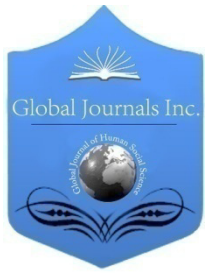
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Corruption and National Development in Nigeria: An Appraisal

By Uji, Wilfred Terlumun
Federal University, Nigeria

Introduction- One of the problems facing most third world, developing and or underdeveloped countries including Nigeria today is corruption. This to a large extent affects development. In Nigeria for example, this problem has become endemic such that the entire fabric of the society is affected. Past administrations be it civilian or military had in the time past, put in place machineries to curb and or curtail this menace. Presently, there are institutions established with the sole aim of eradicating corruption. Yet, the disease has refused to go away or die. This is due to the fact that the apostles of this crusade against (corruption) are in most instances affected by it.

Corruption is an ethical and moral problem not subject to a consistent theoretical construct, because it varies from place to place, time to time, culture to culture and with the level of development in given country. While one can say that corruption is a global phenomenon, the degree of corruption varies. For example, the incidence of corruption is less in developed countries with good welfare system; it is high in countries and or less developed economies with poor welfare system and income. It is less in socialist countries than in capitalist countries.

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Corruption and National Development in Nigeria: An Appraisal

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I. Introduction

One of the problems facing most third world, developing and or underdeveloped countries including Nigeria today is corruption. This to a large extent affects development. In Nigeria for example, this problem has become endemic such that the entire fabric of the society is affected. Past administrations be it civilian or military had in the time past, put in place machineries to curb and or curtail this menace. Presently, there are institutions established with the sole aim of eradicating corruption. Yet, the disease has refused to go away or die. This is due to the fact that the apostles of this crusade against (corruption) are in most instances affected by it.

Corruption is an ethical and moral problem not subject to a consistent theoretical construct, because it varies from place to place, time to time, culture to culture and with the level of development in given country. While one can say that corruption is a global phenomenon, the degree of corruption varies. For example, the incidence of corruption is less in developed countries with good welfare system; it is high in countries and or less developed economies with poor welfare system and income. It is less in socialist countries than in capitalist countries. The machineries or structures put in place in the fight against corruption are either faulty and or defective thereby making the whole exercise a mere jamboree at the start.

In this paper, conceptualization of the two main components would be made and the impact it has on development examined. This paper will focus on key areas like, politics, economics, bureaucratic and judicial corruption respectively.

Also in this paper, issues raised herein would be narrowed to Nigeria. However, reference would be made to some countries as the need arises. In this paper too, histology of corruption in Nigeria would be treated and the roles of those involved will be assessed.

II. Conceptual Issues

The word 'corruption' has become a common denominator in Nigeria and it is hindering meaningful development. As pointed out, its prevalence in less developed economies including Nigeria has become so pronounced that no day passes without a case of corruption against highly placed Nigerian reported. Corruption is a class problem. Corruption simply means the reversion of integrity, or state of affairs through official bribery, favour or made depravity.

Corruption is asking, giving or taking a free gift or favour in exchange for the performance of a legitimate task; the pervasion or obstruction of the performance of such a task or the performance of an illegal and illegitimate task hoarding, collusion, price fixing, election rigging, abuse and or misuse of office.

Corruption in public life in Nigeria was said to be in the 50s when the first panel of inquiry headed by justice Strafford Forster Sutttory was set up to look into the affairs of Africa Continental Bank (Ltd) (ACB). This was on July 1956. The chairman was then the Chief Justice of Nigeria. The petitioner was Mr. Eya. The panel report was released on January 16, 1957 and Dr. Zik was indicted for allowing public funds to be invested in bank which he (Zik) had interest.

In the same vein, three leading members of Action Group Party (AGP) namely: Ayo Rosiji, Abiodun Akerele and Chief E.O. Okunowo used the floor of the Federal Parliament in Lagos to call for commission of inquiry to investigate the various corporations in Western Region where Chief Awolowo was the premier of the region; the Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa set up a commission of inquiry which was headed by Justice Coker. The commission turned in the report December 31, 1963 and Chief Awolowo was fingered in the mismanagement of public funds.

