

LEGISLATIVE CORRUPTION AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN THE NIGERIAN FOURTH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses legislative corruption in the Nigerian fourth republic with specific focus on the National Assembly, and its impact on democratic consolidation. The Nigerian legislature by virtue of its constitutional responsibilities is the principal institution of anticorruption, accountability, and probity. However, widespread cases of corruption among lawmakers of the fourth republic continue to overshadow the proper functioning of the legislature. The paper which is descriptive and analytical interrogates corruption among legislators within the framework of the prebendal nature of Nigerian politics. The thrust of the paper is that allegations and evidence of sleaze among lawmakers, with dire implications for the provision of public goods and citizens' wellbeing represent an obstacle to the deepening of democracy. The reappraisal of the mercantile politics of the ruling elites and enhanced institutional accountability of legislators among others are crucial to minimising legislative corruption, engendering urgently needed development and entrenching democracy in Nigeria.

Keywords: Corruption, Legislature, Democracy, Ruling Elites, Development.

INTRODUCTION

The devastating impact of political corruption on socio-economic and political development in Nigeria is well established in the literature. Politically, Ogundiya (2010) contends that corruption contributes to the subversion of elections, rule of law, popular legitimacy and responsible governance in Nigeria. Besides, Folorunsho (2007) demonstrates that corruption is in part responsible for reduction in economic growth and investment in Nigeria. Moreover, the problems of poverty, collapsed infrastructure, and unemployment in Nigeria can be attributed majorly to widespread corruption in the polity (Alanamu, Adeoye, and Yinusa, 2009).

Political corruption which involves the ‘abuse of entrusted power by political leaders for private gain’ (Heidenheimer in Hodess, 2004: 11) assumed a scandalous proportion in Nigeria with the return of democracy in 1999. Nigeria reportedly lost an average of \$4 billion - \$8 billion annually to corruption between 1999 and 2007 (Mustapha, 2010; Human Right Watch, 2007). The consistent ranking of Nigeria among the highly corrupt nations by the global anti-corruption agency Transparency International (TI) during the period, and the startling revelations by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Nigeria’s anti-corruption watchdog of billions of dollars of state fund allegedly stolen by politicians and political leaders underscore the pervasiveness of corruption in the polity since the restoration of democratic rule.

The legislature as the bulwark of representative democracy is germane to the consolidation of democracy. The legislature is constitutionally and strategically positioned to undermine authoritarian tendencies on the part of the executive, engender government effective and adequate response to the delivery of public goods and services, and enhance strict adherence to constitutionalism and the rule of law. Therefore, the legislature is critical to the sustenance of popular trust in governance processes, institutions, and improving government legitimacy. Obviously, the state of the legislature of a nation at any particular point in time is a significant pointer to the health of the social contract between the government and its citizens. In Nigeria, the legislature is an important institution of government constitutionally empowered to have elected representatives. Thus, the legislature is the embodiment of popular power. This suffices that any hindrance to its proper functioning represents an obstacle to democracy (Bello-Imam, 2004; Odinga, 1994; Fashagba, 2009).

In the crusade against corruption, the legislature especially in Nigeria is constitutionally empowered to play the commanding role. The lawmaking, representative, oversight and appropriation functions of the legislature are crucial to enhancing accountability, transparency, probity and due process in the polity. However, pervasive corruption is a major albatross of the fourth republic legislature in Nigeria. The legislature which ought to be the leading light in the fight against corruption, like most democratic institutions in Nigeria has been overwhelmed by allegations and evidence of widespread corruption among legislators since its inauguration in 1999.

Given the significance of the legislature to democratic governance, widespread corruption among lawmakers portends danger to the deepening of democratic culture, values and processes in Nigeria. Meanwhile, the issue of endemic political corruption in general and massive legislative corruption in particular is core to the failure of the state to ensure adequate delivery of public goods and services in Nigeria. Therefore, Nigeria continues to grapple with socio-economic problems of endemic poverty, massive unemployment, inflation, huge external and domestic debts, de-industrialisation, ethnic and religious tensions, decadent infrastructure, and widening income inequality (Seteolu, 2004; Mathew and Idowu, 2013). Politics in the

country is overshadowed by widespread political and electoral violence, intra-party bickering, electoral malpractices, general insecurity of lives and properties, blatant violation of human rights and the rule of law, widespread corruption, and suppression of political opposition, and political apathy. These crises which have endangered democratic stability in Nigeria are symptomatic of political corruption (Ogundiya, 2010). Therefore, political and legislative corruption represents a serious obstacle to sustainable development in Nigeria, constraining citizens' access to public goods and services, as well as undermining their rights to the enjoyment of a better life.

