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African Dynamics in a Multipolar World

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THE MILITARY IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN NIGERIA: A QUESTION MARK

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Abstract

The military power may be one critical instrument that provides the sword for policy-makers and the military itself may be an instrument of conflict resolution and foreign policy of nations, but in domestic conflicts other than full scale wars, circumspection should be the rule of the game in the deployment of soldiers. The continuous deployment of troops to the streets and choke-points in Nigeria responds to the madman theory. The policy of applying maximum force to levels that have previously been regarded as disproportionate to the conflict and to the objectives of the parties is called the madman theory. The theory has its origin in the Vietnam war. The Nigerian history is replete with the use of maximum force to attempt to resolve conflicts; yet at the end of the day force never had the slightest capacity to terminate such conflicts. The use of soldiers in the Tiv crisis in the First Republic, the military intervention in politics in Nigeria, the deployment of Joint Task Forces (JTFs) to the Niger Delta region, Plateau state, South East zone, Northern Nigeria and road blocks across Nigeria are instances of the madman theory. The central argument in the paper is that in spite of their technical sophistication, the military resources are exceedingly crude in relation to many socio-political objections. Therefore, a big question mark hangs on the use of military resources that are only suitable to sweeping tasks like destruction, conquest and or control people to wage peace in Nigeria, especially under democracy.

Key Words: Military, peace, security, development, environment

The military power is one instrument that provides the sword for policy makers to wield. For good or ill, military power is an asset of a country. It sometimes determines whether a state will prevail or not in the pursuit of its foreign policy goals and diplomatic initiatives. It is also an instrument of conflict resolution. As a legitimate establishment structured to dispense violence, the military is the credible means to defend the national interests of a country. It defends a country against internal sabotage and external attacks. But because of its destructive capacities, awe-inspiring image and menacing behaviour, the military should be used as the last resort after other means of conflict resolution and crisis management are exhausted.

The Nigerian history is replete with cases of the use of the military to attempt to quell domestic rebellions. The first recorded use of the Nigerian military in domestic politics was in 1964 when it intervened in the Tiv riot. Ever since, Nigerian leaders have been making use of the military in political crises even when there is no evidence of success in such interventions. Northern Nigeria which is a boiling cauldron is the latest example of the deployment of troops as instrument of crisis management. Of course, the intention of the government is to secure peace and security in the country through the military approach. This approach is associated with Peace Support Operations (PSO) which requires the military to create the necessary conditions for many civilian and paramilitary organizations to do their work in order to create a stable, self-sustaining secure environment for longer term development.

This paper examines the appropriateness of the military means to peace and security in Nigeria and argues that the military is ill-suited for conflict resolution and crisis management in a domestic setting that requires socio-political solution and national consensus.

To enable us to understand properly the rationale for the use of the military in domestic conflicts and crises in Nigeria, there is need to attempt a penetrating analysis of peace, peace

thinking and security. These three concepts in many nations always trick policy-makers into engagement in militarism and militarization because they think; though erroneously so, that peace and security can be attained through the use of the military establishments.

Peace, Peace Thinking And Security

Mankind in its present state has had more knowledge about conflict than about peace, just as Psychology has yielded more insights into negative deviants (such as mental illness) than into positive deviants (such as creativity) (Galtung, 1999). Sadly, studies tend to be focused on wars as units of analysis rather than periods of peace and there is a tendency to define peace as “non-war”. But the non-war situation is not the essence or highpoint of peace. That is why Ibeanu (2007) questions conceptualizing peace as the converse of war. In his view, if peace is defined as the absence of war, then war should logically be defined as the absence of peace. He does not accept this logic and that is why he concludes that: “This way of conceptualizing peace though attractive is inadequate for understanding the nature of peace” (Ibeanu, 2007, p.3). To this is added the observations of James P. Klein, Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl (2008, p.67) who argue that a negative way to conceptualize peace is to see it as the opposite of war. Accordingly, they write that:

Most efforts in international relations scholarship focus on understanding war and conflict. To the extent that peace is considered, it is often treated as an afterthought or a control condition. Traditionally, peace is conceptualized as the opposite of war; that is, peace is defined as the absence of war or armed conflict. This is a “negative” way to define and conceptualize peace. This is inadequate, however, if the goal of research is to understand and explain peace. If we want to explain why some people are “wealthy”, it is not useful to define them as being “not poor”.

Almost all known scholars in Peace Studies (for example, Boulding, 1978; Galtung, 1985; Rappoport, 1992; Vasquez, 1993) point out that peace does not mean the absence of war but

rather signifies that there are institutional means of non-violent management of conflicts. Examples abound. For years, the United States of America (USA) and the European Union (EU) have been having extensive trade conflicts, but these do not lead to armed conflicts rather they are conducted diplomatically through the platform of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Secondly, arms control agreements are regarded as cooperative acts even though in most cases they take place between hostile states (Klein, Geortz & Diehl, 2008).

Notwithstanding the above analysis, peace is still a rather controversial concept and up till the twenty - first century, peace thinking is still speculative and value laden rather than analytical and empirical. However, just like conflict, some scholars have attempted to define peace and operationalize peace thinking in different ways. Francis (2007, p.17), for instance, argues that:

Peace is generally defined as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence and about peaceful co-existence. It is primarily concerned with creating and maintaining a just order in society and the resolution of conflict by non-violent means.

Francis' opinion is an adaptation of the definition of peace as given by Howard who sees peace as "concerned with the creation and maintenance of a just order in society" (Howard 1987, p.11). The University of Peace sees peace as a political condition that makes justice possible (see Best, 2007) and the Department of History and International Studies of the University of Uyo sees it as "any existing or created structure or mechanism to adjust, manage, and harmonize, in a satisfactory manner, contending and conflicting issues and interests" (Handbook on Postgraduate Programmes, 2008, p.6).