Like corruption, development is a value word. It is always normative because it is directed towards the objectives that people desired. Biddle and Biddle in their own words defined development as: "social and personal change that moves towards consciously chosen goals. The chosen is done by the people who are in the process of change" (4).

Walter Rodney (1972) on his part, defines development as: at the level of individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, self discipline, responsibility and material well-being. Taking a cue from the above definitions, national development can be defined as the capacity of nation state to pull all its resources both human and material to achieve set objectives for the good of the state and the citizenry. This requires total commitment on the part of the rulers and the ruled. Rulers are to create enabling environment

Author: Department of History, Federal University, Lafia.
e-mails: Ujiter@gmail.com, teruji02@yahoo.com

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for the citizens to actualize their dreams without any hindrance.

Having treated the two key issues of this essay, attention would now be turned to how corruption affects development. On this score, the focal point would essentially be political and or leadership, bureaucratic, economic and judicial corruption respectively.

When Nigeria attained political independence, there were high expectations from the people that the political class who were trusted leadership positions could deliver. There were high hopes because the crop of politicians in the first republic displayed seriousness to the task ahead. However, within few years in office, cases of corruption against key political actors became rife as captured by Achebe:

We listened to whisper of scandalous deals in high places sometimes involving some amount that I for one don't believe existed in the country.

He went further to state that satirically, how Chief Nanga wanted a certain road tarred before the next election at the cost of £210,000 tow times higher than the original cost of the contract at that time (46).

Another leadership/political corruption in Nigeria was exercised in July 1956 when the panel of inquiry headed by Chief Justice of Nigeria, Strafford Forster Sutton was set up to investigate allegations leveled against Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe by Mr. Eya, a member of NCNC. He submitted the findings on January 16, 1957. In that report, Dr. Zik was indicted.

Furthermore, three members of the Action Group (AC) – Ayo Rosiji, Abiodun Akerele and Chief E.O. Okunowo had used the floor of the Federal Parliament in Lagos to call for commission of inquiry to investigate activities of various corporations in Western Nigeria. Chief Awolowo was the Premier of Western Nigeria. Against this backdrop, the Federal Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa set up a commission of inquiry headed by Justice G.B. Coker, christened Coker Commission. It report was released on December 31, 1962 and its findings were astonishing.

We came across evidence of reckless and indeed atrocious and criminal mismanagement of public funds. We are satisfied about the diversion of large sums of money into the coffers of Action Group (AG).

The two instances above clearly showed how our political leaders lacked leadership qualities. It further confirmed the early statements credited to the two elder statesmen. Zik had this to say:

That henceforth I shall utilize my earned income to secure my enjoyment of a high standard of living and also to give a helping hand to the needy.

Chief Awolowo was more forceful and direct.

I was going to make myself formidable intellectually, morally invulnerable to make all the money that is possible for a man with my brains and brawn to make in Nigeria.

Thoughts such as these are more likely to produce aggressive millionaires than selfless leaders of their people. Such thoughts can be said to be product of demented brain and complete absence of intellectual vigor on issues of leadership and state craft at the formation stage of the country (11).

The developments in the Western Nigeria involving the two political figures, Awolowo and Chief Samuel Akintola which resulted to what was known as the "wild-wild west, the revolts in Tiv Division when the ruling party NCP attempted to force the opposition UMBC to join its ranks resulted into a serious political crisis.

Thus, the minimal structures laid by the departing colonialists could not be sustained owing to political squabbles, self aggrandizement, corruption and seminal absence of political driven on the part of the Prime Minister who was elected from the parliament, and thus found it impossible to establish any kind of permanent working majority (7).

