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8 April 1966

AN AFRICAN ROLE FOR THE UNITED STATES MILITARY - NIGERIA AS A MODEL

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USAWC RESEARCH ELEMENT
(Thesis)

AN AFRICAN ROLE FOR THE UNITED STATES MILITARY
Nigeria as a Model

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
8 April 1966

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SUMMARY

The investigation of the recent political history in undeveloped areas indicates that the possibility of conflict among present leaders and the dissatisfied opposition can lead to instability which may cause United States involvement. The African military leader can be considered as having the potential to overthrow his government, oftentimes using the rationale of inefficiency and corruption of the politicians as the reason for the takeover.

The United States support for the African military will offer many benefits to the United States and the recipient state:

Add to the unity and stability of the state by strengthening the federal government's influence in the hinterlands.

Strive towards pro-West orientation of the military, especially those military in key positions, and to insure that if a military coup is attempted its outcome will be favorable to the United States.

Assist in public works programs with emphasis on the rural areas and in fields which do not compete with other development assistance agencies. These programs would raise the standard of living, and the education and training level of many Africans.

Increase competency of the military by selective strengthening to complement unification and public works programs.

Encourage an atmosphere of acceptability to requests for overflight privileges or base rights.

Develop another pro-United States voice in world opinion.

Nigeria was selected as a model because of its importance in Africa and because it has problems common to many other African states. This Nigerian model can be applied to other states after careful tailoring to the problems of that state.

Although congressmen, military experts, and cold war opponents may object to this military support proposal the timely application of United States aid to help in Africa's nation building efforts may go far to prevent greater instability and insurgency which may require United States military operations before resolution.

The profits of such a program would be vast in advantages to African stability, and the addition of another viable state in the world community which would be an asset to all.

FORWARD

Six military coups d'etats were successfully conducted in sub-Sahara Africa during the winter of 1965-66. After this thesis was written the Nigerian military took over the reins of the government in that state. Nigeria is now ruled by a group of young military officers who rationalize their drastic action because of the corruption of the political leaders. The press reports indicated that the military group is pro-West and is making some headway towards resolution of Nigeria's many problems portrayed in Chapter 5. This recent African military takeover further indicates that military coups are almost inevitable as the educationed officers react against venal civilian officialdom. Other states will be overthrown by their military; the military in turn may be overthrown as they fail to cope with the problems of disunity, unemployment, inflation, and general frustrations. Certainly it is to the advantage of the United States to attempt to influence these military leaders along lines suggested in this thesis. To do otherwise would leave a vacuum into which communism will certainly move.

* * * * *

From 1959 to 1963 I was the desk officer for Africa south of the Sahara in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, Department of Army. I became familiar with many of the day-by-day activities in Africa. This three and a half-year tour included several trips, totaling about three months, to Africa. During this Pentagon duty several thoughts on more effective military assistance to the Africans were developed. These thoughts were clarified, developed, and greatly modified by research conducted during the preparation of this thesis.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROSPECT AND THE PURPOSE

The violence and unrest which marked the emergence of many of the new African states appears to be well under control. The Congo's problems are at least not great bloodletting and Ghana has stopped menacing its neighbors. After an abortive mutiny the Tanzania Army is under strong executive control. Does this calm in Africa portend continued tranquility or is it but an interlude before more instability and strife? Will turmoil, leading to local wars, break out? Will these wars of whatever intensity involve the United States? Will our next "Vietnam" be in Black Africa?

Affirmative answers to these unhappy questions are certainly a possibility. The potential for conflict in Africa involving the United States is undoubtedly great. What can the United States do to lessen the adverse impact on its interests if African conflicts challenge these interests? This thesis studies these problems by:

Determining the possibility of internal conflict in terms of recent history of other new states.

Describing the lack of stability which generates conflict situations.

Discussing briefly why sub-Sahara Africa is of interest to the United States.

Ascertaining the role of the African military leaders as they affect United States interests.

Depicting a possible role for the United States military using Nigeria as a model.

Applying the Nigerian model to other African states.

Investigating the objections and alternatives.

This thesis will not discuss contingency plans involving United States forces, nor will it discuss the vital role of non-military United States agencies. The initial comment of the paper applies to those African states lying south of the Sahara and north of the Portuguese overseas provinces. Specific comments will focus on Nigeria in order to project a model for United States military activities. See map at end of thesis.

CHAPTER 2

THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT AND THE NEED FOR STABILITY

Since World War II many states have gained independence. The membership in the United Nations has more than doubled because of the admission of these new states. In most cases the states which gained independence after World War II weathered the immediate post independence era with relative calm. However, almost without exception, after five to ten years of independence they encountered problems with which the native leaders could not cope. The problems of managing nationalism and governing their new domain proved too great for many of the new leaders. In general they failed to offer stability or visible aspects of progress. The dissatisfaction of many, usually the younger opposition leaders or the military, resulted in either coup d'etats by the military or by civilians strongly backed by the military. Examples are Pakistan, Burma, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Togo. Ethiopia and several Latin American states offer parallel examples if not in the context of colonialism.

We can expect many new states to follow this pattern. Most of the post-1960 new nations are in Africa. Some have had changes of government since independence: Togo, as mentioned above, Dahomey, Upper Volta, Central African Republic, and the Congo (Leopoldville) are recent examples in which the military have seized power. Other African states have been through periods of turmoil, but the original

ruling elite have managed to survive: Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia and Ghana are examples. How much instability will be seen in Africa or in which state this instability will lead to war cannot be readily ascertained; nor can any specific projection of United States military involvement be estimated. However, it is apparent that several African states, after five years of indigenous rule (like many of the "older" nations), could well be the scenes of new unrest involving the United States. In considering the interests of the United States in new nations the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, General Harold K. Johnson states, "We recognize that threats to United States national interests, and turbulence such as we now face in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Africa will be the rule rather than the exception for years to come."¹

CAUSES OF INSTABILITY

At the risk of oversimplification the basic cause of the turbulence which leads to conflict and overthrow is lack of stability--stability which is so essential to a developing country, and without which chaos, disorder, military takeovers and communism will thrive. Without this stability little will be accomplished in improving the economic, social, or international position of the former colonies. They will revert to the chaos of the 1960-1961 Congo, or fail to develop into mature, responsible states. As long as this instability or disintegration exists the African states will be subject to