Johan Galtung (1999) has equally given several dimensions of peace which, taken together, have broadened our knowledge of peace thinking. On the one hand, Galtung makes references to negative and positive peace. Negative peace means that the peace in existence

includes only the absence of direct violence, war, fear and conflict at the individual, national, regional and international levels. Positive peace denotes a situation where the peace in existence, in addition to the components of negative peace, also includes the absence of unjust structures, unequal relationship, justice and inner peace at individual level. Bakut (2007) calls this *real* or *complete peace* because it includes both the absence of war (direct violence) and the absence of unjust structures (indirect violence). Galtung also makes references to *unqualified peace* where absence of violence is combined with a pattern of cooperation. This is mostly observed in relations between two nations where there is a four-fold classification of *war* (organized group violence), *negative peace* (no violence but no other form of interaction either and where the best characterization is peaceful co-existence), *positive peace* (existence of cooperation interspersed with occasional outbreaks of violence) and *unqualified peace* (absence of violence and state of cooperation).

In the final analysis, we can safely conclude that peace is the attainment of self-esteem and self-fulfillment in the light of one's worldview and considerations of international conventions. But "a critical conceptualization of peace and conflict studies is the inextricable link between peace and security" (Francis, 2007, p.22). Therefore, the concept of security has to be examined in order to highlight the highpoints of the relationship.

Peace And Security

Peace and security are always seen as two sides of the same coin; meaning that the more secured a system is the more peaceful it is and vice versa. Peace as a concept involves issues of freedom, security, justice and development which are equally the hallmarks of security. In order to appreciate the importance of peace to security, there is need to attempt a penetrating analysis

of the concept of security. This is so because the real problem might not be that of obtaining the means of security as that of coming to terms with the meaning of security (Akpan, 1989). Simply put, there is always a poor and vague understanding of security and this in turn has led to an equally poor and vague means of attaining it. This dilemma has constrained a scholar like Barry Buzan (1981) to argue that security is an underdeveloped concept yearning for rehabilitation. It is, however, interesting to note that while the concept has not yet been fully developed, it has been elevated to the status of an ideology and characteristically, ideology, like theology, is hardly questioned. Since it is not questioned the means of achieving it is misunderstood and, therefore, everything about its constituents is subjective and inclined to fluctuate in respect of the values emphasized. In fact, most of the concepts and terms used are at best no more than intelligent guesses and generalizations based on what seems to be the interests and actions of most states for the most time. Of course, they cannot be anything else because of the conditional nature of the large range of imponderables and unique variables involved in specific questions of security. The problem of analyzing security is even more complicated now than it was several years ago. Traditionally, military security was almost always the primary concern of both statesmen and scholars, but in the modern times, economic considerations and welfare values are of increasing importance.

Security, whether at the international, regional or national levels, has the same characteristics and suffers from the same problem – problem of definition. This is so because security is essentially an ambiguous term. Up till now there is no consensus of opinion among scholars on the precise definition of security. Therefore, debates on the issue is still on. Perhaps this state of affairs arises out of the fact that it was not until after the Second World War that the subject developed a systematic body of cumulative knowledge and scientific investigation. The

major concepts, theories and policy prescriptions come mainly from an analysis of the empirical universe as perceived chiefly by the USA and NATO allies (Smoke, 1975). Because of this R. Smoke comes to the conclusion that the concept of national security and its theoretical underpinnings are a Western and largely American phenomena.

In spite of this obvious conceptual problem, many analysts have attempted to define security in different ways. For instance, Johan Galtung (1982, p.82) defines it as “the probability that a system can be sustained – a human system, a social system or a world system”. On the other hand, Tom Imobighe (1983, p.1) maintains that:

Security has to do with freedom from danger, fear, anxiety or uncertainty. It is a condition of being protected from, or not being exposed to, danger. A secure state is therefore one that is reasonably free from, or not being exposed to, external aggression or internal sabotage.

According to Imobighe, security does not only affect the satisfaction of the needs of the inhabitants but also their very survival. Without security, a people cannot develop and direct their human and material resources towards greater production.

Having examined the particulars of peace, peace thinking and security, there the need to analyse critical patterns of security challenges in Nigeria upon which the military is mobilized from the barracks to the nooks and crannies of Nigeria.

Patterns Of Security Challenges In Nigeria

1. Poverty

Poverty is the foundation of insecurity dilemma in Nigeria and as Adam Smith, one of the architects of capitalism, once said: “No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which by far the greater part of the numbers are poor and miserable” (cited in Todaro & Smith, 2004, p.195). More than three quarters of Nigerians are poor and miserable. These are reflected in

short-life span, malnutrition, low literacy rate, unemployment and uncertain future. Millions suffer from conditions of absolute poverty and poverty trap.

Absolute poverty is a situation where a population or a section of a population is, at most, able to meet only its bare subsistence essentials of food, clothing, and shelter to maintain minimum levels of living. These type of people only live to occupy spaces and do not exist to be productive and move away from the state of poverty. Of course, they cannot move because the state has not arranged economic possibilities to accommodate them. As they are not accommodated, their conditions become worse and result in poverty trap. Poverty trap is a bad equilibrium for a family, community or nation, involving a vicious cycle in which poverty and underdevelopment breed more poverty and underdevelopment, often from one generation to another. A typical scenario is that the parents were plagued by absolute poverty and poverty trap and could not take care of the children, and they in turn, as though carrying out the *Will* of their parents remain in abject poverty. Sadly, they produce more children and by implication, one of their kind – more than the rich people. As these set of people will naturally want to live, they become willing tools in the hands of anarchist-oriented individuals. They cannot be blamed if they are used for the simple reason that they are trying to design their own security which unfortunately is diametrically opposed to the notion of national security as defined by the nation's securitizing actors. The bottom line of their actions is that he who is down needs fear no fall. Poverty-stricken people are down already and that explains why they dare security operatives in most cases. Besides, a nation that does not protect the poor who are numerous and anonymous cannot ever protect the rich who are few and visible. Without doubt, poverty is implicated in the many insurgencies that take place in Nigeria.

