

Dora Akunyili's truth and graveyard peace

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Nigeria is a country of over 150 million people, with a minority ruling class. How can a multitude be made so submissive by a few, as to accept silence as the answer to our problems? Silence is a lie when the situation is as dire as we are currently experiencing in our nation.

The Presidency has been intimidated by the actions and comments of the Governors' Forum, the PDP national executives, the recent action of the Brigade of Guard and the utterances of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Demeji Bankole, about coup plot. The Presidency may be intimidated, but the Nigerian civil society is not.

There is no nation worth its name that can just float without direction. How can an incapacitated president rule the nation by proxy through a close cabal of associates, while fronting another designate as the Acting President? The activities of the ruling class are shrouded in secrecy and no one knows what the true state of affairs is anymore.

Nigerians now get information about their president either through the BBC or the Al Jazeera television news report. What a shameless position to be! Yet, Yar'Adua continues to be screened from Nigerians by his close associates. Does this cabal realise the security implications of having an incapacitated president, of treating our head of state in a foreign land, of making Nigeria a laughing stock among other nations, of being economical with the truth?

None of them is civil enough to tell Nigerians the true state of affairs. The only source of getting a semblance of the truth is being intimidated by those who wish to maintain the status quo, so as to continue siphoning the commonwealth of the nation into personal or ethnic banks.

Nigerians must learn to speak the truth and live by it, as it is the truth that can augur well for the progress of the nation. Lies may have many variants, but truth is constant. The truth is being in accord with the fact or reality of a situation, and anyone who has the courage to say it as it is should be encouraged by every means possible.

Saying the truth means sincerity or constancy of action, character and utterance and, such, truth bearers deserve our respect. There is no doubt that those who wish to maintain the status quo will kick against the truth bearer by any means, but they should stand firm, because a man's life consist, not of the abundance of his earthly possessions, but by what he/she has positively contributed to society.

When a man says what conforms to reality on the ground his/her judgments can be said to be truth. The truth said by our Information Minister, Dora Akunyili, is her inability to manage information whose source is unverifiable, dubious at the best or at the worst, totally wrong. Being a part of the condemned system or not, she has shown she has a conscience not to deliberately misinform fellow Nigerians.

Truth is constructed by a social process which is historically and culturally specific, and that has, in part, shaped the current power struggle within the Presidency between the progressive who wish to move Nigeria forward and the reactionary forces, who wish to maintain the status quo.

The perception of truth should be viewed as contingent on convention, human perception and social experience, so those who are most likely to live the truth are those who have been well cultured from the cradle. The converse is also true that those who are poorly nurtured are more likely to deceive by speaking and living falsely, by doing things in the dark, even while working in hallowed chambers and by being secretive, as that is the only way their survival could be guaranteed.

Our deeds determine us, as much as we determine our deeds and those who live by the truth should not be scared to continue to live by the truth, because truth alleviates pain rather than hurts and will always bear up against falsehood and silence, which is a lie, just as oil does over water.

Our truth bearer should not be harassed, because truth is a deep kindness that teaches us to be content with whatever we have or have accumulated on this plane, in our everyday life and to share with people. Truth is incontrovertible, malice and bias may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but, in the end, there it is like a beacon of hope, which Dora Akunyili now bears to this great, sick nation of ours, no matter what others may want us to believe.

Our Information Minister's refusal to manage lies as truth and coming forward with it, has shown that truth is the secret of eloquence and of virtues, the basis of moral authority, the summit of art and life. The current situation of stiff upper lips by those in the know, creates an uneasy calm which is the peace of the grave- yard.

Our Muslim brothers and sisters will agree with the teaching of Prophet Mohammed that there are three signs of the hypocrites; when they speak, they speak lies, when they make promises, they break it and when they are trusted, they betray the trust. The cabal holding the nation by its jugular must be reminded of their promises to their faith to be truthful in all their dealings, so as not to attract the wrath of Allah.

Our brothers and sisters in the FEC, the National Assembly, the Governors' Forum and the PDP Board of Trustees, must release this nation from their iron grip and give Nigeria a breath of fresh air, by coming clean on the health situation of President Yar'Adua, and by confirming the Presidency of Jonathan Goodluck, so that he can move this nation forward.

To Ebele Jonathan, the current tinkering will not do, you must start from the beginning, which is the foundation, and work sleeplessly so that you can leave your foot steps in the sands of time for the benefit of fellow Nigerians.

For now, do not listen to the distant drums, you must keep your goal in focus. I wish you and Dora Akunliyi well and good luck.

Finally, the Holy Bible and the Quoran tell us to adhere to the truth, for the truth leads to good deeds and good deeds leads him who does them to paradise. Falsehood is wickedness and ultimately leads who peddle it to hell.

Ogbonmwan sent this article from United Kigdom.

Note: This article was sent in before the Acting President dissolved the cabinet —Editor.