¹Harold K. Johnson, "The Army's Role in Nation Building and Preserving Stability," Army Information Digest, Vol. 20, Nov. 1965, p. 11.

corruption, misery, and violence.²

A large factor in the instability of the African environment is the gross inadequacy of the local administrators to cope with their multi-faceted problems. In some ex-colonies, particularly those which were under British tutelage, the Africans can manage the skeleton of the government. However this trained talent is mostly absorbed in the "dignified" work of managing the government's external affairs. Practically none of these trained administrators work in the fields of transportation, communications, or regulatory agencies. Outside of the elite government administrative circle a few talented young people enter into teaching, medicine, business, or other "respected" jobs. The real lack of trained personnel is evident in "blue collar" skills; bulldozer operators, apprentice engineers, communications experts, harbor masters, foremen and others.³

Sub-Saharan African economic problems, greatly handicapped by a shortage of skilled labor and poor administrators, are compounded by: one crop economies, lack of capital, inadequate transportation and communications systems.⁴ The paucity of producer to consumer roads is stifling to an economy which hopes to grow. Examples of this are seen in all states but especially Nigeria with its inadequate internal airline or telecommunication systems, or in the Ivory Coast which has one north-south railroad and only two or three adequate east-west

²Hilton P. Goss, The Political Future of Independent Nations of Africa, (Tempo Report), pp. 85-86.

³Ibid., pp. 53-54.

⁴Ibid., pp. 54-55.

highways, or in Ghana which, until late 1962, had no port facilities for external trade and the goods entered or left by litterage from ships anchored off shore.⁵

The needs and problems common to the states in sub-Saharan Africa can be further understood by simply listing other great problem areas: tribalism, lack of unity within the country, disintegration caused by inter alia corruption, overemphasis on industry, and continued low standard of living. Lack of trained administrators, a stumbling economy, and poor communications combined with the aforementioned create a desperate situation in emergent Africa.

INEVITABILITY OF CONFLICT

This discussion of the possibility of military coups and the causes of instability suggests that history may repeat itself. The present leaders may be unable to manage the complete evolution of their state and some of these new governments may be overthrown by opposition parties. This thesis of inevitable takeover by new leaders resulting from disintegration in the post independence era is admirably and fully discussed by Colonel John B. McKinney, Sig Corps, US Army, in "Black Africa's Dilemma: What Kind of Ism?" (US Army War College thesis, 1964-1965).

⁵Personnel observation.

As further indication of the good possibility of military coups by African leaders witness the winter 1965-1966 changes of government in Congo (Leopoldville), Central African Republic, Upper Volta, and Dahomey. In the Congo, Chief of Staff of the Army, General Mobutu relieved President Kasuvubu and announced that he, Mobutu will reign for five years. This is an excellent example of a military takeover initiated when the politicians bickering and impotency to rule effectively threaten the country with more chaos and instability.⁶

⁶ Lloyd Garrison, "African Armies Move in When Politicians Fail," New York Times, 2 Jan. 66, p. 4E and "Central African Regime ousted when New Chief Expels Chinese Reds," New York Times, 2 Jan. 66, p. 1.

CHAPTER 3

US INTERESTS

PRECEDENCE AND POLICY

The United States is at present involved in all sorts of assistance and development activities in sub-Sahara Africa. This involvement amounted to \$1.4 billion from 1945 through mid-1964. Of this amount less than \$20 million was for military aid.¹ The rationale for this expenditure is announced in the United States policy towards this part of the world as: support of self determination, assistance in economic development through aid and trade, discourage military buildup, and urge the ex-metropole* to offer maximum assistance. We are concerned with the discouragement of an arms buildup which was considered by the United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, G. Mennen Williams:

Generally, the military requirements of most African countries have been worked out with the former metropolises, and there has been little need for supplementary arms assistance from the United States. In some cases, however, there is a strong desire to rely on more than one source in this field, and, on request, we have provided limited military assistance.

We feel that the prospects for peaceful settlement of disputes are bettered by avoiding arms races. And, given the very limited economic

¹ US Congress, US Defense Policies, The Library of Congress, p. 81.

*Metropole refers to the former colonial power. Thus France is the former metropole of Senegal and Mali, and the British is the former metropole of Ghana and Nigeria.

resources of the newly independent countries, it is imperative for them to devote their resources to economic and social development rather than arms. While we attempt to stress internal security and civic action programs when called upon for legitimate military assistance, wherever possible we seek to build police programs to limit the need for military programs.²

It is clearly within United States policy to support the African military and the presence of our sub-Saharan military missions in Mali, Senegal, and Liberia reinforce this policy. Therefore the policy has been stated and precedents have been established.

ADVANTAGES TO THE UNITED STATES

If the United States military does assist what advantages accrue to this country? In short, "what is in it for us?"

Our military effort will be applied to influence the African military community, just as the Agency for International Development's effort is assisting the African economic community. Our military effort can focus on increasing internal security skills in order to enhance stability, reducing the insurgency peril, and assisting in development of certain aspects of the local economy through public works programs. By implementing the military aid program the United States military can subtly influence the African soldier. This influence can be projected by person-to-person contact and attendance of the African soldier, sailor, or airman at United States service schools. One apparent goal should be to inculcate a pro-Western

²G. Mennen Williams, "United States Policy in Africa," Department of State Bulletin No. 1346, 12 Apr. 65, pp. 539-548.

outlook in the African military community. This would help to insure that in the event of a "takeover" the military would be pro-West not Communist oriented. An additional benefit of military assistance is that in most states United States military presence will preclude the influence of Communist military advisers-- a worthy goal in itself. Effective United States military assistance, coupled with aggressive and efficient programs of other United States agencies, could contribute in creating favorable world public opinion. A pro-United States vote in the United Nations, an agreement to support United Nations sanctions, or the thwarting of Communist tactics, are all important victories in the cold war.

In time it is probable that the United States will need some base structure in sub-Sahara Africa. Bases for refueling, and staging rights, and locales for scientific activities are presumable needs.* An efficient military assistance program operating in an African state can act as leverage when the base rights requirement arises.