To reverse the trend which might soon build up and become irreversible, Nigeria should re-structure its current imperial administrative system and establish as quickly as it can a system of devolved government. To this extent, it should turn all Federal Constituencies into Federal Development Districts (FDDS), all Wards into State Development Districts (SDDs) and all frontier Local Government Areas into Special Federal Districts (SFDs).

All frontier Local Government Areas in Nigeria (see Appendix A) should be turned into SFDs and treated as security communities (for details, see Akpan, 2011, 2012 a, 2012 b). These communities should host all defence establishments and security agencies. In other words, the presence of all military and para-military forces should be felt in SFDs. The SFDs will provide for Nigeria the outer-most defence bulwark against smugglers, oil bunkerers, trans-national criminals, human traffickers and gun runners whose activities cost Nigeria over two trillion Naira yearly in addition to series of collateral damages.

In the final analysis, any counter-insurgency strategy in Nigeria, and, indeed, the so-called counter-terrorism, must be based on economic development to be effective once poverty is conquered, all else would be conquered. Economic development is the most strategic bulwark against insecurity as underlined by Robert McNamara (1986, p.22) and Maumoon Abdul Gayoon (see Imobighe 2010, p.479). According to McNamara:

Security is development and without development, there can be no security ... development means economic, social and political progress. It means a reasonable standard of living and reasonableness in this context requires continual re-definition; what is reasonable in an earlier stage of development will become unreasonable at a later stage.

For Gayoon, the President of Maldives:

Economic development... is the frontline of battle... Remove the debilitating effects on poverty and the first – the most important – battle will be won, and quite possibly the war. It will never be enough, or indeed good enough, for the small states ... to be just well defended bastion of poverty.

For Nigeria, war on poverty means war on insecurity as war on insecurity would ultimately translate into peace and security. All in all, the weapons for these wars can only be manufactured from the resources of economic development. Yet, at the moment Nigeria is neck-deep in modernization as against economic growth which is the foundation of economic development itself. For Nigeria to institutionalize security and peace, it has to retool its political economy.

2. Nature of Frontier

Nigeria is bordered on the north by Niger, on the east by Chad and Cameroon, on the south by the Gulf of Guinea and on the west by Benin. Of the four countries that border Nigeria, only Benin has a semblance of political stability and absence of insurgent elements. The other three are conflict-prone zones with Chad having the highest index of risk occasioned by activities of rebels whose strategic areas of manoeuvre is the Greater Horn. According to L. J. M. Seymour (2010), the Greater Horn, at its broadest comprises; the states of Sudan (North and South), Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the Central African Republic, Chad, Libya, Egypt, Somalia, Puntland, the de facto state of Somaliland, and the multiple insurgent movements that operate within and across the territories claimed by these actors.

It should be noted that in this region, governments routinely destabilize rivals as a way of gaining leverage and combating their own insurgencies. Indeed, most insurgents find willing support from governments in the region, locking the states of the Greater Horn in a vicious cycle of destabilization and proxy warfare. Any country having common frontier with any state of the Greater Horn ought to strengthen its security because insurgents and fleeing rebels from the region which is awash with SALWs constitute threats to these neighbours. Nigerians should, therefore, not be surprised that Borno state is an epicentre of the activities of Boko Haram. Borno

state shares border with Chad, an actor in the Greater Horn's geo-politics of instability. The Greater Horn is full of insurgent and terrorist groups and Chadians are about the most militarized people in Central Africa. Geo-strategically speaking, Borno state is a part of the Greater Horn of Africa.

Without doubt, the issue of porous border is partly a problem facing Nigeria in its north eastern flank and these are clearly cases of weak state capacity and contagion of conflict from the Greater Horn. Writing on how such problems challenge weak states, Richard Jackson (2007, p.152) argues:

Due to their internal fragility, weak states also face a variety of external threats. Lacking the infrastructural or coercive capacity to resist outside interference, weak states are vulnerable to penetration and intervention by other states or groups ... A related external threat comes from the spill over or contagion of conflict and disorder from neighbouring regions. Lacking the necessary infrastructural capacity to effectively control their borders, weak states can often do little to prevent the massive influx of refugees, fleeing rebels, arms smuggling or actual fighting. Major external shocks like this can seriously threaten the stability of the weak state.

What compounds the problem of the nature of Nigeria's frontier is that international boundaries created two peoples in the frontiers; one group in Nigeria and the other ones in Benin, Cameroun, Chad and Niger. In Benin, the Fon make up 40 percent of the population and the next largest group is the Yoruba which are historically related with the Fon. Inside Cameroun, majority of the groups in Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Benue, Adamawa, and Borno states relate directly and many trace their ancestries to Cameroun. They cross the international borders as if they move from one state to another in Nigeria. The linguistic groups in Chad include millions of the Chado-Hamitic group, which is related to the Hausa spoken in Nigeria and there are many Kanuri and Fulani in Chad, just as they are in Nigeria. Concerning Niger

Republic, the largest linguistic group is formed by the Hausa, whose language is also spoken in Nigeria.

Additionally, there is no state in West Africa and parts of Central Africa (Cameroon and CAR) that does not have a sizeable number of the Fulani who are also present in large numbers in Nigeria. These people move freely from one country to another. Movements by groups in Africa should be encouraged but the people and their activities should be constantly monitored for security checks, evaluation and policy-making.

