

## From Madam Due Process to Madam Public Embarrassment

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Oby Ezekwesili, one time minister for education and minister for solid minerals under the Obasanjo regime, aka "Madam Due Process", and lately the frontwoman for the Bring Back Our Girls campaign, went "Head to Head" on Al Jazeera with Mehdi Hasan at the Oxford Union.

Boy, it should be painful watching for her "fans".

Ezekwesili, perhaps because she has a "Dr" before her name, seems to have convinced a lot of Nigerians that she epitomises competence. She was known as "Madam Due Process" because she made an awful lot of noise about following due process in procurement when she was a minister. Whether she practised what she preached was another matter. Probably because she seems to always get a free pass from the Nigerian press, many have called for her return to the cabinet in the incoming Buhari administration.

But Al Jazeera's Mehdi Hasan was in no mood to give her a free pass like the obsequious sections of the Nigerian media.

Watch the grilling here:

She tripped herself up several times. One minute she claimed Nigeria lacked "capacity" in relation to fighting Boko Haram, the next she said we are not a "weak country". Erm.. if you "lack capacity" you must be "weak"!

She claimed she was not a politician and did not belong to the "political class" - despite holding at least two ministerial positions! The woman didn't seem to know that those positions are political and once you held them, you belong to the political class!

She was nailed to the cross with the questions quoting former Economic and Financial Crimes Commission boss Nuhu Ribadu's Wikileaks comments in which he stated that Obasanjo was very corrupt, and his regime was more corrupt than Abacha's. Ezekwesili squirmed, tried evasion, tried bluster and never coherently dealt with the issues. She was a useful tool for laundering the image of the very corrupt Obasanjo and part of the a very corrupt government.

The session just went downhill from there.

A gentleman from Borno asked how poor provision of education was a factor in the spread of Boko Haram in the area. And Ezekwesili, who was once minister for education, tried to blame the man for not contributing to educating his people. It was embarrassing to watch.

Her responses to the role of the World Bank, where she was a vice president, in Third World poverty were what James Brown would describe as "talking loud and saying nothing". When the criticism of the bank from former vice president Joseph Stiglitz was put to her, she jumped in claiming he was her "friend". As if name dropping made any difference to the point.

She rounded up her show of shame with some baloney about establishing an "office of the citizen". How about asking that education ministers actually did their jobs in providing education for all, rather than expecting the citizens to do it by themselves?

You really wondered how far standards have dropped in Nigeria when people like Ezekwesili are held up as the way forward.