As a vital aspect of United States interests in the developing areas the Army has undertaken extensive programs to assist selected countries in making the transition to a modern society. General Harold K. Johnson has focused on this aspect of Army activities by stressing its importance. "Thus, activities to promote stability and progress in the modernization process of emerging nations have become the Army's third principle mission."³ (Emphasis is supplied.)

* At present the United States has modest space exploration facilities in Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa.

³Johnson, op. cit., p. 11.

It is apparent that by acting in a timely fashion, with modest US military assistance to selected African states we may be able to preclude massive US aid to an African country similar to the aid we are offering Vietnam.

An expanded United States military effort in sub-Sahara Africa is apparently justified in that it offers some insurance that in the event the African military does take over their government the takeover will be by Western oriented military, and the Communists will be precluded from greatly influencing internal security affairs. Selective military assistance could assist us in gaining allies in world public opinion, increasing our ability to obtain base rights if necessary, fulfilling the Army's third principle mission, and most important timely application may prevent another Vietnam for the United States.

It is evident that there is "something in it for us."

CHAPTER 4

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

"The purpose of military power is to provide time for moral ideas to root" Admiral Mahan

The African military, like their professional brethren throughout the world, are concerned with internal and external security problems. Our discussion, however, is limited to their roles in other fields: political, economic and social, which assist their nation's development. Environmental influences which affect their ability to assist their countries' development include: tribal (or area) source of officer recruitment, officer education, in-country or abroad commissioning, pay, promotion, and living conditions. The military as a whole are also influenced by its history of conduct in the colonial period and the pace of replacement of expatriate officers with local officers.¹

If these environmental influences add to the cohesiveness of their state the African military, like the military of many other underdeveloped areas, may represent the only organized, properly led and relatively highly trained organization in the country. If properly assisted they may offer the key to solving many of the problems of the new states.

¹Neville Brown and William Gutteridge, "The African Military Balance," The Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 4.

VARIOUS ROLES OF THE MILITARY

The African military forces in the area under consideration vary in size and proficiency, and most are incapable of effective military action by Western standards without substantial additional training or equipment.² However, there is a realization that their abilities may encompass some skills in the national building field. Coleman and Brice, authors of "The Military in Sub Sahara Africa," indicated an awareness of this trend towards using the military in nation building chores:

There are, of course, extremely important non-military functions which African armies perform in African societies . . . armies are powerful forces in the modernization process is certainly supported by the African experience. . . . The government of Ghana, Guinea and Mali have organized workers Brigades. . . .³

The African military are often the power behind the throne. In discussing this aspect of the military's role one authority states:

Their control of the means of force puts them in a position to influence and often determines the political trends of the emerging states, whereas civilian institutions may have little or no self sustaining capabilities. . . . The military is the key group in the political life of most underdeveloped countries.⁴

Another author reinforces this idea of power potential in the local military by stating:

²Ibid., p. 5.

³James S. Coleman and Belmont Brice, Jr., "The Role of the Military in Sub-Saharan Africa," pp. 396-397.

⁴Peter B. Riddleberger, ed., "Military Roles in Developing Countries, An Inventory of Past Research and Analysis," pp. 3 & 5.

The capacity of the military establishment in new nations to intervene in domestic politics derives from its distinctive military format, namely its control of the instruments of violence; its ethos of public service and national identification; and its skill structure, which combines managerial ability with a heroic posture.⁵

Important elements of any new nation are the outward signs of sovereignty--parades, bands, and honor guards. Only a military organization can provide these trappings, and usually in the form of a "Palace Guard" or personal body guard for the ruler. This guard may be an important power element in the country. Recognize the 1961 attempt to overthrow Haile Selassie in Ethiopia or the 1965 attempt in Indonesia. Both attempts were made by Palace Guards.

Additionally the military has an advantage in its organization, relatively high educational level of its officers, and ability to move about the country and gauge the public sentiment as well as show the flag thereby reinforcing national identity. Oftimes the military is the only link between capital and country.

The role of the African military in contributing to UN peace-keeping forces is important. The bulk of the United Nations forces in the Congo operation were from African states. These African forces along with those from the Middle East and Latin America may offer an answer to the problem of immediately available United Nations police forces. Because these African forces will be serving with other

⁵Morris Janowitz, The Military in the Political Development of New Nations, pp. 27-28.

national contingents, it is obviously advantageous that they look to the West for leadership and guidance.

The military can be an influence in social and economic affairs as well. For example in Pakistan the ex-general president has used the military to advantage in operating schools, transportation facilities, government posts, and in other civic action assignments. Burma and the United Arab Republic (Egypt) are other examples of states where the military are assisting in the civic development of their country.⁶ Most of the sub-Saharan African military must be better trained and equipped in the social sciences before they can undertake the functions of government administrator or teacher.

The African military, by the mere fact that it is organized, has some leadership talent, and is familiar with some of the equipment of the modern age, can be used in a nation building role. One important way to capitalize on these skills is to have the military assist in the economic development of their country. The military's talents, channeled in appropriate directions, could be well used in building roads, erecting power lines, producing maps, etc. Lucian Pye, an authority on the role of military in developing nations says, ". . . the military in the underdeveloped countries can make a major contribution to strengthening essentially administrative functions."⁷

WORDS OF CAUTION AND HOPE

Conversely, the military can also be a very disruptive influence. Witness the 1960 Congo disaster, brought about by the mutiny of internal

⁶Ibid., pp. 77-80.

⁷Lucian W. Pye, Armies in the Process of Political Development, p. 35.

security forces. Unfortunately, most African military forces have the capability to "takeover" their governments by coup. This fact of potential military coups must always be considered in United States planning. To assist a government through its military may be to support a military which will overthrow its government. This is a risk we must appreciate. Obviously our goal should be to support the military in such a way as to add stability to the country, and not to encourage a coup.

Despite its capacity for disruptive influence and lack of highly trained personnel, the African military is an organized leadership group and at present is anti-Communist for the most part.* Any United States effort to assist African countries should include the active support of the military. An effective program of United States military support should capitalize on one of the few in-being assets which each country has. To assist and advise only the economic or political segment of the African scene is to neglect a group which in many cases has the only competent leadership and know-how to undertake worthwhile development projects.