The first National Development Plan (1962-1967) was to be financed by foreign facilities. But this could not be actualized because of lack of domestic savings. The effort at the import-substitution industrialization failed. This was because of the crises in Western Region and Tiv Division, the mismanagement of the national resources involving highly placed political leaders. The Nigerian army had no option than to take over government. Because the key planners and the executioners of the coup were from the same ethnic group (Ibo), some people, particularly the North, felt that it was sectional. This gave rise to a counter coup. This degenerated into thirty months Civil War which ended in 1970.

Poor leadership by politicians in the First Republic retarded development. The resources which could have been used for meaningful development was diverted to crush crises in Western Region and in Tiv Division and the Civil War.

The military messiahs who thought they would arrest the country from these malaises were caught in the web of corruption, from General Gowon to General Abdusalami. The only exception of these military regimes was that of General Buhari/Idiagbon. General Obasanjo in 1976 promulgated decree No. 11 (Public Officer's Protection Against False Accusation). This law gave the military leaders at various levels the opportunity to loot public funds at will.

III. Bureaucratic Corruption

In the time past, civil servants were contended with pay, and this encouraged them to work hard. When they retired, their entitlements were paid on time. Life in retirement was a thing of joy (Ayinde, 36). However, when thousands of them were compulsorily retired from the civil service without attaining the mandatory thirty-

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five years, there was dissatisfaction within the ranks and file of the civil service. In order to prepare for the raining days and against this unwholesome development, some civil servants started to engage in sharp corrupt practices.

For example, it was alleged that the Trade Fair Complex at 6 Badagry Road, Lagos was built at a cost three times its original estimates. The contract cost for the complex signed in 1975 between the Federal Government and Energy Project of Yugoslavia was originally fixed at ₦45, 261 million. But in March 1976, barely a year after, the cost rose to ₦95, 82million following a shoddy revision. Again in September 1977, the cost of the project was further increased to ₦132,34 million.

Another case of this type of corruption is that, on Monday 16th May 1983, National Concord and Daily Times Newspapers reported that there was fraud at the Post and Telecommunication Department (P &T) where the Federal government was losing N50million monthly as salaries to non-existent workers (Achebe 43).

In the course of one year the, Nigeria loses ₦600million in this particular racket. With ₦600million then, the government could build three refineries or pay the salaries of 1,000 workers on grade level 01 for forty years. This fraud was carried out in one of the parastatals in the ministry (Achebe 43).

Sometimes people seeking employment have to bribe before getting the job they are seeking for. Corruption of this kind is traceable in all the three tiers of government and the private sector. Recently the former Comptroller General of Customs and Excise and his Deputy and few staff in the Ministry of Finance were docked by EFCC for granting waivers worth ₦5billion to Vaswanis brothers under shoddy circumstances. This led to the expulsion of the brothers from Nigeria.

Furthermore, in 1980 a commission of inquiry was set up to investigate how ₦2.8billion naira disappeared from the coffers of Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). The commission was set up by President Shehu Shagari and was headed by Justice Ayo Irikefe. The money was traced, found and lodged into a private account with Midland Bank Ltd in London. While the inquiry was going on, the chief accountant of the corporation and the internal auditor sneaked out of the country.

No foreigner would steal from his country and transfer the money to Nigeria as Nigerians do. For example in 1962, a governor of one state in USA was accused by his political opponent of taking bribe of $8million USA dollars from underground garage contract. The state was preparing for election. The governor, in state-wide radio broadcast told his people that the said money was not a bribe but a gift. That the money would have been taken to another state and invested there. Besides, he has invested the money in the state and provided jobs and or employment for upward of 5000 workers. The governor won the election. According to Aluko, this type of corruption is known in economic parlance as productive corruption.

Again, the Nigeria Army was voted N7billion in 2000 budget estimate. Up to March 2001, the money was never released to the army as approved by the National Assembly. The situation is the same in the Police, Navy and other para-military institutions. When people thrust with serious issues of governance turn around to steal public funds what then becomes of the ordinary citizen? This is why in 2002, the police went on strike for the first time in the history of this country. A visit to barracks will convince you.

