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The destructive role of Cameroon's elite

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Abstract

This article attempts to show the destructive role members of Cameroon's elite have been playing at the political, economic, religious, intellectual and other levels. They have considerably contributed to the numerous vices or ills in Cameroon. There is need for a paradigm shift from this unfortunate situation to an acceptable one.

Keywords: Roles Political Intellectual Economic Religious Elite Scandals Disreputable Unscrupulous Dictatorial

Introduction

In every society, members of the elite play various roles. ^[1] These roles could be constructive (in terms of the welfare or betterment of human lives) or destructive (retarding the progress of society). They have a great impact on the developmental process of every society. Their presence is felt in various domains of life.

In Cameroon, these roles exist at the political, intellectual, economic, religious and other levels. They have hindered, to a great extent, the progress of Cameroonians, Cameroonian towns and villages, etc. They have done so since the period Cameroon acquired independence from France and Great Britain.

A good number of members of Cameroon's political elite are involved in numerous scandals in offices, schools, hospitals, churches, etc. In this vein, they indulge in all sorts of corrupt practices concerning the recruitment of workers into the public service, the payment of public service salaries, the award and execution of public contracts, the management of projects, the registration and organization process during State elections, etc. ^[2] These practices have damaged the reputation of Cameroon in many domains.

¹ YourDictionary, "Elite"

Available at: yourdictionary.com/elite

Consulted on: 8/8/22

The aforementioned dictionary defines the term "elite" as follows:

- The group or part of a group selected or regarded as the finest, best, most distinguished, most powerful class;
- A group or class of persons considered to be superior to others because of their intelligence, social standing or wealth;
- The best or most skilled members of a group;
- Something prestigious or the best of the best.

² Numvi Gwaibi, "The Electoral Cycle and Grassroots Realities in Cameroon: The Omnipresent, Overbearing and Contested Political Elite"

Available at: intechopen.com/chapters/63923

Consulted on: 8/8/22

Numvi Gwaibi presents some destructive attitudes of some members of Cameroon's political elite during the organization of State elections. They are involved in "vote buying, intimidation, ballot box stuffing, selective registration, the tampering with electoral registers, etc".

Furthermore, many persons who are part of Cameroon's political elite do not behave properly in public. They speak arrogantly or disrespectfully to others. These politicians are not humble in their approach to political, social, cultural and other issues. They believe that they have a monopoly of knowledge in all domains. They (mostly those of the ruling party) feel that they can tamper with the law with impunity. A great number of members of Cameroon's intellectual elite have been playing a disreputable role in schools (colleges, universities). On the strength of this fact, some lecturers award marks to female students on the basis of their acceptance or refusal of sexual demands. They sexually harass these students quite frequently. Furthermore, a good number of teachers in Cameroonian schools are not duty conscious. They are not mindful of the needs of their students.

Many university lecturers in Cameroon (senior lecturers, associate professors, professors, etc) desperately and persistently seek juicy posts and appointments in government circles. They use unorthodox means to acquire these posts and appointments; they employ foul means to maintain them and they do not judiciously use them when rendering services to Cameroonians.^[3] They are arrogant, nonchalant, etc.

Cameroon's economic elite comprises a good number of unscrupulous businessmen and businesswomen. They indulge in tax fraud and evasion. Their goods and services experience unnecessary price hikes. They do not pay their workers well and regularly. They love extravagance and "feymania", a type of extravagance and "feymania" which sharply contrast with the deplorable working conditions of their employees.^[4]

These businessmen and businesswomen play an unwholesome or harmful role in the society at the social and political levels. They spend a lot of money during elections to fraudulently obtain elective posts and maintain the ruling party in power. Furthermore, they portray a very negative

picture of social success in the society, success acquired through scamming, fraud, spiritual powers and other shortcuts to success.

