seen as extraction 'from below' [The police and custom officers are the main culprits in Nigeria] (Bayart et. al 1997, p.11) [8].

E) *Favoritism*: This is a mechanism of power abuse implying a highly biased distribution of state resources. However, this is seen as a natural human proclivity to favor friends, family and any body close and trusted.

F) *Nepotism*: This is a special form of favoritism in which an office holder prefers his/her *kinfolk* and family members. *Nepotism*, [which is also common in Nigeria], occurs when one is exempted from the application of certain laws or regulations or given undue preference in the allocation of scarce resources (NORAD, *ch.1, ch.2 & ch.4*, Jan. 2000; Amundsen, 1997; *Girling* 1997; also see *Fairbanks, Jr.* 1999).

Causes of Corruption in Nigeria

The causes of corruption are multiple and have been discussed by scholars under numerous headings but I will briefly discuss some of the major causes that we have identified as investigators as some of the common causes of corruption in a political economy.

Weak Institutions: First, we have identified weak institutions as a major cause of corruption. Corruption has a high propensity to thrive when legal and political institutions are weak and government policies generate economic rents. In most climes, there are so many incentives in the public sector, particular administrative and legal institutions that leave public officials with wide unrestricted authority and powers to create avenues for unjust enrichment or use the discretionary powers at their disposal to manipulate the system. According to the World Bank Report; "the normal motivation of public sector employees to work productively may be undermined by many factors, including low and declining civil service salaries and promotion unconnected to performance. Dysfunctional government budgets, inadequate supplies and equipment, delays in the release of budget funds (including pay), and a loss of organizational purpose also may demoralize staff. The motivation to remain honest may be further weakened if senior officials and political leaders use public office for private gain or if those who resist corruption lack protection. Or the public service may have long been dominated by patron-client relationships, in which the sharing of bribes and favours has become entrenched. In some countries pay levels may always have been low, with the informal understanding that staff will find their own ways to supplement inadequate pay. Sometimes these conditions are exacerbated by closed political systems dominated by narrow vested interests and by international sources of corruption associated with major projects or equipment purchases".

Rules and Criminal Justice System: Closely related to the issue of weak institutions is the role of formal rules and the criminal justice system. There is hardly any country where corruption is legalized; to the contrary, there are several formal rules and laws prohibiting corruption and corrupt practices with appropriate sanctions and punishments. In addition to organic laws, several public institutions such as the Police, Customs and Immigration, Road Safety Corps, Fire Marshals, the Armed Forces, internal revenue agents, and other institutions including the judiciary have comprehensive codes of conduct to regulate their behaviours which also prohibit the receiving or accepting of bribes, gifts, gratifications etc. However, in a political economy that is laced with corruption, such formal rules are usually supplanted by informal rules or customs that allow corruption to flourish. For instance, the law may criminalize the giving and taking of bribes but in practice, one can hardly get anything done without gratification or in Nigerian parlance, "settling" someone. In Nigeria until the establishment of the EFCC, the laws were hardly enforced and the informal rules prevailed. The EFCC was thus established to strengthen the institutions and to shift emphasis back to the recognition and enforcement of formal rules. In addition to the formation of the EFCC, the government of Nigeria, recognizing the need to have a strong formal rules, had also enacted various other laws such as The Money Laundering Act, the Advance Free Fraud Related Offences Act and the Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act and several other appropriate legal frameworks to control corruption and strengthen the legal and economic institutions including the criminal justice administration. The Act also made the EFCC the designated Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) in Nigeria, which is charged with the responsibility of co-coordinating the various institutions involved in the fight against money laundering and enforcement of all laws dealing with economic and financial crimes in Nigeria. Essentially however, the incentive to engage in corruption and corrupt practice is stronger where the probability of being discovered or prosecuted is remote or non-existent.

Public Perception: Another cause of corruption is public perception. Corruption is supported when some/few societal culture promotes corruption. Why should a convicted corrupt individual be offered a chieftaincy title by traditional rulers? Why do governors, some of whom have been fingered in corruption be given awards or be elected into the senate? There are also other instances where religious institutions have ordained corrupt public officials and sometimes organized thanksgiving services for corrupt ex-convicts who are just being release from prisons.

