



SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

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Dept. of Pol. Science
Unilorin

MAIDEN ISSUE

VOL. 1 No. 1

1997

Published by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Nnamdi Azikiwe University
Awka, Nigeria.

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THE ARMS-RACE: CAUSES AND EFFECTS BY

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ABSTRACT

The arms race is a prevalent characteristic of the international system. It is a dynamic technological process, involving the development, acquisition and the never-ending proliferation of weapons by all nation states. Over the years the arms race has resulted from various factors such as states misperception of one another's real intention, fear of domination by a militarily stronger adversary, the need for territorial security and the innovations in science and technology. Because of these factors the arms race has thus become an instrument of state policy that ensures each state to develop, procure and maintain an adequate amount of arms more superior to those of other states within the world community. This conscious, unrelenting and constant effort embarked upon by nation-states to acquire weapons of defence and offence at whatever costs has created a state of international insecurity, mutual fear amongst nations, weapons in-flux and the possibilities of further straining of nerves among nations within the international system.

THE THEORY AND CONCEPT OF ARMS RACE

The term arms-race has been described as "a situation where two or more parties change the quality and quantity of their armed forces in response to perceived past, current or anticipated future increase in the quantity or quality of armed forces of other parties ¹. The definition of Arms-Race above generally connotes two meanings:

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- a. An intense competition between opposed groups of powers, each trying to achieve an advantage in military power by increasing the quantity or improving the quality of its armaments or armed forces.
- b. A progressive competitive peace time increase in armaments by two states or coalition of states resulting from conflicting purposes or mutual fears.²

From the above definitions, we can then assert that in analyzing threats faced by nation states and the corresponding build-up of military capabilities in dealing with such threats, one may need to examine a series of explanations from which the analysis can have a meaningful impact. Most states feel threatened when their national survival and territorial integrity are encroached upon by other states; equally, other states feel likewise threatened when neighbouring states or other states within the international system engage in the improvement of their military capabilities. The effort by all states to improve their military capabilities in response to threats perceived from the activities of other states leads to what is referred to as "security dilemma", which in the long-run leads to feelings of insecurity among all nation-states.

In the process of avoiding to lag behind in the arms race dilemma, nation-states therefore engage in the improvement of their military capabilities so as to balance up the power equilibrium in comparison to other countries and at the same time defend their territorial integrity. The concept of arms race contributes significantly towards understanding the nature of threats faced by nation-states in their interaction with one another and the subsequent build-up of their military power capabilities so as to contain any form of foreign interference and domination.

Furthermore, the theory of arms race enables us to understand the pattern of the present international system's

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struggle for power. It also enables us to understand the motivations behind the choices that are made by governments with respect to policy and actions in international affairs. Finally, the arms race has created a general trend among nation-states which involves the balancing up of their various military power and which ultimately determines the pace of the struggle for the accumulation of military potentials and power capabilities by all nation states.

ARMS RACE AND INSECURITY:

All nation states place great emphasis on military preparedness and other means of national defence. This policy inevitably leads to arms race, intensified rivalries among nations of the world, and to even more dangerous and uncertain state of affairs. Moreover, this race leads to improvements in weapons and methods of warfare which place an added premium on the offensive which makes all states a potentially aggressor nation.³ This nature of the international system therefore effectively inhibits absolute trust among nation-states. As a result, states then do engage themselves in "never-ending" competitions which all of them, with no exception, regard as "a condition in which they have an obligation in seeking first, not the kingdom of heaven, but the safety and prosperity of their own kingdoms"⁴

The condition of insecurity in the international system is a fundamental consequence resulting from the distrust among nation states. This distrust, clearly leads to a continuous case of "military build-up and the acceleration of the arms race phenomenon. With the growing insecurity among nation-states in the world system, national safety and national survival have become the prime concern of the all statesmen. This concern is reflected in the attempts by all nations to withstand a "sudden devastating surprise attack", to launch an immediate and effective counterattack, and to mobilize the country's military and national resources. All these efforts are geared towards improving the military

capabilities of each nation. The preoccupation with military preparedness has contributed in no small measure to the spiral of arms insecurity and hostility prevalent among nation states. This situation has further been described as the:

"... peculiar characteristic of the ... Hobbesian fear ... that you yourself may vividly feel the terrible fear that you have of the other party (country)... For you know that you yourself mean him no harm, and that you want nothing from him, save guarantees for your own freedom".

