

NIGERIA: THE BLACKMAN'S BURDEN

PROFESSOR A. BOLAJI AKINYEMI



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Nigeria: The Blackman's Burden

Professor A. Bolaji Akinyemi
Former Hon. Minister of External Affairs
External Affairs

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To Mark

the
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and the
2005 Black History Month

on
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In 1969, I defended a doctoral dissertation at Oxford University titled "Pax-Nigeriana: Nigerian Attitudes To African Issues". In adopting the concept of "Pax-Nigeriana", I acknowledged the debt to, but also distanced it from the concept of a Pax Romana or Pax Britannia. I wrote in that thesis, "the concept of Pax Romana or Pax Britannia was that of peace imposed on others by Rome or Britain in their respective empires. Hence, the ancient usage of this concept has implied the imposition of a certain standard of behaviour by one state on the conquered people of another state.

However, the concept of a Pax-Nigeriana does not imply the imposition of a Nigerian peace on Non-Nigerians. To the extent that between 1958 and 1966, African states, without European intervention, were searching for norms of behaviour to guarantee peaceful relations among themselves, these years were a formative period. To the extent that this search developed into a struggle between two sets of political principles identified with Nigeria and Ghana respectively, and to the extent that it was the political principles that were identified with Nigeria that were adopted by African States and embodied in the OAEJ charter, a Pax-Nigeriana in Africa can be spoken of"

In a speech delivered on October 19, 2004 to mark the celebration of the 70th birthday of General Yakubu Gowon, Professor Ali Mazrui used precisely the same words "Pax Nigeriana" to describe leadership aspects of Nigerian foreign policy. He, in fact, titled that section of his speech "Towards a Pax-Nigeriana." He argued his justification of the adoption of the concept thus: "Almost from independence, Nigeria's exceptionalism included a potential leadership role to keep the peace in West Africa a kind of Pax-Nigeriana". I will return later to the convergence and divergence in the two expositions of this concept.

Even before the independence of Nigeria, there had grown up within the domestic political intellectual class and the international foreign policy elite a belief in the manifest destiny of Nigeria to play a mega role in world affairs. At a time when the Nigerian political class should still be focusing almost exclusively on seeing the struggle for independence to a successful conclusion, foreign affairs had already started to carve a niche for itself in the consciousness of the Nigerian elite.

As early as 1953, Chief Obafemi Awolowo had delivered a lecture to the 1953 Action Group Summer School Lectures titled "Imperialist Agents in Dependent Countries". In 1958, one of the publications credited to Awolowo was titled "A Foreign Policy for Independent Nigeria". In October 1959, Eme Awa was writing in the *Daily Times* on Nigeria's Foreign Policy: "The Need For A Third Force". Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe in 1960, the very year of independence, had credited to him an article titled "Nigeria in World Politics", in *Presence Africaine*. Dr. Tunji Otegbeye published "Foreign Policy for Nigeria: Positive Neutralism" in July 1959 in the *Daily Times*. In August 1960, Ebenezer Williams wrote "Nigeria's Foreign Policy: This is a Weapon of Victory". Nigeria was not at war, and this was a curious juxtaposition of words — defining foreign policy in terms of "Weapon" and "Victory" — and this, even before independence. Ebenezer Williams was not alone in this aggressive (not siege) mentality, it was shared with the articulate political class that included politicians, labour, students, media etc.

This was the same class that was mobilised to defeat the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact. It was not expecting Nigeria to be attacked but it was expecting the foreign policy arena to be a battlefield (not in the literal sense) and it was expecting Nigeria

to emerge as the leader of Africa. That was what the battle was.

The flavour of these publications reflects a consciousness among the Nigerian elite of an acceptance that Nigeria had a crucial role to play in world affairs in the post-independence period. What motivated or spurred this consciousness in the first place? There were four operational factors that underlaid this consciousness. The first factor was the early independence of Ghana which became what was perceived as a genuine African voice on the global stage. This was in spite of the fact that Liberia and Ethiopia had been independent African States much earlier than Ghana. But neither the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Sellasie, nor the President of Liberia, William Tubman, had the flair or vision of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. Nigeria felt that this was an affront to the role which should have been reserved for Nigeria because of her mega size.

