

“They steal in the name of helping the poor”

A statement by Kwadwo “Sir John” Owusu Afriyie

Ladies and gentlemen, I have decided, in my capacity as a concerned citizen of Wonuo, in Ghana, to hold this press conference because I am worried about the path that President John Dramani Mahama and his friends and family are taking this country on. If we allow it to continue a day beyond January 7, 2017, there will be no future for Ghana. It would probably take us another generation to recover.

Just this morning, I saw some research work done by Nana Attobrah and his Danquah Institute that estimates that some GH¢12 billion worth of contracts secured under sole sourcing since 2010 had their costs inflated by 65%. What this means is that Ghana could have saved as much as GH¢7.8 billion in public funds, equivalent to \$2 billion in today’s deflated currency.

Before I go on to my other main case on how Mahama is killing Ghana, let me make this important point. My point is this: President Mahama is dangerous to our country. He is killing us softly with a lethal potion of his charm offensive and offensive corruption.

Typically, what would cost GH¢100 to do Mahama would do it for GH¢400. Let me break it down in another way. What it means is that with the amount of money John Mahama and his NDC has spent, Ghana should have developed at least four times faster. If running a country is all about taxing, borrowing, spending and stealing then every graduate from Nsawam Medium Security is more than qualified to be President.

President Mahama’s own Finance Minister is worried about how Ghana will find money to honour the GH¢60 billion in interest payments due for the next three years, starting 2017. What we know is that more than half of the GH¢112 billion which the country now owes is made up of corrupt deals, pure and simple. If we keep President Mahama in office for another four years I might be forced to leave my farm in Wonuo and seek economic refugee status elsewhere. But, I am too old and love my country too much. Unfortunately, I won’t be alone in being forced to

consider migrating. The good news is that I have no intention to leave Ghana. So we must all do what we can to make sure Mahama gives us no reason to want to leave and that means kicking him out with our thumb. Tens of thousands of graduates without jobs do not want to leave Ghana to be economic refugees or illegal immigrants anywhere. But, if things continue like this dumsor would return; public sector workers would be sacked; hospitals would have no medicines; nurses and teachers would not be paid; our roads would get worse.

What would even be worse is that I do not think Ghana would be able to control the anger of the hungry youth who see no hope in their future. We need to urgently give them hope. The truth is that Mahama is a threat to the peace and security of our nation. He is threat not only because he is a tribalist, but more so because he kills hope. Corruption kills and if corruption kills then the man whose greedy hands are constantly on the trigger of corruption must be stopped to stop corruption killing Ghana.

Without Mahama, Ghana can do four times better. With Mahama Ghana is spending four times more than what is needed to develop. Another four years of Mahama would make us four times poorer. If his government can be this corrupt, reckless, uncaring and incompetent when he knew he would be facing re-election in 2016, then just imagine what he would be if given a final term where he would not have to worry about re-election. I fear for Ghana. I fear for Wonuo.

The issue of sole-sourcing where contract figures are often over-bloated has been topical, particularly under the current NDC administration. Under normal circumstances, government contracts, per the procurement law, are supposed to be taken through open tender process and subjected to value for money audit before execution.

But under the current Mahama government, this laid-down procedure has always been shoved aside and contracts awarded without recourse to due diligence. These contracts often go to friends and family members who often do not even have the requisite know-how to carry through with the job. This has resulted in instances where contracts have been awarded and abandoned, midway, and because these awardees happen to be friends and family members of His Royal Highness Dramani, no efforts are made to hold them to account.

Ladies and gentlemen of the press. I want you to just focus on one such contract by a public institution that is meant to regulate and give consumers protection and you will see the culture of impunity that has overwhelmed Ghana under Mahama.

Now, construction of a borehole, as a matter of fact, should not qualify as an emergency to be offered on a sole-sourcing basis. Again, the price-tag for a mechanized bore-hole, according to players in the industry, should not be more than GH¢18,000, irrespective of the area or location. To drill a mechanized borehole ranges between GH¢12,000 and GH¢18,000 anywhere in Ghana on the open market.

As matter of fact, a company like Animax Drilling Company of Ghana, quotes a mechanized bore-hole within the Greater Accra Region at Ghc14,000, and a maximum of GH¢18,000 is quoted for same in any part of the country, irrespective of area, location and soil make-up.