To fully understand the mechanics of the spiral of insecurity, one should note that the attempt by one state in achieving security will indirectly precipitate a feeling of insecurity in other states. What one state regards as an "insurance" against external threat, the adversary will see as "encirclement", that is, an attempt to dominate and transgress upon its sovereignty. Hence, when states embark on the improvements in the quantity and quality of their defence capabilities, they unknowingly reduce an enemy's or neighbour's security. This tendency to procure as many weapons of defence and offence that a nation can afford and the corresponding attitude of such policy by other states creates a "security-dilemma". This "security dilemma" of course creates an arms race which is an obvious manifestation of insecurity. Contemporary "spiral theorists" describe the situation of spiral insecurity thus:

"Once a person develops an image of the other- especially a hostile image ... the behaviour that others might see as neutral or friendly will be ignored, distorted, or seen as an attempted duplicity."⁶

In so far as this work is concerned, we are of the opinion that in security and distrust create "bad blood" among nations. One nation's attempt at providing for its own security results in morbid fear, antagonism, distrust and insecurity among other nations. This situation to us seems irrational and unnecessary. Contemporary international relations should be conducted on trust and mutual interest instead of being based on myopia and insecurity. The situation of insecurity described above has further been criticized by international relation theorists. One such analyst describes the present phenomenon of arms race as:

" ... The time of triumph of the irrational. It is difficult to wander anywhere on the face of the earth without being assailed by a sense of being in a mad house where delusion govern amid hopeless and needless suffering, where myopia and fear have obscured the most elementary demands of the true self interest .. It results from our inability to use our knowledge and resources to create a society that will work"⁷ For any one to fully understand the dynamics of arms race and the accompanying insecurity it engenders within the international system, cognisance must also be taken of the fact that an arms race must operate between nations or two groups of opposed nations with fluctuations in the arms level of one side bearing a relation to fluctuations in the arms level of the other side. However, continuous arms race has been seen as the mechanism by which the stability of the international system is preserved. This preservation, nevertheless enables each nation to maintain a certain level or ratio of arms that is respectively commensurate to those of its opponents. This ratio or level is what has been tagged "the-ratio-goal" model.⁸

The-ratio-goal model (RGM), is one the attempts at explaining the phenomenon of arms race. For the purpose of this write-up, the RGM involves the positive reaction of one

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country to the other's increase in its military expenditures (MILEX), that is a qualitative and quantitative increase in country A's armed forces and weapons capability will be matched off by country B. Because of this, the RGM can also be referred to as the rivalry model of arms race, for such behaviour is also determined by factors such as distrust of other, the need for security and the need to have an effective attack capability.⁹

Arms race manifests itself in different forms. Basically, each nation reacts positively to the other and in particular increases its military capabilities as other nations do. This tendency is due to:

- a. mutual perceptions of threats from the mere existence of a state's military capabilities.
- b. mis-perceptions regarding the intentions of one or more nations.
- c. the analysis of the nature of categories of weapons and defensive measures of each nation relative to its rivals.¹⁰

From the analysis above, one can thus summarize the phenomenon of an arms race as a situation in which countries increase their armaments because others are doing so. This "cause and effect" has resulted in an "upward spiralling of hostile reactions" that is a characteristic of the nation-states system.¹¹ This hostile situation of the international system has forced the more than one hundred and sixty (160) nation states in the world community, large and small, to look for their own defence. This motivation for defence has made the strengthening of national military institutions and organisations, at whatever cost, to be "compelling and over ridding"¹² As such, a nation's willingness to expend its precious and limited resources in order to invest or stock-pile

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'quantities of weapons is presumably the most fundamental kind of demonstration of national resolve and capacity to defend itself under any and all circumstances.¹³ Historical antecedents have therefore shown that militarily powerful and stronger states often times encroach on the territorial sovereignty of otherwise weaker and non-militarily powerful states. This large scale "international terrorism" has coloured the perceptions, dispositions and attitudes of inhabitants of various nation-states in the international system. Basic to these predisposition and attitudes then is the "feeling of insecurity, distrust, 'we versus they' feeling nourished by historic memories, symbolic ties, and a wide array of psychological elements that make for a climate of emotional antipathies.¹⁴

CAUSES OF ARMS RACE

The question at this point then is what are the causes of this all pervading arms race? Below, are some of the possible explanations for such causes.

