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**GUNS, PENS AND WORDS:
THE MILITARY, THE
POLITICIANS AND THE
INTELLIGENTSIA IN THE
PROCESS OF POLITICAL
MOBILISATION**

T. O. Odetola



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GUNS, PENS AND WORDS: THE MILITARY, THE
POLITICIANS AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA IN
THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL MOBILISATION

by

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The choice of a title as this one was not fortuitous; it was deliberate. Earlier I selected a very innocuous sounding title: "Political Mobilisation and Development." My colleagues reminded me that this was an inaugural address and not a seminar paper and that my predecessors had selected such striking titles as, "All flesh is grass", "History and Society". So in this Great Ife tradition, I settled for "Guns, Pens and Words". . . . guns representing the military; pen, the intellectuals; and words, the politicians. Politicians, of course, these days have more than words, they have money. I do hope then that a title, starting with 'guns' is sufficiently pointed and striking.

What is interesting is that I have changed the title round in my mind without altering a word of the contents. Juggling around with words is the prerogative of intellectuals who have nothing else to juggle around with. The search for the perfect fit between ideas and the precise, comprehending expression for it is a most exciting intellectual exercise. The search for perfection is the most exciting thing in the world. It is in the process of this search for perfection that intellectual work and knowledge appears unending, most rewarding and really infinite. Academic work does not end with becoming a professor. I have discovered on the contrary, that it starts with becoming one. My work for which I have been made a professor has touched only briefly on the role of elites in the process of political mobilisation. It has not even started talking of the masses. Yet within this sphere of the elite world, I have only dealt with the military, not to talk of the politicians, bureaucrats, the intelligentsia, the business elite and so on. Again, even within the treatment of the military, I have been concerned with the role of the military in development. Thus I have done only a minuscule

part in the analysis of the military's role in the development of the masses. Another group of 1000 below will be in part a continuation of what has already been mentioned.

portion of the work in this area. The more I research into political and military sociology, the less I am sure I know or understand. True scholarship is indeed a very humbling discipline. It is in the spirit of this humble scholarship that I present what I have been doing in the past, what I am currently doing and the paths I am charting for myself for the future. This is what I believe an inaugural address should be. I believe my works have taken me to the foundations of a theory of development with political mobilisation as its base.

Foundations of a Theory of Development and Political Mobilisation.

Why political mobilisation, what is it, how does it relate to development? What have the various elite groups in Nigeria, particularly the military, been doing? Where do I as a young scholar stand with respect to an intellectual understanding of these questions?

In the developing societies, the mobilisation of resources is a political, rather than a purely economic affair. All economic programmes are consequences of political decisions. I am sure economists won't like that, but it is true. This makes political sociology a most important subject in development studies.

In a culture of poverty, every process and every item of modernisation is perceived as an opportunity for group or individual mobility. Every step taken or even contemplated to build is most eagerly perceived as a bright hope for change, an expectation of deliverance from want and a belief in the future. Thus, politicians most adroitly exploit this by dumping water pipes, or drums of tar most visibly and conspicuously just before elections. The argument here is that in the Third World, there is a strong utopian element to development, Utopianism here refers to orientation

toward and belief in a bright hopeful future. The day shall come when all will be well even when all is not well. The utopian element in Third World development leaves the way open for any elite group from the most sacred to the most profane to rule the people. This important ingredient makes it easy for the political and military groups to move in an out and succeed each other, or even for the military to succeed the military. Waiting for the millenium to arrive or for the messiah who will save the nation to emerge from the horizon bears with it a most beautiful illusion. It is like star-gazing when, in the hope of seeing a new star, all present pain is forgotten.

When a new ruling class comes to power, this illusory perception of the future raises the peoples' expectation. But when the reality of governing and being governed dawns, the high expectation flattens out and soon begins to drop. From my researches, I have discovered that the ability of successive governments to sustain the initial spurt of development activities is quite limited. That is, performance initially goes up, tapers off into a plateau and falls as in a graph. This correspondence is very important in legitimising all successive regimes. The important point of theory here then is that utopianism in the Third World is basic to the legitimisation of regimes. The initial legitimisation of regimes has little to do with performance but with high expectation held of the rulers by the people and deriving from a culture of poverty.

In this manner, my work has therefore challenged the theories of legitimacy. In Nigeria as in the rest of the Third World, regimes are initially legitimised not by performance but by the peoples' hope of a bright future. As a trait of the character of the emerging political culture, therefore, legitimacy has, at the onset of a government, not a real but a euphoric foundation.

However, the incessant failure of the realisation of utopian

hopes has led the people to begin to believe not in the achievement of a collective utopia but in an individual one. The decline of the vision of a collective utopia is the beginning of the growth of a rabid, uncontrollable individualism. Individualism in a developing society manifests itself in several ways such as in the inordinate desire to make money or to acquire social status.

