

Black Restoration is a Black Responsibility: Nigeria and the Black Leadership Imperative.

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by

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PREFACE

Inaugural lectures are delivered shortly after the appointment of a professor as his or her attestation to the validity of the appointment to professorship. I am delivering my own address as a "valedictory" lecture since this is my last formal session in the services of the university system.

First, I did not feel enthusiastically inclined to deliver an inaugural lecture after my appointment as a Professor in October 1984, because I felt cheated having been previously found appointable in October 1980. My application was not fully processed then. Perhaps, because I agreed to serve in the government of late Professor Ambrose Alli, who was seen as a confrontational Governor and belonging to a party opposed to the party of the federal government, it was not convenient to fully process my application while I was on leave of absence. Secondly, I was not quite sure that I would have been bold enough then to address the subjectmatter that has been my concern long before my appointment as a professor. I feel very happy and confident that the time is long overdue to address the topic. Finally, I took this long time to write an inaugural lecture because of the anti-intellectualism that I continue to encounter in academics. It started with a petty minded lecturer in the University of Ibadan who considered University teaching a license for rudeness and disrespect. Then at the University of Lagos, I came across petty mindedness, ignorance, crudeness and injustice among very senior academic staff. I came to Uniben only to be confronted with yet another member of the clan of those who proverbially never dreamt of greatness but decided to name their children "Troublesome Greatness" (*Olaniyonu* in *Yoruba*). Unfortunately such miscreants are still in the system but we need to find a way to keep them out.

In my sixty-five years' journey through life, I want to acknowledge here only very few people who made possible the miracle of the only one of a farmer's family of six boys and two girls to receive formal education and ended up becoming a university professor. My father, late Akerele Azego opposed my going to school initially because he felt that western education created thieves. He reluctantly changed his mind three months before he died on the 8th of August 1946. His reluctance has always served as a warning to me. My late mother, Maria Ebeniyo Akerele, supported me fully and made significant sacrifices before and after my father's death to enable me to go to school.

My eldest brother, late James Idogun Akerele, saw early that I would not be suitable for the demanding subsistence farm work in the village. He felt that I was better away from the farm for I was eating more than I was producing. He spent a good part of his time during my primary and teacher training days to ensure that I did not make the mistake of

leaving school. Late Paul Ibitoye Akerele lived and died in the cause of my education once I entered primary school in August 1942. Late Joel Bamidele Akerele then took over the burden of my educational guidance and responsibility. He did what he thought Paul would have done to keep me on the right path. My elder sister (Ozofu Akerele) died in 1941. She saw to it that I was not harassed when I was an apprentice blacksmith to late Okuta Oguma which was my first port of call after expulsion from the farm. Late Laisi Atosun Ametu Akerele made life bearable for me – a weakling on the farm and yet reluctant to go to school. My late immediate sister, Mrs. Omonikoni Onamibo Aiyede, was my companion and confidant. Until she died a few years ago, she stood by me always but never failed to tell me the truth. My younger brother, Jacob Aiyekusehin Akerele continues to have my admiration and sympathy for he missed western education because he was physically stronger than I and so was found suitable for the farm. To all of them, I will remain eternally grateful for their contributions to the miracle of my life.

My numerous nephews and nieces have made my life more interesting by their remarkable achievements in the path I have been made to chart. Dr John Akerele of Uniben's Faculty of Pharmacy, Mr. Ekundayo Akerele of the new Ministry of Co-operation and Integration in Africa, Barrister Kehinde Akerele of Ibadan, Mrs. Philomena Benson (nee Idogun Akerele) of Akoko-Edo Public Health Department, Mrs. Tina Adebolajo (Nee Ibitoye Akerele) of the United Kingdom, Mrs. Wemimo Alele and Mrs. Dolapo Cole (both nee Bamidele Akerele) and Olumide Akerele – all of the United States, Anthony Akerele of the Federal Government College, Ibillo and the others have made my life very fulfilling indeed.

Late Pa Solomon Bello Olowojoba was a real father. He was a pillar of support and taught me that a poor family was surer with education as a means of rising up. If I had not met him, I would have been a much smaller miracle than I consider myself to be now. Late Professor Ojetunji Aboyade inspired me into higher education and academics. Late Chief (Dr) Peter Taiwo Odumosu helped me to develop confidence in honesty and family morality. He encouraged me to adhere to my father's philosophy of life to which the numerous good and selfless Irish Catholic priests I met earlier in life had introduced Jesus Christ. Professor Tijani M. Yesufu should accept responsibility for my academic frankness and boldness. He brought me up from the University of Ibadan to learn to disagree with what I did not accept and point out whatever I considered wrong. I have not met anyone who could be so accommodating and tolerant of the views of a complete starter as he did when I was his Graduate Assistant and he was Dean. I can never forget my many class and school mates here in Nigeria, the United States and Great Britain as well as my numerous students who frequently disagreed with my views. I am very grateful to all of them. To late Pa Alfred Rewane, I owe a lot for the little I know about politics. I wish he could have been around today.

The Black Renaissance Movement (BRM) was formed by a group of us mostly based at the University of Lagos in 1969. We published *The Philosophy of Black Renaissance* in 1970. I owe my awareness of the black problem to the Movement and I surely would have plagiarised the document to which I contributed a little but participated fully in the nine months' discussions that gave birth to the document. I am very grateful to all the

members whose permission I do not have to openly identify by their names. The Federal Government of Nigeria, the University of Lagos, the United States Agency for International Development and New York University for my postgraduate education and Texaco Nigeria Limited for part of my undergraduate education at the University of Ibadan, deserve special thanks.

Of course, my family: our children, Ayopo and Mrs. Feyi Tinubu, who as toddlers successfully stopped me from smoking. Ozovese (a.k.a. Ovesi), Oziofu and Onimisi are as independent minded as I have always been. Only in them do I realise the problem I must have been to others for they intrigue me a lot by the frequency of our disagreements. Certainly my life would have been dramatically poorer if Providence and Pa S.B. Olowojoba had not brought Olufunke (nee Lawani) into my life. Apart from being a wonderful wife, she has been a mother to me. She has often saved me from my excesses and frequent over-enthusiasm in national and international matters. I cannot understand how she has been able to cope with me especially when I was a chain smoker. She has been responsible for my return to the Church which I abandoned because of what I saw as double standards by people I considered Church leaders. She taught me to mind my own relationship with God and let others do the same. I assure all of them of my love and immense gratitude.

To all these people, I am immensely grateful. There are many others I have not mentioned. For example, Professor Pius Sada, who was responsible for my agreeing to submit my papers for consideration for professorship again in 1984. I am immensely grateful to him also. There are many more colleagues and friends who have been very helpful in many ways. Like every paper I have ever written, this lecture is the joint effort of many people who edited, discussed, read fragments and in many other ways influenced my thoughts. I am most grateful to them all.

Finally, I do not know how to acknowledge the Almighty. I am a miracle of the Omnipotent and I thank Him more for making it possible for me to be persuaded to accept Him. To Him be all honour and glory. May we be worthy of His bountiful mercies. Amen.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Classification of Human Beings

Human beings have been classified or identified or grouped in very many ways. Within the family, children are identified by the names given to them by their parents or their other relations. Families themselves are a form of classification in the community and communities form another basis of identification. Geographical locations, countries, regions and continents are also other various forms of identifying human beings in different parts of the world.

We have the so-called hemispheres to group people. The Northern Hemisphere refers to the industrially developed world and the Southern Hemisphere is used to describe mainly

industrially under-developed world. The different religions have also have been used to classify human beings. The level of economic or social achievement could be used as well for identifying different peoples and this is often referred to as social class. People who have many things in common, such as language, customs and religion, are called nations and are some times labelled tribes.

2. Classification of Human Beings by Race

The concept of *race* to classify people was said to have been used for the first time in the English language in 1508 (Banton and Harwood, 1975:13). The word was also found in John Buchan's *Pilgrims Progress* in 1678 and also in another publication by Robert Bennis in about 1778 (ibid. p.13). Unfortunately, the word race has been used by bigots to give it (race) an emotional connotation. Different authorities - historians, anthropologists, biologists, sociologists and psychologists - have used the word for their different purposes with different meanings (see, for example, Pritchard, 1808). We wish to avoid the controversies generated by the word. We just want to note that racial groups have also been identified as a way of categorising human beings.

In a work by Blumenbach (1775) five racial divisions were identified. They are Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American and Malayan (Banton and Harwood, 1975:24). It is certain that the Ethiopians were later classified as Negroid. Ethiopia was the only country or Empire then known or accepted by European racial apologists on the African continent. Even at the beginning of the Christian era, Ethiopians were recognised (Acts, 8:27). The Blumenbach classification leaves the American and Malayan from the three classes of Caucasian, Mongolian and Negroid that are now commonly known and used. The controversy apart, there is so much that is not known about human beings to make race an acceptable means of classification. Besides, for selfish purposes, many people have used the word, race, to justify many unacceptable things done by their own groups to other groups, e.g. slavery.

3. Classification by the Colour of the Skin

To avoid these controversial discussions and to make our discussion less esoteric and unnecessarily academic, we will choose to categorise people by the colours of their skins. It must be pointed out that this choice is not scientifically justifiable; for the conventionally used skin colours hardly correspond to the colours recognised by science. Moreover, there are some groups that hardly fall neatly into any of the colours.

For our purposes, we shall classify human beings into black, white, yellow and others. Black people are the people of African origin and other people in other continents who have dark skins. Our discussions shall show that the destinies of all peoples with dark skins are tied together and so could be justifiably grouped. White people shall refer to people of European origin whether western or eastern. The Yellow people shall refer to people from Asia including the Chinese, Indians, Japanese and Pakistanis. It is possible that there will be other people that have been left out of the classification. Again, our

discussions shall show that as important as these other people may be, important for many other the purposes, that is, they may not affect our concerns very seriously.

II. THE CENTRAL THEME OF OUR DISCUSSION

The Vice Chancellor, distinguished colleagues, respectable guests, ladies, gentleman, friends and enemies, (Malcolm X, 1965) our concern in this discussion *is to examine the progress of black people in comparison with people of other colours and try to show that Nigeria has a responsibility to raise up the black person in the nearest possible future.* We also wish to examine the roles of different groups of Nigerians in this exercise. Our fundamental proposition is that *unless Nigeria responds to the call of destiny, the black people shall remain the "wretched of the earth"* for many years to come (Fanon, 1967).

1. The Call of Destiny

With due respect to non-Christians, let us use this song to identify the call of destiny.

*I, The Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry,
All who dwell in dark and sin, my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night.
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?
(Schutte, 1981)*

Black people all over the world are crying to the Lord, He, the master of history has heard their prayers and is looking for a messenger. It is our thesis that He can be calling only one country and that is our country, Nigeria.

THE BLACK PEOPLE

1. Identification

It may be necessary to try to identify and locate the black people. We (Black People) were the original inhabitants of the continent of Africa and possibly the lost Atlantis. The islands of Australia, New Zealand, Papua, Madagascar, etc must have been part of the old continent. Black people are now found mainly in Africa, South of the Sahara, having surrendered Africa, North of the Sahara to the Arabs from about the eighth century (about 700 AD).

Whatever agglomerations were in existence, first before the invasions of the Arabs over a thousand years ago and again before the European invasion from the fifteenth century, (especially from the Berlin Conference of 1888), are all now left in history books. The Arabs occupied present day Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Sudan. Incidentally, Sudan derives form an Arabic word that means the land of black

people. Alhaji Shehu Malami is the Sarkin Sudan or the king of Black people of Sokoto Caliphate. In Egypt, Mauritania and the Sudan, there are significant black minorities that European colonisation left under Arab control. The countries of black people in Africa South of the Sahara were carved out by the Europeans by some illegal combinations of parts of empires and kingdoms with the exception of Ethiopia that was not affected by the European invasion and division of 1888 until the second European war of 1936 to 1945 when Ethiopia was invaded by Italy.