IV. Economic Corruption

The economic system of any country is the wheels that drive its development. Nigeria economic system was laid on faulty foundation. The colonial orientated socialization process had made the life-style and consumption pattern of the industrialized countries look the civilized form of living and consumption. This made third world countries (including Nigeria) to start to import production technology from advanced countries with the aim of producing these items themselves instead of importing them.

After the Nigerian Civil War in 1970, the amount of money Nigeria realized from export of Crude Oil and non-oil products stood thus, oil export was ₦885.6million while non-oil exports was ₦376.0million. The average exchange rate between the US dollar and the naira for the period was about N1 for $1.60. The value of Nigeria's total foreign exchange earnings for the period of 1970-1980 was $999.238billion (Ayagi, 19).

However, the two military governments and Shagari's administration started to import substandard goods at a very high cost: obsolete vehicle assembly plants were set up at a very high cost. Two ministers in Shagari's government were removed for bribe-for-import scandal (Ayagi, 19).

Steel industry worldwide is a major key for industry and technological take-off of any country. It holds the key for national development. Countries like Russia, China, Britain, USA, India etc presently are world leading nations in various areas of development. This is as a result of steel industry.

When the steel plants, in-land Rolling Mills and machines tools in Oshogbo were set up, they were high hopes that at last the movement for Nigeria's industrial and technological take-off was here. But alas, it turned up to be another conduit pipe on the national purse. Those who were saddled with the responsibility of its daily affairs ran them aground. Money meant for the running of the plants was diverted into private pockets.

For example, one Alhaji Dalhhatu, the then administer in-charge of steel was involved in $28million dollars bribery scandal. Over $8billion US dollars have

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been spent on the Steel Industry without producing one bar of steel (Ayagi, 19). This has in no small measure contributed to our present state of underdevelopment.

Another area is agriculture. Agriculture is another component for national development. A nation that cannot feed its people is at the mercy of other countries that export agricultural products to her.

Before the discovery of oil, agriculture accounted for 75% of Nigeria's export earnings. It was and still the highest employer of labour. With the discovery of oil, agriculture was neglected at the expense of oil. Nigeria is importing rice and other agricultural products from overseas. This had a serious and or negative impact on national development. During Shagari's administration, Alhaji Umaru Dikko who was saddled with the responsibility for the importation of rice was removed for corruption. He and another minister were removed on bribery scandals.

The Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC), River Basins, Operation Feed the Nation and Green Revolution became a conduit pipe on the national purse. These programmes were launched with fanfare. After funds were allocated to them, those who were placed at the helms of these corporations looted the funds. Nigeria had no option than to start importing some food items to support her population. For the first time, Nigeria started sharing essential amenities like sugar, salt, mil, etc to her citizens.

This was as a result of the collapse in agricultural sector which led to rural urban migration. The introduction of Belt fighting under General Obasanjo government, Austerity Measures under President Shehu Shagari and Structural Adjustment Programme under General Babangida could not arrest the economic drift. Rather, it worsened the already bad situation.

The government instead of encouraging local government production of fertilizer and rice preferred to import. This included other agricultural machineries and inputs. Dubious importers of no description connived with foreigners to dupe the country. For example, foreigners were issuing invoices locally to ensure inflation of price and over-invoicing.

This development killed local industries and agriculture. There was rural-urban drift. Rural dwellers who were and are still the main stay of agriculture abandoned their farms and left for the township in search of jobs and new life. This had caused serious social problems for policy formulators. The assembly plants are now idle except the one located at Bauchi State which has been turned into factory fabricating military hard wares.

During general Babangida administration, 12billion US dollars disappeared from the Escrow Account of the Central Bank of Nigeria. If that money was injected into the economy and properly monitored, the story of Nigeria would have been different today.

In 1995, a contract worth about 200million US dollars was awarded to Total Plc for Turn Around Maintenance (TAM) of Kaduna Refinery. Nothing was done about the refinery and the said money was not returned to the government coffers.

Power generation is another sector that is very essential to national development. The multi-dimension impact of power generation on national economy is enormous. It creates more jobs, reduces poverty, provides clean water, drives the industries, etc. Nigeria power sector is in a very poor shape. A steady and uninterrupted power supply can pull the economy out of the woods. Ghana is a classical example in this direction.