This growing individualism in a rapidly changing environment creates a need for self-identification. The speed and flux of change many times lump people together without distinction. For example, there are today about 100,000 undergraduates in contrast to the 431 in the whole of this country some 28 years ago when I was a first-year undergraduate. Then, every one of us was important. The situation today can therefore be likened to spectator behaviour in a football match in which the struggle to see the match is greatest when the match becomes most exciting. If those in the front seats get excited enough to stand up, those immediately behind must stand on their toes to be able to gain a better view and those immediately behind still must stand on a pedestal in a progressively rising challenge of status identification. The argument here is that the lumping together which occurs at a period of rising individualism creates a massive orientation to individual status identification. That is why we have such titles as crazy status identification as Professor-Chief, Engineer-Alhaji and so on in our society today.

Let me illustrate still further with two short stories. I had a first class ticket to travel to London in 1980. As I was easing myself slowly into a seat, someone grabbed me by the bottom of my trousers and shouted: 'Don't sit down'. I turned around; it happened to be the Director of Operations of the Nigerian Airways. He demanded to see my ticket and when he saw Dr. as prefix to my name he said 'I am sorry sir'. I demanded an explanation for his behaviour. He retorted,

"Sir, you did not dress like a first class passenger". I had on only a T-shirt over a pair of jeans. Everybody in the cabin, including a Vice-Chancellor laughed. I told him that happily in the universities, we do not have to dress to show what we are. Not only sane people have this problem of status consciousness. Even psychiatric cases do. A psychiatrist went on a ward round in a hospital. He asked the first patient who he was. The patient replied: "I am Jesus Christ". The doctor asked: "Who told you that you are Jesus Christ?" The patient replied: "God told me". The nearest patient suddenly and quickly retorted "I did not".

Emerging Theoretical Position

Our First point of theory can be stated as follows: African and Third World regimes are legitimised by the utopian hopes of the masses. The decline of a collective utopia gives rise to a search for individualism which in a rapidly mobilising environment generates high status consciousness, confusion and instability.

Next, the mobilisation of people for development requires the generation of a centre of loyalty, a new focus of legitimacy in which the people will believe. That is, development requires the creation of a public consensus about goals, common aspirations and hopes. The creation of a public consensus in Nigeria as elsewhere in the Third World has been problematic. The extremely heterogeneous ethnic base of the polity, the disparate orientation of the elite and the masses, the divergencies of religion, all combine with the ineptitude of the political class to lead and give proper direction.

From these theoretical positions therefore, the intervention of the military is not a fortuitous event. It has always come when democratic political institutions have failed. The collapse of the political parties, of the parliamentary institutions and of democratic communication channels

between 1962 and 1966 which manifested in murder, arson and almost total anarchy in many parts of Nigeria, led to the first coup ever.

The achievement of consensus is a primary precondition for development. Consensus here means agreement on goals, directions of movement, mechanisms of proceeding, etc. This consensus must be not only among sectors of the elite but also between the elites on the one hand, and the masses on the other. Consensus is not usually reached without competition. Competition is probably the primary step towards consensus.

The point is particularly important in the Third World where the definition of development goals and how to reach them have not been mapped out nor resources mobilization specified. Apart from the problems of ethnicity and religion, the relationship among the various elite groups is marked by competition. The politicians are constantly fighting with the bureaucrats; the intelligentsia always remains aloof; the business elite is constantly engaged in hostile relationship with the bureaucrats; the military intervenes as an arbitrator to settle these quarrels. The historical development of the elite groups have naturally placed them in antagonistic positions.

The bureaucrats are products of colonial training and hence they were the first group to emerge in the modern sense as the elite. From colonial days, the civil service was the sole agent of integrating conflicting demands and interests. It has since remained the pivot of successive democratic civil or military governments. It has remained the group which has come into the most crucial contact with all the other groups, and remains the bulwark of elite privileges.

The political class developed under a considerable atmosphere of agitation for freedom in the 1940s and 1950s. They had no training and skill in running the government machinery nor in technical decision-making and depended

almost exclusively on the bureaucracy. The bureaucrats had possessed vastly different orientations to development while the politicians who had had the task of mobilizing power and opinion were in a hurry to justify their existence. The bureaucrat perceives the politicians as crude, corrupt and perhaps immature and even irresponsible. Even in those executive bodies where the politicians perceive themselves as supreme such as in the legislative houses, it is again the civil servant who sets the standard of performance, the criteria of competence and the level of excellence expected of these politicians.