Outside Africa, the Americas contain a large population of black people descendants of people of Africa who were forcibly transported from Africa as slaves to work in the plantations. In Australia, New Zealand and Papua, there are black people who must have shared a common land mass many millennia ago with our present continent. There are also surprisingly a large number of black skinned people in the Indian sub-continent.

2. Why Emphasise the Black People

It is pertinent to ask why we are interested in black people of the world. Earlier, we had identified people of other skin colours. It is common knowledge that dark skinned human beings are disrespected all over the world. It does not matter whether they are from Africa, the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, Papua or Southern India. Since we belong to this group, we should be concerned and try to find out how something could be done to change the lot of all black people.

Why is the black person discriminated against? Or perhaps, how is the black person discriminated against? How did it start and how has it been perpetuated? It is our view that the black person's problem resulted from ancient successes. It is now no longer disputed that the Egyptian civilisation was a black civilisation (see, for example, Herder, 1999). Not many people ever doubted the achievements of the Egyptian civilisation which covered as far south as the present day Chad Republic (Durant, 1954).

3. The Black Ancestry

The dispute must really have been whether black people who had been separated from the base of the civilisation by the Sahara desert for so long, who were expelled from the base and who left southwards in a hurry and in disarray could have created such a marvel as Egypt. The ease with which the Arabs over-ran Africa, north of the Sahara, the mere possibility of the slave trade, colonialism and the absence of the contents of European civilisation, especially the art of writing, in black Africa and among other black peoples, must have convinced the Caucasian authorities to conclude that such a magnificent civilisation like that of ancient Egypt could not have been black. Not a few black intellectuals subscribe to the view of black inability to have been responsible for the Egyptian civilisation (see, for example, Oyebola, 1976 and Eze, 1996).

4. One Possible Source of Black Negativity

We are inclined to theorise that the success of the Egyptian civilisation led to the spread of its fame in the ancient world. It was the same success that led to the sojourn of the Jews following the sale of Joseph by his brothers into Egypt. His stay in Egypt enabled his parents and relations to escape from the scourge of famine. The level of developments and possibly the size of the population of Egypt enabled the Jews to remain and expand in Egypt.

There were seventy (70) male Jews who went to Egypt including Joseph and his children (Genesis 46:27). In four hundred and thirty years, about six hundred thousand (600,000) of them left Egypt for the promised land (Exodus 12:37). Such a phenomenal growth in the male population of Jews in just four and half centuries (an annual non-cumulative rate of 14%) should be taken as evidence of an environment of good health care, affluence, good government and peace. Yet the biblical accounts of the relationship between the Jews and the Egyptians are devoid of any appreciation for the hospitality of the Egyptians. The biblical writers present a picture of oppression and even used *slavery* to describe the conditions of the Jews. Clearly, at the time of Joseph's and his relatives sojourn in Egypt, the pyramids had been built. The use of slavery must have been an exaggerated imagery. Slavery, from time immemorial has always involved a complete ownership of the slave by the master (e.g. Genesis 16:1–3; 20:14). They might have been held hostage but the Jews were not owned by the Egyptians and so could not have been slaves.

The Exodus shows the amount of bitterness the Jews had against the Egyptians. It is our contention that the Jews, in their various contacts with other civilisations, especially from conquest of Palestine by Nebuchadnezzar first in 597 BC and again in 587 BC which led to the deportation of many Jews (New Jerusalem Bible 1985:1171) which was the beginning of the diaspora, disseminated their anti-black (Egyptian) bitterness to the whole of ancient Asia and Europe. Those Jews, who heard the stories of Egypt in folklores must have heightened the exaggeration of Egyptian atrocities. Their stories could be taken as credible as it was handed down by people who claimed to be victims of Egyptian rule and ill treatment which was perpetrated by black people.

5. Blackness and Badness

Blackness must have thus started to acquire the image of evil and wickedness and ill treatment. For over six hundred years before the Christian era, Europe must have been awash with stories of ancient black people who treated the Jews the way they (Jews) reported in their stories. Banton, has noted that " ... there was a basic idea, grounded in European thought that black was a colour of sin and death ..." (14). That grounding might have been provided by the atrocities claimed to have been committed by the black rulers and citizens of Egypt. What is contained in the Bible should certainly be less than what must have been relayed orally by distressed prisoners of war that the Jews in diaspora were. Western civilisation spreading from this region – the Greeks and then the Romans – also provided a good opportunity for the spread of these anti-black feelings which had a basis which may now be adjudged unjustifiable even though perfectly

defensible in those days by those whose ancestors were victims of the black (Egyptian) atrocities.

We must emphasise that our inferences about the relationship between the attitudes (or thoughts) towards black people and the Jewish rendition of their experiences in Egypt are hypothetical and conjectural. But, anti-black feelings have spread round the world. Black people are discriminated against by virtually all other peoples of the world. The discrimination has been perpetuated by the Western world to justify the slave trade which was forced on a weakened and defenceless black people later.

As noted by the Black Renaissance Movement

"Blackness, right from ancient times has always evoked a degree of fear, even scorn and a good amount of mysticism. Both the Bible and Koran, ... are unanimous in attributing the black human pigmentation to Noah's curse, thus portraying ... the wearer to external damnation. The Greeks devoted considerable time to finding an explanation for why some species are black..., it is significant that no such exercise was thought necessary to explain whiteness ... blackness has always been regarded by non-black races as a deviation from the human norm ... Ancient India condemned the dark skinned Pariahs to the ignoble caste of Untouchables. Ancient China, while it tolerated slavery, generally restricted its victims to criminals and other undesirable citizens. Yet such courtesies were denied the dark skinned barbarians of the Southern Islands. They were apparently criminal enough by the very darkness of their skin, (BRM, 1970:13, 14). The Arabs circumvented Islam's noble intolerance of slavery by characterising the black people as "a docile race only fit to be slaves" (See in addition, Genesis, Ch. 9, Davies 1966 and Simons, 1961).

As Banton and Harwood (1975) rightly observed "It is possible that writers and readers were unconsciously afraid that they themselves would indulge in frightening forms of ... license if they were to relax their hold upon themselves and assuaged themselves by attributing to Africans what they feared in themselves" (p.15). It might not have been recently that the black person was used as the scapegoat for assuaging fears. It is now necessary to examine how the black person who achieved the height of civilisation in Egypt and laid the foundation for the developments in science and technology that had taken place since then has gone down the ladder to be at the bottom.

6. The Tragedies of Black People

One interesting thing about the Exodus was the complete movement of a people. All Jews – men, women, children, animals, artefacts and all their possessions - left Egypt for the promised Land (Exod. 12:38). They were able to keep their customs intact. They left with their educated people, their priests, etc. Their religion, educational system, history and whatever they learnt from Egypt, they were able to take along with them. Their version of history has survived without any challenge whatsoever from the victims of this history or from any serious intellectual source.

(a) Fragmented Departure from Egypt. In contrast, black people moved out of North Africa in chaos and in small groups. It appears that the various group leaders, whatever form of education, history or technology that was coming with them quickly got lost in the journeys downwards. While the Israelites had the advantage of Moses who must have been highly educated and versed in the various religions in Egypt, the various groups of black people that migrated from North Africa had no people to continue the traditions, customs or religion in existence where they had come from.

For example, the Yorubas must have had contact with the civilisation of North Africa but most of what they knew must have been lost. The content of the '*Iledi*' in Yoruba traditional religion is suspected to be the remnants of the parchment being brought by their leaders that did not get as far as the settlements that were later founded by the surviving migrant Yoruba populations (Johnson, 1921).

(b) Slavery, Violence and Dehumanization. The black person's first problem, therefore, was the disorderly movement of groups from the original settled civilisations. The second major problem was slavery. Defeated and routed by the invading Arabs, black people were pressed southwards and they must have settled in smaller settlements and militarily weaker than their original formations which was an evidence of the deterioration in the conditions of the people.

The Arabs by a mixture of religious zeal and adventure continued their forays down south and captured black men who they sold into slavery to the elite of their societies and the black women for sexual pleasures. The Trans-Saharan slave trade undertaken by the Arabs was not as embracing as the Trans-Atlantic slave trade that emerged after the 'discovery' of America. The need for plantation hands in the Americas and the West Indies was perhaps the greatest disturbance of the black people in Africa South of the Sahara. It is estimated that between fifteen and twenty million human beings were exported between 1451 and 1870 (Oloko, 1993).

Both Trans-Saharan and Trans-Atlantic slave trades required the use of violence which disrupted large areas where people had settled down to organised life. Captured people were sold and became other people's properties. In the absence of adequate means of transportation, human wastage was incurred in the transportation of people across the forests, grasslands, and the seas. Another consequence was inter-ethnic conflicts which were fomented to create opportunities for the slave traders to capture black slaves. The journeys to the coasts of the Atlantic and across the Atlantic itself were difficult and costly in lost lives for the captured slaves.

The violence for the capture and the violence involved in the journey to the seas and across the seas traumatised both the slaves and those who escaped capture. In the plantations, people were dehumanised and deprived of self-identity; languages were destroyed, names obliterated and human dignity was denied. Slaves were bred like chickens and branded like cattle for the slave markets which were very similar to cattle markets.

(c) Depopulation. For the black person in Africa South of the Sahara, the consequences were depopulation of the productive and innovative group, devastation of productive land and the loss of valuable property all of which would have formed the capital base for economic and social development. These led to food shortages and famine which further reduced the population of black communities. In addition, there was retrogression in development, massive population displacements, permanent inter-ethnic hostilities that have lasted till today. Black people developed a sense of temporariness as invasions and inter-ethnic wars led to movements from one place to the other. Most importantly, there was the emergence of a sense of psychological inadequacy, shame of defeat, a sense of inferiority, loss of historical perspective and self-hate.

Slavery became uneconomical with the industrial revolution and the trade died but not before it had created a wealthy class in Europe and laid the foundation for the economic, scientific, social and technological development of the Americas. The slave trade gave way to trade in goods to service the new industries that emerged in Western Europe and later in the Americas. There were needs for raw materials and markets for the manufactured products. Competition among the traders from the different countries of Europe rendered profit making a bit difficult. European countries then divided the continent of Africa among themselves in 1888 in Berlin for colonisation which was meant to make their traders better protected against other Europeans and emergent Africans so that their trade became more profitable.

(d) Colonialism. Colonisation was just a little more humane form of slavery. Common to them were exploitation, devastation and dehumanisation. The master-servant relationship between the colonial master and the colonial subject resulted also in psychological inadequacy. In the case of colonialism, inferiority complex was induced by the colonialists to facilitate exploitation. Self-hatred and displaced aggression are often associated with the helplessness of oppressed people (Fanon, 1967).

(e) Neo-colonialism. Colonisation denied the subjects of any rights whatsoever. The political and economic systems were controlled by the colonial powers. The socio-cultural system was influenced and manipulated by the colonialists to ensure the permanent existence of collaborators in the colonised countries who would also be psychologically dependent. Political freedom was granted to give the elites the opportunity to "govern" themselves. The leaderships emerging therefrom are usually the collaborators and those who accepted the colonial socio-economic and cultural ways as superior to the native ones. A consequence is the non-existence of any meaningful departure from the way things were being done during the days of colonisation. This so-called *neo-colonial system* is a disguised system that thrives on the consequences of slavery and colonialism.

The net result of slavery, colonisation and neo-colonialism for Africa has been appropriately summarised thus:

"Africa became a collection of amorphous enclaves under the tutelage of different colonial masters, each enclave in turn consisting of amorphous individuals held together only by their mutual allegiance to a common master" (BRM, 1970:18–19).