We can now examine specific areas in which the United States military can influence the African military. Our central problem is to determine how effectively United States military expertise can be applied in solving the dilemmas of

*It is heartening that the press reports of the recent military takeovers in the Congo, Central African Republic, Upper Volta and Dahomey were led by rightist military who, in the case of Dahomey and Central African Republic stated that they were demanding that the Chinese Communists leave the country immediately.

Maintaining a state's stability while

Insuring that the military, with their potential for government takeover, are Western oriented.

In order to define certain concepts Nigeria will be used as an example and model for the United States military program. This model could then be adapted to the needs of other countries. Nigeria was selected because of its importance as a leader in Africa, its size, potential, and dynamic leadership which indicates national interests coincidental with ours. Its problems are common to many of the other new states.

CHAPTER 5

UNITED STATES ROLE, NIGERIA AS A MODEL

Nigeria's 55 million people, and 373,000 square miles make it the largest and most important country in Africa south of the Sahara. It is divided into three major groupings based on tribal affinity or religion. The Ibo tribe in the east, the Yoruba tribe in the west, and the Moslems in the north. These major groupings usually vote as a bloc splitting the country along tribal or religious lines. There are many smaller tribes and about 250 different languages. English is the official and most widely used language, and the lingua franca for government and business intercourse. Nigeria has been consistently pro-West in outlook, and is a member of the British Commonwealth. It does have relations with the Communists. At present, however, neither communism nor subversive internal security problems plague the country. Nigeria's level of education compared to other African states is high. Educational facilities are increasing. Its predominantly agricultural and extractive economy (palm products, cocoa, peanuts, cotton, rubber, columbite, tin, coal, timber and a growing petroleum industry) is relatively strong and its light industry is expanding. Nigeria's domestic airline serves the 13 largest cities in the nation on an infrequent schedule. Although 51 airfields are available the services at airfields are primitive. The railroad system is not extensive;

however, it does serve the major cities in the country. The inland waterway system is extensive along the two main rivers, the Niger and the Benue. However, seasonal restrictions limit navigation to about four months a year. The telecommunications system is incapable of meeting present demands.¹ The Nigerian Armed Forces consists of about 8,000 men, a few unsophisticated aircraft, and ten coastal patrol craft. The Army is concentrated in brigade sized formations in Kaduna, and Lagos.²

INDICATIONS OF INSTABILITY

Despite relative prosperity, divisive tendencies and instability are apparent in Nigeria, as they are in many new African states. The following paragraphs investigate this instability in order to set the stage for a proposed United States military role in African nation building.

Anticipating potential unrest, United Kingdom, the former colonial power, made a substantial effort to develop the political and administrative abilities of potential leaders of Nigeria prior to independence in 1960. However, the British ruling structure was headquartered in Lagos, and extended into the hinterland through the traditional tribal chiefs. As the new nation developed the tribal leaders were largely supplanted by younger nationalists, and the

¹Wale Ademoyega, The Federation of Nigeria, pp. 158-193 and British Information Services, Nigeria: The Making of a Nation, pp. 40-55, and Special Warfare Handbook for Nigeria, Chapter 1.

²Neville Brown and William Gutteridge, "The African Military Balance," The Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 8.

government structure was altered to fully accommodate the three (later four) major regions rather than the tribes. As the government structure evolved many of the tribal chiefs became figureheads, and some were disposed. This transition of leadership from tribal chief to nationalist politician and from Lagos to the regional capitals is a major cause of instability. New power centers have developed, allegiances have been challenged, and general decentralization has loosened tribal control. The specific results are seen in the new power of the regional rulers, and the regional associated political parties.³ The cohesiveness of the country has been threatened several times. Recently the Eastern Region threatened to withdraw from the Federation. Prior to that a coalition between one of the coastal regions and the Northern Region threatened to form a state and withdraw from the Federation.⁴ Lack of understanding and jealousy between the regions results in political disunity. The foremost question in the minds of most Nigerians is: "Can Nigeria hold together over the long pull?"⁵ Regarding this problem of national unity the Nigerian Prime Minister, Abubaker Tafawa Balewa has said, "No problem is more urgent and none more difficult of solution."⁶

Of course, Nigeria, like all developing countries, needs a massive public works program to assist in developing its national productivity,

³Henry L. Bretton, Power and Stability in Nigeria, Chapter 6, p. 180, and H. O. Davis, Nigeria, Chapter 9.

⁴Charles M. Thomas, Pan Africanism, pp. 19-20.

⁵Lloyd A. Free, "The Attitudes, Hopes and Fears of Nigeria," p. 3.

⁶Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, in forward to book Nigeria, by Chief, H. O. Davis, p. xi.

its economic viability and to raise the standard of living. The Nigerians are acutely aware of these low standards of living, when compared to the riches of other states. One social research effort has recently made exhaustive surveys in many parts of Nigeria. The researchers questioned the needs and desires of many Nigerians of all social levels. The recurring answers reflected desire for an improved standard of living in the community, honest governments, street lights, tarred roads, and an adequate water supply. Individual needs were expressed by the desire to learn a trade, to have buildings (not mud huts) and steel ploughs.⁷ When viewed as a national conglomerate these localized shortcomings and the reasons for them are potential causes of national unrest. To substantially alleviate this unrest, public works programs are required in every facet of the economy, from financial planning to construction of local wells.

General widespread lack of simple mechanical skill, aggravated by the desire to emerge into an industrial society within a generation leads to unrest and insecurity as the natives move to urban areas. They are forced to learn new industrial trades and are beset with new social structures. For some the traditional tribal society is replaced with the society of urban slums. For others the voice of Nigerian politicians pleading for votes is disrupting tribal ties, and casting doubts on chieftain allegiance.⁸

⁷Free, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 38, 40-43.

⁸David B. Bolen, Nigerian Desk Officer, Dept of State.