It is in the light of this that a Public Utility Regulatory Commission letter dated 6th October,2016, requesting for a “single-sourced procurement approval for PURC’S pro-poor water project” shows the danger that our cash is in under Mahama.

In the said letter, it is stated “the commission is seeking approval to single-source contractors to construct bore-holes in selected deprived communities”. The letter continues, “the commission seeks to proceed with phase II of the pro-poor water project which shall cover all ten [10] regions of the country and consist a total of five hundred [500] bore-holes to be drilled and mechanized”.

The letter continues “the total cost of the project for the 500 bore-holes is GH¢30m.” And, no matter where the borehole is being dug, the rate per unit is quoted at GH¢60,000. This, ladies and gentlemen, is four times, the market rate. Going by the maximum Animax quotation of GH¢18,000 per borehole in the remotest part of the country, the 500 bore-holes would have amounted to GH¢9m and not GH30m. So, in all, the contract offered on sole-sourcing by PURC, has been bloated by at least GH¢21m.

Now, we currently find ourselves in a country, and under a government where allowances for nurses and teacher trainees have been cancelled due to unavailability of funds in the state coffers. Qualified and working professionals

from these two fields of study who have been fortunate to be employed, have had to go without monthly salaries for not less than 3years, in some instances. Again, there some of these professionals who have qualified, for years, but have not been employed and have become burdens on their parents by way of daily upkeep.

In recent times, Senior High Schools have had to suspend their re-opening days because the state had no money to pay feeding grants. Even procurement of ordinary chalk became topical because there were none I our basic schools and a head-teacher had to put a request to the Second Lady, Mrs. Amisah-Arthur, to which the latter retorted "I can't provide you with common chalk".

Indeed, the issue of over-bloated contract figures and excessive affinity for sole-sourcing, have become synonymous with the John Mahama-led NDC government, which unquestionably, has become avenue for state-sanctioned stealing of taxpayers' monies. Pure acts of unbridled corruption, under the current government, has become the norm and appointees who engage in it are sometimes made to refund the loot at their very convenience and on their own appointed pace, while others are elevated by being offered cozy offices at the presidency with no defined responsibilities.

Ironically, NDC claims to be a social democratic party, and more strangely, the purpose of this bore-hole project was to provide relief to the poor. Now, this mantra of being pro-poor political party has been trumpeted by the ndc, to the point where unsuspecting members of Ghanaians society have fallen for this deception. But in reality, the party has become a vehicle for CREATING, LOOTING AND SHARING taxpayers' monies. This obscenely corrupt vehicle, undoubtedly, is being driven by equal cabal of unrepentant socioeconomic criminals whose only claim to fame is merciless dissipation of state resources.

NDC people claim to be socialists who care about the welfare of ordinary masses, but in reality, their real motivation for always rigging their way into political office, is to loot state coffers to enrich themselves, friends, families and close associates.

Evidently, Ghana is not poor but a very wealthy country and the citizens are not supposed to be living in the current state of abject penury. In both natural and human-resources, Ghana is supposed to be rubbing shoulders with any of these

now developed nations, South Korea for example, that were at par with us when we gained independence in 1957.

Ghanaians now live under the era where the pitiful plight of the poor has now been capitalized on by the President and his friends and family. Today, the people of La are on a demonstration because they claim their lands are being stolen by the same Mahama, friends and family.

It is such levels of naked corruption and unbridled looting of state coffers that we must be wearing of, as a people, and take a decisive decision to change, on 7th December,2016, to stop the rot and put Ghana back on track for socioeconomic development.

As a people, we must be ready to take our destiny into our own hands and rise to the occasion on 7th December,2016, to effect the change which is so critical to our collective socioeconomic survival. Four years in the life of a nation is very important and must never be toyed with this time round.

Should we make a mistake and fail to remove this corrupt, inept, insensitive and visionless John Mahama-led ndc bunch of mismanagers from power at the next opportunity, we shall be calling upon ourselves, a quadruple dose of untold hardships we are currently going through. Our failure to remove such a corrupt bunch of people from the helms of governance, will be tantamount to signing our ultimate death warrants.

This NDC government has proven to be corrupt beyond the boundaries of human comprehension, and must be fittingly voted out of power, come 7th December, 2016, and a credible party, the NPP, led by the incorruptible Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, given the mandate to serve so that our coffers shall be protected and resources judiciously managed.