Next, the intelligentsia are depicted in the literature as the custodian of the national will, spirit, ideology and history. They represent the bridge between traditional and modern as well as constitute the group which expresses new norms that are functionally related to change. While the politicians represent the hope and aspiration of the common man, the intelligentsia represent skills and ideals which are in great demand. The intelligentsia and bureaucrats are closer in their education and background training. Members of both groups probably attended the same schools, meet in common clubs, and share common tastes.

The State as the Quintessence of the People's Will

The competition among the elite, coupled with the rise of individualism and ethnic and religious divisions, cannot but lead to chaotic situations. Such chaos can be contained only by the establishment of a new consensus. National consensus can be fully expressed only through the establishment of the legitimacy of a central focus of power — the state. The state represents not the government, nor the bureaucracy, nor the legislature, nor the judiciary. It represents the quintessence of the will of the people. Therefore from this analysis, what I see is that Third World societies are moving towards the establishment of state legitimacy and state power. I

humly submit that the creation of a strong state power is an imperative precondition for national mobilisation in the Third World societies. National consensus best finds expression in the establishment of a strong state power. Indeed, the fact that the national bourgeoisie is weak, coupled with the structure of class relations and ethnic pressures, make this movement towards the establishment of a state inevitable.

The weakness of the national bourgeoisie to build the nation ensures that it is the state and the state only which must break down class, ethnic and other barriers to national mobilisation. It is the state alone that can create, greatly strengthen or even become the entrepreneurial class. The state becomes the provider of capital, or equipment and of most other resources. This is evidenced in the many economic ventures. In Nigeria for example, the state embarks on many economic ventures: it owns 60 percent controlling shares in banks and finance houses. The state directs agricultural and economic growth. It controls the provision of infrastructures such as power and water. It even buys and sells rice. So much power resides in the hands of the state in the Third World that it must be considered an autonomous independent entity. This is a very important point. But the state is autonomous only to the extent that the top elite are not the representatives of those with vested interests.

The second condition for state autonomy is to ensure that the state is not subordinated to or controlled by any party apparatus, social class or ethnic group. In other words, the state is autonomous to the extent that a distance is maintained between it and other social forces such as class or ethnic interest. If the state power is owned or controlled by class or ethnic interest or even if those interests can in any significant way influence state power, then political mobilisation for development would be impossible.

Military rule in African nations has come to attempt to

strengthen state power. It can be argued that the history of military intervention in Nigeria as elsewhere is the history of the attempt to build or strengthen state power. Indeed, we can say that the succession of military coups is a function of the acknowledgement of, and the rise of, state power in the Third World. Let it be emphasised that coups will occur for so long as the national bourgeoisie attempt to weaken state power either through ethnic or class interests. A government, be it military or civil, will succeed in mobilising the people and advancing development only to the extent that it can increase the distance between state power and ethnic or class interests.

It is the military that can guarantee state autonomy far more than the liberal democratic party system. As a socio-political force, the military is more likely than the bureaucracy to be free of the economically dominant class or ethnic group. Secondly, force is usually needed in the Third World to break internal or external class alliances which tend to jeopardize real national development. In those countries where civil political leaders have attempted to strengthen state power, the tendency has resulted in the development of the one-party state. Examples are Sekou-Touré in Guinea, Houghouet Boigny in Ivory Coast, Nyerere in Tanzania, Kaunda in Zambia, Banda in Malawi, Eyadema in Togo, Kerekou in Benin Republic, Mobutu in Zaire, Biya in Cameroon, Kountche in Niger, Nimeiry in Sudan, Gaddafi in Libya. Today, more than 80 percent of African states is ruled by military or civil dictatorship.

The military has succeeded in breaking more sharply with imperial domination in some places than the party system has. They tend to appear to be more concerned and they overtly express patriotic ideals than the civil political party has. Perhaps more than the civil political leadership, the military has invented many more consciously expressive symbolic nationalistic rhetorics and devices towards the

creation of a national consensus. As we know, the importance of a political language is not accuracy but the appraisal that is common to members. We should remember the following saying 'To keep Nigeria one is a task that must be done'. 'Low profile', 'WAI' etc. The trend towards the use of terms that evoke a common national unity, a common faith in a symbol compels attention, causes emotional release and tends to heal anxiety if they do little else.

It will be seen therefore that whether by the military or civil government, coercion has been primary to state building. No known group possesses coercion as an efficient mobilising instrument and as a means of achieving break-through in the creation of national consensus more than the military. The weakness of the national bourgeoisie, the rise of individualism and the divisiveness of ethnic forces have ensured that this be so. My point of theory which I have explained in my two major works on the military is that there is great but at the same time real disparity between democratic liberalism and national development. I have established a positive correlation between coercion and development. I have also showed that there is a lower congruence between liberalism and national development. We can establish a relationship between the political structure of coercion and economic development. There is no doubt that as a bureaucratic organization, coercion is directly linked to military domination. Coercion here is described as order, discipline, hierarchy accountability, regulation.