Political corruption thrives in a political system that lacks the core democratic values of accountability, transparency, and probity, rule of law, strong and independent institutions, and popular participation in governance (Diamond, 2008). By implication democratic governance is critical to undermining corrupt tendencies among political leaders and enhancing the capacity of the state to improve the wellbeing of the people. This no doubt explains why most Nigerians regarded the return of democracy in 1999 as a rare opportunity to nurture and sustain stable democratic institutions and culture in the country, and improve the social and economic wellbeing of Nigerians (Bello-Imam, 2004). However, the much anticipated dividends of democracy have continued to elude most Nigerians partly due to the scourge of widespread political and legislative corruption.

The democratic fallout from the misappropriation, mismanagement and blatant stealing of public fund by politicians and legislators in the Nigerian fourth republic is the steady decline in public trust in government, democratic institutions and processes. Importantly, this has created the perception among most Nigerians that democracy is meant to protect only the interests of political leaders and politicians. The result is heightened public disillusionment with the political system and glaring cases of political instability (Ogundiya, 2010; Fashagba, 2009). The thrust of the paper is to explore widespread legislative corruption in the Nigerian fourth republic, with emphasis on the National Assembly (The Senate and House of Representatives) and its impact on the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria. To facilitate an effective discourse, the paper in addition to the introduction consists of the theoretical framework of analysis, the legislature and corruption in the Nigerian fourth republic, legislative corruption as obstacle to democratic consolidation, as well as conclusion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The theory of prebendalism popularised by Richard Joseph is adopted in the paper as the theoretical approach underpinning endemic legislative corruption in the Nigerian fourth republic. Prebendalism is germane to explaining how the nature of the Nigerian state and politics, and the role of the ruling elites contribute to the crisis of governance and development; particularly the problem of state centred corruption (Ogundiya, 2009). The central thrust of prebendalism is that 'state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by office holders, who use them to generate material benefits for themselves and their constituents and kin groups' (Joseph, 1987: 1996). Therefore, politics within the prebendal framework is as an investment that involves returns, and state offices are avenues to appropriate state resources for personal and group benefits.

The prebendal nature of Nigerian politics is fundamental to the problem of political corruption (Ogundiya, 2009; Diamond, 2008). The overwhelming allegations against and in some instances conviction of political leaders and legislators in the Nigerian fourth republic of bribery, nepotism, cronyism, award of phony contracts, inflation of contract sums, embezzlement,

misappropriation of public fund, electoral fraud and abuse of office are indicative of the ruling elites consideration of politics as the means to capture state power and offices for economic benefits (Ogundiya, 2009; Joseph, 1991). The dominant role of the state in the control of oil wealth and socio-economic development are fundamental to understanding the prebendal character of Nigerian politics (Diamond, 2008). With most Nigerian politicians and the ruling elites regarding politics as the means to the primitive accumulation of state resources, revenue accruing from oil thus provides the basis for dangerous struggle among political elites for the acquisition and preservation of state power. In power and with major control over the economy and economic resources, the ruling elites blatantly steal the commonwealth for their personal aggrandisement and manage the state as their personal fiefdom (Ogundiya, 2010).

Moreover, the ruling elites in Nigeria divert massive oil resources into buying the loyalty and support of Nigerians so as to sustain their hold on power. Equally, political appointments, contracts, promotions, jobs, cash, and other state resources are deployed to sustain network of relationship, maintain political support and patronage (Diamond, 2008; Joseph, 1991). The resulting patron-client relationship ends up turning citizens into mere ‘clients of the ruler rather than citizens with rights’ (Diamond, 2008). Undoubtedly, prebendalism has dire implications for development. Prebendal governments as Diamond (2008) rightly observes are more concerned with how public resources are plundered for private uses rather than with the delivery of public goods and services. The crisis of poverty, inequality, unemployment, insecurity, political instability, and infrastructural decay prevalent in the Nigerian fourth republic can be appreciated within this context (Omodia and Aliu, 2013).