Black people have thus been victims of what happened in their original home in Egypt, conquests, expulsions from bases, disorderly migration, non-survival of the elite/ leaders of migrations, loss of socio-cultural traditions, religions and beliefs, Trans-Saharan Arab-led slave trade, the massive European Trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism ensured the wretchedness of black people on the continent of Africa. The stigma of slavery, the dehumanisation, destruction of identity, disgraced, dispersed, antagonised communities, self-rejection, as well as a guilt driven discrimination secured the putting down of black people inside and outside Africa.

BLACK PEOPLE AND OTHERS

1. What the World Owes to Egypt

The prejudices against black people deriving from the rise and collapse of the Egyptian empire coupled with the great search for the justification of the evils of the slave trade have kept all other black people in other parts of the world at the bottom of the ladder of humanity, thus becoming joint victims of the actions of other people. The black people of Africa, the descendants of their exported brothers and sisters, the dark skinned Indians in Asia, the black people of Australia, New Zealand and Papua are discriminated against and have been exploited, deprived, brutalised and rendered helpless on account of the colour of their skins. Their achievements have been denied and expropriated, their contributions have been copied without acknowledgement. So it has been that the novel idea of monotheism, the temple practices and liturgies from ancient Egypt and her social order have been claimed by other races.

The Jews left Egypt with all they learnt. Their soldiers from the Egyptian army must have trained the desert warriors. There has been a connection among the white empires that succeeded Egypt sharing all that they found in Egypt. Greece conquered Egypt and took full advantage of Egyptian civilisation – the arts, crafts, science and all. The Roman Empire took over from the Greek civilisation. There is no doubt that the Egyptian civilisation has been passed on to us through these same sources. As noted somewhere "Through the Phoenicians, the Syrians and the Jews, through the Cretans, the Greeks and the Romans, the civilisations of Egypt passed down to become part of the cultural heritage of mankind (Durant 1954:216 – 217). The world is still to find out the science that enabled the Pyramid builders of Egypt to carry huge rocks to such magnificent heights on the Pyramids.

2. The Other People

(a) The White People. The white man has dominated world history since the Roman times. The Dark Ages, the Medieval Times and the last few hundred years have been a world dominated by white civilisations – Spanish, English, Prussian, Hungarian etc. A

series of wars in the second millennium culminating in the first and second European wars forced on the world from 1914 to 1918 and 1939 to 1945 respectively were the fallouts of their struggles for relevance. The white man's supremacy can be traced to Macopolo's discovery of the gun powder from China. The road to the atomic bomb, space travel and the mission to Mars has put the white man on the top of the ladder of human developments which has been used to dominate and exploit the other races of the world especially the black race.

(b) The Chinese People: The Chinese, after the humiliation of the Opium Wars (Kroos and Gilbert, 1972) and the dehumanisation that followed, succeeded through the Revolution of 1949 and the leadership of Mao Tse Tung to redeem the image of the Chinese by joining the Nuclear club. We must remember that just before the 1949 revolution, the white man reserved the same toilet in public places for dogs and Chinese. But today, the Chinese talk on equal terms and even able to warn almighty America not to interfere in the matter of Taiwan which the Chinese describe as a renegade province.

(c) The Indians, Pakistanis and Japanese. Just before the close of the last century, the Indians and Pakistanis joined the Nuclear Club. The CNN showed the jubilation of Indians and Pakistanis all over the world on the achievement of the two countries, despite the so-called poverty of their peoples. The Japanese had shown during the 1939 – 1945 war that they were not in any way inferior. After their defeat, they have since shown their mastery of modern technology by building the strongest economy in the world (Cyril, 1965).

(d) Effects of the Successes of the other People. We can see then that successive white civilisations raised people of white skins to the pinnacle of the world and the United States of America has ensured that the prominence is maintained. Technological conquest ensured military superiority, domination and exploitation of other races, the highest level of economic development, the highest standard of living and the proudest citizenry that white countries have ever had. The Chinese no longer share toilets with dogs any where in the world. Japanese used to be classified as 'coloured' in apartheid South Africa. This was quickly revised in the 1960's when the Japanese technological breakthrough convinced the South African racists that the Japanese could not be second class citizens anywhere in the world. With the achievements of the Indians and Pakistanis, no other race can now afford to discriminate against them or ill-treat their citizens anywhere.

BLACK IMPOTENCE AND REMEDIES

1. The Black Experience

Of the major skin pigmentations only the black skinned people have not achieved a modern technological breakthrough. They are the only ones still colonised by any adjective used e.g. neo-colonialism. They are the only ones still discriminated against. If that were all our problems, solutions would be easy.

Our experiences have been so devastating that too many black people have a negative image of themselves. We are thus driven to varying degrees of self-rejection. We, men and women, bleach our skins to look like white, straighten our hairs for them to look like the hairs of other races, we imitate white people in our dresses, eating habits and do such other things to manifest our self rejection and affirmation that whiteness and the features of people of non-black skin colour are better than and superior to blackness and other black features.

In our present circumstances, what do we do? We have seen that the United States of America leads and protects the interests of white skinned people all over the world. Japan, by her world-wide economic power and potential military power protects all Japanese people spread all over the world as a result of the limited land space and natural resources back home in Japan. China is now strong enough to protect Chinese and Chinese interests all over the world including the forging of one China by the unification of Taiwan to the mainland, if need be, by force. Indians and Pakistanis all over the world can now command the respect of other people, thanks to the achievements of their countries. Jews in modern diaspora are adequately protected by the State of Israel, which has not joined the Nuclear Club but is accepted as a potential member. Egypt and Iraq are competing to qualify to be leaders and protectors of the Arabs. For black people, there is no leader now. As we noted before, if the concentration of black people is the sole criterion for the leadership of black people and the protection of their interests many countries could qualify.

2. Possible Sources of Help

The countries that have these black people have kept them poor, ignorant, powerless and helpless. Along with few countries in Africa, there ought to be the possibility of rescuing the black people of the world.

(a) The United States of America. The United States of America is a white country with a history of brutal black enslavement, a gruelling civil war over the enslavement of black people, a history of racial bigotry, and a sense of historical support for racist regimes in Southern Africa as well as racial guilt (BRM, 1970) is not likely to be able, even if willing to elevate black people. From estimates and projections, there could be over one hundred and twenty million black people in the USA, Canada, Mexico, South America and the Caribbean Islands (Ojior, 1997) but they cannot now by themselves do much. If black Americans had been empowered as other racial groups and nationalities had been, despite their justifiable anger against Africa for making the slave trade possible by selling her children to other people for enslavement, they might have willingly rescued the black race whose powerlessness, impotence and discrimination they share. The indignities, self denial and hatred, the world's rejection of blackness and the corresponding humiliation black people face all over the world are based only on the colour of their skin.

The empowered European nationalities in the United States who are all white skinned, facilitated the Marshall Plan that rebuilt Europe after the 1939 – 1945 war. The empowered Jews in America facilitated the creation of the State of Israel and provided a

Prime Minister, ensured massive continued American support for Israeli's military superiority in the Middle East and an American guarantee of preventing Israel's military defeat. It is the same American Jews that secured massive war reparations to Israel from Europe. Recently, the World Jewish Lobby, mainly funded from America, forced an Austrian Party leader to resign because he had made a statement uncomplimentary to Jewish interests. NATO's interventions in Yugoslavia were engineered by empowered American Slavs and the world focus on Chechnya is the handiwork of empowered American Chechnyans. America would not even dare to empower black people for fear that a free black people could seek revenge.

(b) Brazil. Brazil has become a leading economic power in Latin America with a substantial black population. They are even said to form a majority in one of the states of the country i.e. the State of Bahia. Brazil has very strong cultural and political ties with Portugal which until recently was the last colonial power in Africa. Not only did Brazil support Portuguese racist colonial policy and war in Africa, she strongly supported apartheid South Africa.

It is unlikely that such a country would give too much recognition to its own black population. Black people are not encouraged to be proud of their colour and they form the bulk of the Brazilian poor and their state (of Bahia) is said to be the poorest in the country and situated in the least fertile part of the country. She would not, therefore, be able or willing to help in raising the status of black people in the world. The United States of America and Brazil are outside the continent of Africa the ancestral home of most black people.

(c) The Republic of South Africa. Within the continent, the Republic of South Africa and Nigeria currently stand as possible candidates for the leadership and protection of the black world. They both possess the human and natural resources to be able to lead the black world. The Republic of South Africa had been practically independent of British colonial rule for nearly a hundred years. It has the largest proportion of white people in her total population on the continent of Africa. From the late 1940's she developed a system of government based on separate racial development strategies for the minority white population and the majority black population with other races. The system called *apartheid* concentrated all political power in the hands of the white skinned people as black people were denied the right to even vote.

The political power was used to corner all economic resources for the white community, while a system of brutal violence was unleashed on blacks to maintain the political system and economic privileges for the white population. The Western world of the United States of America, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Brazil and Portugal armed South Africa to effectively suppress black agitation. They provided her with economic aid to ensure a standard of living for white people comparable to most other white countries and maintained an economic policy that sustained the *apartheid* economy.

South Africa now free has a formidable armed forces built from a combination of the freedom fighters of the African National Congress during the Liberation Struggle and the South African Army which was one of the best trained and probably the best equipped army in Africa, South of the Sahara. The economy also has one of the best infrastructures and an industrial base available anywhere. Unfortunately, the white community neglected the education, training and welfare of other races in the country. But the white population is well educated and adequately trained for an industrialised economy. The ill-equipped majority black people now have to be properly educated and trained to be active participants in the economy.

The Western World which now includes some parts of the European portion of the old Soviet Union could have preferred the black leadership to come from the Republic of South Africa. In the first place, they (white people) could claim it for the minority white people who still control the economy of South Africa. This would suit them for they still cannot believe that black people could achieve anything on their own.

Secondly, it could also retrospectively justify their investments in apartheid which would be claimed to provide the foundation for the country's ability if it were to save the black world. In our view, it would be undesirable for the black world to be redeemed by a country like South Africa. Even though it could be a worthy compensation for the over a century of brutalisation of black people in their own country, such a redemption cannot be decidedly black in content and intentions. The interests of the white powerful minority could reduce the completeness of the redemption. The black world would still owe part of its redemption to the very forces that bastardised us.

(d) Nigeria. Nigeria is the only acceptable country to restore the dignity of the black person. Her enormous human and natural resources place her in a position to redeem the black race. The black world needs an authentic self salvation. Nigeria is a genuine black country to debunk the white people's pathological desire to put the black person down. Such an action is necessary to justify white brutality and dehumanisation of black people in slavery and colonisation. Despite our abundant resources and the world acclaim of our ingenuity we have so far failed to provide the leadership to propel black people to their rightful position. The success story required by black people can come from Nigeria and it will be authentic, indigenous and pride-worthy. Infact, the world, at least the black world and genuine friends, expect Nigeria to lead the black world. Nigeria, therefore, cannot afford to fail.

Nigeria's population of over one hundred and twenty million is not only a measure of a large country but also on evidence of potentiality for rapid and successful economic and technological development. We should be able to get the best in all fields – football, music, science, technology, management and the like – from our large population. What is needed is the domestic leadership to bring out our best to be used for preparing the country to take its place in the history of black people, for the human resources requirements can be easily sourced.

Secondly, a large population is a potential market which industries can serve. In the economic development of Europe and America, large populations formed the basis of industrial growth. If our economic policies take into consideration our need for internal development, we could encourage our domestic industries to serve our markets while foreign investors could be assured of a market. It is our population that has made us the largest market for used cars in the world. A thoughtful economic policy could provide a very good market for a viable automobile industry. We have noted that we are the largest market for electricity generating sets in the world. A responsible economic policy could have exploited it to establish an appropriate industry. We have allowed European, Japanese and South Asian manufacturers to base their production plans on the growth of our population for their automobile, generating sets and water pumps manufacturing industries. We could exploit these domestic markets ourselves instead of creating jobs and economic growth for others by our consumption.