Nigeria has an extensive coastline in the Gulf of Guinea covering several kilometres. This poses a formidable security challenge to the country. The entire Gulf of Guinea has about 5500 kilometre-long coastline fed by the Congo, Ogoone and Niger Rivers, other numerous waterways and Creeks and the Bights of Benin and Biafra. Together, these resources provide havens for criminals, especially those of the trans-national organized crime category. Criminal activities in the Gulf of Guinea are worth more than \$100 billion a year. Such crimes include oil bunkering, narcotics smuggling, smuggling of precious metals and other natural resources, arms trafficking, human trafficking, sea piracy and illegal fishing. Already the Gulf's coastline is the second most violent coastline in the world after Somalia's coastline (Bakut, 2010).

Nigeria as a visible state in the Gulf of Guinea cannot be immune to the security torments that the Gulf of Guinea presents and what is more is that most of the states in the region are facing some degrees of insurgencies and challenges to their authorities.

Essentially, Nigeria faces serious security threats from its land and sea borders. The country has extensive international border of about 4900 kilometres made up of 773 kilometres with the Republic of Benin in the West, 1497 kilometres with the Republic of Niger in the North, 87 kilometres with the Republic of Chad in the North-West and 1690 kilometres with the

Republic of Cameroun in the East and 853 kilometres of Coastline. On this score, Nigeria can only upgrade its security profile by re-thinking the concept of security away from the old stereotypes. This calls for the creation of at least four technified security outfits; the National Guard (NG), the Border Guards (BG), the Air Marshal and the Coast Guards (CG) to work in league with the Army, the Navy, the Air force, the Immigration and the Customs Services.

These agencies should be well equipped with modern security instruments which incidentally abound in quantity and quality in technology supermarkets. Take the case of South Africa as example. The Republic has radar Surveillance installation which can monitor shipping throughout the Southern Oceans (Bowman, 1985; Akpan, 2000). Indeed, South Africa has the capacity to chart ship movement “in an operational arc ranging from the Antarctic to North America and from South America to Bangladesh” (Bowman, 1985, p.128). Nigeria should dominate the Gulf of Guinea with such technology and installations.

Domestically still, Nigeria should create SFDs as a matter of urgency. Internationally, progress can only be assured if the states of West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea unite behind stronger, more effective multilateral organizations.

3. Availability of Small Arms and Light Weapons

In UN parlance, small arms refers to pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine-guns; while light weapons (a separate category) refers to heavy machine-guns, grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, portable missile launchers, mortars of less than 100mm; and “ammunition and explosives” including cartridges for small arms, shells and missiles for light weapons, hand grenades, landmines, and explosives

(see the UN General Assembly Report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms: 11 – 12). These are all weapons of terror.

The world has in excess of 1 trillion SALWs and Africa has in excess of 100 million of these weapons (Akpan, 2007). According to the UN, only 3 percent of these arms are used by governments, military or paramilitary forces (Naim, 2003); the rest are in illegal hands especially in conflict-prone areas. Outside outright sales and military programmes, SALWs are spread through covert and “gray market” channels especially in Africa (Akpan, 2007). Their low cost nature, portability, ease of maintenance and operations make them perfect instruments for use by insurgents, criminal bands, separatist groups and other sub-and non-state actors (Jayantha, 2005). In fact, the increasing sophistication and lethality of some of these weapons have given these social actors a firepower that often exceed that of any nation’s security operatives.

With such weapons capable of firing up to 300 rounds a minute, one individual can threaten a society in no small measures. Besides, the simple nature of SALWs can be demonstrated with the use of AK 47. The assault rifle has about 30 moving parts and is so simple that it can be used and maintained by teenagers. Most of these weapons require few hours of training for users to be highly skilled in using them. That is why they are perfect partners of insurgents, criminal gangs, warlords and militia.

4. Weak Intelligence

Intelligence is a part of the “nerves of government” (Deutch, 1963). It is equally a part of the power of information rooted in the belief that to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Intelligence is the key to national security of nations but the problem as observed by James Der Derian is that

like security itself, it is the “least understood and most *under-theorized* area of international relations” (1992, p.15).

There are many ways that intelligence is conceptualized and a few merits documentation. Thomas F. Troy defines intelligence simply as “knowledge of the enemy” (Troy, 1992, p.433).

The Economist of London which is a respected periodical defines it as:

The painstaking collection and analysis of fact, the exercise of judgement, and clear and quick presentation. It is not simply what serious journalists would do if they had time; it is something more rigorous, continuous, and above all operational ... that is to say related to something that somebody wants to do or may be forced to do (see Johnson & Writz, 2008, p.2).

Kent Sherman, an early theorist and practitioner of intelligence, defines it as knowledge, as organization and as an activity (Johnson & Writz, 2008). From this definition is a description of how intelligence services collect and analyze information, the finished intelligence product that agencies provide to policy-makers and the way intelligence services are organized (Kent, 1949). Providing a succinct description of the three facets of intelligence, Mark Lowenthal (2006, p.9), another intelligence theorist and practitioner, writes:

Intelligence as process: *Intelligence can be thought of as the means by which certain types of information are required and requested, collected, analyzed, and disseminated, and as the way in which certain types of covert action are conceived and conducted.*

Intelligence as product: *Intelligence can be thought of as the product of these processes, that is, as the analyses and intelligence operations themselves.*

Intelligence as organization: *Intelligence can be thought of as the units that carry out its various functions.*

Stan A. Taylor (2007, p.250) argues that intelligence:

refers to the collection, analysis, production and utilization of information about potentially hostile states. It differs from other sources of information in that it is often, but not always, collected clandestinely and that states attempt to keep other states from obtaining it. It may include special activities meant to influence the foreign or domestic policy choices of other states without revealing the source of

influence. Intelligence also refers to the government entities that collect and analyze information as well as to the process by which this function is performed.