The second factor was the activist foreign policy pursued by Ghana. She practically hit the ground running on cold war issues and on Pan-Africanism. If Ghana had achieved independence and kept out of the international limelight, Nigeria would not have felt the urge to stake out foreign policy positions long before independence. But Nkrumah was not the quiet one. He was the stuff that revolutionaries were made off.

As if responding to Dylan Thomas burgle command, "Do not go gentle into that good night, rage against the dying of the light", Nkrumah came out raging against the international system. He teamed up with Pandit Nehru of India, Abdel Gammal Nasser of Egypt, and Sukarno of Indonesia in forming the non-aligned movement. On the African continent, he launched a blitzkrieg of ideas and institutions, summoning a Conference of Independent African States (1958) and an All African Peoples' Conference (1958).

The third factor was the existence of the cold war which led to a competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for control and influence in all parts of the world. This competition meant that the Soviet Union and the United States were sensitive to political developments in Africa and did not always wait for independence before seeking to acquire friends.

Finally, the fourth factor was and still what I will call the mega syndrome of Nigeria in Africa. If Nigeria had been a mini-state, it is an open debate whether she would have been sensitive to and irritated by the early independence of Ghana. A classic illustration of this irritation was when the *Daily Service* denounced Nkrumah as "cocky" and "swollen headed" for not consulting Nigeria before summoning the Conference of Independent African States. It described Nkrumah's attitude to Nigeria as "gratuitous contempt" and "unwarranted insult". The mega syndrome of Nigeria is a phenomenon which Nigerians, Africans and the international community have had to confront. The physical size of Nigeria, the state of her economy and the size of her population vis a vis other countries in Africa have bred an expectation of a leadership and activist role for Nigeria in the global system, a state with a manifest destiny to become a Black Power.

There is a critical question which raises itself: Did the consciousness of this mega syndrome originate with Nigerians or was it externally bred and transplanted back into Nigeria? In other words, was the concept of the mega syndrome autonomous or not?

Under normal circumstances, a political elite from a colony focusing on foreign policy would have been laughed off the stage with derision and contempt. But the controllers of the

international system were already alarmed at the moves that Ghana was making internationally and the new international status she was acquiring that it would only be natural and logical to speculate that they would be shopping for a counterfoil to Ghana. Even though there is no evidence to support this, I wouldn't be surprised if in some foreign quarters, there was no regret that Nigeria was not granted independence before Ghana. In other words, in official foreign quarters and in the foreign media, the idea of a mega-Nigeria playing a mega role was actively canvassed.

Does this mean that Nigerians themselves did not develop a dose of megalomania?

Irrespective of party allegiances, there was especially in Southern Nigeria a highly articulate elite that was conscious of and familiar with the developments in the ideology of Pan-Africanism. They were aware of and some of them had attended the Pan-African Congress in the United Kingdom. Some of them had studied in the United States and attended Lincoln University, the hotbed of Afro-American nationalism. Nnamidi Azikiwe was familiar with the history of Liberia and in tune with the developments in that country. Through his newspaper, the *West African Pilot*, his readership was exposed to the evangelism of Pan-Africanism. But this could not have automatically translated into the mega syndrome. Nigerians would have had to be made of a different hue of the human genes if they themselves could not fathom what advantage to derive from the peculiarities of the natural resources of their country. Nigerians were aware of their size and the advantage this size could confer.