Coercion as a System of Public Discipline

However, let me state clearly that coercion does not necessarily require physical force or even direct control. It means the laying down of particular values that define loyalty. Coercion in general then is a system of public discipline. When the norms of accountability, discipline and equity are being laid down by the military, a new system of

loyalty is being defined. Let me elaborate still further on this point. As change becomes more rapid in Nigeria as elsewhere in the Third World, information of all types (computer, market, education, business and so on) bombard us every minute. Information increases our choices. Choices necessarily lead to consequences, but without coercion choices will never have any consequences. The essence of coercion relates not to brute force but to the quality of control and the ability to guarantee effectiveness through proper monitoring and accountability. To illustrate this point, I will quote the example of a cluster of countries which I have used in one of my major works. It has been discovered that a cluster of countries in the high developmental high militarisation group were the following countries with their annual average percentage increase in GNP figures over the period of analysis: Israel 7.6; Libya 19.2 (although oil has contributed to Libya's position); Greece 7.5; Nicaragua 7.5; Iraq 6.9; Taiwan 10.0; Ivory Coast 7.5; Jordan 8.8; Bolivia 4.9; Thailand 7.1; and Korea 7.6. At the other end of the scale are countries which represent a non-militarised category at the time of investigation. These are: Venezuela 1.0; Argentina 1.2; Uruguay 1.0; Brazil 1.2; Morocco 1.3; Ceylon 1.3; Kenya 0.3; Uganda 1.2. I found strong evidence to support this kind of presentation that high militarisation can be associated with high development. For example in Nigeria between 1964 and 1966 during a civilian regime, the GNP was 4.2 but between 1969 and 1971 during the military regime, it jumped to 9.1 and in 1972 to 12.1. Even in the interval of 1969 to 1972 when the GNP rose from 9.1 to 12.1 (when the oil money came in) it was very impressive. By some statistical calculation, I tried to remove the contribution of oil and the figure was still as impressive as 6.1, a figure higher than that projected for the year 1985.

Coercion not only enforces norms, it performs norm-generating functions as well. As I have argued, the hall-

mark of coercion is its ability to ensure that accountability is generated in all facets of its operations. In all organisations, accountability is generated through effective monitoring of procedures, processes and of results. Effective monitoring derives largely from effective coordination. That is, coordination leads to effectiveness which in turn leads to accountability. That is why the ideals of discipline, order etc. which are inherent in military organization values appear at first sight mainly suited to political mobilisation at the initial stages of development. We are not arguing that it is the military only which can achieve this. The military has failed woefully to achieve this in some Latin American and African nations.

The central issue being raised here concerns the level, quality and degree of liberal democracy permissible or desirable or even possible during periods of rapid political mobilisation for development. Liberal democracy and political mobilisation are not anti-thetical but a happy balance is not easy to strike or to maintain in situations of rapid development. Who, may we ask, can create 12 or 19 states in Nigeria, who could cancel results of census but a government with the kind of leverage of the military? Will Nigerians make the kind of sacrifice we are now being called upon to make without effective control? Effectiveness guarantees legitimacy even where legitimacy did not exist before. That is, where a government assumes power through armed intervention as the military, legitimacy can be earned through being merely effective. Over a period of time, where people can visibly see and appreciate results, they will accept such a government. Hence, contrary to existing theoretical positions, I have demonstrated in my works that legitimacy must be perceived not as a static theoretical concept but as a dynamic process signifying the changing orientations of a living people. Legitimacy as conceived here is therefore tied to the meaning, type, quality and speed of change and must always

be regarded as such. I am happy to note and I thank God that these efforts are receiving modest international recognition.

The Limits of Coercion

However, it must be pointed out that coercion has serious limitations. Coercion entails a large amount of centralisation of power and authority. It carries with it a decline and sometimes a complete neglect of the kind of development of grassroots' awareness among the uneducated and the deprived. It sometimes even involves the decline of the development among the large sectors of the elites of that kind of wider consciousness which informs people about their rights, duties, obligations and commitments. That is, coercion may indeed lead to the destruction of the development of the society which it sought to improve in the first place. Examples were the dangers in Nkrumah's Ghana which led to the enactment and abuse of the Preventive Detention Act. As progressive as Sekou-Toure first appeared, coercion led to the imprisonment of opponents and consequently to the decline of that state.

The crucial point of argument concerns the character of the balance between authoritarianism and liberal democracy. This balance determines whether we move forward fast and lose some liberty and freedom in the process. It is clearly obvious that the level of awareness of one's duty and political rights in African nations is so under-developed and so rudimentary that it can hardly sustain any proper democratic political development. That statement might appear sacrilegious, but the last elections in this country clearly illustrate the point being made. Votes in 1983 became mere commodity and the law enforcement agencies became parties to the open rape of the Nigerian polity. Intellectuals acquiesced in this brigandage. The military once again stepped in and arbitrated. Perhaps more than any other previous military regime,

the Buhari government had the greatest opportunity to set this country right or make it fail.

