

Dismembering Nigeria

It was months ago that Ayodele Oke, the then Director General of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and his wife Folashade Oke were caught with over \$43.5 million stashed away at a safe house on Osborne Street, Ikoyi. A few months later, Lawal Daura, the Director General of the Department of State Services was sacked by the Acting President Yemi Osibanjo over the DSS occupation of the National Assembly. When Mr. Daura's house was searched, over N21 billion, arms and ammunition and thousands of Permanent Voters Card (PVC) made in the name of Nigerien were recovered.

The two busts have two things in common. One, they came amidst the President's war against corruption. I said the President's war because only Mr. President believed he is fighting a war against corruption. As is evident since the commencement of this administration, the president's idea of corruption is limited in conception and focus. The President is battling selective theft of public fund. In this, the President is also alone. This is because his party the All Progressives Congress (APC), members of his cabinet including his kitchen cabinet, his Uncle/Counsellor and Chief of Staff, the agencies fighting corruption, the 36 state governors and the 774 local governments chairpersons have left no one in doubt from the beginning of this administration that their agenda did not include fighting any corruption.

As I once argued, the only commonality in every one of these institutions and individuals was that they hitched a ride on the train called APC and their destination was power. However, they all occupied different coaches in terms of what they planned to do with their power. Mr. President claimed his possession of power would enable him accomplish three agenda: secure Nigeria, fight a relentless war against corruption and revamp the economy in order to create opportunity for youths. As the President, his agenda should have been a national agenda embraced by most Nigerians. This was not to be. Mr. President is a loner. In the last three years and as a lead up to the general elections of 2019, the President's media machines are struggling to represent the accomplishment of these agendas in the lives of Nigerians.

Two, both Ayodele Oke and Lawal Daura were members of Nigeria's so called security services. I said so called 'security' services because the use of security to describe these institutions and their functions leave the concept of security undefined and ungoverned in Nigeria. As Nigeria's intelligence outfits, the National Intelligence Agency and the Department of State Services takes care of the external and internal dimension of Nigeria's intelligence.

In the name of 'security' but especially 'national security' members of the political class and law enforcement/defence class have presided over the brazen milking of the resources

of this country. Nigerians are living witness to the milking of Nigeria's commonwealth occasioned by the revelation from Mr. President's war against corruption. In the name of 'security' and 'national security', the then National Security Adviser purportedly expended over \$2billion. Since 2015 and in spite of the war against corruption, the milking has continued.

The Oke-Daura affair was not only indicative of the continuation of this theft. It demonstrated the intention of those who rode on the APC train. The theft did not stop with the unusual circumstances that brought these two instances into public view. The theft of public fund on "grand" and "political" scales in the name of 'security' is happening in the other agencies of law enforcement and defence. This theft is the foundation of the cooperation and unity between the law enforcement/defence and political class. Both have abiding interest in maintaining Nigeria's 'security' and 'national security'.

As one discerning social critic argued, Nigeria's unity is sustained by corruption whether the selective theft of public fund Mr. President is battling and/or the grand and political type that is being perpetrated by those with the means away from public view. According to this critic, Nigeria's ship of state is floating because of the hope held by many that there is still opportunity to get their own share from the unprotected commonwealth.

Contemporaneous with the theft of public funds for those who can there is also the scheme of securing citizenship of western countries for their children. These fraudulent public officials steal Nigeria's commonwealth and invest these in real estate, financial services and other service related enterprises but never in production and manufacturing. Using these schemes, they transfer these resources offshore in collaboration with established businesses where they now invest in safe portfolios in western capitals. With their wives and children abroad in these western capitals to oversee and protect the investment, they remain in Nigeria to continue the plundering.

Aside from this development, there are hardworking and honest Nigerian professionals who are losing faith in the survival of the country. They are therefore obtaining citizenship of countries in the west for their children. What this demonstrates, in no uncertain term, is that there will not be Nigeria tomorrow.

Nigeria's governing elite in politics and law enforcement/defence are presiding over the dismembering of Nigeria. They accomplish this by stealing and buying citizenship where it will be safe for themselves and their children. The fireworks to the 2019 general elections may be touted to be about Nigeria in the next four years. However, it is really about the political and 'security' elite as they plot the next phase of grand and political corruption and consolidate the dismembering of Nigeria.