I must introduce a caveat here. As a minister, I once had the occasion to deliver the 1986 *Gold Medal Lecture* (I wonder what

has happened to the series) and I identified certain self-imposed factors which were inimical to the mega syndrome and which Nigerians need to liberate themselves from. Mr. Chairman, I cannot do better than to quote from the speech. I said at that time –

I wish to refer to certain freedoms which are essential and crucial to credibility and balance in our foreign policy. These freedoms are:

- ♦ *Freedom from the Right-Rightist tendencies have often manifested themselves in the advocacy that whatever is good and desirable to strengthen economic relations with Western industrialised countries is in Nigeria's interest. Their position is that every aspect of our economic relations is of necessity beneficial to Nigeria! Their call that Nigeria should always design political policies that will reinforce the present state of our economic relations with the West ignores the fact that that there might be need to design and implement political policies that will seek to rectify the pressure which economic relations with the West currently impose on us. My view is that the questions which Nigeria should always ask are: What is the benefit of a given association to Nigeria? Does a given relationship enhance or diminish our freedom of action?*
- ♦ *Freedom from the Left-by which it is meant that the success of our foreign policy pronouncements or lack of it should not be judged whether such a policy or policies pursued by government is supportive of left-wing governments in any part of the world. Nigeria is not a*

left-wing or a socialist state. Therefore, we have no business seeking an automatic congruence of views with left-wing regimes all over the world...

- ♦ *Freedom from being apologetic about our size. Yes, Nigeria is the most populous black nation in the world. Why should we be apologetic about it? The tendency of our being apologetic has often led us to seek to please other nations and, in the process, to displease ourselves. Why do we want to be loved by others! My position, which I have stated earlier on, is that we should not seek to be loved but to be respected.*
- ♦ *Freedom from sentiments of a historical religious or cultural nature — By which I mean that our foreign policy pronouncements, actions and initiatives should not be dictated by emotional attachments to a particular viewpoint because of historical, religious or cultural affinity with peoples of other countries.*

Obviously some of these views are no longer relevant due to developments in the international system. But the point of drawing attention to these comments is that the acceptance of a mega syndrome by Nigerians did not translate into convergence in what policies should be pursued to actualise it. In fact, from the quotation above, it is evident that the advantages to be derived from the syndrome could have pushed Nigeria in several directions.

Irrespective of the source of the syndrome, whether it was home grown or not, whether it was sponsored from external sources or not, nothing showed the fact that there were Nigerians who felt the syndrome should be used to enhance the status of the black race than the views which the present President of

Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, ascribed to Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, that enigmatic figure of January 15, 1966. In his seminal book simply titled *Nzeogwu*, Obasanjo wrote:

Chukwuma had a dream of a great Nigeria that is a force to reckon with in the world, not through ineffective political rhetoric but through purposeful and effective action... He dreamt of a nation where social justice and the economic interest of its citizens will not be subjugated to foreign control and manipulation. He believed in the ability of the Blackman.... Chukwuma, as had been pointed out, was a well read individual. He was familiar with Marx, Giap and Mustafa Kemal the Attaturk. He probably saw himself in the mould of the latter, a kind of Nigerian military hero on horseback, a moderniser, a nationalist, and a Nigerian bent on carving a niche for the Blackman in world history, an idealist who wanted to put the Blackman on the same pedestal as all other races. He saw Nigeria as pivotal to his dreams. In order for Nigeria to realise what seemed to him a divine if not self-evident mission, he had to clear the Augean stable...

Naturally, this is a loaded passage that one can fill a whole book deconstructing. The only two issues I wish to draw attention to are first, no one can accuse Nzeogwu of being a character that is subject to manipulation. Second, there is a recurrence of that theme of "manifest destiny" characterised here as "divine destiny". Obviously, there is sufficient evidence of a domestic fertile ground for a home-grown philosophy of a mega Nigeria and its relationship to the emancipation of the Black race.

This is not to imply that aspects of this philosophy did not only surface abroad but that attempts were made to transplant its overseas variant back into Nigeria. As earlier canvassed, the controllers of the international system, panicked because of the radicalism of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, sought for and found in Nigeria a counterfoil to deflate Ghana; If this is a correct reading, then there is no doubt that to embrace the Nzeogwu model of mega Nigeria would in fact have been counter-productive as it would only have created a bigger Nkrumah with a bigger capability. To that extent, the variety of mega Nigeria that would be encouraged from overseas would be for the limited purpose of blunting Nkrumah's vision for Africa and the Black race.