Another importance of our population is the dynamism and diversity. The different peoples may have become a melting pot and our differences may be disappearing but the uniqueness of the Bini, Epira, Efik, Esan, Ezon, Fulani, Hausa, Ibibio, Ibo, and Yoruba, provides a wonderful blend of human beings for the industrial psychologist to choose from. Such a variety has been the strength of the United States and which she is strengthening by her immigration policy. When we become sufficiently self-confident, we shall need to mix up more by bringing back home the descendants of our kith and kin who were taken away to the Americas and the Arab world as well as opening up other country to other African peoples to join as members.

Our population aside, we have the material resources – oil, gas, coal, iron ore, etc. – at present being exploited by foreigners for their own benefit. What little benefit we ought to get as a people are being stolen and stashed away in foreign countries. Primitive capital accumulation took place at different stages of the development of the present advanced countries by the group Karl Marx called *bourgeoisie*. Unlike our bourgeoisie, the capital so accumulated was invested in their economies. For example, the Kennedys, Rockefellers, Carnegies, Fords and others invested (whatever they got) in the United States of America. If we had the loot that had been taken from our common share of our economy, we would not have been bothered by the current foreign debt burden that chokes our budgets every year.

Even if we were to forget the past and hence forward plan to prevent not only pilfering but also unprofitable public and private foreign investments and reinvest our earnings in our economy, we should soon be on the way to seek to lead the black world. It is here necessary to warn that our resources are vanishing and non-replaceable. Countries had mineral resources and have been completely exploited. New Castle in Britain now has no coal anymore and we do now carry coal to Newcastle! Oloibiri, our first oil town is a wasteland now. The advanced countries preserve their oil and gas while we export our oil and flare our gas. The advanced world threaten us with developing alternatives to oil admonishing us to exploit fast and reap the current financial benefits derivable from our oil. If this were a wise advice, America would not be preserving her known oil resources

despite the high prices. We should be weary and seek to manage our resources with many generations ahead in mind.

Our natural resources are at present being exploited for pittance and for the benefits of our oppressors. Our vast arable land lies waste and our highly trained human resources are under utilised, underemployed or not even employed at all and are drained to Europe, America and Asia We need an internal leadership to galvanise these resources to enable Nigeria put the black race in its proper place and give back to the black people their dignity and pride.

THE ASSIGNMENT

1. Providence in Nigeria's Emergence

Nigeria and Nigerians must recognise the enormity of their assignment. The 1914 amalgamation of Nigeria might have been a mistake, it might have been done to serve the interests of the British; the failure of the attempted secession of Biafra might have been unpalatable to many; but, providence has created and sustained Nigeria as a political entity in the world probably for a purpose. If we human beings made a mistake, nature did not. The mission laid down for Nigeria is just being manifested – *to lead the black person back to greatness.*

To be successful, Nigerians must be made aware of the mission and why it is our destiny to achieve. We must all be made to understand the enormity and the sacrifices required for the attainment of the objective. The black world requires a country that will be successful culturally, militarily, politically, socially, technologically, and – infact, in all spheres of life. Black people require a country where they can run to if persecuted anywhere on the globe. They want to know that there is a country that can say NO to an ill-treatment of a black person or country by any power in the world. They want a country that could ask questions at the United Nations about black people in East Timor, Papua, in Indonesia, Haiti, the United States, Great Britain, Cuba, Russia or anywhere else. There should be a country that would be concerned about a black person being killed in New York, denied any right in Australia, New Zealand or Southern India. The Sudan should be afraid to commit genocide in Southern Sudan because the victims are black. Indonesia should think twice before taking over East Timor again. Monsoon floods in Southern India, hurricane in the West Indies or cyclone in Mozambique and Madagascar should be the concern of a Black Country with the ability to make a difference in the sufferings of the people in those places because they are black. There ought to be a Black Country that could put an end to a senseless civil war in any Black Country such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo or Sierra Leone.

As we have noted before (Akerle 1965, 1976, 1977, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1998) political leadership is part of the society and like every other leadership, can only be part of the society. The type of awareness needed by Nigeria and Nigerians to be able to embark on the enterprise of liberating the black world must be cultivated and imbibed by all.

"Black people cannot change prejudices of other races or the zeal with which they want to subjugate us, we can however negate their machinations. Since we cannot make them love us, we should be able to render their hatred inconsequential. If we are unable to persuade them to respect us, we must be able to force them. To do this, black people must put together what slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism have put asunder. They (black people) must build a viable and formidable power centre, revive and strengthen creditable and useful black institutions and inspire respect for black values" (BRM, 1970:19).

2. The Leadership Role

Leadership is about influencing the actions and behaviours of other people. Leadership models derived from existing literature may not be too useful for our purpose. Leaders like Kwame Nkrumah, Mandela, Julius Nyerere, Adegoke Adelabu, Thomas Sankara and Obafemi Awolowo may provide us with the model we need. These people identified some fundamental needs of the people they wanted to lead. They committed themselves completely to satisfying that need after they had successfully convinced the followership of the importance of that need. Kwame Nkrumah identified genuine independence as different from the United Gold Coast Convention's (UGCC) phoney freedom. Mandela would rather die in Robben Island jail than accept any conditional or incomplete freedom for his people. Julius Nyerere committed his life to the freedom and unity of the people of his country. Adegoke Adelabu (a.k.a. *Penkele Mess*) and Thomas Sankara descended to the level of their followerships before they could lead. Awolowo identified education and convinced the followers that it was the road to progress and committed himself to its attainment.

Perhaps, the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt realised the need to remain ahead and convinced the citizenry to follow. The builders of Benin Moats should have convinced their subjects of the importance of protection from external attackers. In all these cases, successful leadership involved

(a) the identification of a fundamental need of the society.

- the leader must convince the followership of the importance and relevance of the need; and
- the leader must be seen to be selflessly committed to the attainment of the goal or objective.

It must be noted that the successful leader is seen as being part of the society, i.e. he or she must be perceived as being similar to the people to be led (Akerele, 1978). It is well known that similarity between the sender of a message and the receiver is a potent force in believability.

In this black enterprise, therefore, there are important preliminary steps that must be taken. The identification of the fundamental need is what we are trying to do here – *that is that the Black Person needs a protector and that Nigeria is the best qualified country*

to provide that protection. We also need to convince Nigerians that the identified need is paramount to their interests now and the future. Finally, we should be able to suggest how the leadership could be effective.

3. Common Black Identity

As a first step, the black society requires a positively directed black consciousness (BRM, 1970:23) which does not connote any chauvinism, ethnocentrism or separatism but a healthy acceptance of blackness and the required responsibilities and obligation towards the black cause. It rejects all forms of negativism by black people against blackness such as skin bleaching, hair straightening, artificial speech forms, cosmetic surgery to disfigure black features and contrived inter-racial marriages meant to reduce the blackness of the next generations, internationalisation of simple problems by the black aristocracy and intellectuals who resort to esoteric philosophies to divest themselves of any responsibilities for seeking solutions.

4. Crystallisation of the Commonness

Because of the heterogeneity of the black race, we need also to crystallise the essential components that constitute the common denominators of the diverse traditions, histories and cultures such that they form the basis of a common heritage. Therefore, our educational system must transmit these essential components to the black child to enable him or her think black throughout adult life. 'Black people' have been enjoined to "...identify spontaneously with one another share common loyalties and feel committed to a common purpose" (BRM 1970:29)

The values and traditions of black Africa and black people need to be evaluated so that only those that will contribute to the rapid realisation of black liberation will be retained. The black race must learn from the experiences of China, India, Pakistan and the Jews. After the revolution of 1949, China did away with feudalism or any tradition that detracted from the equality of the human being. India and Pakistan quietly retired all their feudal lords for democratic and truly republican societies. Religion was used to divide the people of the Indian subcontinent. Happily, the largest unit, India, has remained a multi-religious state. Religion is also being exploited in Nigeria to divert attention from Nigeria's urgent assignment.

There is equally need to forge a black identify. This involves the development of a high degree of cohesion amongst the various black people such that there will be an instinctive identification of one member of the race with all other members. But this requires a process of an inclusive self-definition, which presents one to oneself as the arch type of the entire race (BRM, 1970:25 – 28). The world's powerful media are owned by the other races who dictate the black values to be projected. Only light skinned, thin bodied girls with processed hairstyle and Western oriented are allowed on the screen. Black actors take back seats, black faces are only flashed even when they are the principal figures in an event. The recent Miss Black Africa competition is a step in the right direction. We must have more of such competitions to promote authentic black values.

Refugee Jews from Europe during the 1939-45 war were discriminated against in New York and Florida among other places in the United States of America. By dint of hard work, racial consciousness and pride, the Jews bought up apartment houses, in New York and resort centres in Florida to defeat anti-Semitism of the Anglo Saxon Americans of the east coast. Now, no politician, no medium (print or electronic), religious leader or any other public figure in America can disparage the Jews or the State of Israel without immediate punishment - thanks to the power of the Jewish communities in America. Black People must learn to turn such discriminations to opportunities as the Jews have done all over the world.

5. Devotion to the Race

Black people also need to cultivate a complete individual and collective devotion to the black race. Devotion is expressed in the form of unswerving loyalty to the race, conversion of general black goals to personal goals and commitments. This makes possible the suppression of personal goals in favour of the general goal in the event of conflict (BRM, 1970:31). It is this type of loyalty and devotion that enable people to serve the common goal at the expense of the personal advantages. Bribery and corruption can easily be fought if black people were to cultivate the right type of loyalty and devotion to the race.

6. Nigeria's Leadership Experience

As once more noted by the Black Renaissance Movement in 1970, "Even with the awakening of positive black consciousness, the successful cultivation of a racial identity, a rejection of impeding values and the arousal of the fiercest possible sense of loyalty and devotion among the citizenry, it is doubtful if 'the black cause' can get very far unless it is blessed with a dedicated and responsible leadership" (p. 38). Leadership in black countries and communities have been problematic. It is a direct result of the experience of the black people. Their weak economic bases, teleguided (after being trained and armed) by their colonial masters, so-called independent black countries have hardly had the opportunities to exercise real and independent power in the countries they are supposed to lead. This could be one of the reasons, which could account for the frequent misuse of the power at their disposal (BRM, 1970).

Besides, in situations where there is a low level of consciousness in the society, absence of loyalty and dedication, lacking self-respect and without any basis for racial pride, the black leader does not feel compelled to act responsibly since in addition there is no sense of identity to suggest that more than the individual leader is involved in misbehaviour and the consequences. But the entire black race is involved in leadership misbehaviour. Black leadership requires "an impersonal, selfless and dedicated" (p.39) people who are "attuned to the needs of the black masses, seeking neither personal fame nor private fortunes, emboldened by the righteousness of the black cause but humbled by (their own) limitations" (ibid.) The right black leadership must be fearless but cautious, unbending in its determination, yet flexible in its approach. It must eschew any special privileges, avoid even the appearance of unethical behaviour, and inspire others to sacrifice through

its own examples" (ibid.:39). Like Marcus Garvey, we recognise that "it is so hard, so difficult to find men and women who will stick to a purpose, who will maintain a principle for the worth of that principle, for the good of that purpose, and if there is a race that needs such men and women in the world today, God Almighty knows, it is the race to which we are members" (ibid. 39).

(a) Induced Misbehaviour: It is clear that Nigeria is a very long way from the position from which to attempt to play this destined role of leading the black world to freedom, pride and regained glory. We strongly believe that irresponsibility in the leadership in the black world (with few exceptions) including Nigeria, is largely involuntary. Their helplessness and pauperism apart, our enemies callously encourage the misbehaviour of our largely unstable leaders to prove the point made by Arthur Lee and Rousselot de Surgy that "there was not a Negro from the highest king to the lowliest slave who would not sell his wife and children for some alcohol" (BRM, 1970:49).