The impact of pure science and technology on weapons development and procurement with its implication of competition, rivalries and conflicts, has been cited as the major momentum behind the arms race. The motivations which lead a state to acquire arms derive to a large extent from certain interpretation by that state of the dangers it had to face-principally the (hostile) intentions of other states. The perception of threats and the hostile intentions of other states inevitably results in a state of permanent war preparedness which ultimately created a certain balance of armed strength between nations- an implicit international interest in deterring war.¹⁵

On course the argument so far could be premised upon the progress made in western civilization in terms of technological innovations and the growth of new scientific knowledge. This phenomenon appears to be increasing at

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such a rate that the destructive scope of war creates a "permanent sense of insecurity" among nations in the international system. The technological search for security has ironically become one of the principal propellants of the search for qualitative arms race which in effect creates a situation of war panic in all countries that is at once reflected in the operations of constellations of interests in armaments. Cyrus Vance, one time United States secretary of state, reflects this assertion in his speech to the American society of newspaper editors on April 10, 1978. He reiterated that the United State safety:

"Continues to depend upon a strong, modern military defence capable of meeting the full spectrum of our military needs. We have had that strength in the past. We have it now. And we will maintain it. Yet, we can not assure our security by military strength alone. New weapons systems acquired by one side stimulates the other side to develop more sophisticated countermeasures. The net effect is, the expansion of weapons systems on both sides without real increase in the security of either."¹⁶

Another inherent outcome resulting from the on-going analysis on the technological impact on arms race, is the ever competitive rivalry by each state in building-up its military capabilities-a reaction and response to perceived threats on the nations's national security which ultimately results in heightened feelings of insecurity based on the fear of uncertainty of a probable and possible future (surprise) attack. This fear, over the years has become an important factor in conditioning inter-state relations in contemporary times.¹⁷

In summary therefore one can assert that technological development and the sequence of insecurity described above have contributed a great deal in making arms race a dominant

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feature of the international system and we agree with Reinhold Niebuhur when he explained that:

"Our problem is that technology have established a rudimentary world community, but have not integrated it or organically, morally or politically. They have created a community of mutual dependence, but not one of mutual trust and respect ... They increase the deadly efficacy of the instruments of war so that vicious circles of mutual fear may end in conflicts (atomic) and mutual destruction. To these perplexities an ideological conflict has been added which divides the world into hostile camps."¹⁸

Another major cause of arms race, is nation states perception of threat and, the mis-perception of the intention of one another. According to this argument, "an increase in the other's military forces makes the state doubly insecure - first, because the other has an increased capability to do harm, and second, because this behaviour is taken to show that the other is not only a potential threat but is actively contemplating hostile action."¹⁹

It is pertinent to mention also, that persistent international tension created by conflicts between various countries within the international system is another major cause of arms race. Factors like territorial ambitions by some aggressive states like Iraq, border disputes between neighbouring countries like India and Pakistan and Nigeria and Cameroon, internal civil-insurgencies being witnessed in countries such as Liberia, Mozambique, Angola, Rwanda and Burundi, Sri-lanka, Nicaragua etc., have given rise to tension and subsequently arms race among nation states.

Lastly, the activities of international arms suppliers, whom we shall henceforth refer to as, the military-industrial-

contractor-complex (MICC), is another major cause of the arms race syndrome. The MICC, encourage states, developing countries in particular, to procure obsolete and refurbished arms in most cases, at cheaper rates. The reasons for the MICC's activities are manifold. According to Azim Husan:

The interests of the arms supplier are commercial, political and strategic. Arms sales abroad are encouraged, since greater sales reduce per unit cost of weapons for the country which manufactures them; often R & D (research and development) cost are recovered from the sale of new weaponry abroad..., in many cases it (the interest) is the result of great power rivalry over the extension of their influence in gaining of a strategic advantage. Sometimes, major powers see arms sales as a means of freezing conflicts or maintaining a balance of confidence in situation where political solutions continue to elude the parties.²⁰

CONSEQUENCES OF ARMS RACE WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO AFRICA:

From the on-going analysis, we have been able to understand that arms race is a policy of national defence. Whereas, what we intend by arms race is the creation of security what we have, instead, is insecurity - a "monster" that pervades the international system. Security policies, progress and peace which scientific innovations and knowledge should have created have, instead, established in their place a permanent sense of fear and distrust. Nevertheless, it is obvious that nation-states, including African countries and Nigeria most especially, continue to indulge in arms procurement as a possible answer to their security problems.

Nigeria and other African nations are equally preoccupied with preserving their territorial integrity and national survival against external aggression. To this end, most of these countries through their armed-forces are involved in improving their military capabilities to such a level that an imminent and potential threat can be repelled or deterred. The race for such security therefore necessarily entails the acquisition and procurement of weapons of defence and offence, which like we have discussed earlier in the text, results in an endless arms race - the consequence of which is insecurity, fear and distrust among neighbouring countries.