Another evidence of the recurrent theme of the mega Nigeria and its nexus with the Black race is to be found on the platform on which this lecture is being delivered. This lecture is one of the activities commemorating the 28th Anniversary of FESTAC and the Black History Month. FESTAC in English translates in full into *World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture*. Even though Senegal was the first to host the first Festival, there must have been more than a symbolism in the fact that Nigeria was declared the "star country" at the Dakar Festival and was asked to host the Second World Festival, after which none has been held.

That FESTAC was not just a cultural event simpliciter was propagated by the Arts people themselves. Writing in 1981 in the *Survey of Nigerian Affairs 1976 to 77*, Femi Osofisan, a major participant at the Festival, wrote an article, titled *Festac and the Heritage of Ambiguity* in which he commented as follows: "Secondly, there was also in the choice of Nigeria as host a tacit recognition of the country's symbolic role as the ancestral home

of the blacks in diaspora... thus, for the blacks outside, coming to Nigeria was like a pilgrimage back through history and suffering to the replenishing fountains of their and our ancestry". Ola Balogun, another participant at the FESTIVAL, delivered a lecture at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in 1986 titled *Cultural Policies as an Instrument of External Image-building: A blueprint for Nigeria*. In it, Balogun commented

In other words, given our country's large population, our internal dynamism, and our considerable economic and military potential, Nigeria will inevitably have to assume the role of Black Africa's leading nation. It is also quite obvious that Nigeria's potential leadership role in Africa is not only a duty that we owe to the rest of Africa and to the black race in general, but also a natural prolongation of our own quest for a coherent national outlook.

On official level, Nigeria sought to concretise its nexus with the world black community by announcing the "establishment of a Museum of Black and African Arts and Civilisation the Nigerian Federal Government pledges further its willingness to subscribe to any such efforts based in institutions of higher learning or outside, in the belief that a proliferation of Centres of Africa Studies all over the world, is one of the firm guarantees that a break-through will be made in giving a sound basis for what we are trying to achieve in FESTAC '77".

In a book titled *Nigerian Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, (2002), Dr. Jide Timothy Asobele argued thus:

Consequently, we should set up cultural centres: in Brazil for example, to cater for the Africans in the Diaspora in that great country. Slave trade, colonial transatlantic trade

led to the physical deportation of millions of Africans to Brazil and the Caribbean Islands. The cultural presence of Nigeria in the United States is a diplomatic imperative. Nigeria has an interest in influencing America politically, economically and culturally, the presence in America of a large Black and African population makes Nigerian cultural presence in the USA a diplomatic imperative.

This recognition of the nexus between the mega syndrome and the Black race whose exposition I have dated back to the 1960s can perhaps explain my bewilderment at the appearance of a question mark as part of the title of my lecture. The question mark signifies an uncertainty on my part as regards the validity of the nexus. I entertain no uncertainty on the mental, philosophical and intellectual levels. Therefore, there is no need for the question mark and there was none when I submitted the topic.

At the beginning of this lecture, I drew attention to the adoption of the same term by Professor Ali Mazrui and I. While I had used the term Pax-Nigeriana in 1969, Professor Marui used the same term in Abuja in October 2004. Let me give you Ali Mazrui's pedigree so that you may give this concept the mega seriousness it deserves. Professor Mazrui is the Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies and Albert Schweitzer Professor in Humanities, State University of New York at Binghamton, New York, USA. He is also Albert Luthuli Professor-at-Large, University of Jos, Nigeria; He is Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large, Emeritus and Senior Scholar in Africa Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA. He is also a Professor—at-large of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Nairobi, Kenya.