Corruption and inefficiency are hallmarks of most new nations. Nigeria, and especially its Western District, takes pride that its government is less corrupt and less inefficient than in most new states. But corruption is widespread, particularly in the awarding of construction contracts, and obtaining of government permits. Corruption is "not too great a sin" in Nigeria. It has been practiced by tribal leaders and native entrepreneurs for centuries. As in many states, it is accepted and almost all indulge. The outcries against corruption come usually from the high minded, Western education leaders, or those in opposition.⁹ Inefficiency can be expected when the reins of management are thrust upon neophytes. Although Nigeria's road to sovereignty has been accepted as a model of transition from colony to independent country there still exists much to be done.

Expatriates, (British, Canadian, Greek, Lebanese, Swiss and others) who work in managerial positions in all sectors of the Government, and in some sectors of the private economy, influence the stability of the country. The Nigerian views these expatriates in two ways: Since they have desirable and responsible positions, can influence the government, and draw large salaries, they are envied and their positions are in demand. Vocal groups want the expatriates to leave and are continually pressing for full Nigerianization of all managerial skills. The other view is that the expatriates are honest and well trained administrators

⁹Bretton, op. cit., pp. 78-80, 169-172.

who add to the efficiency of the government.¹⁰ To bear this out the Federal Minister of Finance in Parliament when discussing certain facts related to his Ministry said "These are all facts that could be checked in my Ministry and the Accounting General's office where expatriates still are. They are not Nigerians that could be bribed by anybody."¹¹

We have pinpointed the major causes of instability as lack of government unity, low standard of living, need for training and education, the problems imposed by shifting allegiance from tribe to politician, corruption and inefficiency and the controversial role of the expatriate. These major causes are further aggravated by substantial unemployment in the urban areas. We see that the root cause of the instability is the traumatic experience the Nigerians are undergoing as their traditional society is destroyed. This destruction of society and drastic change in patterns of living, accompanied by unemployment, disrupts the native resulting in individual unrest. Inevitably this unrest will cause the disintegration of the tribes, displacement of individuals, and the complete dis-functionalization of the society.

Our goal is to attenuate the adverse effects of this disintegration so that Nigeria can survive with the least amount of instability. Our military efforts should stress education and training to the Nigerian military, the one element of the society which can presumably be offered as a model of stability.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 112, 146.

¹¹Davis, op. cit., p. 86.

THE NIGERIAN OFFICER

The officer corps is an effective elite in Nigeria. Many of the officers are foreign trained, which enhances their prestige. They enjoy a relatively high standard of living and are recognized as important instruments of the federal government. One insight into the Army's interest in unity is the remark of an Army captain when discussing Nigeria's election problems and resultant strike in the winter of 1964-1965, stated "The Congo must never happen here."¹²

The military establishment is concerned with the traditional security roles. Since a threat from an external force is not evident, the military is occasionally used to assist the police in internal security functions. Two recent examples are the dispatch of a battalion (one of six) to quell the election riots in early 1965, and the stationing of a battalion in the Northern Region to counter the unruly Tiv tribe.¹³ The bulk of the military is engaged in routine military training. The environmental influences (officer education, pay, promotion, living conditions, etc.) described in Chapter 4 within the Nigerian military are good for the military's effective use as an economic, political and social force. On the positive side the Army is almost 100% Nigerianized. Their pay,

¹²Lloyd Garrison, "Elite of Nigeria Deplore Disunity," New York Times, Jan. 4, 1965, p. 3.

¹³Sir James Robertson, former Governor General of Nigeria, "Nigeria in 1965," African Affairs, Oct. 65, p. 254. He reported "It's true that the army is now maintaining law and order in Tiv country, not the police; but I was told by several people. . . that the Tivs rather like the soldiers. Many of them are presumable, are pagans like themselves. They prefer them to police, who had been trying to pacify the area before the soldiers came."

living conditions, and promotion system are adequate. The Army, which traces its lineage to the old British West African Frontier Force, has good acceptability among the natives. To date the military have not shown themselves to be politically minded. On the negative side the bulk of the officers are from one tribe, the Ibos, and the recent training and equipment of the military has been supported by the British, Americans, Ethiopians, and West Germans.¹⁴ This mix of training and equipment detracts from the unity of doctrine and causes logistic problems.

PUBLIC WORKS AS A UNIFYING FORCE

To aid in creating a condition of stability through nation building, it is proposed that the United States military can and should assist in Nigeria's development. Prior to United States military involvement certain steps must be taken. Discussions with the Nigerians, surveys of need, detailed planning conferences, and finally government to government agreement must be accomplished. These vital steps, which are immensely important, are beyond the purview of this paper to develop. Assuming that the above have been accomplished, a detailed country military aid program should be developed by the Country Team. The following depicts some areas in which the United States military could be applied to assist nation building in Nigeria.

¹⁴ Bolen, interview, op. cit.

All authorities, including the Nigerian government agree that disunity is Nigeria's major problem. The military can play two vital roles in furthering Nigeria's unification. The first role is one of simply being in existence. This role of the military, representing the whole country, draws attention to the country's sovereignty. This is especially so when the military is mobile, able to parade, demonstrate, and extend the federal government's influence into the hinterlands. The second role is the time honored internal security role of federal forces. The Nigerian military should be prepared to reinforce the police or take immediate action on the behalf of the federal authorities to support the government.

A priority United States effort to assist in unification could focus on supporting a small military force with sufficient mobility to show the flag and to respond to any internal security threat. A vital element of this support could be in the form of assistance to a military operated feeder airline, servicing the regional capitals and the remaining tribal power centers. The purpose of this airline would be to support the deployment of the military in reacting to internal threats to or to show the flag on behalf of the federal government. This project could be jointly supported by the United States Army and the United States Air Force. It would include establishment of an airways communication system, a weather service, control facilities, construction of rough airstrips, access roads and other projects associated with the establishment of an airline. Its creation would

capitalize on the existing embryo airline and the available airfields. The aircraft would be light transport types, routinely hauling commercial cargo or passengers, but readily available for internal security missions or demonstrations. A parallel activity supported by the United States Navy or Coast Guard could be the development of a series of wharves and small harbors along the coast line and up the Niger and Benue Rivers.

Still another project to enhance unity could be a modest effort to increase the surface mobility of the Army. Trucks, perhaps buses, and a small armored car detachment would comprise the equipment typical of this type of support.

