

The elites had sowed wild thorns, and the harvest is fully here

In one passage she writes: "... the almajiri, area boys, MC Oluomo, and their likes are not the main threat to this beautiful country. The elites are." I couldn't agree more. Contentment is the grace to stand up from the dining table and look away from the food tray when your belly is full. But the Nigerian public official, although filled and belching with excess, would still hide stolen meat within the corners of his mouth at a dinner, stuff fried rice into his socks, and try to shuffle moimoin into his shoes. Madness, you say. But who else would steal 80 billion Naira except a mad fellow. I am no longer numbed at the numbers stolen in Nigeria, but I am terribly saddened by the titles of the pen robbers.



Kemebadikumo Pondei, that dramatic NDDC acting Managing Director that fainted in the Senate, was a Professor of Medicine. A man trained to build, repair, and even possibly manufacture life. Yet, he too got to the table and scooped jollof rice into his boxers. Do you know who Diezani Alison-Madueke was? No, you don't. When ladies of her age were wishing and praying to be admitted to Shell Petroleum as typists or tea girls, she was already on the board of the company as an executive director. God gave her the bigger privilege of marrying Allison Madueke, a naval officer and former military Governor of two States. She was a trained architect who transformed to become Nigeria's first female petroleum minister. Yet, despite these privileges, Diezani stole our barbequed fish, roasted yams, and hide them in her bra. Like a mad woman.

You recollect that JAMB/NECO ex Registrar, that Professor, the one that stole almost a billion. Just go through his CV, he had been eating from one educational agency to another non-stop since the military era. But at almost 70, a grandpa, he comes from a detention facility and goes to court to defend himself for stealing monies he would never need. At 70, a man is nearer to his grave, but in Nigeria, a 74 year old Minister would steal to buy a plot

of land to build a new mansion. His sepulcher, of course.

Our leaders make you poke at your credentials and certificates. If medical doctors, Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Doctors of Philosophy, and Professors would be this bestial and mad, you wonder to what purpose is our education. They say people steal government funds because they fear falling into the poverty trap. But how do you explain a Uzor Kalu, Rochas Okorocha, who rode on private billions before politics and still stole the community goats and chickens. Or Lucky Igbinedion, former Governor of Edo State, who had a golden spoon in his mouth and nevertheless seized the feeding bottles of milk from the mouths of Edo babies.

A billion has nine zeros. With ₦80 billion, you can build a brand new town, local government area, of 15, 000 low-cost housing units complete with roads, schools, and hospitals. ₦80 billion would build a new ten – Faculty University, which can accommodate 20,000 undergraduates and graduate students. But an accountant allegedly stole such a staggering sum. A fellow of ICAN. A distinguished member of a privileged elite group. Who else should know the cost implication of fraud better than a chartered accountant? See, the almajiri, area boys, MC Oluomo, and their likes are not the main threat to this



SOWING WILD OATS

beautiful country. The elites are. The Directors, Permanent Secretary, vice chancellors, CEO, Solicitor Generals, Senators, Governors are the ones bleeding us. Not bandits, boko haram, or IPOB. The elites are the ones bombing and destroying the social architecture of our nation with their unbridled hedonism. They think the stolen billions would enamour them to the dangers ahead. "But stolen melons are the sweetest...they don't know the former guests are now citizens of hell." Everyone is today a victim.

Having broken the social ligaments that hold our nation together, by stealing monies meant for education, healthcare, and infrastructure, the elites have rendered Nigeria a classless nation. Billionaires are now stolen, emirs are kidnapped, and attempts have been made in the recent past to abduct a serving governor. The elites had

living personally needs a billion. What for? Dangote, Buhari, Bua, Otedola, OBJ, Elumelu, TY Danjuma, cannot spend fifteen thousand naira daily on Nigerian foods or meals. If they do, they would die sooner than their time. You would, too, because God didn't create us to be excessive.

Every extra gift, talent, grace, money, and wealth we have is not totally for us but for society and state. We are to give, give, and give, for state, humanity, and posterity.

Although nature and law permit optimal material rewards and compensation for our efforts. That is why the Accountant General of the Federation, Minister, Governor, Senator, Rep, permanent Secretary is well remunerated above others, so he won't run mad and go about stealing. But all is not sad. Like Chief Micheal Adekunle Ajasin, there are a few saints in this country of sin. There are good examples despite the rot. Oby



sowed wild thorns, and the harvest is fully here. Politicians steal in Japan and Senators thief in America. A \$50,000 bribe. A golden watch. Or a misappropriated flight ticket or inflated hotel bills. But in Nigeria, our leaders don't embezzle. They haul. Why? Because they are mad.

Our politicians, despite their jejune certificates, lack the intellectual capacity to solve our economic problems, and worse, they lack the contemplation of the right philosophy of public service. They aren't kingly, and neither are they philosophic.

Leaders are made to live for God, and their existence is for society's sake. We are to use our gifts, spend our grace, and deploy our earthly terms and years to serve community, society, country, and mankind. No man

Ezekwesili was former minister of solid minerals and education. She does not have the look nor the body scent of a thief. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala handled our billions of dollars at the time Nigeria was awash with much. Her hands are not hypo clean. But she didn't haul our billions into her truck. If she had, no one would call her higher into WTO. We also have the like of Professor Ishaq Oloyede of JAMB, who started reporting and returning surplus to the Treasury, unlike his predecessors as JAMB Registrars. Therefore, in this country, not all are crazy.

God, open the eyes of our elites to see and know that they don't need what they steal. For only a mad fellow gathers stones and pans that are needless. Don't forget when you see something say something Nigerians.