There was both a convergence and a divergence in both usages. When I used the term in 1969, I anchored the concept on the contestation of ideology between the radical and the conservative wings of Pan-Africanism. Even though the military components of Nigerian foreign policy had been evident in the Congo and Tangayikan experiences, my case was that these military components were not central to the evolution of the Pax-Nigeriana. The military operation in Congo was not at Nigeria's initiative and was carried out under the United Nations operations, while the military operation in Tangayikan was carried out at the express invitation of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the President of that country. In other words, even though both operations were evidence of Nigeria's capability, they were not projections of Nigerian power in the sense of unilateral enforcement actions of the type later undertaking in Sierra Leone and Liberia. In the sense that my own conception of the mega syndrome was located in the struggle for which ideas and which institutions would embody Pan-Africanism in post-independence Africa, I was able to locate my concept of Pax-Nigeriana firmly in Africa.

Ali Mazrui located his own concept in West Africa and firmly grounded it in the use of military might to project Nigerian power and interest across its borders. He argued on the evidence so far, Pax-Nigeriana — keeping the peace in West Africa under Nigeria's auspices — is better fulfilled when Nigeria is under military rule than when it is under the politicians.

The most spectacular exercises in Pax-Nigeriana occurred in the 1990s when Nigeria led the forces of ECOWAS (the ECOMOG troops) into Liberia first to restore peace and then to help re-start electoral democracy. The final result were elections in 1997, which returned Charles Taylor to power for a

while in 1998. Nigeria more unilaterally took on the army in Sierra Leone, which had overthrown the elected government of the President. Nigeria reversed the military takeover and restored the constitutionally elected government... It is arguable that one of the first exercises of Pax-Nigeriana occurred in Tanzania in 1964... it is arguable that the beginnings of Pax Nigerianna lie in a voluntary partnership between Nigeria and what later became Tanzania."

As Professor Ali Mazrui struggled to grapple with this concept of a Pax-Nigeriana, he ended up producing the evidence of an event which happened way across the continent which involved Nigeria to justify a concept which he had originally sought to limit to West Africa. To that extent, what originally looked like a divergence between my exposition of the concept and Ali Mazrui's exposition have been resolved.

In any case, apart from the case of the United States, the only mega global power left on the scene, the global role of other actors in the international system is anchored on their regional capabilities. They are basically regional enforcers, medium rather than global powers. But recognition of the regional capability by others, leads to continental and international status.

Recent events in both West Africa and North Africa have further reinforced the validity of the Pax-Nigeriana. In 1998, Liberia again exploded into a murderous rage of bloodletting. Long after the international community had decided that the government of Charles Taylor had to leave and that this could only be done at the point of external military enforcement, the United States, the former global enforcer in Liberia moved a marine flotilla and anchored off the shores of Liberia and refused to go any further until Nigerian troops moved in to reestablish

law and order. The United States marine put in a brief appearance for forms sake and left the military task in Nigerian hands. Presumably, this validates Ali Mazrui's original limitation of the concept of Pax-Nigerianna. But the Nigerian leadership of the limited African Union military exercise in the Darfor region of Sudan locates the manifestation of the mega syndrome just outside West Africa. Theory and reality meets in the genocide fields of Darfor.

Apart from Darfor, events in Sao Tome and Principe and perhaps in Togo show that the vitality of the concept is still very much in evidence. There is no doubt that a clear and present readiness to send in troops to overturn the coup d'etat in Sao Tome and Principe was conveyed to the coupists and this was responsible for their surrendering power back to the constitutional authorities. In Togo, events are still unfolding. But it is instructive that spokesmen for the Nigerian authorities have refused to rule out publicly the use of force to resolve the situation. The Nigerian National Assembly had already embraced the mega syndrome by calling on President Obasanjo to use force to roll back what one can only describe as a clever coup by the back door.

Karl Max must have had Togo in mind when he wrote in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleone, "Hegel says somewhere that all great events and personalities in world history reappear in one fashion or another. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce". In 1963, when President Sylvanus Olympio was assassinated, Jaja Wachuku, the Nigerian Foreign Minister in condemning the action added that for security reasons, Nigerian boundary was the Togo-Ghana boundary. He was roundly condemned. Looks like he was just speaking forty years out of tune. He would be pleased to know

that Nigeria had caught up with him. And that should also be a lesson to those who think that Nigerian foreign policy started and ended up with them.