Nigeria cannot achieve that feat despite her enormous natural resources. The recent Halliburton bribe scandal involving Elumelu of House of Representatives shows how people thrusted with high responsibility used their position to enrich themselves at the expense of the country. This is why development would continue to elude the country. This poor power generation has forced some companies who want to stay in business to source for alternative power supply. This in turn increases the cost of production. Those that could not afford and or lack the financial clout to run their plants on standby generators have closed shops, while some rendering skeletal services.

The introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by General Ibrahim Babangida worsened the situation. The national currency (the naira) was devalued thereby making the procurement of industrial inputs expensive. Some government owned enterprises had to close down because of the running cost. It was on this score that when Olusegun Obasanjo came in, he privatized government owned enterprises with the hope of creating more jobs and making these enterprises functional again.

However, when the process commenced, the Nigeria factor (corruption and bribery) took the front burner in the exercise, money started exchanging hands. Due process which was put in place for the exercise was put aside. Some co-investors were picked up purely on sectional and religious background. Even when the co-investors actually stepped in, and commenced production, its impact is not felt within the immediate community. In some instances, expatriates particularly Indians have been brought into the country and given employments while competent Nigerians are shoved aside. Benue Cement Company Plc (BCC PLC) Gboko is a case in point. These expatriates are paid in hard currency for doing virtually nothing. Drivers, welders, fitters etc are brought from India.

The haul aging of the product (Cement) is done by the company. Local transporters are finding it difficult to do business with the company. The company is in the hands of Indians. This has retarded development around the host communities, and by extension Benue

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State. The private sector which is the engine room of private-sector driven economy is worst for it. The recent developments in the banking sector attests to this fact. Funds which could have been used to oil the economy through projects financing was siphoned to overseas banks by some bank chiefs executives. Some of the stolen funds were injected in non-productive sector of the economy thereby frustrating our dream to national development.

The transport sector had it own share of the malaises. About ₦345billion was voted for the sector in 2002 budget specifically for roads. Information had it that the money was diverted into the coffers of the ruling PDP for second term project. It was the same in Port Authority and Aviation sectors respectively. Bode George is serving a jail term for his role in the shoddy contracts awarded under his leadership. Fani Kayode is standing trial for corruption.

The amount voted for roads in that budget alone if it was properly utilized, the state of roads in the country would have been different. The poor state of our roads is the major cause of road accidents which sometimes are fatal. Farmers find it difficult to transport food stuff to urban centres during raining season. This has attributed to the high cost of food stuff in many bigger cities in Nigeria. This scenario is experienced in other sectors like education and health.

In the education and health sector respectively, funds meant for the procurement of instructional materials and drugs were diverted to private pockets by those who are saddled with such responsibilities. Sometimes fake drugs are procured and distributed to government owned hospitals and clinics. In the case of educational sector, substandard projects are executed by school authorities. This is why there are many cases of collapse school buildings in most states of the federation. Recently, a primary school block collapsed and killed three primary school pupils because of the faulty structure.

On 4th May 1980, a newspaper reported that a commissioner in Oyo State had diverted over millions of naira given to him for the procurement and distribution of drugs to state hospitals and clinics to his own use, the question is how could a commissioner of a ministry have done this? Once can say that, it is agreed that many Nigerians in high positions of authority practice on daily basis. It beats one's imagination how people with such responsibility abuse their positions.

V. Judicial Corruption

Like economic corruption which affects Nigeria's effort towards national development, judiciary corruption too has serious implication on our match towards national development. As expected, the judiciary is the last hope of an average Nigerian. The judiciary acts as final arbiter between the government and the citizens, and or between one citizen and another, and or between a citizen and a corporation and or between corporation and corporations. It is expected that the judiciary should give judgments based on argument adduced before it the parties concerned where money and other inducements are used to pervert justice, there is bound to be trouble. In the treason trial which the NPC controlled government famed against Chief Awolowo and in which the presiding judge Justice Sowememo said that the evidence before him was not sufficient to jail Awolowo, but had no option than to jail Awolowo, because according to him, his hands were tied. This gave rise to the crisis in the Western Region, lives were lost and properties worth hundreds of million dollars were destroyed. This caused a setback in that entire region. This was one of the reasons why the first military coup plotters advanced as one of the reasons why they overthrew the first civilian government.