For, if we may ask, who provided Bokassa with the funds with which he crowned himself Emperor in a most lavish ceremony to commit all his atrocities? Who created Idi Amin in Uganda? Whose interests was Mobutu serving? He was the 'saviour' of the Congo from the "evils" of communism which Lumumba wanted to bring. His wealth was invested in the countries which are today the creditors of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Who helped to get rid of Kwame Nkrumah and Sankara? Where have all Nigerian looters kept their loot? Was it not the United States of America that created Savimbi of Angola especially under Reagan? Are the Diamond dealers of Europe and America not responsible for still sustaining him? Liberian and Sierra Leonean crises were also the handiwork of European and American fortune seekers from diamond and ammunition.

(b) Failed Leadership: Black leadership in all aspects of life have behaved alike. They harboured no shame because they lack racial consciousness, racial loyalty and commitment as a result of which they have no racial pride. The political leadership has demonstrated crass ineptitude and has been a complete disappointment to the black masses all over the world. But our leaders have not been better.

i. Religious: Apart from Brazil where the Catholic Church attempted to incorporate Yoruba religious beliefs into the Christian liturgy, e.g. Yemoja for the Blessed Virgin Mary and Esu for Angel Gabriel, black religion, like every other thing black, was assigned to Satan and fetishism by our converters. They easily forgot (or perhaps conveniently) that Christmas was not originally a Christian festival but adopted by the early church to convert rural Romans who were the original users of the festival for their traditional worship. In the Catholic Church black saints have been claimed by our same white converters. Was Albertus Magnus a Nubian or German for example? What of St. Maurice? St. Augustine was for many years denied his Africaness. Nothing black has found favours with the religions of our oppressors.

Christianity and Christians as we have shown have discriminated greatly against blackness. The Eastern Orthodox churches have accommodated the national peculiarities of the countries of the Orient e.g. Greek, Russian Serbian, etc., but the Western church

has refused to extend that practice to blacks and Africa. Our over enthusiastic Christian priests, especially the Pentecostal leaders, have never realised the blackness of the Egypt and the Egyptians of Biblical times whom they malign so regularly. They also forget that the Jews were not and are not Christian.

Islamic leaders fail to see that Islam was and is basically a nationalistic device to preserve the Arab race and culture. The Hajj was devised to divert attention from the Judaic practice of worshipping once a year in Jerusalem and prevent the early Christian Church, dominated by Jews, from capturing Arabia and introducing non-Arabic cultures as the Greeks tried to do in the area earlier on. Islam is generally intolerant of anything non-Arabic. Islam may be tolerant of all people but the Muslims in Egypt, Mauritania, Sudan, Morocco and Tunisia have not found better use for black people than slaves. Sudan and Mauritania routinely decimate black communities and sell black captives into slavery to their Arab brothers within and outside Africa.

ii. Judicial: Our judicial leaders have not been different. Christians and Muslims kill each other over the adoption of foreign legal systems even though both are products of Nigerian traditional laws. No one is protesting the destruction of the traditional legal system. We have Faculties of Law where English and Islamic laws are taught. One is based on English traditions inherited from the Roman Empire which must have drawn heavily on Egyptian legal system via Greece while the other is based on Arabic oral traditions deriving probably from the same sources as the Judaic system and both of which must owe a lot to ancient Egypt. We hope that soon, someone will fight for the black traditional law, which is authentically ours. Our lawyers have no room for our traditional laws. Forty years after our independence, we still do not see anything wrong with English medieval court dresses that were designed to promote the sale of wool. Our traditional laws may be better than the English common law and the Arabic Sharia, if only our lawyers find out.

iii. Business: Our business leaders have not done better than their counterparts in other departments. They have been experts in leading black people into consuming other peoples' products. We are masters in knowing the qualities of other people's products. We are probably the world's largest consumers of generators. Neither NEPA nor the numerous Nigerian entrepreneurs and not even our business leaders, have thought of making generators for this huge market. Our water systems do not work and so every middle class family in the country has at least one pumping machine. Again we do not have any manufacturing outfit in the country to produce water pumps. Our 3:3:6:4 education policy required large quantities of machines for Technology courses which will continue to be needed in the foreseeable future. We imported rather than seek fabricators from which our economy and technologists would have benefited. May the Universal Basic Education not go the same way, Amen.

There appears to be the mortal fear of giving Nigerian names to products made in Nigeria. Only recently have we seen a bathing soap named in a Nigerian language (*Dudu Osun*). All beers made in Nigeria bear foreign names and even the ones that were brewed originally from our brewers' laboratories bear foreign names. Foods made in Nigeria

must bear foreign names to be acceptable. Foreign airlines (not black) from and into Nigeria play their national music, our airlines including our national carrier and other black owned airlines play foreign music into or out of Nigeria.

iv. Academic: Tailors, hair dressers, boutique operators, barbers, mechanics, panel beaters, engineers, surveyors, architects and other professionals are equally guilty of lack of consciousness, commitment and dedication to the black cause. But academics ought to be free from the malaise of black leadership. But they are not. This lecture is being delivered in English and our only Nobel Prize has been won in English. We have certainly more professors of English and French and probably even of Portuguese and Spanish than we have professors of Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba put together. You cannot talk of even a lecturer in Ogoni or Etuno languages for these are not taught beyond primary school if taught at all.

Worse still, we still insult ourselves with the English Language. We have so many negative uses of blackness in the English Language which may have meaning in white environments. A black leg, blackmail, black Saturday, black market, etc. are all negative, but we use them daily and teach our children to use them too. We ought not to. We teach the history our oppressors have taught us. Should anyone still talk of Benin Massacre of 1897, have a memorial grave for the few white people that died disobeying the orders of a King in his own kingdom and no memorial for the thousands of gallant black soldiers who died in defence of their blackness? Who was massacred? We wear academic gowns on suits (now grudgingly over traditional dress) as evidence of intellectualism but of white intellectualism. We only hope that some black intellectual would find out how ancient black intellectuals identified themselves which could at least make us their distant successors different from other races.

v. Political: Black political leadership has also failed us. They have not been able to move away from the colonial political institutions, which they inherited. The English speaking former colonies have migrated between the British parliamentary system of Government and the American presidential system. Their arguments have been around American or Canadian forms of federalism. They have sanctioned colonial boundaries among countries and often within the countries. They have accepted the colonially imposed citizenship that often separates families and ethnic groups. The French-speaking countries are like extensions of France.

We ought to examine our past, pre-colonial structures that could re-assemble our people into natural cohesive groups. We ought to imitate late Kwame Nkrumah's Pan Africanism in designing a Pan-Black citizenship. He rightly saw that all black people had a common destiny. His inclusion of the Arabs in Africa and the limits of size and resources in Ghana could have led to the failure of the experiment. We in Nigeria luckily have the size and resources as well as the opportunity to concentrate on black people all over the world.

If we were lucky to have genuinely black political leadership (civilian or military), the last forty years would have been a wonderful opportunity to build the foundations of a

black power and a universal black unity. Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo almost hit the point in his 1960 Action Group Presidential Address at the Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos when he pointed out that African Arabs had their political bases in the Middle East and that they treated black people in their countries no better than second class citizens. He was too far ahead of his colleagues and the Party rejected the idea and the policy recommendations emanating therefrom. Mobutu Sese Seko, despite his other problems also once proposed an Organization of Black African States. We could, by our actions, have favoured black ambassadors from countries with reasonable black populations such as USA, Great Britain, France, Cuba, Brazil, the Netherlands, etc. Since leadership has not been effective, and lacking direction anyway, at the national level, Nigeria could not have made any shot leading the Black world even though we frequently call ourselves the giant of Africa. Not much has been done to show that we so sincerely aspire.

(c) Followership: There is massive illiteracy in the land. Our people are uneducated and unconscious. They are completely unaware of the black problem. They are economically down trodden, exploited and vulnerable. They are politically docile because their poor economic status opens them up for manipulation. Imported stratification has made them diffident but unduly optimistic of a better tomorrow, which generally encourages the acceptance of the present. They are self-hating and disrespectful of blackness, and in our case, Nigerianness. These must change as well if Nigeria is to move towards the promised land along with the black world.

NIGERIA'S PATH TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE BLACK WORLD

1. Black Success and Black Honour

Nigeria has a responsibility to the black world and to humanity. Because she can, she should remove the black person from the bottom and move him or her to the top. We do not know which should come first. Black success is needed to restore black honour but black honour must be accepted for the possibility of success. Black people did it before even after Egypt, they built other empires and even in the Americas where they were enslaved, they recorded wonderful achievements (Ojior, 1997) and the little opportunity they have been given has enabled them to demonstrate their worth in athletics, the arts, computer sciences, technology, etc. We must organise to crack the nuclear nut or do some other things very spectacular for the black person to raise his or her head up everywhere in the world.

Nigeria, therefore, must put in place measures that could lead to the retrieval of black honour. That is to say, she must become a black power with which all black people in the world can identify. She must do things to ensure that any black man or woman is no longer badly treated just because of the colour of the skin. It is necessary that the Nigerian enterprise must succeed. We must leap through history to provide a place for the multi-national state that we are for the successful Black Country is bound to be multinational. For the success to be possible, we must provide the black person the opportunity to re-awaken genuine black creativity and consciousness of the black cause.

2. The Preliminary Steps

The first leadership task of goal identification should be very clear now. Only a few people can question the fundamental need for black people to throw away the inferiority complex that our recent past has imposed on us and emerge from the abyss which people of other skin colours have put us and discard the accompanying disrespect and ill treatment which we have patiently borne over the years. We are thus perhaps lucky that the need is easily recognisable by the followership and easily proved to be of tremendous relevance to the well being of followership. These functions as we have seen have eluded most black leaders who have, in most spheres of human endeavour, failed to address any fundamental need of the society. Only a few had identified sufficiently fundamental needs to carry the people along. In all the cases, black leaders have been concerned with local needs. Now, we need to address a common black problem which touches all black people in the world. For the role we want Nigeria to play, it is required to evolve a set of qualities that both leaders and followers must share and which will enable them (leaders and followers alike) to acquire the necessary similarity to facilitate acceptance and believability. In other words, there must be some common qualities that the leader must transmit for the followership to accept the message being sent.

3. Qualities to be Cultivated

(a) Responsibility. We must develop a sense of RESPONSIBILITY, i.e. a sense of ACCOUNTABILITY for positions held and resources disbursed. Black pride, dedication and identification to the black race will all demand of us the responsibility we demand of black people. We require it at the individual level from where norms emerge.

The leadership in the black world must be mortally aware of the need for responsibility to the race. It is the type of responsibility that led Jomo Kenyatta to refuse to abandon the Kikuyu cause in Kenya. Nelson Mandela remained in jail for twenty-seven years rather than betray the African National Congress. They felt responsible for the lives and sufferings of those they had called into rejecting colonialism and the virtual slavery of apartheid. They suffered personal deprivations for no visible personal material benefits.

Ian Smith of Southern Rhodesia and the various leaders of South Africa from 1948 pursued their obnoxious policies for the benefit of their race – not their person. Gandhi led the Indian sub-continent to independence and Mao Tse Tung led China in the 1949 revolution while Fidel Castro has given Cuba the same type of leadership that demonstrates the responsibility we envisage. Leadership for a cause should ensure that the leader recognises that the followership, by accepting the leadership, entrusts the resources of the group to the leader in the hope that the pursuit of the cause will be the only purpose for which the resources will be applied.

It is the lack of this sense of responsibility that, among other things, had created leaders that pursued personal goals of power, wealth and influence. Bokassa, Idi Amin, Mobutu, Abacha and the like in Africa as well as Hitler, for example, were all leaders that failed to cultivate the sense of responsibility to know that the resources entrusted to them ought to

be accounted for to those who entrusted them. Leadership, whether acquired by force or by election is held in trust for the people to whom the leader must be responsible.