There are three other examples which I wish to draw on to show not only how widespread is the acceptance of the concept of the mega syndrome but also how the parameters have been expanded. In 1979, Mazrui delivered the Reith BBC lectures and argued for Nigeria to develop a military nuclear capability as a means of restoring the balance of power between the West and the Third World. He returned to this theme in a lecture which he delivered at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, titled, *Niger-Saki: Does Nigeria Have a Nuclear Option?*

As the Foreign Minister of Nigeria in 1987, I called for Nigeria to develop a Black Bomb as I was and am still firmly convinced that you do not clap with an open hand in foreign affairs. Edem Kodjo, a former Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity, who later became the Prime Minister of Togo, put it eloquently in a preface to my book, *Essays on International Politics: Foreign, and Domestic Affairs*, "This strong Africa must be powerful Africa. I mean militarily powerful. We should not fall into the angelism in a world where power mongers are equally military. Africa cannot make the economy of a modern army at the service of a brighter diplomacy. This does not mean warmongering. On the contrary, it is in Africa's interest that peace reigns in the world. But she must learn to walk on her two legs, and the more she progresses economically, the more she develops militarily.... though I am not a Nigerian, I believe in the fundamental role of Nigeria in building a united Africa. I have been saying it over the years and I am getting furious that Nigeria is not totally assuming the role which should be hers ever since... There should be

'federating factors': countries with a dense geopolitical mass and an acceptable economic power who will take upon themselves to achieve, by federating gestures, the unity of our continent... Nigeria is indisputably one of these countries, if not the only one."

The third evidence of a global reach of the mega syndrome is the continuing existence of the Technical Aid Corps scheme and its continuing expansion. Right from its inception in 1987, the scheme covered 12 countries which included Fiji and Jamaica, two distinct non-African countries. The following batch in 1990 expanded to 15 countries with Dominica joining the list of non-African countries, The following batch in 1992, saw Belize joining the list of non-African countries. The following batch in 1994 saw St. Kitts and Nevis joining the list of the non-African countries. On the average, non-African countries have been responsible for about a quarter of the yearly beneficiaries.

Of course, General Yakubu Gowon was in fact the first Nigerian Head of State to go for a global reach of the mega syndrome when he offered to pay the salaries of civil servants in the West Indies.

As the original designer of the Technical Aid Corps, let me state categorically here that Europe was also part of the target areas conceived in the original plan. There are large black communities in European inner cities where the African history that is taught is a travesty of the real thing. In a slightly modified form, the Technical Aid Corps would have included a corps of African historians who would have been offered to educational authorities in the inner cities to teach African history — a reversal of the missionary flow of early years sent to evangelise Africa.

Underline the advocacy and promotion of the mega syndrome is the recognition that the facts of geography crudely put as Nigeria having the largest concentration of Blacks in the world owe it to itself, Africa and the rest of the Black world to make it. The success of Nigeria will have a spill over effect in the way the world perceives the Black race. This train of thought is clearly evident in the vision attributed to Nzeogwu, in my choice of the term Black bomb, in my design of the Technical Aid Corps scheme to cover any area where there is a black population, in Gowon's offer for Nigeria to pay salaries in the West Indies, and in the subconsciousness of *FESTACPHILE*. If one reads between the lines; of Mazrui's advocacy of the mega syndrome, one sees for reasons that need not delay us, the contortions that Mazrui goes through to downplay the element of race in the international system. The Nigerian bomb in *NIGERSAKI* is to balance equation between the industrialised north and the Third World. if not for the element of race, why couldn't the Indian bomb play the same role?