Another example is the June 12, 1993 Presidential Election which was annulled by General Babangida. It was on account of a suit filed by Chief Aurther Ezeribe under the auspices of Association for Better Nigeria (ABN) calling the election fraud. The judgment, it was alleged was written by Professor Nwabueze the then Attorney General of the Federation, and delivered by Justice Ikpene in her chambers. This set in the tune of political crises that engulfed the entire country. This development nearly tore the country apart.

Recently in Ekiti State Election Tribunal, the presiding judges were accused of receiving bribe from the ruling party, People's Democracy Party (PDP) and accordingly, the judgment was delivered in favour of the party and its governor.

VI. Impact of Corruption and National Development

The study in 1996 by Transparency International and Gottingen University ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation among the 54 nations on the study. Two years later, perception (index), survey of 85 countries also ranked Nigeria No.81. In 2009, Corruption Perception Index (CPI) survey of 85 countries, Nigeria's image did not improve of the 91 countries surveyed in 201, Nigeria ranked 90 of the countries studied.

Corruption leads to slow flow of traffic, manholes on the roads and poor waste management. It leads to killing of political opponents. It could upturn ethnic balance and cause serious problems in the areas of national integration and the legitimacy of that government. Above all, it makes governance ineffective and causes brain drain.

Furthermore, some countries with low level of corruption, risk can be insured and this attracts investment flow consequently, countries with high level of corruption have serious problems in attracting foreign

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direct investment. Governance issues in the modern globalize economy includes issues of foreign direct investment and the transfer of new technology.

Corruption leads to abandonment of projects that could have accelerated national development in all facets. Examples are; Ajeokuta and Aladja Steel project, Itakpe iron ore, the inland rolling mills and machine tools in Oshogbo; the paper mill in Akwa Iboku in Cross River State, Aluminum Flat Sheet also in Cross River State and so many abandoned projects of Federal, State and Local Governments. There is also re-cycling of projects, 10% kicks back syndrome at the three tiers of government.

Education, health and indeed the entire economic sector is at its lowest ebb because of corruption. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) reported that Nigerians have about $189billion in overseas banks. This is the money stolen from Nigeria and starched overseas. It is this money that is oiling the economy of Europe. If that money was invested in Nigeria, Nigeria could have been a better place. No foreign will steal his country's money and take it to Nigeria or any third world country and bank.

VII. What the Government is Doing

Government on its part over the years has put in place mechanism to combat corruption and attract national development. In the first republic, judiciary commission of inquiry was set up to probe allegations of corruption and mismanagement against Dr. Nnandi Azikiwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo. They were indicted and asked to transfer their interests to their regional governments.

In 1975, military government enacted Decree No. 38 of 1975 christened Corrupt Practices Decree. This was to try corrupt politicians, civil servants and military officers who were found wanting in their discharge of their official functions. The 1979 constitution Sections 5-20 of part 1 of the fifth schedule created Code of Conduct Bureau. This sections are to compel political office holders on assumption of office declare their assets. Ditto when they are leaving. All these measures were taken to combat the menace of corruption.

One of the political objectives enshrined in the 1999 constitution is that the states shall abolish all forms of corruption practices and abuse of power. In pursuant of the objectives, the constitution, in the third schedule provides for the Code of Conduct Bureau, to ensure that public officers conform to ethics of incorruptible behaviour, through the declaration of their assets before and after holding public offices. It also provides for Code of Conduct Tribunal to try public servants. The Public Servant covered by the Bureau and Tribunal include: the President, The Vice President, Governors, Deputy Governors of States, Justice of Courts, Attorney general and Minister of Justice, Army Chiefs, Police Chiefs, top civil servants, diplomats in Nigeria and abroad, chairmen members and staff of Federal, States and Local Government, Chairmen Boards and corporations and similarly placed public officers. The constitution also provides for the establishment of Electoral Tribunal at all levels of elections in order to ensure a corrupt-free electoral process.