Also, the modus operandi of prebendal governments is usually antithetical to the democratic spirit. The ruling elites make sure that state power, institutions and processes are readily subjugated to their whims and caprices. Subsequently, critical democratic values such as respect for the fundamental human rights of citizens, the constitution and rule of law, institutional autonomy and accountability, freedom, credible and competitive elections, strong and vibrant civil society and opposition political parties are subverted in the quest to satisfy their vested interests (Diamond, 2008). This has been the recurring character of the political leadership and ruling elites of the Nigerian fourth republic.

Prebendalism reinforces the deep connection between political corruption and class formation, and the acquisition and consolidation of state power through fraudulent means (Szeftel, 2000; Seteolu, 2005). The several cases of political assassinations, electoral violence and malpractices that have characterised the Nigerian fourth republic reflect the extreme dimensions elite contestations can assume in the quest to secure or retain state power to pursue primordial and personal interests. More so, the conflict among the ruling elites is aggravated further by the zero sum nature of Nigerian politics. Consequently, good governance and development issues have become a mirage for most Nigerians (Omodia and Aliu, 2013).

The relationship between the prebendal character of Nigerian politics, the role of the ruling elites in widespread corruption, and the damaging effects on development, democratic values and processes emphasised in the theoretical analysis are core to the discourse. The political class in Nigeria regards politics as a means to make money (Ogundiya, 2010) and the state as the instrument to economic survival, ‘a clearing house for jobs, contracts and official plunder’ (Joseph, 1991: 10). This explains the pervasive culture of corruption, impunity and misrule, absence of political-will to tackle corruption, weak and ineffective state of accountability and transparency institutions in Nigeria. The political class and ruling elites who benefit most from

corruption tend to undermine democratic values, institutions and processes that impede corruption (Ogundiya, 2009; Yagboyaju, 2011).

THE LEGISLATURE AND CORRUPTION IN THE NIGERIAN FOURTH REPUBLIC

The legislature as a significant institution of democracy consists of elected representatives of specific political constituencies constitutionally empowered to make laws and oversee the government (Lafenwa, 2009; Loewenberg, 1995). The legislature is the hallmark of electoral democracy since it embodies the democratic spirit of popular participation and representation (Bello-Imam, 2004). Considering that the legislature is ‘the collective defender and watch dog of the aspirations, ideals and collective will of the people’ (Odinga, 1994:124), it suffices that ‘any attack against the organisation, composition or functioning’ (Bello-Imam, 2004: 408) of the legislature poses serious obstacle to democracy. Generally, the legislature differs in composition, structure and function globally; however its representational, lawmaking, appropriation and oversight functions are universal and germane to deepening democracy (Lafenwa, 2009).

The functions of the federal and state legislature in Nigeria according to the 1999 constitution include lawmaking, oversight and investigation, watchdog of public funds, and representative functions (Lafenwa, 2009). Therefore, the legislature within the framework of the constitution remains the foremost anticorruption, accountability and probity institution in Nigeria (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). Specifically, the legislature has powers to make laws that will strengthen the capacity of public institutions to curb corruption and amend rules that undermine probity in government. It is empowered to create accountability and transparency institutions to enhance honesty in government and society (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). This function of the legislature was evident during the establishment of the EFCC and Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), two anticorruption agencies that have been at the forefront of the war on corruption in Nigeria. Besides, the appropriation and oversight functions of the legislature allow it to protect public funds and ensure prudent management of government resources. Significantly, the legislature is empowered to check abuse of power and arbitrariness by the executive (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010; Lafenwa, 2009). These essential functions of the legislature in Nigeria underscore its democratic essence as the bastion of the people’s will and its importance to the deepening of democracy and responsible governance (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). However, the legislature in Nigeria rather than being alive to its constitutional responsibility of combating corruption in government and society has been overshadowed by allegations and evidence of large scale corruption.