Recognizing that political disunity is the major problem of Nigeria, other types of United States military assistance to strengthen unity and increase stability are suggested below.

It is apparent that a wide ranging public works or civic action program could benefit Nigeria. The US effort could emphasize assistance in the construction of simple bridges, dispensaries, local irrigation projects, telephone lines and other public requirements. The military should be able to provide the leadership and foreman ability for such projects. Labor would be done by the local citizens hired for specific projects. These minor local public works projects could be the backbone of the United States effort and additionally would decrease unemployment and offer training and skill benefits to many Nigerians. Our own Civilian Conservation Corps program in the 1930's could be a prototype for this effort.

TRAINING ASSISTANCE

The support of the military training establishment could be a three part program:

First, priority effort should be given to developing in-country technical military schools to prepare the junior officer and non-commissioned officers to supervise modest public works programs and the airline and harbor development projects. The military school center now at Kaduna, Northern Region, could be enlarged with courses offered in elementary irrigation skills, basic road and bridge construction, communications techniques, and other selected needs of the Nigerian economy. This training program could also provide an allocation of United States service school spaces to Nigerian officers and soldiers. In order to complement the public works program, and to discourage an African arms race Nigerians should attend United States technical service schools, not combat arms schools.

Secondly, travelling teams of United States military experts could visit Nigeria to further advise and assist. Teams of United States technicians could be dispatched for specific purposes of public works development, i.e. military sanitation skills that could be carried into villages, construction of river wharves. These are examples of some of the skills the United States military could provide. A major effort would be assisting in the development of the feeder airline.

The specific purpose of these training programs would be to provide some "blue collar" skills to the military. The paucity of trained people in Nigeria is recognized. Military sponsored training programs could benefit the military as well as providing a reservoir of skills in those soldiers discharged and returned to their home areas.

The third element of the US training program could be to support an officer education and training project. This program would have as its goals the replacing of the few remaining expatriate officers, the spreading of the tribal affiliations of the Nigerian officer corps, and the extremely important aim of developing a pro-West outlook in the officers corps.

The expatriates are a paradox in the Nigerian military. They are a source of dissatisfaction because they hold key assignments thus excluding Nigerians from these assignments. Yet their very presence adds stability and efficiency to the military. Although Nigeria is rapidly relieving the expatriate officers, our effort could supplement (perhaps not accelerate) this trend by training and developing officers and key non-commissioned officers. This replacement effort should not solely be focused on expatriates, but also on the officers and other leaders who have had long associations with the British. One author points out

Army officers and noncoms, the police and parallel ranks in the administrative services will all develop increasing dissatisfaction with the ruling groups over inadequate, and what to them appear to be unjust, methods of elite recruitment, since the younger, and frequently more competent, individuals must wait until the creatures of colonialism and the parvenu politicians have either died or been removed by slow, gradual means beyond the control of the reformers.¹⁵

Another author refers to this as "generation cleavage" and indicates that the gap between the old guard and the new is a prime cause of instability. The old guard favor the status quo. The new want action and efficiency on their terms.

The suggested replacement and training program should stress a wider base of tribal representation in the military leadership. Seventy-five percent of the present Army officers are from the Ibo tribe of the Eastern Region. Several authorities have questioned whether the Army would take drastic actions against the Eastern District in view of the high percentage of Ibos in the leadership structure.¹⁶

If this modification of the officers corps is done dramatically and swiftly instability will result. If done over a longer period of time, with appropriate honors and benefits for long service to the departing, the allegiance to Federal Nigeria (rather than to old British ties, or to tribes) will be strengthened.

¹⁵Bretton, op. cit., p. 109.

¹⁶Gutteridge, op. cit., pp. 37, 46.

CORRUPTION AND CAPABILITY

To anticipate that the United States assistance will pressure the Nigerians into stamping out corruption and dishonesty through working with the military is far fetched. However, every United States military supported program could stress honesty and "duty, honor and country" should be the bywords of a strict code established and enforced in order to instill the highest standards in at least one sector of government. This code of honor should permeate the ranks. Discharged soldiers should leave the military with an understanding and a strong feeling for such a code.

Nigeria probably will not be satisfied with a military establishment which is employed exclusively in public works tasks.¹⁷ It should, and rightly so, have a capability to defend itself and to respond to calls for peacekeeping forces from the United Nations. The concept whereby a military force has the dual capability of being combat ready while simultaneously involved in public works projects is not easily accepted. A small, perhaps 1,500 man, composite Army-Air Force-Navy Brigade, stationed in Lagos with a sizeable self-sufficient component as an honor guard or Palace Guard, is needed. A portion of this brigade should be marked as available for use as a United Nations force. The advice, training, and material assistance to this brigade should receive great emphasis. The United States should use all appropriate techniques to cultivate the officers of this group

¹⁷Conversation with Nigerian Military in Nigeria, 1961; from notes.

to insure their pro-Western orientation, providing obvious insurance in the event of a Palace Guard led, or supported, coup.

The Nigerians should be encouraged to recruit for this composite unit (as well as the rest of the Army) on as wide a geographic and tribal basis as possible. Periodic rotation of the individual members of the organization should be encouraged, and unit (company or Air Force detachment) rotation should be considered. This could enhance the mobilization potential of the military as a whole and offer some protection from clique development in the Palace Guard. Such a rotation policy might preclude any counter-government outside force from capitalizing on the closeness of the Brigade to federal government power.

To recapitulate, the following depicts the major causes of instability resulting from the breakup of the traditional society and possible areas wherein the United States military can assist in attenuating these causes.

CAUSE OF INSTABILITY

Divisive tendencies of the regions, tribes and religious elements.
Breakdown of the old regime.
Lack of unity.

Low standard of living, and unemployment.

POSSIBLE US MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Support of small mobile military formations to "carry the flag," unity of the military by wide geographic recruitment and officer selection. Support of small Palace Guard, feeder airlines, and harbor development.

Public works projects extended to critical areas; hire of unemployed in projects to raise standard of living.

CAUSE OF INSTABILITY

POSSIBLE US MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Low education level and problem of adjusting to new semi-industrial environment.

Broadening military training especially in minor technical skills.

