

The Drama at EFCC and the challenges with corruption

By Bolaji O. Akinyemi

Equity and justice are the greatest need of our society. All are presumed to be equal before the law, but it is what it is, a presumption! The reality of our administration of justice has dug a gulf between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have not's, those who belong and those who don't. It is important and germane that our law enforcement agencies are better not blind to this reality. Magu and Olukoyede are testimonies of the need not just to belong to the party in power, but also to be seen as being loyal to members of the kitchen cabinet. Olukoyede learnt fast and struck the cord. No doubt, the zeal for work should be given to the lawyer in him, but his not being a trained investigator, is showing on the job. The Yahaya Bello drama is nothing but a piece of entertainment for Nigerians and the rest of the world. The burden of corruption on us as a nation is not as bad as the absence of equity and justice! It is sad that Donald Trump, the immediate past president of the United States who once again aspires to the highest office in that nation is presently in court to defend him before the law. But Yahaya Bello, former governor of Kogi State finds it insulting to present himself before the law of Nigeria and answer to charges made by the EFCC against him and we are not losing our sleep. That action or implied action alone is an offence.

Global perception on our determination to fight corruption should better be on the positive if we hope to win the discouraged hearts of foreign investors who though seduced by our numerous potentials can't put up with the impunity raping justice in the open. The assignment before EFCC has gone beyond fighting corruption. It must include marketing our nation as a country of law and order. The burden of equity must be attended to; justice must be seen to be served. If Olukoyede's error of investigation is forgiven, that of law shouldn't be, easily. The withdrawal of the appeal against Yahaya Bello is too much of an error for the lawyer who is the chief executive of EFCC. IK Joy-Uzor, one of the many minds with who mine regularly rubs with to better my concept on the Nigerian Project sent me his thoughts on this matter. Though we haven't met one on one, we have bonded so strongly through our desire for a better and greater Nigeria. On my chat with him on the Drama at EFCC, he had this to say: "We have had over 108 governors from 1999 till date. I use the figure 108 on the assumption that all governors have had two full terms which we know is not the case. Only about 2 of them (Joshua Dariye and Jolly Nyame) have been successfully jailed in Nigeria after EFCC prosecution. Diepiriye Alameyeseigha's time in EFCC detention counted

towards his conviction and James Ibori was incarcerated abroad. Nyame and Dariye were both pardoned. Messrs Lucky Igbinedion and Orji Uzo Kalu respectively got a wrist smack and a court order for a retrial. My point being that it is impossible for just the aforementioned to be the only former governors that have embezzled. Let's not talk of the brigandage that goes on elsewhere." He continued: "I believe that our politicians and public office holders including administrators should be granted full amnesty. I believe that this 10th NASS should pass a law absolving these categories of people of all offences, including Yahaya Bello. After this is done another law should then be passed stating that henceforth anyone who commits such offences should be punished. This way we can get on with the business of doing serious governance and not this charade we have. We are too concerned and without results from EFCC which seems to be compromised anyways by the thefts that have gone on instead of safeguarding our future". Could Yahaya Bello have fallen out with BAT's kitchen cabinet because of his role in Buhari's? This is a possibility that must be inquired into, not by media hype and propaganda, but via thorough investigation!

Once there is money to share, a criminal will have paid activists to speak for him, hungry lawyers, to protest and defend him and the abused and the depressed public, to sympathize with him. The Nigerian public is presently mind sick owing to many years of rape and abuse by leadership. Olukoyede can't afford to be distracted from the fight against corruption to retreat into explaining the fight he is yet to win! Once the battle against corruption is won – though that is impossibility so what is meant is token victories- he can come explaining the gain and sweetness of victory. The most important thing now is to disabuse the notion that Yahaya Bello is a victim of not belonging to the caucus in control of power. The only way to do that is to publish the names of all former Governors investigated by EFCC from 1999 to date. This of course may have the President listed, but neither Olukoyede nor the President need to be worried. The immunity that kept Yahaya will keep the President. Listing the President on such a list is the only way to answer the question of this Government's credibility and assure the world of our readiness to make a change!

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