The legislature in Nigeria especially the National Assembly (The Senate and House of Representatives) has been overwhelmed by numerous corruption scandals since its inauguration in 1999. It is important to stress that the challenges confronting the legislature following the restoration of democracy in Nigeria should be understood within the context of protracted military rule and the nature of Nigerian politics. The constant dissolution of the legislature after past military coups denied the legislature the time and continuity required to strengthen its capacity to perform its constitutional functions (Fashagba, 2009). However, the tendency for the Nigerian ruling elites to regard politics as an investment, and personalise state power and institutions are significant factors underlying the corrupt activities of legislators (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010; Muhammed, 2007). The fact that some of the legislators are products of fraudulent elections masterminded by political godfathers who are motivated more by monetary rewards they get from influence peddling partly underscores this point

(Ogundiya, 2010). Thus, many lawmakers in the Senate and House of Representatives have been in the news more for their involvement in one corruption scandal or the other, than for the main duty of making laws for national development since 1999 (Ogundiya, 2010).

The Senate for instance was embroiled in allegation of corruption immediately after the swearing in of Senators in 1999. Senators purportedly received N850, 000 (Eight Hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira) each to vote into office Evan Ewerem as Senate President instead of Chuba Okadigbo, and collected N5 million (Five Million Naira) each as furniture allowance against the N3.5 million (Three Million, Five hundred Thousand Naira) they declared to the public (Ologbenla, 2007). Moreover, the leadership of the Senate have not been exempted from the corruption scandals. The trio of former Senators Evans Enwerem, Chuba Okadigbo and Adolphos Nwabara were impeached as Senate Presidents for corruption and mismanagement of public fund. Particularly, Senator Chuba Okadigbo was found guilty of inflating the cost of a street light project by the sum of N173 million (One Hundred and Seventy Three Million Naira), while Senator Wabara was indicted for collecting N55 million (Fifty Five Million Naira) bribe from ex-minister of education Professor Osuji to get Senate to approve the inflated budget of the ministry in 2005 (Ogundiya, 2009). Besides, Senator Iyabo Obasanjo, who is the daughter of ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo; as Chairman Senate Committee on Health in 2008 was arrested and arraigned by the EFCC for receiving N10 million (10 Million Naira) as her own share of the Committee's largesse from the unspent budget of 2007 (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). Equally, Senators are alleged to demand bribes before confirming political appointees. For example, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai ex-minister of the Federal Capital Territory claimed that Senators requested for N54 million (Fifty Four Million Naira) to confirm his appointment (Ologbenla, 2007).

The House of Representatives has its share of graft scandals that have rocked the legislature. Honourable Patricia Etteh, the first woman to emerged Speaker of the House of Representatives in Nigeria resigned from office on account of her indictment for misappropriating \$5 million in 2008 (Ogundiya, 2009). Presently, former speaker House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole is undergoing prosecution for the alleged N894 million fraud committed while in office (Punch March, 2013). Equally, lawmakers in the lower house have been accused of perpetuating graft during the performance of their oversight functions (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). For example, Honorables Ndudi Elumelu, Paulinus Igwe and Mohammed Jibo were in 2009 arrested and arraigned by the EFCC for their alleged involvement in N5.2billion (Five billion, Two Hundred Million Naira) power contracts while serving as members of House of Representatives Committees investigating the low performance of the power sector despite the huge investment in the sector (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). Similarly, in the probe of the activities of the Nigerian Stock Exchange, Honourable Herman Hembe and three other Honourable members were accused by the Director General Ms. Arunmah Oteh of demanding bribes to give her and organisation a clean bill of health (Punch, March, 2012a). Similarly, Honourable Farouk Lawan who chaired the House ad hoc committee that investigated the fuel subsidy scam was detained by the police on allegation of demanding and receiving part payment of a \$3m bribe from businessman Mr Femi Otedola to give his company a soft-landing (Punch, June, 2012b). The lawmaker has since been charged to court for fraud and corruption. Arguably, the proper management of the colossal amount of money lost to corruption evident in the foregoing analysis would have contributed to a large extent to improving the debilitating state of education, health care, roads and other social services in Nigeria. Meanwhile, corruption involving lawmakers as the next

section reveals impinge on the integrity of the legislature and its capacity to perform its responsibility creditably, with serious implications for public trust in the legislature, democracy and anticorruption crusade.