Furthermore, the National Assembly passed into law the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (Establishment Act) 2000, the Anti-money Laundering Act 2002, the Anti-Drug Enforcement Act 2003, and the Fiscal and Responsibility Act 2005, to strengthen the previous legislations on bribery and corruption. Prior to the 1999 constitution, the Federal Government has also put in place the Due Process Mechanism to reduce fraud in the award of government contracts and unnecessary spending of public funds. The establishment of Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and EFCC to handle cases of financial crimes both in the public and private sectors respectively is a welcome development. The arrest and trial of former bank chief executives and politicians are efforts of the government to fight the scourge.

The result so far achieved is insignificant when compared with the quantum of corruption that is being perpetrated in the three tiers of government parastatals and in the private sector respectively. General Murtala Mohammed recorded huge success in his fight against corruption. Ditto general Buhari, General Babangida institutionalized corruption in Nigeria. President Obasanjo on his part instead of fighting corruption other social vices used the anti-graft body (EFCC) under Ribadu to fight his political opponents. If not for the judiciary, Yar'Adua/Goodluck would have recorded huge success in their fight against corruption and financial crimes in their first tenure. Corruption in the fourth republic has surpassed and or is the highest since Nigerian attained political independence.

VIII. Conclusion

Corruption is a global problem which requires a global solution. The recent regime in Thailand were democratically elected government was overthrown for corrupt practices in a case in point. There is a heavy pressure on the Taiwanese president to resign over corruption charges. The former Italian Prime Minister was voted out of office for his inability to deal with the daunting economic and social issues as well as corruption. In China, a cabinet minister was executed for corruption. Bode George, former chairman of the ruling party in South West Nigeria was sent to jail for corruption. Three ministers under Obasanjo are facing trail in various courts, while other five including a Senator are undergoing interrogation for corrupt charges. Too,

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Chief Ogbulafor the former chairman of the ruling party (PDP) was forced to resign on account of corruption. He is standing trial.

Corruption is a worldwide phenomenon dating back to the Old and New Testaments. As globalization becomes an interesting reality, internationally, corruption becomes our problem too, more than ever before. It is instructive to note that corruption cannot be eliminated while humans live, but can and must be effectively curbed and restrained if nations are going to prosper and poverty reduced.

To enhance national development, and change, the president of this country Goodluck Jonathan must take and be seen to take, a decisive first step of ridding his administration of all persons son whom a slight wind of corruption and scandal has blown. When he summons up courage to do that, he will find himself grown overnight to such a status and authority that he will become Nigeria leader and not just it president.

Secondly, the nature of corruption now is beyond the scope of conventional measure and mechanism such as the police, judiciary and administrative tribunal of inquiry. All of which are inherently prejudicial and operationally corrupted. Therefore, the only fundamental solution from existing capitalist type of development strategy is genuine economic political and social democracy (Newbreed 18).

Corruption being the most formidable obstacle to development in Nigeria, and whch has permeated the polity, a total overhauling of the system would be carried out by progressive elements within the government in order to lay solid foundation for socialist democracy. Alternatively, a people's revolution should be carried out in order to instill a socialist system. It is the only surest way to curb corruption and pave way for genuine national development.

In this paper, theoretical issues of corruption and national development were brought to fore. In this paper too, some cases of corruption dating back to the first, second, third and fourth republics were treated and the reaction of government equally analyzed. We also looked at the impact of corruption on national development with particular reference to Nigeria and measures taken by various countries in the world to curb it. It is observed that the mechanism put in place in Nigeria to arrest this trend is worthless unless positive steps are taken to totally overhaul the present system and install social democracy or genuine national development will remain a mileage.

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