The Nature of the Economy: The nature of the economy is also a crucial factor. It has been argued that rent-seeking or rent-based systems tend to promote corruption. If this view holds, then, because the Nigerian economy is based on rents from crude oil and gas, it follows that there would be a number of "leakages" that would allow for the easy flow of cash and favours, sometimes in illegal ways. Until recently in Nigeria, public officers would deliberately delay the implementation of national budget with the hope that at the end of the financial year, any unspent budget would become largesse to be shared by the senior civil servants. This is why it is often said by experts that for corruption in public sector to flourish, public

officials must possess “the authority to design or administer regulations and policies in a discretionary manner”. However, with the passage of new government policies which have made it mandatory for any unspent budget heads at the end of the financial year to be returned to the federation account and the passage of the Freedom of Information Act which is aimed at promoting transparency and accountability in government finance among others, this practice has also become a thing of the past in Nigeria.

Materialism: Obsession with materialism, compulsion for a shortcut to affluence, *glorification* and approbation [of ill-gotten wealth] by the general public, are among the reasons for the persistence of corruption in Nigeria (Ndiulor, March 17, 1999). It has been noted that one of the popular, but unfortunate indices of good life in Nigeria, is *flamboyant affluence* and *conspicuous consumption*. Because of this, some people get into dubious activities, including ‘committing ritual murder for money-making.’ The cases of *ritual* murder abound in Nigeria, but a few examples will suffice. A middle-aged woman and an SSS3 female student were reportedly beheaded in *Akure*, the *Ondo State* capital recently (*ThisDay News*, July 7, 2002). Another case was that of the 1996 *Clement Duru* (alias ‘*Otokoto*’) ritual killing episode at *Owerri* in *Imo State*. A well-known proprietor of ‘*Otokoto*’ hotel, *Clement Duru* was reported to have been killing and selling the body parts of some of the travelers that checked into his hotel at *Owerri*. And recently, another incident of ritual killing was reported in the area (see Ogugbuaja, *The Guardian*, May 16, 2002).

Low Ethical Standards: The lack of ethical standards throughout the agencies of government and business organizations in Nigeria is a serious drawback. According to Bowman, *ethics* is action, the way we practice our values; it is a guidance system to be used in making decisions. The issue of ethics in public sector [and in private life] encompasses a broad range, including a stress on obedience to authority, on the necessity of logic in moral reasoning, and on the necessity of putting moral judgement into practice (Bowman 1991) ^[10]. Unfortunately, many officeholders in Nigeria (appointed or elected) do not unfortunately; have clear conceptions of the ethical demands of their position. Even as corrupt practices are going off the roof, little attention, if any, is being given to this ideal.

Poor Reward System and Greed: Other factors are poor reward system and greed; Nigeria’s reward system is, perhaps, the poorest in the world. Nigeria is a society where national priorities are turned upside down; hard work is not rewarded, but rogues are often glorified in Nigeria. As *Arthur Schlesinger* said of America in the 60s, “Our [the] trouble [with Nigeria] is not that our capabilities are inadequate. It is that our priority - which means our values - is wrong” (Howard (ed.) 1982). And peer community and extended family pressures, and ‘*polygamous household*’ are other reasons (Onalaja & Onalaja, 1997). The influence of extended family system and pressure to meet family obligations are more in less developed societies. *Lawrence Harrison* acknowledged that the extended family system “is an effective institution for survival,” but notes that it poses a big “obstacle for development” (1985, p.7).

Poor Attitude to Work: The lukewarm attitude of those who are supposed to enforce the laws of the land (judges, police officers and public officials) could lead to people engaging in corrupt behaviour, knowing full well that they would get away with it. Some cultural and institutional factors lead to corruption. For instance, *Nepotism* and the strength of family values are linked to the feeling of obligation. The work of *Robert K. Merton* has demonstrated the relationship between culture and corruption (1968). His “means-ends schema” implies that corruption is at times a motivated behaviour responding to social pressures to violate the norms, so as to meet the set goals and objectives of a social system.