It was such responsibility that guided Kwame Nkrumah in running the affairs of Ghana. Aminu Kano in his lifetime demonstrated that kind of responsibility and Pa Michael Imoudu is still an example of those who possess the responsibility we preach. The Japanese leaders of the Meiji Restoration and their post-war reconstruction demonstrated the type of responsibility we are talking about. Nigerians at all levels must demonstrate this type of responsibility that is dedicated to the service of the black race rather than the individuals' goals and benefits. The black cause is a worthy cause and should be worth serving and if need be, dying for.

(b) Awareness. The second quality is AWARENESS by which we mean a recognition that blackness of the skin is relevant in the history and future of black people. This recognition is "...a love of self transferred to those with whom one shares a common historical experience and a common destiny." It is "a healthy acceptance of one's self as black and an acceptance of the responsibility and obligations" to other black people (BRM, 1970:23).

Our lack of awareness has led many of us (black people) to deny the existence of the black problem. We fail to recognise that when we talk of "blackmail, black leg, black Saturday, black list", etc. we are actually insulting ourselves. The absence of awareness leads us to ignore the reality of discrimination based on the colour of the skin. Wole Soyinka, the black Nobel Prize winner is an achiever. While Paul Samuelson, a white Nobel winner, will be honoured at every airport in the world, Soyinka has been subjected to humiliation because of the colour of his skin. The landlord or landlady in Europe or America will deny accommodation to ANY black person, the hotel attendant will deny ANY black person service, and a white Judge will assume ANY black person guilty of a crime (McKissick, nd). Awareness of these situations is necessary to prepare us for the task ahead.

Equally important, this awareness will enable us to realise that the black person CAN be successful. With this awareness we will recognise black achievements in the past and those that are current (Ojior, 1997) and emphasise them. Black achievement must be sought out, particularly so in the Americas, where the black name has been completely obliterated to make it impossible to recognise the black person by name. The black Supreme Court Judges and Congressmen and Women, scientists, musicians, athletes, sportsmen and women need to be identified. Tiger Woods, the Joneses, the Smiths, the Jacksons, the Tysons are recognisable at sight not by name. The quality of awareness will ensure that we seek out these achievers and identify with them. We may emulate Chamberlain (1897) who wrote "...race is made by man by the will of the people. Even if it were proved that in the past there never was an Aryan race, we want there to be one in the future...." We want to be able to declare that even if it were proved that all black people were not in the past the same, we want them to be same in the future because of our common experiences. We want to be commonly identified and to be mutually identifiable.

We cannot but refer to the Jews again. The average Jew through the ages has been brought up to recognise him or herself as a member of the chosen race and of the jealousy of all other races. Jews are conscious of anti-Semitism in the world. They are, therefore, required to be successful and every Jew strives to be successful. Black people ought to be aware of their disadvantaged position in the world and strive to be at least one step ahead of competitors from other races. A black mistake is taken as a disaster; so, we must avoid mistakes. Irish and English conflicts are political problems but Yoruba and Ibo misunderstandings are reported in the West as traditional inter-tribal wars. A failure of a company headed by a black man would be because of the black's usual incompetence but if headed by other races, the failure would be because of unforeseen economic circumstances.

Black leaders are advised by non-black experts to misappropriate public funds because the experts benefit by it and give one more proof of black characteristic behaviour. We employ non-black financial experts to reconcile our national debt to their countries of origin. While national and racial awareness makes them reconcile against us, black experts are excluded and the black countries' representative in the committee lacking awareness shares peanuts out of the loot of an unjustifiable national debt. We have so quickly forgotten that awareness of our leaders of yesterday. Kwame Nkrumah required all foreign owned companies in Ghana to have Ghanaian Directors of Finance. To register its anti-apartheid stance, the Action Group government of Western Nigeria banned expatriate public servants from using Western Region's funds to support vacations in South Africa. Neither the private nor the public sector now has policies that promote black awareness. We ought to have.

(c) Power. We must also seek POWER which is the ability to do the things one wants to do without hindrance. While we should do things that do not hurt other people, we need the ability to be able to hurt other people if that is required to prevent these other people from hurting black people. We need to empower the black race economically, technologically, scientifically and militarily to protect black people and black interests all over the world. We need power at home and abroad.

There was no response from the Black world to the Indonesian annexation of East Timor when the black people of East Timor reminded us that they are black people. The OAU ignored the appeal because black people are powerless. The Sudanese Arabs have routinely invaded black southern Sudan and sold captured black people into slavery. They have been engaged in genocidal war against black Sudanese for over twenty years. No black power exists to complain on behalf of black people. Mauritania oppresses her black citizens who originally owned the land of Mauritania. All the black people can do is flee to Senegal. No black power exists to prevent this.

The black man was enslaved by both the Arabs and the Europeans. Black labour was the foundation for American economic development. Wealth from the slave trade and slave labour built the Europeans industrial revolution and modern economic development. No black power exists to demand reparations. Reparations have been paid for the Jews that were senselessly exterminated by Hitler. No black power exists to demand same

treatment for the mega-holocausts of slavery and colonialism. European banks have sought and found the accounts of victims of the holocausts. There is no black power to ask for the return of proceeds of foreign exchange earned by black countries, e.g. coffee, palm produce, cocoa, gold and other minerals from Ghana, Cote de Voire, Nigeria, Kenya, Gabon, the Congos and other black countries during colonisation.

Another incidence of our powerlessness, and a wrong seeking to be corrected, is the recent apology by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, the head of the Roman Catholic Church for the wrongs the Church committed against different peoples of the world. Significantly omitted were the Catholic Church's role in the enslavement of the black people which was championed by Catholic Portugal. We were told in primary school that the first slave to Portugal was actually bought by a Catholic priest. Spain, Portugal and France were active participants and were Catholic countries. Colonisation of Africa was also championed by catholic Europe with the worst recorded atrocities, brutalisations and dehumanisations by Catholic Belgium, Spain and Portugal. Lastly, the Pope blessed the Italian forces that invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia) during the 1939-45 war (BRM, 1970)). There are many more wrongs done to black people that ought to merit a special apology. But since there exists no power to ask, Papal speech writers had no reason to include black people in the apology.

An example of what power can do for a people is the determination of Israel that offences against Jews in the world shall be visited with *merciless justice* to prevent any future reoccurrence. No holocaust criminal has been spared as they have been hunted and arrested around the globe. Lack of power has led us to forget slavery and colonialism so soon. Mugabe and Mandela have been hailed for their forgetfulness of their experiences. We must not be surprised if a future generation of whites in Southern Africa try to dominate black people again. Another black enslavement is a possibility in the absence of any repercussions for those who perpetrated the earlier ones. The difficulties faced by Mugabe in attempting to nationalise stolen land in his country should be a warning. The future of the black race can only be secured by the existence of a black power. Our civilisations – Egypt, Cush, Nubia, Benin, Oyo, Ghana, Songhai, etc. have been bastardised. We need a black power to reclaim our stolen art and other evidences of our past achievements.

To achieve this, we need to harness all our resources, i.e. human, material and spiritual to seek to empower the black person. We have sold much of our birthright. Black countries were deceived into signing a lot of international treaties that were and are against our interests. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ought never to have been signed by any Black Country and certainly not by Nigeria. The World Trade Organisation is meant to ensure that we remain poor and powerless and safeguard the prominence and position of the white world. We need power and we must operate outside these treaties to be able to succeed.

(d) Unity. Finally, the black people of the world need UNITY. Unity is not only strength, it is power. Black people are fragmented and the erstwhile colonial powers and America promote policies that keep black people disunited. Any visitor to the United States can

attest to the strenuous effort by white people to keep black people from Africa apart from their kith and kin in the United States. Our differences are exploited to the full and the same policy is pursued towards black people from Latin America and the West Indies. In Africa, all efforts at continental unity have been frustrated by the machinations of the West. Their mass media is always seeking to ensure that divisive happenings are kept alive. Only inflammatory stories about the Sharia have been carried by them, for example.

Unity is also peace and no non-black person wants peace among black people. Yet, our detractors do everything possible to pursue unity among themselves. If the United States were fifty-one countries instead of fifty-one States, an Organisation of American Unity could have been as ineffective as our Organization for African Unity. The United States recognises the usefulness of unity and thus promotes the Economic Union of the United States, Mexico and Canada. We must remember that the US did not always support the European Economic Community that between 1959 and 1999 metamorphosed into the European Union with a Parliament and Government. The European Union is expanding to Eastern Europe to provide an alternative base of power – economic, scientific, technological and political – to America and the Soviet Union (now the Russian Federation). It is also in the hope that it would be easier for fewer and stronger white powers to unite against China when she comes on the stream of power.

Black unity is compulsory if we are to be able to achieve the other objectives. Black unity is based on the commonness of our cause. It provides a better base for action than ethnicity which has been promoted by Europe. European ethnic groups keep fragmenting, e.g. Scottish, Irish and Welsh in Great Britain which is understandable and manageable because of the emergence of the European Union and which will soon make nonsense of the ethnically-based countries that now exist. In any case, the white people are already at the top. We are at the bottom we need the unity to be able to move up the ladder.

It is regrettable that when other people are uniting in Europe, America and Asia, the only black hope, Nigeria, is being threatened with disintegration. The *Sharia* misunderstanding has been blown out of proportion by the Western Press which is relayed by the local press without sifting or editing. Our policy makers and politicians cannot appreciate the implications of disintegration for the black race. Our colonial masters understood and still understand the threat of a large black country.

The French prevented the emergence of federations in French West and Central Africa. Nyerere offered to delay the independence of Tanganyika to be able to federate with Kenya and Uganda. The offer was rejected by Britain. A federation of the West Indies was frustrated by Britain. Early attempts at continental unity such as Ghana-Guinea, Ghana-Guinea-Mali and Senegal-Sudan (later Mali) were thwarted by the imperial powers.

Clamour for confederation in Nigeria is another evidence of failed leadership and it should be nipped in the bud by realising the benefits of unity. We are recognised at all levels because of our present size and potentiality. We need to expand the union instead

of reducing it. Our leadership must learn to accommodate and live together. Inter-ethnic violence in India, Pakistan, China and Europe have been accommodated; why can't we?

(e) Basis of a Simple Philosophy. These four qualities provide a simple focus for a national and racial philosophy that could guide the evolution of a new Nigerian and black society. Sharing a common philosophy about life, the leadership and the followership could communicate much better. Leadership is facilitated by a more effective communication. As a means of achieving the goal of black respectability and success through Nigerian leadership, other black countries will also need to be persuaded to accept the RAPU philosophy. A sincere pursuit and its success in Nigeria, will make attractive to other people. If Nigeria is able to provide the protection sought for black people, her acceptability as leader of the black world can be assured.

THE NEED FOR DESIRABLE LEADERSHIP

1. The Story So Far

We believe that we have tried to show that the conditions of life of the black people are deplorable and undesirable. We have also shown that the other races or colours have managed to pull themselves up from the bottom. We have tried to suggest the foundations of the problems of black people. We do not intend to hold anyone responsible for our position. What we have tried to show is that historical factors had helped in dismantling the oldest but collapsing black civilisation. We have noted that what the world got from our ancestors are not fully acknowledged if at all.

More importantly, we have postulated that the condition needs to be changed. We identified possible saviours and concluded that only Nigeria could adequately and genuinely save the black world. At every point we have tried to find out how the other colours of human beings have pulled themselves up. We also saw that despite the blessings bestowed on black people, we are the only colour not protected and whose interests could easily be and is disregarded.