Many members of Cameroon's religious elite are irresponsible. In this connection, they do not handle religious issues seriously in their respective places or spots of worship. They are involved in the poor handling of funds in terms of embezzlement, misuse, etc. Their manner of dealing with members of their respective churches is dictatorial. They preach virtue and practise vice in many issues concerning the management of their respective houses of worship or prayer.^[5]

Many religious leaders (catechists, pastors, deacons, bishops, archbishops, reverend brothers and sisters, lay persons occupying key positions in churches, etc) are involved in a great number of political, matrimonial and other scandals. In this vein, they support the Cameroonian Government in its despicable activities. Furthermore, some of them are part of sex scandals concerning married women, etc. They adore illegal sex!

From the foregoing points, it could be inferred that members of Cameroon's elite are playing a destructive role in various domains. Their handling of societal issues is far below expectations. This situation confirms Steve Bannon's definition of the term "elite", thereby rendering Hugo Chavez's and Bobby Orr's solution to this mess a necessity.^[6]

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2. Dohgangsine Prudence Tangham, "Economic Crime in Cameroon – Its Impact on the Sound Development of the State" Available at: unafei.or.jp/publications/pdf/RS_No66/No66_17PA_D

³ Ozore Opio (Cameroon Post), "Praise Be To The Mediocre Men of Letters"

Available at: cameroonpostline.com/praise-be-to-the-mediocre-men-of-letters/%E2%80%8B

Consulted on: 9/8/22

In the aforementioned article, Ozore Opio states as follows:

The appointment syndrome has diverted intellectuals from the service of principle and they are instead worshipping utility and servicing their political passions. A spell has been cast on the contemporary Cameroonian intellectual.

At the University of Buea, we boast of the vilest pick of academic brigands. They belong to a school long abhorred (absurd mediocrity). It is dreadfully depressing.

⁴ Dohgangsine Prudence Tangham, "Economic Crime in Cameroon – Its Impact on the Sound Development of the State"

Available at: unafei.or.jp/publications/pdf/RS_No66/No66_17PA_Dohgangsine.pdf

Consulted on: 9/8/22

Dohgangsine Prudence Tangham gives us an idea of the meaning of "feymania". She writes:

"Feymania" is an economic crime that manifests itself in multidimensional forms but is basically characterized by the classified offences of breach of trust and...fraud.

Affected by the high rate of unemployment and poverty, its authors ("feymen") go in search of quickly and easily obtained profits, and this goal is achieved based on victims' naivety.

"Feymen" are a prototype of economic delinquents in Cameroon today. Though well known and very dangerous, they maintain solid relationships at high political levels. Aged from 25-35, they are known to live in great affluence...

It should be noted that "feymen" are found in all age groups (not only in the age group mentioned above).

⁵ Paul Reinhard Wandji (Journal du Cameroun.com), "Cameroon – Presbyterian Church: Christians Accuse Pastors of Theft and Corruption"

Available at: journalducameroun.com/en/cameroon-presbyterian-church-christians-accuse-pastors-of-theft-and-corruption/

Consulted on: 10/8/22

Paul Reinhard Wandji provides an example of the nature of corrupt practices in Cameroonian churches. He states as follows:

Signs read: "We don't want you, Reverend May Wose, and Reverend Vetin Tambi in Presbyterian Church, Kumba. We are tired of Reverend Mary Wose and Reverend Vetin Tambi and their corrupt pastoral work in Kumba Presbyterian Church." It was with the help of these messages that members of the Kumba Presbyterian Church Parish uttered their dissatisfaction last Sunday, 3 July 2022.

⁶ BrainyQuote, "Elite Quotes"

Available at: brainyquote.com/topics/elite-quotes

Consulted on: 10/8/22

In the aforementioned article, Steve Bannon, Hugo Chavez and Bobby Orr write about members of the elite of all countries.

Steve Bannon affirms as follows:

"A member of an elite is someone who's for themselves and not for the country."

Hugo Chavez asserts as follows:

"We must confront the privileged elite who have destroyed a large part of the world."

Bobby Orr contends as follows:

"Everyone should have the same opportunity, and in many areas; that's not the case because programs are built around the elite."

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