Corruption and its effects on Nigerian Democracy

Many studies have been conducted that show the evils or consequences of corruption. And corruption has taught the Nigeria a dangerous and wrong lesson that it does not pay to be honest, hardworking and law-abiding. Through corrupt means many political office holders acquire wealth and properties in and outside Nigeria; and many display their wealth (which is beyond the means), but the society does not blink. This has made politics a big business in Nigeria, because anything spent to secure a political office is regarded as an investment, which matures immediately one gets into office (*The Guardian*, July 14, 2002).

Corruption is also destructive of governmental structures and capacity. *The NEWS*, in its July 11, 1999 issue *The Face of a Liar*, broke the news of “forgery” and “perjury” committed by the former *Speaker* of the *House of Representatives*, *Alhaji Ibrahim Salisu Buhari*. Through corrupt means, *Alhaji Ibrahim Salisu Buhari* amassed wealth (he made millions working for *NEPA*), and bribed his way to the fourth highest position in the land. This scandal dominated the political agenda of Nigeria for some time. It is a national shame that a crook was in-charge of the *House of Representatives* – the body that makes the laws of the land. What type of laws could he have made for Nigeria? *President Olusegun Obasanjo* disappointed the world by granting *Alhaji Salisu Buhari* a state pardon, despite his apparent campaign to transform Nigeria into a corruption-free society (*Obasanjo's Inaugural Speech*, May 29, 1999). The ‘*Buharigate*,’ as the scandal was later called, nearly destroyed Nigeria’s democracy-experiment.

Corruption can destroy the legitimacy of a government. The *Shehu Shagari* administration was written off as inept because of the magnitude of corruption in the administration, and its lack of policy direction (Suberu 1994). Corruption may alienate modern-oriented civil servants and may cause them to reduce or withdraw their service or to leave the country. Corruption is one the reasons for the ‘*brain drain*’ phenomenon in Nigeria (talented professionals leaving the country in search of employment somewhere else). In Nigeria, you can hardly enter an office and get your ‘file signed except you drop’ some money. Even the security personnel at the door of every office will ask for (bribe) tips? In other words, corruption leads to ‘slow moving files that get through the desk of officers once the interested parties have compromised themselves.’ It also leads to “missing files that [would] resurface immediately the desk officer is settled,” unnecessary bureaucracy and “delays until fees are paid” (Oloja; *The Guardian*, April 21, 2002).

By doling out money to politicians, General *Abacha* got many of the nation’s political class to commit political suicide in 1998. Many of them lined up en masse to proclaim him as a ‘dynamic

leader' and the only person qualified to lead Nigeria. Similarly, recently many politicians from the ruling *Peoples' Democratic Party* (PDP) recently trooped to President *Obasanjo's Ota Farm in Ogun State* to 'beg him' to run for a second term. Even General *Abubakar's* visible timidity to address the issue of corruption in Nigeria was alarming and discouraging, as he retained the military officers of accused of looting the national treasury with *General Abacha*.

Corruption upsets ethnic balance, and exacerbates problems of national integration in developing countries. For instance, if a corrupt but popular ethnic leader is replaced in his or her position, it 'may upset ethnic arithmetic' and the cohorts may revolt. The social brawl that followed the *Moshood Abiola's* 1993 elections rebuff is one of the many cases dotting Nigeria's political landscape. Southerners (mainly Yorubas from his ethnic *Southwest*) rioted, as they felt they were mistreated by the northern oligarchy. Similarly, some politicians from the northern part of the country seem to have forgotten the atrocities committed by Generals *Buhari*, *Babangida*, and *Abubakar* during their regime (they even refused to testify before the *Oputa Panel*), because they are their 'home boys.' Any attempt to bring them to justice would lead their cronies to ethnic and social conflicts and possible loss of innocent lives.