We also tried to identify what should be done. We suggested that four things were required to take the black people to the promised land. These are *responsibility, awareness, power* and *unity*. Perhaps, we were able to show as we discussed along that the task is enormous. We also called attention to the lack of desirable leadership to carry this heavy burden.

Leadership for black people requires a group with the wherewithal to make the sacrifices needed for leadership. We had elsewhere (Akerle, 1998) considered leadership in terms of the relationships of people with different levels of authority – but within an organisation. In the black world, it is not the differential levels of authority that qualifies Nigeria to lead. It is that Nigeria has the characteristics to be able to perform the functions of leading black people to the promised land.

2. Desired Leadership in Nigeria

Human and/or material resources ought to be enough for economic development necessary for Nigeria's leadership of the black world. Japan had only human resources to provide the Yellow people the leadership to take a respectable place in the comity of nations. What we have lacked in Nigeria is the desired leadership (Akerle, 1998). In our view, there is no bad or good Politician, Soldier, Pastor or Imam. What we have lacked are black politicians, black soldiers, black pastors and black imams. We have all been people with *black skins and white masks* (Fanon, 1970). We have been brought up to think of ourselves as members of the human race, which is not supposed to be distinguishable based on colour of the skin. But we are wrong, we are black and every other person knows that we are black. It is the criterion by which we are all judged by people of other skin colours. Our desired leadership in all spheres of human endeavour must become black mentally. We must remove the white masks and recognise our blackness in order to enhance it and win for ourselves respectability and honour.

If we agree that the black person was once respectable, had contributed immensely to civilisation, that on falling from power and respectability had fallen to the ground to be trampled upon by every other colour of the human race, even if we disregard the process, then we must recognise that the black person and his or her colour has become associated with evil, backwardness and disrespect. There is need for this position to be reversed by creating the environment for black people to stop rejecting themselves, being ashamed of their blackness and seek respectability instead. The way to this desirable situation requires responsibility, awareness, power and unity by black people. Nigeria is the most qualified country to provide the desired leadership for black people to attain these lofty goals. What must we do as a nation?

3. Removal of Impediments to Total Mobilisation

(a) Ethnicity and Religion. In our view, Nigeria must first recognise this onerous responsibility. The populace must be sensitised for this assignment. Ethnicity and internal competition must be in terms of which ethnic group would contribute the most towards the attainment of the goal of black greatness. We must recognise the issues that are being used to divide us. The white world had recognised the potentiality of Nigeria. At independence, the British ensured that unity would be far from us by encouraging mutual hatred, distrust and false self images, among our different peoples. They assured us that one religion was better than the other while they seek accommodation among all the different religions in their own country. Our elite were trained to be English in every other thing but the colour of the skin.

Our pastors and imams should also be sufficiently understanding especially in the era of religious harmonization that the Catholic Pontiff has embarked upon. The inter denominational disputes that created permanent enmities in Christian Europe, (e.g. English/Irish) and the inter personal disputes that created the antagonisms in the Islamic world but originating in Arabia, should be carefully managed to enable us focus on the fundamental problem of black deprivation. Not many things in the traditional religions are even against the basic tenets of Christianity and Islam. There were holy people among

our traditional religionists. Wholesale condemnation of the traditional religion does not help the black person to explore fully the contents of the traditional religion.

(b) Colonial Educational System. Reports of happenings in our country, on BBC and VOA, always reflect what they want to happen and not what actually happened. Their aims are always to complicate our problems. If we accept our responsibility, then our *educational system*, which should be the main means of socialisation and integration must be reorganised to instil in us the beauty of blackness, the current disadvantageous position of blackness, the worthy past and present magnificent contributions of black people when given the opportunity, the need to change the disadvantaged position of black people and Nigeria's desired role in this regard, to the population and especially the coming generations. We must, therefore, revise our primary, secondary and tertiary curriculum to make Black History compulsory and provide funds for more objective research by **black** scholars into our past, the slave trade and colonialism

(c) Unquestioned White Claims. If we are going to be successful, the campaign must be carried to all spheres of human endeavour. We need to let our doctors know that the so called father of medicine – Hippocrates – came into being many centuries after doctors had been performing complicated operations and mummifying dead bodies in Egypt. Egyptian historians had been recording history before Herodotus styled the father of history, came on the scene. Renowned and famous Egyptian Universities produced the human resources for the Egyptian civilisation from which Greek scholars got their training before the fall of the Egyptian empire. The Roman Empire in similar vein benefited from the Greeks before the demise of Greek influences.

(d) Simplistic Black Intellectualism. We must persuade our academicians to find out how the black intellectuals dressed so that we can design a substitute for the academic gown. We must recognise that modernization should neither be Europeanization nor Westernization as advanced by white intellectuals (Eiseristadt, 1964) and accepted by our own intellectuals without questioning (e.g. Oloko, 1993:9). Above all, we must inform our children that it is not funny for a black person to talk of blackmail, black leg, black sheep or in any other way assign negativity to our colour. Shakespeare must have had fun in creating the Shylock in the *Merchant of Venice* but the Jews do not revel in describing a fallen Jew as a Shylock because that does not describe the best of Jewish characteristics. In the same way, black people should desist from self-insult by the negative use of blackness.

(e) Cheap Imitations. Our electronic media is awash with foreign Nigerians who cannot speak the Nigerian English. Other people seek to be identified by their intonation in speaking another person's language. Both on radio and television, Nigerians speak the English (and often Nigerian) languages with such perfect Americanisms that radio stations in Lagos are hardly different from those in New York. On television, one need first hand knowledge to confirm that speakers are Nigerians. We have even gone to the extent of copying an American Television Station to have on our NTA Network, **EyeWitness News!** Our musicians compete favourably with Americans in teaching us

the American English. All these must change. We must promote and exhibit our blackness – Nigerianness – everywhere and at all times with pride and dignity.

(f) Missed Opportunities to Project Blackness. Foreign airlines used to, and perhaps still do, entertain their passengers with their country's music and menu. Nigerian carriers, including the national carrier, with the possible exception of Okada Airlines when it was operating, entertained passengers with European classical or even pop music. All our airlines serve European food. We imagine that that was their way of demonstrating their civilisation and modernisation. This is absolutely wrong. We need to use every available means to show-case to the world our rich black culture.

Lawyers and judges in Nigeria have faithfully maintained the British tradition of dressing. There is no reason for this. Other countries, e.g. the United States of America, have long modernised these dresses in their own way. We should find local dresses that would better fit our judges and lawyers.

There is much to be said about western medicine in the promotion of good health in the world. China has shown that traditional medicine can contribute immensely to the universal good of a healthy humanity. Christianity and Islam had in the past helped to destroy traditional medical practices by ascribing their efficacies to the power of Satan (mistranslated as Esu in the Yoruba bible, Johnson, 1921; Idowu 1962). We must rise up to the challenge of exploring our traditional medical practices in order to make available to the world those things that are uniquely ours and not available anywhere else. But as long as we are deceived by the propaganda of multinational pharmaceutical companies about our herbal tradition and supported by discredited ignorant fundamentalist religious bigotry, we may fail to help in solving many universal health problems.

(g) Not Creating Stakeholders of Nigerians and Black People. In addition to the massive campaign that is required to enlist the involvement of every member of our society and the drafting of the support of every social, cultural, and professional organisation, Nigeria must consciously seek to mobilise her resources to serve the need of every Nigerian. Every Nigerian citizen at home and abroad must see that the national governments and authorities are resolved to ensure the well being of all. Even if this is not yet assured, the mere genuine and transparently honest positioning of our policies to the achievement can give the hope that the welfare of the citizen is the foundation and priority of the state.

Every Nigerian (and ultimately every black person) should be assured of the protection of the state. No more should a Nigerian be executed by a foreign government or rebel army as was done in Liberia and the culprit going unpunished. The ultimate goal of Nigeria should be to assure every black person of adequate protection from humiliation and ill treatment. Other countries should be aware that Nigeria would not take kindly to a black person being disrespected anywhere in the world. Even America should be aware that every black American is entitled to the protection of a powerful black government.

The United States provides such blanket cover for white people all over the world but especially her citizens. During the Cold War, America would have readily come to the aid of a European country being attacked by the Soviet Union. She went to Stanleyville in the sixties to free some Belgians trapped by a left wing rebel group in the then Congo–Kinshasa. Her (America's) support for the apartheid regime was for the protection of the interests of the white minority in South Africa. But black people are routinely jailed for flimsy reasons and used as guinea pigs, all over the world, black specific diseases are usually left unresearched or given faint attention, black communities are raided by other races, black human rights violations by white people are called civil rights, blacks are enslaved by other races and have to depend on the intervention of non-blacks, black people are denied any rights over their land and above all, black people are denied any dignity in all parts of the world including here at home.

These indignities must be stopped. Nigeria needs to provide a safe haven for black people all over the world. In particular, stateless black people in the Americas and Europe must be given the opportunity to have a country of their own. Polish American, Irish American, Spanish American, Greek Americans etc are no less America than the African Americans but Africa is too large for some one to call home. We never hear of European-Americans, or Asian-Americans. We must seek to be able to **never again** allow a **'Ghana Must Go'** situation. All black people from any part of the world should be provided an automatic home in Nigeria. Those who wish should be entitled to our citizenship. But we must make our citizenship sufficiently attractive to persuade people to seek its responsibilities, obligations and protection. All black people look up to Nigeria for salvation and we need to make every black person a stakeholder in this black enterprise. Modern management knowledge shows that stake holding makes better followers and the job of the leader much easier.

TAKING UP THE CHALLENGE OF BLACK LEADERSHIP

1. Leadership in Management

If Nigeria accepts her inevitable role, and there is no reason why we should not, there is an urgent and compelling need to adopt as our managerial philosophy the internalization of our four cardinal characteristics of Responsibility, Awareness, Power and Unity. By this means, we can manage our country and resources in pursuit of black development and revival. We can learn from the dominance of basic managerial philosophies of other people.

One can deduce from managerial practices that Japan around 1867 i.e. the Meiji Restoration, (Heaton, 1948) was in a hurry to modernize the country to prevent the West from taking over their country. China after the 1949 revolution strove to erase the shame of the defeat in the Opium wars (Heaton, 1948). There is no doubt that western management has sought to maintain western domination of the world and imposition of western capitalist values and customs on everybody in the world (Kroos and Gilbert, 1972). Russia tried unsuccessfully to use the USSR to impose communism on as much of the world as possible.

Leadership is only one of the many managerial functions. It is crucial because it deals with the most important factor of production, i.e. the human being (Mondy and Premeux, 1993). Because the human factor reacts, independent, cannot now be owned legally by another person and so an independent agent, it is important to deal with it in the most careful manner. Leadership is considered the most crucial factor in management but it is not all that there is in management. Our black enterprise will be dependent on the other functions of management to which we must now turn.

2. Visioning

In our management practices, we must have a clear idea of what we want. In our visioning, we must be aware always of our goal to lead the black world to greatness. Having accepted the vision, we should be able to develop a vision statement that graphically and succinctly conveys the ideas of elevating the black world to a position of respectability and the role Nigeria has decided to play in this exercise with our RAPU philosophy at the back of our minds.

3. Goals and Objectives

National goals could then derive from the vision statement that has been accepted. The vision statement could become very useful in the mobilization of the masses. It should be made a household word and if possible, composed into a Black National Anthem which could eventually *replace* national anthems and then be taught right from kindergarten and sung *before* and later in place of the national anthem. The vision cannot be accomplished in a swoop. It follows that parts could be identified for short term attainment. The planning function requires that the vision be broken into manageable bits. For example, the mobilization component could be targeted at different segments of the society. Opinion leaders like teachers at all levels, political office holders and aspirants, students, business leaders and the like could be the target in the first two to three years of the effort. At each point the goal must be measurable.