Corruption and inefficiency.

Use of military as model of honesty and efficiency.

Controversial role of the expatriates.

Replacement with Nigerian officers; infusion of new officers in military.

The proposals recommending United States support of the Nigerian military are ambitious, especially when viewed in the context of 55 million Nigerians and only 8000 men in the Nigerian military. Some expansion of the military may be required. This expansion should be modest and controlled, with emphasis on low cost (infantry) units rather than expensive sophisticated formations. The small size of the military may be a liability in view of the latent instability of the country. One Nigerian leader viewing this dilemma realistically issues a warning:

A large and efficiently equipped army constitutes an alternative ruling elite to the politicians and the army is as much interested in stable government as any political party. If the government is threatened with collapse through maladministration of the politicians, the army cannot be expected to endure the ensuing chaos passively. It is ready and eager to step in and fill the vacuum.¹⁸

Our arrangements with the Nigerians must be careful to strike a balance in size and efficiency so as to avoid the buildup of a large and expensive force.

¹⁸Davis, op. cit., p. 76.

The mobility of the military, especially in the Air Force and Navy, and the relatively few population centers which are potential sources of internal unrest, indicate that the smallness of the force may not be an insurmountable problem. Given adequate training, planning, well established priorities, and effective goals, the modest military should make an effective contribution in a social vis a vis traditional military role. It is apparent that the United States can support the stable progress and security of Nigeria by demonstrating that their Armed Forces can contribute to the welfare of the people and the stability of their lives by broadening the popular base of support for the Lagos government.

CHAPTER 6

APPLYING THE MODEL

One should recall that our central problem is to determine how best to bring United States military expertise to assist nation building in Africa, with a goal of insuring that the military elite in the governmental structure is pro-West. To this end a program focused on Nigeria was developed to support unity, education and public works in order to promote and maintain stability and limit the disintegrating effects of the changes in the Nigerian society.

APPLICATION TO OTHER STATES

It appears, that given proper planning and essential cooperation between the American and the Nigerian governments, the mutual execution of the proposed nation building effort has an opportunity to succeed. Success in Nigeria could lead to requests for similar United States assistance in other African states. Such requests for assistance must be subject to a critically selective response. That such responses may be in the affirmative has been indicated by the United States Congress in approved military assistance to developing countries with a specific reference to the use of the military in development projects:

To the extent feasible and consistent with the other purposes of this part, the use of military forces in less developed friendly countries in the construction of public works and other activities helpful to economic development shall be encouraged.¹

¹US Congress, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 505 (b), pp. 187-195.

If such assistance to other nations is in the United States interest, the experience gained in the Nigerian effort could be applicable to a parallel effort in, for example Senegal or Tanzania. The Nigerian program would give the United States a wealth of experience and talent in nation building administrators. To effectively use this experience and talent many of the US military employed in the Nigerian program could be transferred to the new state rather to other assignments under routine assignment procedures. The advantage of repetitive assignments to capitalize on the wealth of this experience and understanding could immeasurably further our efforts in the new country.*

Education and training of the security forces are the keys to the success of the United States program. The technical (vis a vis the combat) school system established in Nigeria could be expanded to support other states' military forces with many benefits. Benefit to the United States and recipient country in avoiding duplication of training facilities, and in the United States-Africa transportation costs, would make such a program palatable to cost effectiveness experts. The advantage to the military in sharing of mutual

*This proposal to modify military assignment procedures will not be further pursued. However, there is little likelihood that a successful assistance program can be built in one year by those on hardship (without family) tours. A recognition that this cold war effort requires long association with the project should be encouraged in developing personnel policies.

experiences in a multinational school would be one step towards reducing tensions and encouraging communication and understanding between states. Travelling United States teams could visit successive states thus avoiding the United States-African transportation costs and contributing to the cross pollenization of ideas.

The advantages of expanding the United States effort in African nation building are consistent with the announced policy of discouraging an arms race, and providing limited military assistance. Inasmuch as the United States aid would focus on solving domestic problems and offering public works assistance, substantial quantities of lethal weapons need not enter the African scene under United States auspices. The United States equipment would consist of trucks, bulldozers, road scrapers, cement plants, telecommunications equipment, instead of howitzers, tanks, or jet aircraft. If the United States supports selected African military forces the chances that a Communist effort to expand its foothold in the African military scene may be lessened.

FURTHER UNDERSTANDING

In order to further develop the concept of applying the Nigerian model to other states consider what the proposed Nigerian program is not. The Nigerian model did not stress a buildup of Nigeria's combat capability other than in a modest Palace Guard-potential United Nations

contingent. To urge development of a substantial military force would only lead to a dangerous arms race, and further whet the appetite of the African military for more sophisticated weapons. Our policy regarding non-support of offensive type weapons (combat aircraft, armored vehicles, long range artillery, etc.) should be clear and unswerving. To reinforce this "no heavy arms" policy a large proportion of United States personnel assigned to these duties should not be from the combat arms but rather medical personnel, communication experts, and engineer specialists.

The Nigerian program makes no proposals for United States officers assuming command of Nigerian formations. The Nigerian military need not replace one country's expatriate leadership with another.

One aspect of the Nigerian model which should be clearly understood is that of attendance of Nigerians at service schools in the United States. The potential dangers of exposing the Nigerian military to our sophisticated weaponry by sending them to combat arms school has been recognized. The other and greater danger in sending large groups of Nigerians to United States schools is recognized in the aggravation of seeing the affluence and stability in the United States, and attempting to rapidly force these aspects of well-being upon Nigeria. This potential aggravation could lead to further instability and at best a piecemeal approach to modernization. Additionally, many Nigerians attending southern military training centers could be

exposed to segregation problems when they leave the immediate area of the military post.

An understanding of the Nigerian model in both its positive and negative aspects should indicate the worth of the potential United States military effort in Africa. Any application of the Nigerian model to another country would be preceded by a detailed survey and analysis of that country's domestic and external problems. Certainly disunity is paramount in Nigeria. In Tanzania the prime problem may be the Chinese Communists' influence and the dangers of internal subversion. Whatever the problem it appears that the United States military can assist in nation building and increasing stability.