Another consequence of corruption is that it creates the condition for political instability. This is because unrestricted corruption makes the state an unlimited allocator of wealth to individuals and groups. This character of the state makes it possible for the politics of do-or-die to take root, with politicians struggling to out-compete one another sometimes in violent manner. It must be recalled that the various military regimes that took over power from democratically elected representatives of the people had always justified their intervention on the ground of grand corruption and looting of state treasury by political state actors

Corruption also has other social costs apart from poverty. As rightly noted by Myint (2000: 50), in "any society, there are laws and regulations to serve social objectives and to protect the public interest, such as building codes, environmental controls, traffic laws and prudential banking regulations. Violating these laws for economic gain through corrupt means can cause serious social harm." The frequent use of substandard materials and violation of building regulations have led to several buildings collapsing and killing innocent occupiers have become a recurrent decimal in Nigeria while large scale oil spills with catastrophic effects have continued in some part of the country

Recommendations

1. The *mass media* has a crucial role to play in the campaign to educate the people of their rights as citizens, and in exposing the rogues. Nothing chills *nonsense* more than exposure to thin air. The nation should erect permanent structures in the society to constantly tackle corruption, instead of setting up *ad-hoc* corruption-panels here and there. The citizens have a role to play in the war against corruption: they should always try to resist the temptation to offer bribes to corrupt government officials, as 'it takes two to tango.
2. To win the war on corruption, adherence to ethical standards in decision-making must be the foundation of the nation's policies. Without ethics (set of moral principles or values or principles of conducts governing an individual or

a group) - *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1980, p.389, in the conduct of the affairs of the nation (public and business), the apparent wars on corruption in Nigeria will not be successful. In other words, without ethics, any money budgeted toward fighting corruption in Nigeria is a thing cast to the *wild cat*. Nigeria has to make laws and implement them to the letters. As *Aristotle* insists, the aim of ethical philosophy is practical - 'to make us better men' - (*The Philosophy of Aristotle*, *Bambrough* (ed.), p.280; *ThisDay*, May 26, 2002). And to win the war on corruption Nigeria has to fortify the institutional 'checks and balances among the country's major social forces and the separation of powers within the government' (Dahl 1998). The nation has to make sure that those entrusted to execute the war on corruption are men and women of *virtue* - those who recognize and always do what is right.

3. The constitution of the land must be respected and obeyed to the letter. Every rule guiding the behaviours of public officials are domesticated in the 1999 constitution. The onus is for the political head to act in accordance with the dictates and injunctions of the law. This will foster accountability and probity. Secondly, all anti-graft agencies namely, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) should be strengthened. By implications, the body should be made autonomous and independent of politicians at whatever level - be they federal, state and local government. The best way to do this is to urgently amend the anti-graft law of the EFCC and hence, divorce the agency from politics and place it under the control of the civil society organizations, trade unions and other political groups.
4. Moreover, the freedom of Information Bill should further be explored and strengthened to the extent that the secret deals of public officials and politicians, including their private businesses and accounts are made public for everyone to see. When this is done, caution in the affairs of public business will be at the heart of every public official. And circumventing these rules will spell stiff punishment for such a person as well as serve as deterring factor to potential partners in crime.

Conclusion

Corruption, in all its ramifications, is the one single factor that has been holding our country back for decades; that has not let Nigeria and Nigerians fulfil their God-given potentials; that has not let our enormous wealth and resources work for or benefit all of us, but a few rapacious, evil clique. Corruption it is that has contributed to our underdevelopment, lack of progress and underachievement, poverty, high infant and adult mortality rate, etc. Corruption is the reason why we do not have good leaders (and even worse ones are battling to replace them), good roads and transportation systems, good water, good medical and health care, good food, good education system, good foreign policies, excellent sports facilities and great sportsmen, a fair judiciary and efficient police and security systems and good governance in general. Corruption also breeds tribalism, nepotism, favouritism, injustice, mismanagement, neglect, etc. It is the reason why millions of Nigerians are living in abject poverty and why more millions of Nigerians are living outside Nigeria today. Many laws are already on the book to fight corruption in Nigeria (including those crafted by the

international organizations). But what is important now, as Peter Eigen, chairman of the *watchdog* group, *Transparency International* has noted, is “the political will to fight corruption at home...” countries. And as Robert McNamara remarked at the end of the *Second Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity at The Hague* May 31, 2001, “Every country has to determine its own priorities” on the war against corruption. But each society should “focus on concrete actions that can yield measurable results,” and “...publicly report whether results are being achieved” (see *Odessey, Washington File Staff Writer*, May 31, 2001).

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