A British academic, Ken Robertson has forcefully argued that:

A satisfactory definition of intelligence ought to make reference to the following: threats, states, secrecy, collection, analysis, and purpose. The most important of these is threat, since without threats there would be no need for intelligence services ... A threat is not simply an unknown factor which may affect one's interests but is something capable of causing serious harm or injury ... (Intelligence's) unique element is secrecy – the secret collection of someone else's secret (Robertson, 1987, p.46).

Secrecy is holiness in the world of intelligence. That is why Michael Herman emphasizes that: “Intelligence uses all types of information but is geared essentially to penetrating those areas in which concealment and deception are endemic” (Herman, 1989, p.28). On this score, Shulsky underlines that: “Fundamentally, intelligence seeks access to information some other party is trying to deny” (see Herman, 2008, p.118). In this business:

The task of the intelligence officer is to tell the policy-maker what has happened throughout the world in the recent past, what is happening currently (and why), and what the future is likely to hold (see Barnds, 1975, p.13).

That is why the American CIA defines intelligence dryly as “knowledge and foreknowledge of the world around us – the prelude to Presidential decision and action” (CIA, 1983, p.17).

Nigeria, like most states, has both foreign and domestic intelligence; the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the Department of State Security (DSS) otherwise called the State Security Service (SSS) respectively. Since intelligence organizations and operations are shrouded in secrecy, one may not know the extent of their man-power and resources to rate their operational performance; but since results are almost seen in form of security outcomes, then a huge question mark hangs on the efficiency of the country's IC. A country with an efficient IC would certainly not experience the scale of security dilemma or most appropriately the spiral of insecurity that Nigeria faces.

5. Weak State Syndrome

Nigeria is a fragile state and to that extent should watch out against the problems associated with the weak state insecurity dilemma. The nature of insecurity dilemma confronting weak states is largely a function of the structural conditions of their existence. They lack the most fundamental of state attributes which concern the existence of effective institutions, a monopoly on the instruments of violence and consensus on the idea of the state (Jackson, 2007). Because they have incomplete or quasi-state, they face numerous challenges to their authority from powerful domestic actors.

Different measures, though controversial, are actually adopted to assess state strength in order to discover the ones that fall under the category of weak states. Distinguishing between two forms of state power - despotic power and infrastructural power – C. Thomas (1989) links state strength and weakness with institutional capacity. Despotic power concerns the state's coercive abilities and the exercise of force to impose its rule on the people. On the other hand, infrastructural power refers to the effectiveness and legitimacy of the state's institutions and its ability to rule through consensus. In the light of the above, strong states have little need to exercise coercive power because their infrastructural power does not make room for that. Conversely, "the more a weak state exercises coercive power, the more it reinforces its weakness and corresponding lack of infrastructural power" (Jackson, 2007, p.149). For Barry Buzan (1983, p.67), weak states "either do not have, or have failed to create, a domestic political and social consensus of sufficient strength to eliminate large scale use of force as a major and continuing element in the domestic political life of the nation". As a counterpoint to the formulations of Thomas and Buzan, J. Migdal (1998) defines state strength in terms of state capacity or the

ability of state leaders to use the agencies of the state to get people in the state to do what they want them to do.

Buhaug (2010) has used the concept of institutional consistency to classify the strength of states. In his analysis, domestic order is achieved through a mix of allegiance and coercion and according to him; allegiance can materialize through different channels. For one, well-functioning democracies offer dividends of democracy which in turn produce high levels of trust in the system. Together, these effectively ensure compliance by the citizens. In regimes with narrow base of political support, coercion comes in as important supplementary means of control. “This way, the autocrat ensures that the cost of challenging the regime is sufficiently high to outweigh anticipated gains of capturing state power” (Buhaug, 2010, p.114). Consequently, strongly authoritarian regimes appear to be stable and strong. The democratic and authoritarian channels ensure for states strength and create ideal type situations of state capacity.

On the other hand, institutional inconsistent regimes – sometimes referred as to mixed regimes, anocracies, semi-democracies, or semi-autocracies – are fundamentally founded on a relatively narrow concentration of power while at the same time imposing restrictions on the executive and allowing organized opposition. In other words:

... institutionally inconsistent regimes lack both the broad political legitimacy of established democracies and the dictatorships’ ability to crush groups that threaten to challenge the state. To the extent that political stability affects state capacity, then, ideal type regimes should be better able to avoid armed challenges within the state boundaries and particularly so in core areas (Buhaug, 2010, p.114).

On the relationship between anocracies and intra-state conflicts, Hendrix (2010, p.276) argues that:

Mixed regimes, or ‘anocracies’, which are neither fully democratic nor extremely repressive, are most likely to experience internal conflicts. The argument revolves around the ability of the state to repress or accommodate dissident political viewpoints. Highly authoritarian states experience fewer civil conflicts because potential rebels are less likely to mobilize when they perceive the repressive capacity of the state – and thus cost

of organization – to be high, as is assumed to be the case with highly consolidated, coherent autocracies. While the costs of organization are lower in consolidated democracies, these political systems have institutionalized channels through which dissident groups can be accommodated... In the middle of the range, where regimes are not repressive enough to prevent mobilization but also not accommodative enough to channel this organization through institutional mechanisms, conflict is most likely.

This is the same argument of scholars like Harvard Hegre, Tanja Ellingsen, Scott Gates, and Nils Petter Gleditsch (2001). Nigeria is a typical example of the mixed regime thesis and that explains its lack of capacity to terminate its many internal conflicts and crises.