I want to state clearly that my second major hypothesis is that there is a positive relationship between coercion and mobilisation for development. This sets the stage for evaluating military performance across the world. My assessment which follows leaves out the performance of the present Nigeria military government, not because I am afraid to go to Kirikiri, but simply because their activities are too close in time and thus lack proper perspective. A fair and proper assessment must give time for their programmes to mature, and one can then with the advantage of a hindsight adequately pronounce on them. What I have observed so far about the present Nigerian military rulers is the high degree of resoluteness and the determination in pursuing goals. What will be more important to say at some future date is the degree of the achievement of and the significance of the impact of the pursuit of these goals on the structure of the Nigerian society. Researches have demonstrated that a military junta must have clear goals before seizing power. If they do not, they are most likely to falter and flounder.

Let us now try to evaluate the performance of the military. We will do two things: first, we will take a look at the problems of transferring military values into an open society; and secondly, we will critically examine the armoury of the values and skills which the military is supposed to possess. According to the literature, the military has the following qualities in greater abundance than the rest of the society:

1. Order and discipline resulting into a kind of puritanism which set the military organisation apart from the rest of the society;
2. Organisational cohesion through which ethnic differences vanish. That is, it is a melting pot through which proper nationalism is achieved.
3. Organisational skills such as engineering and literacy.

There are problems which beset the ability of the military to transfer these values to the rulership of the civilian society. This we must discuss first. Norm-setting behaviour which we have argued that the military engages in is particularistic. Usually the norm-setting agency defines the norm-setting roles in its own terms. The military cannot define their functions except in its own terms and according to its own organizational values of order and discipline. Successive military governments sought to inculcate discipline through military drills such as forcing late comers to pull up their ears and jump. The caning of people for example is a one step, short-term, highly specific measure. It bears little or no relationship to structural variables which need correction. As a force for reformation and change, the military may falter to the extent that it cannot go beyond itself or its own terms to introduce change. Real progress consists in the ability of the change agent to adapt the conditions of change dynamically to define and redefine its own goals, functions and roles.

There is then a problematic with the nature of progress itself. It seems to me that the ultimate intent of all progress is the spread and consequent preservation of its own values and achievements. We may argue that all progress leads in the final analysis to the preservation of specific ideals, goals, processes, roles and functions. For example, if all organisations can be as disciplined as the military organisation, then the military would believe that a lot of progress has been made. We must, however, observe that there are many routes to progress. Hence, most processes tend to converge on similar set of principles – namely, those processes and tendencies which best inherently define the change agent. Even political parties which started out as far left (Labour in Britain, Democratic Party in the United States); as far right (Conservative in Britain and the Republican in the United States) tend to reflect the tendencies of the societies which give them birth. They therefore tend to

converge in the ultimate upon similar societal principles. Thus, we may not be able to distinguish between the manifestoes of Labour and Conservative parties in Britain nor of those of their counterparts in the United States. The same philosophical problem, as I have defined in relation to the military, applies also in large measure to socialism. Socialism requires that every force be defined in its own terms and every process thus defined in its own terms only, means progress and no other.

The point here is that in defining change in their own terms only, change agents may become so intolerant of the change proposed by other interest groups that progress is delayed. It also means, on the other hand, that the very nature of progress demands constant definition. The theoretical lesson for me here is the exploration of the limits of progress and of development. Some of these issues I am examining in a new work which is about completed. The point I have raised can explain the unwitting convergence between the revolutionary ideals of such disparate characters as Sekou Toure and Jomo Kenyatta. Both started as fire-eating revolutionaries, one socialist, the other bourgeois capitalist. Both became extremely intolerant of other interest groups and of other views. Both ended up not really developing their societies. This notion of convergence in political theory in the development of Third World societies is to me an extremely important one and accounts for this small excursion which I have made into it. Indeed this kind of excursion leading away from a particular (the military in this instance) to the general (political leadership and mobilisation) constitutes the essence of my scholarship.

We will now turn to the military organisational values enumerated above. First to be discussed is order and discipline. It is argued that the exposure to order and discipline socialises the military into a professionally disciplined organisation the like of which is not available in the rest of

the society. It is also argued in the literature that the rules, regulations and code of ethics of the military train them to be austere; that they are trained to adopt a hard and severe attitude towards wealth, fun and ostentatious living. In short, they are trained to abhor all forms of indisciplined behaviour such as corruption. As professionals they must live an exemplary and puritanic life.