All forms of planning could then be linked to it. Vision for any year ahead, Rolling Plans, Ministerial Plans, State Government Plans, Industry Based Plans, Individual Organizations, Plans, etc., could all derive from this National Vision. But all objectives must be designed to contribute to the achievement of the overall vision of **Black Restoration**. Every sector of the society will be recruited to participate in the national effort. National objectives, for example, could aim at revising the primary school curriculum in the country, to reflect the new thinking in the very first year. Budget priorities would reflect the new thinking. Private organizations and foreign investors should be able to identify profitable components of the national goals and objectives. For example a commercial short wave radio station aimed at disseminating the new philosophy to, not only the entire country but also to the black world could benefit from the support of black businesses all over the world and others interested in the black market world wide.

4. Strategies for Accomplishment

Objectives need to be attained. The means of attainment which management experts call strategy becomes very important in our type of exercise. We must ensure that our strategy synchronizes with our vision. It will not agree with our philosophy to use white Public Relations outfits to reach black people; we cannot use non-black architects and engineers to design our national arts theatre or national or state assemblies and not even a Local Government Office. We should not allow European or American experts to advise us on our strategic industries. We must not prefer any imported product to the one that is made in Nigeria even if the quality is a little lower. Public officers and private industry leaders must always identify with blackness in all their activities. Our profit calculation must make room for our national needs. Foreign experts cannot reconcile our foreign debt when they are from the countries of our creditors. Can't we convince our football fans to be a little patient until we can produce local coaches to take us to the World Cup and save the huge sums we pay to foreign coaches which will not allow us defeat their home teams?

Private sector operators must participate in the building of the black world. We must prefer local fabrication or manufacture to massive importation, for examples, for our UBE and equipping our armed forces. Private sector operators should be in the vanguard of forcing patronage of local products and resources. In this type of effort, no activity is too small or too big. All that we do in public, at private and individual levels are all important.

We lost the opportunity when we launched our 3-3-6-4 education programme. We can still start with our UBE programme. We must require all uniforms where necessary to come from Textile Mills in the country. Introduction to Technology equipments should be fabricated or better manufactured in Nigeria but *never* imported for assembly. Scientific apparatuses and chemicals should be required to be sourced from Nigeria. We have no doubt that Nigerian businesses are capable of meeting the challenges since the market is large enough to be profitable.

A possible objective is self-sufficiency in food production. We spend so much money in importing food. For example, the money used for importing rice should be more than sufficient to generate the same volume of rice from the rice growing areas of Nigeria and eventually provide sufficient surplus for export. Under our R.A.P.U. Scheme, public stealing should reduce drastically because of the enhanced self respect we expect to be inculcated in our people and leaders since the welfare of the citizen will become more important in the activities of the state. Manufacturers should always prefer local materials to imported ones. Our national campaign should encourage Nigerians to consume products made in Nigeria from locally produced raw materials. We do not really need to ban any importations but discourage them. As we progress in our black liberation, the market base for consumption encouragement will expand. We must find Nigerian names for Nigerian products to complete our circle of black strategy in the management of our national affairs.

5. Policy Formulation

In designing our policies to guide our activities, we must always again align them with the over-all goal so that we do not do anything at any point to negate our fundamental principles. In our selection of executors, we must recognise black expertise that abound all over the world. There are highly qualified Nigerians at home and a multitude who have been turned expatriates for lack of relevance at home. Then there are the numerous black people in the Americas and in Europe who will be proud to be part of the Nigerian enterprise. Our policy must specify blackness in our choices.

6. Organising

Organising for the implementation of our plans also require our resort to fundamental principles. As a nation, we will need to reorganise our policy to be congruent with our overall game plan. We need a country that provides for the entrenchment of Nigeria's ambition and responsibility to lead the black world to respectability, into everything that we do. If the society is attuned to the four cardinal principles, emergent leaders should also be so attuned. Our fundamental law will be based on the new philosophy and it should guarantee common citizenship first, all over the country and eventually for all black people and equality before the law. We should aim at guaranteeing equal rights and responsibilities to any black person who seeks membership of our nation. Our federation should comprise our present member states but should provide for expansion to include any black country wishing to join the union either now or in the future. We should respect territorial boundaries, but we must be willing to assist black communities in, for example, Sudan and Mauritania to break away from their Arab conquerors and other black people world-wide who seek freedom and dignity. Black interest should take precedence over international laws and conventions that are anti-black.

In our fundamental law, we should guarantee freedom of religion consistent with our fundamental philosophy. We believe that genuinely black Christian will be at peace with the genuinely black Muslims. Black traditionalists who have been mentally black should be made more conscious. We should encourage every member to seek ways of making positive contribution to black pride. We must realise always that neither Christianity nor Islam in fundamental tenets is anti-black. It has been the practitioners who bend the beliefs to discriminate against blackness and justify their atrocities against black people. The Holy Prophet's secretary was a black man while the Holy Family sought refuge among the black people when the life of Infant Jesus was threatened by King Herod. Simon of Cyrene who helped Jesus with the cross was an African and most probably black. In the history of both religions, black people played significant roles in their spread through physical and intellectual contributions and sacrifices but are hardly acknowledged. It must be part of our policy to identify them and publicise their contributions and sacrifices.

7. Staffing the Black Enterprise

Our job will not be complete until we provide for the human beings that will execute the plans we have put in place through the organization we would have provided. In our human resource management, we must be guided by our fundamental principles of

R.A.P.U. Our large population gives us another advantage in the execution of our plans. The sheer numbers, the variety of the different nationalities and their unique characteristics provide a very wide base from which we can draw.

Despite this advantageous position Nigeria has had problems deploying the right human resources to tackle our problems. Part of our difficulty is the inefficient system that shies away from merit. If we were to insist on merit, we would have been more successful. The quota system for the allocation of positions is inefficient, and dysfunctional by discouraging the beneficiaries of the quota from struggling. Forty years and over after the institution of the quota system, the educationally disadvantaged areas have become even more disadvantaged. In the old Western Region, scholarships to tertiary institutions were awarded on merit. The disadvantaged Divisions (as the Local Government Areas were known then) which could not successfully compete were given compensatory secondary school scholarships and in a rather short time were able to compete successfully for the tertiary scholarships. Their disadvantage was wiped out in no time. If we had adopted the same method from about 1953, we would have eliminated areas of educational disadvantage by now.

Another problem with our staffing system in Nigeria is over dependence on paper qualifications. (Akerle, 1998). We ignore the fact that the paper qualification is merely an evidence that the holder of a certificate attended an institution and passed some prescribed examinations but not an evidence that the holder could perform any particular set of functions. Even more confounding is the weight we give to approved institutions. We still demand evidence of approval (accreditation in the case of universities and polytechnics) of institutions attended in addition to the certificates.

We will need to sharpen our human resources selection methods to emphasis ability to perform. In some private sector organizations where our suggested form of selection has been implemented, higher quality personnel have been selected. Many of such personnel went to unknown schools and might not have had the best results. In our race to redeem black dignity, we can not afford to relegate merit to the background. It is only then that we can ensure keen competition and genuine efforts to aspire to be the best and we will be able to put forward our bests to pilot our ship. We will have to start from the very bottom of providing equal opportunities to every child in the country to receive education. We ought to provide free and compulsory education up to the Senior School Certificate level or fifteen years of free and compulsory education from the age of three years. If the state cannot bear all the cost, the philosophy of R.A.P.U and Black History should at least be made compulsory at all levels of the educational system irrespective of ownership of the institution.

For utmost efficiency and effectiveness, Nigeria needs to establish a register of highly trained and experienced Nigerians at home and abroad as part of a national database. All Nigerians with a doctorate degree, a Masters with at least five years experience or a first degree or its equivalent with at least ten years practical experience in decision making positions in the public and the private sectors at home or abroad, even if such a person had been forced by circumstances to renounce his or her Nigerian citizenship, should be

in the register. From such a register, we should be able to select the best qualified people for interview to fill any top job at home, contribute to international organizations or to make available to any black country or organization that may request for assistance in human resources. We must accept the principle of dual citizenship in the country. We must however be careful about inter-racial marriages for our strategic personnel. It is common knowledge that Western intelligence agencies plant agents as wives of potentially strategic black personnel. We cannot afford to be too careful.

Admission to the Universities, Polytechnics and other institutions of higher learning should be based purely on merit and eventually open to every black person from any part of the world on equal terms. There is no part of the country that should be given special treatment. All that we require are adequate opportunities for every child. It is shameful that any group could accept a categorization of inferiority.

8. Control and Periodic Evaluation

Nigeria cannot make much progress unless there are adequate measures to assess the level of achievement at different intervals. We have so far failed to derive maximum benefits from our vast and far flung investments. We hardly know how to evaluate since we prescribed a set of goals at inception but use different objectives for assessment. Our public enterprises were established to boost employment, provide leadership in investing in risky areas, open up rural areas and provide some social services. In the age of World Bank inspired Structural Adjustment Programme, we evaluated on the basis of profitability in terms of monetary returns on investment. Of course, we concluded that the enterprises were not doing well.

We can no longer afford to invest blindly. We must specify our goals in measurable terms so that our evaluation could be adequate. If NITEL is to provide one telephone for every three hundred Nigerians, it must be given the amount of money to expend per telephone and a time frame so that we can judge NITEL managers not only on the number of telephones provided, but at what cost and within what time. If we want the organization to make some money, we should provide guidelines. The system where the public enterprise is accountable to no one for charges to consumers is unacceptable. In all our efforts, the bottomline should be the ultimate contribution to our match towards leading the black people of the world to respectability and dignity through our own success story. Whatever we do will not only be meant to serve Nigerians and other black people, but we must also demonstrate black capability and ability to succeed. We should show example to other black countries on how to succeed. We shall cast away the shame of blackness if we succeed.

It is for reasons of evaluation that management requires clear vision, measurable objectives, carefully considered and consistent strategies and policies so that the human and material resources deployed could at the end be evaluated to determine the level of achievement. The black enterprise cannot be different. We believe that RAPU provides a wonderful opportunity for Nigeria to lead the black world once again to greatness and respectability.

X. FINALLY

If we proceed on this course of action, we will be telling the world that we will not accept an inferior position for black people. Our actions will show that we have the will power to achieve our goals because we know and the world knows that we have the resources to pursue the cause of the black world. Our determination should be based on the righteousness of our cause.

We can now answer the **Call of Destiny** and as a country say, by paraphrasing Schuttel (1981)

*Here we are Lord
Are we the ones Lord?
We have heard your calling in the night
We will go Lord if you lead us
We will hold your people in our heart*

May the Lord lead our country and bless our aspirations,

Thank you for listening

SOME USES OF BLACK AND WHITE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Black = Relating to the Negro race or Afro-America

Black deed = thoroughly sinister or evil, wicked

Black curse = invoking evil supernatural powers

Black despair = very sad and gloomy

Black Friday = a day marked by disaster

Black resentment = Characterised by hostility or discontent, sullen

Blackball = a small black ball used to cast a negative vote or a vote against someone to membership in an organization

Black ball = the negative vote to exclude someone from membership

Black death = an epidemic of the plague

Black leg = strike breaker

Black list = list of disapproved people, to be punished or boycotted

Black mail = forcing someone to pay money by threatening to reveal a secret will bring trouble and disagree

Black market = illicit trade in violating official regulations

Black out = period of darkness

Black racer = an American shake

Black sheep = disreputable member of otherwise respectable group

Black shirt = a member of a fascist group

Black widow = a poisonous spider

White = fair, honest free from moral impurity, innocent

White lie = not intended to cause harm

White day = favourable, fortunate

White fairy = passionate

White elephant = something requiring much care and expense and yielding little profit, something no longer wanted by its owner though not without value to others

Source :Websters New Encyclopaedic Dictionary, New York, Black Dog and Leventhal Publishers Inc; 1993, pp.100–101; pp.1188–1189.

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