Nigeria may not be a failed or collapsed state but certainly it is a weak state. It shares all the attributes of a weak state as outlined above. For instance, today a lot of groups are compelled by poverty, marginalization, unemployment, neglect, political gerrymandering and general de-empowerment to structure their own security and in the process create insecurity in the national system. These groups of social actors include kidnappers, armed robbers, political thugs and lords of the underworld. There is no geo-political zone that is spared the seeming holocaust.

On account of its weak status, Nigeria lacks the capacity to repel these actors who effectively challenge its authority. It cannot be anything else. The root of the problem partly lies in its style of governance for as Samuel Huntington (1968, p.1) notes: “the most important political distinction among countries concerns not their form of government but their degree of government”. Weak states “invite collective dissent and revolution” (Lichbach, 1995, p.68) while strong states, according to David Sobek (2010, p.269) “decrease the rebel’s expectation of victory ... any rational rebel would avoid conflicts with strong states, all else being equal, as compared to weak states”. These points are graphically captured thus by Gurr (1970, p.235): “If dissident coercive control is substantially less than the regime coercive control in both scope and degree, dissidents are not likely to be able to organize and sustain an internal war”.

Nigeria may operate democracy as most countries in the Western Hemisphere but for it to inch towards the status of a strong state, it has to re-invent itself and as a matter of urgency construct a platform of human security and development for the citizens. It should be realized that when the demands on the government overwhelm the capacity of government, then civil violence is the likely outcome (see Sobek, 2010). Besides, many studies show that a country would become less democratic as it becomes richer in, and highly depended on, oil (Robert, 1999; Aslaksen & Torvik, 2006 and Aslaksen, 2010). Nigeria should watch out as signs of imperial democracy greased by oil are on the increase. This situation is partly explained by the fact that with oil, “the state is the only game in town” (de Soysa & Fjelde, 2010, p.290). In the final analysis, it should be noted that the military does not have capacity to quell large-scale domestic violence. The perfect antidote to violence is economic development. Once a country experiences perennial economic problems it is at a risk of outbreak of violence. This position is supported by the World Bank Policy Research Report (2003, p.54) which states that:

... the key root cause of conflict is the failure of economic development. Countries with low, stagnant, and unequally distributed per capita incomes that have remained dependent on primary commodities for their exports face dangerously high risks of prolonged conflict. In the absence of economic development neither good political institutions, nor ethnic and religious homogeneity, nor high military spending provide significant defenses against large-scale violence. Once a country has stumbled into conflict powerful forces – the conflict trap – tend to lock it into a syndrome of further conflict.

Essentially, one enduring issue triggering the weak state dilemma in Nigeria has to do with oil (Akpan, 2003). Chaudhry, (1997); Karl, (1997); Herbst, (2000); Klare, (2001); Synder, (2002); Fearon & Laitin, (2003); Ross, (2004); Smith, (2004); de Soysa & Neumayer, (2007) and Lujala, Rod & Thieme, (2007) also argue that oil is generally regarded as the resource most directly associated with the weak state capacity and the “resource curse” phenomenon. Anybody with a

nodding acquaintance of Nigeria's political economy will readily admit that the country has weak capacity for resource extraction especially in the key area of taxation. Added to the woes of the country is the phenomenon of weak institutions.

6. Democratic Insecurity and Dilemma

Democracy is not the best form of government. Theocracy and monarchy are evidently better than democracy but because they are irrational systems where few individuals play God and constrict ingenuity and creativity, then democracy being a people-based system is always given the pride of place. Democracy is characterized by a lot of oppositional forces and when not played according to rules, it is not only deadly but also anarchical in nature; evidently worse than the worst authoritarianism. Because of features of opposition, its operation is always marked by conflicts and crisis. That is why a society that operates democracy must of necessity embrace key elements of conflict resolution and crisis management because conflict and crises are natural outcomes of political rivalries. These elements include dialogue, negotiation, conciliation, consensus and reconciliation. Besides, key institutions associated with democracy should also be strengthened. These include political parties, civil societies, the court, the press and the security services like the police.

A greater part of the spiral of insecurity in Nigeria is associated with the way the country operates its democracy. The scale of assassinations and ruins associated with nomination exercises and election proper in the country is simply appalling; it is more than the scale of destruction wrought by the activities of insurgents, anarchists and armed robbers put together. Therefore, to achieve peace through democracy, Nigeria should deepen and broaden its democratic space.

Having come to terms with the capacity of the military for destruction which, under normal circumstances, should be engaged in warfare experiences only, the questions are: In what ways have the Nigerian military succeeded in crisis management in Nigeria so far? And what are the impact of military intervention in domestic conflicts and crisis in Nigeria?

The Military Power And Crisis Management

There is no doubt that the military is an instrument of conflict resolution just as it is an instrument of foreign policy. Such influence has its root in military power. Thucydides (1959), Hegre, (2008) and Buhaug, (2010) argue that the most obvious dimension of state strength is military power and military strength is generally regarded as an important determinant of state capacity in international affairs. In his *Melian Dialogue*, Thucydides expressly articulated the position that “the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must” (see Buhaug, 2010, p.112).

The term military power usually refers to the capacity to kill, maim, coerce and destroy. Although occasionally this same power may be possessed by individuals within the state – as the feudal barons possessed it during the Middle Ages and as drug barons and political warlords possess today in weak states – nowadays military power is monopolized by states and used primarily by governments to protect their states from external aggression and internal subversion. According to John Garnett, military power is the legally sanctioned instrument of violence which governments use in their relations with each other, and, when necessary, in an internal security role (Garnett, 1981). But because of the destructive capacity of the military, it ought to be used as a last resort when other non-violent means are apparently exhausted. It should be noted that war is a means of allocating scarce values to resolve conflict and in this

view is a rational instrument of decisions and, in any case, war policies are decided by a logical computation of costs and benefits. But the claim to rationality is however controversial. Conflicts can be decided by arbitration, elections, courts and tribunals, administrative decisions, direct negotiation and compromise – even the flip of a coin (Jones, 1985). As Walter Jones has aptly asked: How is it rational to spill blood when non-violent means are available?