We must then ask ourselves whether this is true. The answer is yes and no. In part the military organisation strives to inculcate the value of discipline into its rank and file and possesses internal organisational mechanisms for disciplining its members such as no other organisation probably possesses. Inspite of this, however, many instances of disorderly conduct have been recorded. Whole units of the military have gone on rampage and destroyed civilian properties when a military personnel had quarrels with civilians. It must also be recorded that on such occasions, senior military officers have reprimanded erring military personnel. In disciplining civilian societies, military governments have depended largely on the issuance of decrees and regulations. However some of the more general problems here relate to the issue of the ability of the law to regulate human behaviour whether these laws be civil legislation or military decrees.

The weakness of the law in regulating behaviour is great. The most important weakness is that the law behaves like a ceiling beyond which you cannot go without punishment. But it must be recognised that there are choices up to and beyond that ceiling point. If the speed limit for driving on the Lagos expressway is 60 kilometers per hour and if this is strictly enforced, most drivers will drive between 58 and 59 $\frac{3}{4}$ kilometers per hour and sometimes more than 60 kilometers per hour. Thus, in general, most human beings, not just Nigerians, live at the edge of the law.

Besides, the law tends to criminalise our behaviour as one

of my colleagues has pointed out. When a new law is made against the performance of a certain activity, the mere engagement in that activity makes one an offender. For example, to publish the truth and embarrass the government was not an offence; now it is. Hence journalism which is supposed to be the fourth realm of the state cannot now publish the truth in Nigeria if it will embarrass the government. They must ask themselves which truth would and which would not embarrass government. The academic and even the practical problem for law becomes the setting up of criteria that define the limit of activities. Unfortunately in theory, limits relate so critically to infinitude that it is a futile exercise to set criteria to define them. One of such critical relationships is the ability of limits to shift unpredictably. The predictability of shifts of limit is determined among several factors by changing technology, changing human knowledge, and human behaviour. For example, what will embarrass the government of today may not embarrass that of tomorrow depending on the attitudes of government leadership, or upon improvement in reporting by journalists and so on.

It will seem to me that behavioural changes are best introduced through the traditional agencies of socialisation the family, the school, the peer group and the mass media. Any changes to be introduced through them must be based on careful sociological studies. This is because it is most important to first find out where these changes occur and how policy innovations can be most effective.

Still under the first point that the military is the most disciplined institution, I examined the issue of the ability of successive military governments to achieve one of their cardinal aims, that is, the stamping out of corruption. The expectation held is usually that while Third World leaders generally are corrupt, the military is different. But corruption and embezzlement have been found among Third

World ruling military elites. Examples are General Ankrah of Ghana who received a bribe of twelve thousand pounds; of several officers in the Ethiopian military who stole relief money reserved for poor, starving drought-stricken Ethiopians, and as well as in Nigeria where such evidences were published in newspapers after public enquiries. Therefore, one can safely say that the military is as much part of the problem as the solution to the problem. What is more interesting is that if we compare civilian politicians with the military in terms of corruption, there is one major difference. Corruption in civilian political life is institutionalized. In political life, contract issued and signed must carry ten percent kick-back for the political party in power. No such institutionalization of corruption on a corporate basis can occur for the military. The military officer corps cannot steal money on behalf of the military organisation. Hence only individual stealing can occur under military rule. While this itself is not justifiable, nor is less reprehensible, it is perhaps, much less, in terms of the damage done to the society. The alleged syphoning away of billions of Naira from the country by the last set of politicians, the amount of stealing that went on during that period has staggered the conscience of the world. Let me describe a simple process of stealing. First, a big businessman requests for a loan of about four million naira through a commercial bank and the Central Bank for a certain project to be carried out. The amount is taken away in foreign currency, cashed in Britain and brought to Nigeria to be sold in the black market. One pound is sold for about ₦5. The four million naira or equivalent of about 3.2 million pounds is converted into about 16 million naira. The four million naira is returned to the bank which originally loaned it. The man has now gained about twelve million naira of his own and the business continues.

It became worrying to me both as a scholar and as a

Nigerian citizen that so much money required for mobilisation has been stolen by a few. Much more worrying is the fact that successive Nigerian governments, be they military or civilian, have failed to reduce the level of bribery and corruption in the body politic. I believe that something more fundamental must be wrong. What is it about corruption that makes it stick so hard in the structure of the society? From my usual line of approach to problems, I decided to probe how corruption relates to the structure of the society, I read all the literature on corruption and found them inadequate. I therefore arrived at what I have called the structural break hypothesis' which again, thanks to God, has been receiving quite modest acceptance in the world of scholarship. Simple stated, this hypothesis says, corruption can be identified and exists most at the point of discontinuity between traditional institutions and values on the one hand, and the so-called modern or Western institutions and values on the other. It is the point of structural break that harbours the greatest opportunities for corruption and these opportunities are utilized. Points at which traditional institutions or values and modern or Western institutions come into contact are points of structural break. The principal explanation here is that the expectations held under one-value system are different from those of other systems. The opportunity of wishing to by-pass the normal process increases in proportion as the gap increases between traditional and modern expectations. Therefore, where traditional and modern institutions clash, sets of different expectations combine with the need for change and mobility to produce opportunities for corruption. From that general point of corruption, I was led to the general conclusion that points of structural break are those at which political mobilisation can most effectively take place. This is my third point of theory.