CHAPTER 7

OBJECTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

Any discussion of the role of the United States military in supporting stability or nation building in Africa would be incomplete without consideration of the objections and alternatives to the use of the military in assisting African countries.

OBJECTIONS

Objections would focus on the fact that the United States military involvement will tend to dissipate military resources, already heavily committed. However, a little military effort applied with efficiency and timeliness should do much to obviate a large military effort later. If we abdicate our responsibilities in these areas it is not improbable that we might create a vacuum into which the Communists will move, resulting in chaotic Vietnam or Dominican Republic situations requiring United States combat troop participation. Many will say the military ought to get out of the civic action work and stick to shooting and other traditional military training. This objection can be countered by the hard fact that non-military agencies just cannot hire employees or pay enough money to find competent individuals to advise foreign governments in low level skills. The Peace Corps does some of the work. The Agency for

International Development also advises, but a large scale effort outstrips the capacity of these agencies. Another counter to the argument that the military should stick to its traditional role is the recognition by the Army's Chief of Staff that nation building is a third principle mission of the United States Army.

Critics will say "let the former metropole do the job." This would be desirable if they would do the job--however, many will not.¹ Moreover, the African states desire to broaden their base of outside assistance, and to demonstrate sovereignty will go afield to ask for assistance. If the West fails they will most assuredly go to the Communists.

Probably the prime objection would be expressed by some Africans and many opponents of United States aid who would charge "neo-colonialism," or imperialism by insidious, often economic, aid. These objections would be voiced by the Communists, Nkrumah, and others who gain from reiterative damming of the West, especially the United States. These objections could be countered with an exact, publicized, explanation of the program by the recipient country, and a parallel announcement by the United States to the effect that our military aid is in line with the "third mission" of United States military forces, that of assistance in nation building. Our publicized announcement should stress the public works program,

¹Lucian W. Pye, Armies in the Process of Political Development, p. 35.

the absence of heavy arms as well as other benefits to be gained by the people of the recipient country.

An objection voiced by the recipient might stress that the United States is supporting a development force, not a military establishment. This is true; the United States effort would not markedly improve the African military effectiveness. The recipient country must recognize this and be urged to take a realistic view on the need for military formations in terms of actual threats.

Another criticism of the proposed military nation building program is that the United States is propping up the incumbent power of a government which may not be responsive to the needs of the people. The necessary surveys and consultations prior to an agreement to support nation building should recognize any unsavory regime and refuse military assistance.

ALTERNATIVES

One alternative to participation by the United States military is to let the other United States agencies train internal security forces and conduct public works programs. Here the risk is in offending the local military who would doubtless feel slighted if civilians attempted to advise them in military (or public works) arts. Underdeveloped Africa has enough problem areas for the Agency for International Development, the Peace Corps and the military to assist in solving. Certain agencies have expertise in their

functional fields that supplement as well as complement the others. Certainly the military can offer sophisticated advice that will not overlap the other agencies. One authority, in discussing the Peace Corps has written: ". . . (the) capabilities of young people directly out of school would generally be too limited to provide assistance in technical fields. For example in agriculture or industry, but they could render great service as teachers."²

Another alternative is to urge the United Nations to accept the role of adviser to the African military. To accept this proposal would mean that Communist members of the United Nations would have rights in the sensitive field of internal security. This proposal is obviously not in the best interest of the United States.

A final alternative, and one which in fact encourages our proposed effort, is that of "do nothing" and let events run their course. We have opted for this alternative to our sorrow and expense in many areas of the world. Inevitably the United States, because of its responsibility as a world leader will be drawn into most serious conflicts. Earlier discussion stressed the likelihood of military coup d'etats in the newly independent countries, and the coups in four African countries during the preparation of this paper reinforce this discussion. It appears that if the United States stands by and does not aggressively offer assistance to developing Africa in an intelligent way, which limits arms buildup and aids in development and stability, the Communists

²Beneviste & Moran, op. cit., p. 13.

will plunge into the vacuum making Africa another serious cold war battlefield. Benjamin Franklin expressed this concept of timeliness well when he philosophized on a stitch at the appropriate time. We should begin to sew up the many loose ends that exist. Our carefully considered timely steps can help to guide the social revolution now under way in Africa into a force compatible with our concept of a free world.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

In a search for the proper role of the United States military in sub-Saharan Africa the problems of African needs, United States interests and specific applications were developed.

The investigation of the possibility of conflict in the new African nations concluded that most of the new nations undergo violent governmental changes after the original post-independence rulers failed to manage the dynamics of government. This unrest reflects in local violence, often having roots in tribal conflicts or in the disfunctionalization of society as it moves into the urban areas. As often as not however, violence in Africa is the result of the old established nationalists losing office by their misconduct.

United States involvement in Africa has been established by the policy announced by Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen Williams and precedent of several military missions now in Africa. This policy acknowledges that it is in United States national interest to provide modest assistance to the developing states with the hope of preventing greater US military effort later. Our policy of discouraging an arms race and in assisting new African nations can be supported by the United States Army's nation building mission.

A brief study of the history of developing states indicates that oftentimes the military will lead government takeovers. We must influence these military leaders through a program of assistance and

improvement which will benefit their country. Because of its organization and familiarity with equipment the local military can assimilate this United States assistance which should be offered with imagination and energy by United States experts in nation building. The old military assistance formula of developing general purpose forces, or the recent overcompensation by support of almost exclusive civic action efforts must be avoided. It is apparent that the African states want a professional military and the government needs development assistance. The United States military can effectively provide both by clearly establishing priorities and objectives.

Objectives and alternatives were weighed and it was determined that timely application of United States military expertise will go far towards stabilizing and assisting new African nations.

It is apparent from these conclusions that the proper role of the United States military in sub-Sahara Africa is in nation building, the Army's third principle mission. This role should have the goal of assisting and guiding the indigenous armies in stabilizing the turbulent environment and in developing selected public works projects. Accomplishment of these and other goals will materially benefit the country. If this program is effective in unifying the people the threat of internal instability will be lessened. The military

implications are apparent in terms of preventive action now rather than a large application of combat military power in later years.

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Boundaries are not necessarily those recognized by the U. S. Government.