LEGISLATIVE CORRUPTION AS OBSTACLE TO DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

There is strong consensus in the literature that political corruption whether among legislators or executive members of government is detrimental to democracy. Yinusa and Basil (2008) contend that political corruption erodes interpersonal and public trust in government and affect support for democracy. Chang and Fu Hu (2003) suggest that political corruption undermines institutional trust necessary for the legitimacy of government and deepening of democracy. Moreover, Robinson (2004) observes that the denial of citizen's access to public goods resulting from political corruption is concomitant to violation of their human rights. Similarly, democratic values of the rule of law, accountability, transparency, and probity are perverted in an atmosphere of widespread corruption. This dampens citizens' morale and motivation to participate effectively in the democratic process. Hence, political corruption constitutes a threat to popular participation and to democratisation (Inokoba and Ibegu, 2011).

The magnitude of corruption in the legislature portends grave danger for democracy in Nigeria. A strong legislature as Ake (1996) argues is essential for democracy to engender popular participation. However, a compromised and corrupt legislature threatens the viability of democracy. The permissiveness of corruption in the legislature has weakened the capacity of the legislature to effectively perform its duty of strengthening accountability and transparency in Nigeria. The revelations of corrupt practices among law makers undermine their moral authority to entrench probity in government (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010).

Besides, corruption in the legislature has debilitating effects on governance in Nigeria. The making of laws to favour the powerful in society instead of the public repudiates the democratic principles of rule of law, equality and justice (Inokoba and Ibegu, 2011). Similarly, a corrupt legislature tends to compromise its constitutional power to protect citizens against the arbitrariness of the executive (Kwaghga and Echikwonye, 2011). The result is the blatant manifestation of misrule, abuse of power and electoral process, and human rights violation which are evidence of the country's descent towards political authoritarianism (Fagbadebo, 2007).

Furthermore, corruption in the legislature undermines the fight against corruption and democracy. Corrupt legislators are known to use their legislative powers to scuttle the activities of accountability and transparency institutions and amend laws they perceived threaten their corrupt practices (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). The amendment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission law by the Senate in 2003 under the guise of strengthening the performance of the agency according to Abdullahi (2004) was to weaken the investigative and prosecutorial powers of the agency. Similarly, the National Assembly was criticised for its reluctance at the initial stage in passing into law the Freedom of Information legislation meant to facilitate the unhindered access by civil society and mass media to information in public institutions (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010).

Corruption among lawmakers in Nigeria erodes public confidence in the legislature as a democratic institution and its capacity to perform its responsibility. The trust of citizens on the effectiveness and impartiality of the institutions of government is germane to democratic sustenance (Diamond, 2008). Equally, the failure of democratic governance to meet the

high expectations of most Nigerians that the fourth republic democratic experience would provide the basis for the state and its managers to supply their basic needs, and improve their socio-economic welfare due in part to corruption among legislators undermines popular trust in democracy. Therefore, pervasive corruption in the legislature in Nigeria is concomitant to the lost of public trust in a key democratic institution (Muhammad, 2007). The decline in the public approval of the performance of the National Assembly from 58% to 23% between 2001 and 2005 (Diamond, 2008) illustrates the increasing frustration by most Nigerians with widespread corruption among legislators. Such public dissatisfaction has contributed to the passive participation of most Nigerians in the decision making process and government with dire implications for political stability and democratic consolidation.