The next area of military organisational values concerns

the socialisation process within the military by which every soldier is expected to become professionalized. Professionalism, it is argued, lays the foundation for the acquisition of universalistic values of loyalty to a nation and not to an ethnic group. The modern military organisation thus becomes a melting pot for diverse ethnic groups. Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Ibo, Edo, Itsekiri, Anga, Tapa, become soldiers and nothing else. Thus, the uniformity of training forces diverse and heterogeneous ethnic groups to comingle into an arbitrary social group where position and relations are determined by the criteria of military rank and professionalism and not by their pre-service status.

Is this always true? Evidence shows that the recruitment into the African armies has been generally skewed. For example, while the Kamba and the Kalengin tribes of Kenya represent about 10 per cent of total population, they provided about 34 percent of the army personnel in 1961. About the same time 62 percent of other ranks in Ghana came from the North. In Nigeria also in 1961, 60 out of 81 military officers were Ibo while a good number of other ranks came from the North, particularly from the Middle Belt. The British government had a deliberate policy of recruiting the other rank from the minority groups which were thought at that time to be suspicious of the nationalistic movements which were headed by the majority ethnic groups. In this way, a never-ending division based on ethnic loyalty was ensured. It is clear that the seed of ethnic division had been sown by the colonial powers right from the inception of African military organisations. That unfortunately tends to reinforce pre-colonial sentiment and divisions. The pre-colonial African war apparatus was composed of men from the same ethnic groups who engaged in forages of conquests and domination in the effort to advance group interests. In the Congo, Sudan and even Nigeria there have been tendencies of North-South tensions within the military

as a result of ethnic rivalry. Hence, the military organisations in Africa have broken down exactly at those lines of cleavages and stresses evident in the larger societies.

Then I asked the question: Why is ethnicity or ethnic attachment persistent in the light of social class development and modernization? Why is ethnicity still so preponderant in modern organisations such as the military or the university? Of course we must admit that ethnic attachment is as prevalent in the university system as it is in the military organisation. Right within our own communities, groups have mobilised not based on the criterion of scholarship but on place of origin. Thus, in espousing narrow particularistic and non-rational values, academics in this country have been as anti-intellectual as any other group. Ethnic attachment in the world of scholarship can lead only to the lowering of standards and the enthronement of mediocrity.

I then proceeded to analyze the relationship between ethnic attachment and the structure of the African societies in my effort to understand and analyze the role of ethnicity in political mobilisation. In the literature, it has been argued that ethnicity will decrease over time with industrialisation and expansion of the market and particularly when market forces come to dictate that we should all behave rationally. Hence, over time tribalism will play not an independent but a residual role. But evidence such as those which obtain in the developed nations show that ethnic attachment is still playing a very independent and autonomous role. Let us look at some examples. In Britain, Ireland and Scotland ethnic attachments are strong. The Barth region in Spain, Quebec Province in Canada are all agitating for separatism. My researches therefore led me to the following conclusions. Ethnicity in the African context creates the facilitating social condition for group mobilisation. The level of poverty and deprivation finds common expression in geographical contiguity, common language and common orientation.

Indeed during periods of rapid political mobilisation, primordial sentiments gain ascendancy. Traditionalism in dress, in speech and in behaviour becomes more acceptable than any other set of values. My point of theory here is that ethnicity is a facilitator for group mobility in a competitive modernising environment. Ethnicity therefore becomes the factor or conceptual link which relates traditional society with modern Western institutions. Thus the independent role which ethnicity now assumes in political mobilisation raises issues with the Marxist's theory of class consciousness because the autonomous role of ethnicity appears more salient than that of social class in explaining the generation of consciousness in political mobilisation.

The last set of military organisational values relates to the notion of the possession within the military organisation of a pool of skills such as engineering and medicine assumed to be far in advance of the rest of the society. This statement is correct only in relation to the less developed African nations such as Gabon and Ethiopia. In such nations as Nigeria and Ghana, those skills exist in much greater abundance in the civil society than in the military.

I have found contrary to the literature that military and civilian elites tend to converge in terms of training and professionalisation. In a recent paper, I demonstrated that the military and civilian higher institution recruit from the same pool of candidates, set similar standards of achievement and aim at producing comparable graduates in the universities on the one hand and the military academics on the other. The same people had had similar backgrounds in education and generally relate to similar market conditions and similar social environment.