A major plank in the advocacy of the mega syndrome which gets lost in the cacophony of the criticism that the syndrome attracts, and yet which is so obvious is that Nigeria must get its act together before it can play the role manifest destiny has assigned to it. Obasanjo wrote "in order for Nigeria to realise what seemed to him (Nzeogwu) a divine if not self-evident mission, he had to clear the Augean stable of a corrupt, decadent, reactionary and ethnically divisive government, which according to him had raised the art of unprincipled compromise to a dogma and principle of government, instead of a strategy for minimising conflict at home. This was why he thought the government had to go." Edem Kodjo, a normally urbane diplomat, could not have been more direct when he wrote "...I

am getting furious that Nigeria is not totally assuming the role which should be hers ever since... The country must first of all overcome her own problems to assume a sound management of her resources, effect national consensus to help the consolidation of the country by the Federal Government before turning to the external world... Nigeria is too much undermined by centrifugal force... selfish interests and religious upheavals. All these are set backs to this great country and to the whole Africa."

Edem Kodjo and Nzeogwu, quoted above, struck at the core of the *Blackman's Burden* argument. To most Nigerians, Nigeria through its aid programme is already carrying the Blackman's burden. But my position which is shared with those who have been associated with the mega syndrome is that in fact it is Nigeria that is letting down the Black race by not achieving its potential. The same controllers of the international order who as earlier shown had promoted the mega syndrome as an anti-Nkrumah tool are now only too happy to trumpet Nigeria's failure because it is not in their interest for that mega syndrome to energise the international Black community. If Nigeria, with all the resources that she is endowed with cannot make it then something is genetically wrong with the Black race. Without meaning to, even Chief Obafemi Awolowo lent credence to this perception when he was supposed to have said that if you removed all Germans and brought them to Nigeria, and if you transferred all Nigerians to Germany, within a short while, Nigeria would have been transformed into a Germany while Germany would have been transformed into a Nigeria. It is in this sense that Nigeria is the burden being carried by the Black race.

For the avoidance of doubt, let me emphasise that the mega syndrome has three components. The first is a progressive and

activist foreign policy. The second is a military establishment to back up this foreign policy activism and this must include a nuclear component. Third, Nigeria must have a total domestic overhaul to not only complement the other two components but to also be the engine of growth for them.

Most of the critics of the mega syndrome have focused on the absence of the third component to question either the desirability or the achievability of the other two components. Advocates of the mega syndrome, on the other hand have sought to adapt the management by objectives paradigm to public policy. They have argued that the reason that Nigeria fritters away so much resources is that she has no fixed objectives to guide the allocation of resources beyond mouthing the usual palliatives about development. If a consensus can be built around the components of the mega syndrome, then they become as fixed as the fixed elements of the consolidated vote.

I expect that one of the criticisms that the views expressed in this lecture will attract is the issue of timing. At a time when the country is beset by many problems on both the political and economic fronts, does it not amount to going to Afghanistan to devote intellectual resources discussing a mega syndrome. I believe that there are so many Nigerians blessed with intellect that we can safely spare some to raise visions about lofty goals which have been present from the birth of this nation and which have been unrealised.

One cannot end this lecture without directing one's mind to the expected question as to whether Nigeria can afford this mega role of fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the Black race. Since independence, Nigeria is supposed to have made \$300 billion from the oil sector alone. Of this, 30 per cent is supposed

to be unaccounted for. That means \$90 billion has gone astray. Nigeria is supposed to have spent about \$12 billion on the Liberian and Sierra Leone operations, not counting the cost of the present operation in Liberia. If we add to this, the cost of our operations in Chad in the 1970s, then we know we have spent over \$12 billion on military operations externally. Surprisingly, the cost to France of acquiring a credible nuclear force by 1970 was put at between \$9 and 12 billion. Given low labour costs, it had been speculated that the cost to India of developing and stockpiling 100 nuclear warheads was \$5.6 billion. Therefore, only ten per cent of the \$90 billion that has gone missing which translates to \$9 billion would be enough to achieve the nuclear component of the mega syndrome. Of course, Nigeria being Nigeria, I know we would rather spend the money even if it is available on building more mega stadia, more international airports and creating more states. But as Martin Luther King once said about the United States, I also believe that one day, this nation will rise up from its knees and come to terms with its hopes, aspirations and destiny.