CONCLUSION

The paper explores the impact of legislative corruption on democracy in the Nigerian fourth republic with a particular focus on the National Assembly. The legislature as the bastion of popular will is critical to the deepening of democracy and governance processes. The constitutional powers and responsibilities the legislature enjoys make it the foremost accountability, transparency and anti-corruption institution in Nigeria. However, corruption as revealed in the paper is rife among legislators of the fourth republic and is attributed to the prebendal inclinations of the Nigerian ruling elites. Consequently, the effective and efficient functioning of the legislature in Nigeria has been overshadowed by alleged cases and evidence of graft among legislators since the return of democracy in 1999. More so, endemic corruption involving legislators is among the major causes of development crises confronting Nigeria. Despite earning hundreds of billions of dollars in oil revenue, two thirds of Nigerians continue to live in poverty, just as diseases, illiteracy, unemployment and inequality are rampant (Mathew and Idowu, 2013). Moreover, the credibility and integrity of the legislature as an essential democratic institution capable of inspiring trust among Nigerians has been damaged; with serious implications for popular trust and participation in governance institutions and processes. Concomitantly, persistent allegations and evidence of massive fraud involving lawmakers represent a major setback to the anticorruption crusade in Nigeria. The drive to enthrone a corruption free society is denied the requisite moral political leadership expected of legislators representing the principal anticorruption institution in Nigeria, and the popular support necessary for a successful implementation. Therefore, issues of accountability and transparency in governance, and anticorruption drive of government are regarded as insincere, hollow and mere rhetoric that should not be taken seriously by most Nigerians. Obviously, these developments as explored in the paper provide insights into the threat that legislative corruption pose to democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Concerted efforts and measures are required to reduce corruption in the polity and among legislators. The ruling elites have to reassess the mercantile kind of politics they practice and which have become the dominant face of governance in the fourth republic. They must provide purposeful and firm political leadership critical for national development. Obviously, this must be done within the framework of democracy and good governance. This will inspire the political will and impetus necessary in the war on corruption. Evidence since 1999 has shown that elected officials have not been sincere and serious about tackling corruption head-on. Moreover, political parties in the country have to practice and promote democratic ideals in their activities. The absence of internal democracy in most political parties of the fourth republic contributed in part to the hijack of the political parties by power brokers notoriously referred to as godfathers, to promote their selfish interests. The politics of imposition of candidates, monetary reward and electoral malpractices associated with the godfathers to some extent is

responsible for the deepening of corruption in the polity. Equally, the capacity building and informational roles of Civil Society Organisations, as well as their constant attack and criticism of instances of sleaze and abuse of power in the national assembly is commendable and must be sustained.

The ruling elites in general and legislators in particular have a role to play in promoting institutional accountability and strengthening the independence of anti-corruption institutions in Nigeria. It has been argued that while legislators can monitor the activities of other institutions and hold them accountable, there are few measures put in place to demand accountability from lawmakers. The passive interest shown by anticorruption institutions in the country in most of the corruption scandals in the legislature, except where they have been prompted by the executive undermines further the process of holding legislators accountable (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). The reluctance of these institutions is understandable. The palpable backlash and vendetta that might follow their interventions in the affairs of legislators, to whom they owe their existence, remain a constant source of fear. Therefore, strengthening anti-corruption and democratic institutions to enhance their complete independence from political interference is imperative. Politicians must learn to submit their activities to public and institutional scrutiny as dictated by the constitution when the need arises without turning around to use their positions and connections in power to scuttle the activities and operations of such institutions and processes of government.

The sustained political education and reorientation of Nigerians is crucial in the fight against corruption. It increases Nigerians awareness of the need to vote for credible politicians and avoid mortgaging their future by selling their votes to charlatans during elections. Also, it improves the knowledge Nigerians have about their constitutional rights and the processes involved in demanding for accountability from their elected officials, especially their lawmakers. Amid high level poverty, electoral violence and blatant elite interference in the processes and decisions of democratic institutions which have characterised governance in Nigeria since 1999, this may seem a daunting task. Nevertheless, the electorate needs to demonstrate immense courage in the struggle to sustain democracy by doing everything legally possible to make their votes count during elections. Besides, the ruling elites have to improve on the delivery of public goods and services, and provide the political leadership and will necessary to spur citizens' confidence in the democratic process and the war on corruption. The widespread criticisms by Nigerians and segment of the international community of the recent state pardon granted by the Federal Government to some persons convicted of stealing public funds in the past underlines how government decisions rooted in elite solidarity can undermine popular trust in governance and the war on corruption. Essentially, legislators must imbibe the culture of responsible and transformational service to the people, and must realise that the effective and efficient performance of their constitutional responsibility without fear or favour is core to enhancing sustained socio-economic and political development, fostering the much needed ethical revival in the polity and making Nigeria a corruption free society. The reorientation of lawmakers therefore is politically imperative.

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