The general point I have noted here is that as education and industrialisation rise, there appears to be a growing convergence in the role performance and orientation of the African elites. For example, in Nigeria, a bureaucrat can

resign his job and become a politician overnight. Politicians were known to have become permanent secretaries in the last civilian government. Major generals retired and joined the business world or became politicians. University intellectuals joined politics or the civil service. There is therefore high interchangeability of roles. My last and fifth point of theory then is that there is a developing convergence in the role and orientation of Third World elites in spite of the initial competition which characterised them. Whether this is a solid basis for class formation over and against the ethnic theory of the last point is what I plan to move to investigate later.

Let us now reiterate our five points of theory:

1. Third World regimes are legitimized by the utopian hopes of the masses. The decline of a collective utopia gives rise to a search for individualism which in a rapidly mobilizing society generates high status consciousness.
2. Coercion and development are positively correlated.
3. Points of structural break are those at which mobilisation most effectively takes place.
4. Ethnicity is a factor of group mobilisation in a competitive modernising environment and becomes a concept which links the traditional society with modern institutions.
5. There is a convergence in the roles and orientations of Third World elites.

It will be observed from the lecture and this summary of points that what I have done is to use studies of military organisation as a point of departure to analyse the peculiarities of that organisation in development and, importantly, examine the more general problems of the structure of the African society. I will now discuss the thematic structure which ties together my points of theory.

First, the rise of individualism highlights the decline of the traditional society and the transition to modern society

and hence the need for the mobilisation into new groups for development. The low level of education, and of awareness and so on coupled with a high level of poverty as well as the heterogeneity of the society makes imperative the need to create a common focal point of legitimacy such as the state. The creation and the strength of state power against ethnic class and religious forces induces the rise of coercion as an instrument of rule. Weakness of state power and the polity in general as indicated by corruption, indiscipline and so on are best observed at points of structural break. Ethnicity represents one of the salient factors in relation to the traditional and modern sectors of societies and it is most evident among the elites where a kind of convergence is already taking place. Thus, political mobilisation depends on the generation of a new consensus whose processes are facilitated by the creation of a center of loyalty. The rapidity of the process of mobilisation is enhanced by some forms of coercion which in the present African, Latin American and Asian nations is represented largely by the military. This process consists of some antithetical trends such as the rise of individualism on the one hand, and the rise of ethnic attachment on the other. This antithesis is resolved by the submergence of individualism in a neo-traditionalist and a new fundamentalist development.

The main thrust of my scholarship is to develop theories that emerge from the womb of African social processes and structures. We in this nation have had too much of imported theories, be they Marxist or Western. The point of departure of African scholarship must be African. The best theory is that which reflects the social conditions, processes and structure of the place being studied. Knowledge and truth of human societies are relative to the time and place in which they occur. I challenge my colleagues in the social sciences to a healthy competition in theory building. To my younger colleagues in the faculty and the department, I

promise hard work and collaboration. To students, whom I believe form the purest constituency in the nation, I promise hard work in spite of the fact that there are some cranks among them.

The role of social science is to tread on the misery of others in the pursuit of truth. Social science is feared and disliked; but it must never be afraid. I will like to end this lecture with a short anecdote which illustrates the problems facing social science. In the process of doing social science research, I and some colleagues trod on the misery of some whores. In 1971, I went to New York with my supervisor and two other colleagues. One of the evenings, we were drinking at a pub and looked across the street to see a line of beautiful ladies waiting to be picked up. My supervisor urged three of us to go and pick each one up into the hotel and do practical sociology. My two colleagues jumped to the street and picked two girls. Upon this, my supervisor shouted 'nigger, go and pick that other nigger up'. Well, I picked up courage, sauntered across the street and moved to the black girl I thought was most beautiful from across the street. On getting there, I discovered that her face was hidden under a mask of powder and that she was as old as my mother. Still picking up courage I asked: "would you like to follow me to my hotel?" She asked: "where is the hotel?" I did not remember the name of the hotel. She then advised that I should follow her to her own hotel and she charged fifty dollars. I said: "35 dollars". She stopped a taxi but I had only two dollars in my pocket. So I told her I wanted to take some more money off my colleagues. I sped off. I looked back and saw her make a signal. Two men rushed out and ran after me. It took me several hours to locate the hotel where I was living; infact I did not return until the following morning. I could easily have been killed. That is, and should be the hardship to which the social scientist must be exposed. I did not regret it and should

the opportunity arise again, I should be prepared to do exactly the same thing. Intellectuals are the custodians of the will of the nation and we should never be afraid to move in the direction of truth.