The Nigerian history is replete with the use of maximum force to attempt to resolve conflicts yet at the end of the day force never had the slightest capacity to terminate such conflicts. This madman theory should be checked especially in internal crises. The theory of applying maximum force, even to levels that have previously been regarded as disproportionate to the conflict and to the objectives of the parties, is called the madman theory. The theory has its origin in the Vietnam War.

The use of soldiers in the Tiv crisis in the First Republic, the intervention of the military in the politics of the First Republic through a coup de'tat, the sacking of the villages of Odi in the Niger Delta and Zaki Biam in Central Nigeria and the deployment of the Joint Task Force (JTF) to the Niger Delta and Northern Nigeria are instances of the madman theory. The usual excuse is that the military is often deployed for security purposes. But as Barry Buzan and Barry Jones (1981, p.159) ask: if security consists of retaining a relative advantage in relation to the other members of the system over a broad spectrum of activities, to what extent are the military means appropriate? They answer thus:

Military tools for all their technical sophistication are exceedingly crude in relation to many socio-political objections. They are well suitable to sweeping tasks like the destruction or disruption of existing structures, or the conquest and control of people, but they are much less useful for the fine-tuning of voluntaristic exchange relations where neither conquest nor destruction is required.

To be sure, technological miracles have given the average soldier in modern times mobility and fire-power infinitely greater than his predecessors. The global military establishment benefits from training and re-training programmes than the civilian establishments. Additionally, global expenditure on military Research and Development (R & D) is heavier – always in the region of one quarter of all R & D expenditures – the average military product being some twenty times as research intensive as the average civilian product (Khan, 1988). From its R & D, for instance, the military gave modern civilization the gift of internet service which was originally its secret means of communication. But regardless of these positive high points, the military operates with force and its arsenal the world over contains primitive instruments that cannot be relied upon to advance human cooperation and development. Moreover, as Alan James has observed, the use of force besides giving rise to immediate difficulties may not be beneficial in the longer term because “it cannot be relied upon to solve problems or set in train a process which will lead to their solution” (Twitchett, 1971, p.5). If anything, it contains within itself the seeds of its own expansion because either frustration or an initial success can present a powerful temptation to enlarge the level of one’s intervention or extend one’s objectives. There is also the tendency of force to leave a bitter legacy of bitterness or exhaustion which could provide a basis for a future threat to the newly established order of things.

History teaches us that before the contemporary modern period, there were three clear methods of conflict resolution: conquest, surrender or complete annihilation of the enemy. Then military means were highly relied upon to the extent that nations had Ministries and Ministers of War but today there is “increased doubt as to the moral propriety of force ... accompanied by growing awareness of the limitations upon its practical value” (Twitchett, 1971, p.5). There is, indeed, no war in modern times that the belligerents can claim to have won. Perhaps influenced

by thoughts of “seven million young men who were cut off in their prime, the thirteen million who were maimed and mutilated, and the misery and suffering of the mothers and fathers during the Second World War, Neville Chamberlin, emphasized that “in war there are no winners ... all are losers” (Middlemass, 1972, p.47). He also opined that “war wins nothing, cares nothing and ends nothing” (Middlemass, 1972, p.47). The cunning dimension is that conventional military methods cannot be relied upon as the final arbiter in political conflict. In their book, **War Without Weapons**, Boserup and Mack (1974, p.9) have shown how superiority of weapons may disappoint ultimately in war situations. According to the duo:

The Vietnamese experience showed the inadequacy and indecisive character of conventional military methods under certain circumstances, even when the supply of weapons and manpower was virtually limitless and the military superiority of one belligerent overwhelming.

On the military strength as the instrument of peace, Halvard Buhaug (2010, p.112) forcefully argues that “military superiority does not always secure peace and its victorious outcomes of war”. Providing a typical but intriguing exception which resulted in Pyrrhic victory, he writes:

One exception is found in the ancient Graeco-Persian war, made famous through Zack Snyder’s epic film 300. In the battle of Thermopylae (480 BCE), a tiny Spartan-led alliance of Greek city-states inflicted so much damage on the vastly superior Persian forces (the contemporaneous Greek historian Herodotus speaks of a 500-to-1 soldier preponderance) that even though Persian King, Xerxes I, eventually won the battle, the victory was so costly that he lost the war (Buhaug, 2010, p.112).

The import of the above analysis is that conventional security doctrines are weak when the enemy is shadowy, shapeless and determined and the objectives are nebulous. Beyond this, when resolve is higher than capability in any conflict situation, it is highly likely that a sophisticated and mammoth battalion may not be able to defeat even an amorphous violent group or rag-tag band of rebels. As a matter of fact, since the birth of the international system what is witnessed in modern warfare is the rising challenge of insurgency and terrorism which high technology and state of the art weaponry can hardly defeat. Granted that the sophisticated battalion wins, there

may still be a complex problem in an attempt to win peace, for a party may win battles but lose the war and may even win the war but lose the peace. Peace is the highest prize to achieve in any post-conflict environment because without it human progress cannot be made. In the Second Gulf War, America won series of battles and the war itself but has forever lost peace in Iraq. Before embarking on conflict resolution through the use of force, nations ought to first imagine the nature of post-conflict environment they seek to achieve. In asking the military to intervene in the Nigerian crisis, the country should be mindful of the intimate connection between force and diplomacy. In this direction, it should first profit from the counsel of the great Chinese strategist, Sun Tzu, who wrote about 500 BC that: "A government should not mobilize its army out of anger ... Act when it is beneficial; desist when it is not" (Rourke, 2008, p.326). Secondly, it should note that wars should be governed by political, not military, considerations. As Karl Von Clausewitz (1832, p.8), the father of war, argued:

War ... is an act of violence which aims at compelling our opponent to do our will ... the goals of military violence, as well as the amount of efforts to be made, will be determined by the political objective, the original motive for the war ... war is not a pastime; not a mere passion for venturing and winning; not the work of free enthusiasm; it is a serious business for a serious object. The war of a community, of entire nations and particularly civilized nations, is always called forth by a political motive in a political situation. It is, therefore, a political act, (and) ... naturally this original motive ... should continue to be the most important consideration in conducting it. Still, the political objective is not a despotic law-giver by that fact alone; it must accommodate itself to the nature of means ... changes in those means may involve a modification in the political objectives, though the latter always must be given first consideration. Policy is intertwined in the whole course of war, and must continually influence it as far as the nature of the forces let loose by war will permit ... a method which must always include objectives as a part of itself ... war is only a continuation of state policy by other means.

Thirdly, it should be told that war should be fought with clear political goals otherwise disaster looms. As Liddel Hart admonishes nations:

The object of war is to attain a better peace ... hence, it is essential to conduct war with the constant regard as to the kind of peace we desire, for if we concentrate exclusively on

victory, with no thought for the after-effect, we may be too exhausted to profit by peace, while it is almost certain that such peace will be a bad one, containing the germs of another war (Momah, 1995, p.7).

Fourthly, it should equally profit from the counsel of Colin Powell, former Chairman of Joint Service Chief of the US that: “Army fight people; police protect people” (Al Jazeera News, February 22, 2010).

From the foregoing, it is clear that the activities of the JTF in the Nigeria cannot bring about peace in the nation and cannot give Nigeria enduring peace. Already, from the military point of view the expected utility of the Nigerian conflict is zero. Expected utility is a calculation of the probability of successfully achieving military goals. Efforts should be made to demilitarized the region and de-escalate conflict there as well for *armed peace* in history has never guaranteed *absolute* or *complete peace*.

Having come to terms with the capacity of military for destruction which, under normal circumstances, should be engaged in warfare experiences only, the questions are: In what ways have the Nigerian military succeeded in crisis management in Nigeria so far? And what are the impact of the military intervention in domestic conflicts and crises in Nigeria?

The Impact Of Military Intervention On Domestic Conflicts And Crises In Nigeria

The intervention of the military in Nigerian domestic conflicts has had several impact on the Nigerian nation and her people. To start with, as a result of the use of the military in peace support operations in the country, a number of lives and property have been destroyed; fear and anxiety have been created and mutual distrust has been institutionalized. Additionally, the use of the military, especially in choke-points like Northern Nigeria, has inflamed the crisis the more as those who are targets of military operations are known to raise the bar of violence and conflicts.

In concrete terms, Nigeria has lost thousands of citizens and property worth millions of dollars to violence and crisis.

Intervention has resulted in the violation of human rights of many Nigerians, some of whom do not constitute the opposite numbers of the army; that is, they are not parties to many conflicts in the country. Instead, most of them are caught up in cross-fires once attacks and counter attacks are initiated.

Economically, Nigeria has diverted a major part of its resources from production activities to destruction. This resulted in double loss: the loss from what resources were previously contributing and the loss from the damage they now inflicted. The first loss is quantifiable as governments increase their military expenditure during violent crisis and this affects economic growth drastically. It has been argued that during peacetime, the average developing country spends around 2.8 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on the military and this increase to about 5 percent during civil strife (WBPRR, 2003). This implies that a decrease in other public expenditures such as those on infrastructure and health. The decrease in the quality and quantity of such public goods has consequences for incomes and social indicators. Indeed, the consequences for crowding out productive expenditures are phenomenal. M. Knight, N. Loayza and D. Villaneueva (1997) have quantified the costs of the growth of military spending during peacetime and their stimulations suggest that additional 2.2 percent of GDP spent on the military, sustained over the seven years that is the length of a typical conflict, would lead to a permanent loss of about 2 percent of GDP. It is worthy of note that the increase in government spending is only part of the diversion of resources into violence. The resources controlled by rebel groups are also diversion from productive efforts. Even at that, the real economic losses from civil strife arise not from the waste constituted by diverting resources from

production, but from the damage that the diverted resources do when they are employed for violence. The most significant cost comes from the direct destruction of infrastructure. As part of their overall strategy, insurgents are known to target physical infrastructure.

It is worthy of note that Nigeria has 36 states and today soldiers are deployed in 24 states in the country for peace support operations. This is an act of militarization and a confirmation that the country is unwittingly promoting militarism among the citizens. At the end of the day, fear is created. But what compounds the problem is that at road blocks mounted by soldiers, citizens are often killed when the soldiers are provoked through arguments with road users. In addition, they use their uniforms to intimate civilians and extort money in form of bribes from them.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the policy of using military resources for conflict resolution in Africa with Nigeria as a case study. It has been found out that, though a sophisticated establishment with up-to-date weapon system and or munitions, the military is very crude when mobilized for conflict resolution purposes in internal affairs of states. Nigeria has a policy of using the military for peace support operations but at the end of the day, the military would have compounded problems for Nigeria. Such problems are reflected in loss of lives, properties, creation of refugees, creation of fear and reversal of developmental efforts.

To reverse the trend, it is argued in the paper that economic development should be used as a distinct strategy for conflict resolution and crisis management. There is no doubt that economic development is the only antidote to violence in Nigeria and to that extent attention

should be given to it in order to create jobs and make the citizens partners in the development of the country.

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