Taking Nigeria as an example, the implication of this arms race is evident when the country deems it necessary to procure newer and more sophisticated military weapons. Neighbouring countries do watch closely and suspiciously this defence endeavour by Nigeria. A classical example is the case between Nigeria and the Republic of Benin. In the late 1970's when Nigeria acquired the Russian T-55 Tanks, the Beninois government responded by purchasing new set of anti-tank weapons aimed among other things, at balancing the Nigeria's military capability.²¹

Consequently, there results a situation in which the neighbouring countries react in hostile and aggressive manner to any policy that will have an effect on such countries - no matter how minimal the effect might be. This hypothetical situation reflects the implication inherent in our analysis that one nation's strength and security necessarily declines as the neighbouring country's military power increases.

Moreover, another consequence of arms race in Africa is the fact that most African nations and other developing countries (Nigeria inclusive) have for the last two decades or so, been expanding and increasing their military expenditure. In fact, "in 1988, military expenditure in developing countries in general amounted to approximately one-hundred and

seventy billion dollars (\$170 bil) or 4.5% of gross national product (GNP), while outlays quintupled in constant dollars between 1960 and 1988, increasing at a rate twice that of income per capita, and reaching a level only slightly below total expenditures for health and education".²²

This substantial increase has been attributed to the effort and pressure from the developed countries towards the militarization of Africa. These developed countries further contribute to the arms race in Africa under the guise of bilateral "defence" cooperation by which they supply arms to their allies or satellite countries in the continent. These activities further stimulate the demands for more newer and sophisticated weapons by African countries. In addition, the developing countries of Africa are also preoccupied with their own security arrangements hence, they do embark on the procurement of armaments just like the developed countries. Other factors that contribute to the arms race by African countries include such factors as the creation of poles of power in Africa, regional rivalries, boundary disputes, protection of spheres and zones of influence, consequences of tensions and escalation of armed conflicts, the awareness of national interests, power politics and many others. All these factors contribute to the accelerated militarization of Africa.²³

From the on-going discussions, however, we should bear in mind that in spite of the inherent effects of the phenomenon of arms race, countries all over the world continue to expend millions of tax payers money on the acquisition of weapons of defence and offense instead of the provision of food, clothing and other social services and amenities for their citizenry.

The possible argument in support of the continued expenditure on arms procurement activities is explicit in the explanation that an arms race resulting in improved military capabilities serves as a "deterrent and insurance" against

possible external attack by a more powerful and stronger nation. With this kind of explanation for the perpetuation of arms race policy, there seems to exist a powerful yearning and an "unwritten rule of the game" amongst nations that arms acquisition and procurement is the order of the day. In addition, the predisposition towards arms race is further based on the belief that having an equal number of arms in terms of quantity and quality serves as a sort of "power balancing arrangement" which tends to prevent any particular state from having the inclination of becoming too dominant or gaining a military superiority over others. As the argument goes, this is necessary because the very powerful naturally generates jealousy, distrust and insecurity by the power they exhibit.

It is thus obvious to us, as strategic analysts, that all nations place great emphasis on military preparedness and other means of national defense. This security policy nevertheless leads to intensified rivalries and to dangerous and uncertain state of affairs. Thus, one would like to sound a note of caution that arms race is not necessarily the panacea for lasting international security. Indeed, each new measure and the counter-measure adopted by the principals in the name of defence has the effect of intensifying insecurity.²⁴ Thus what is essentially important to ensure international peace and security and minimize the prevalent tendency and craze for international arms race and its attendant ugly consequences of increasing insecurity and mutual distrust, is for the nations of the world to learn to live in peace and harmony with their neighbours. It is also imperative, as a sine qua-non for such peaceful co-existence for all countries of the international community to adopt the policy of co-operation in all matters, mutual trust, respect for the territorial integrity and corporate existence of one another as well as the application of dialogue in resolving misunderstandings and conflicts as they arise.

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ELITES AND PERFORMANCE OF NIGERIAN PUBLIC ENTERPRISES: A Sociological analysis.

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ABSTRACT

It is argued in this paper that elitism, a pronounced feature of the processes of acquiring and using state power in most class societies, impedes the realization of the goals of Nigerian public enterprises. That the people (general public) is quiescent over the elites excesses, is traced to the historical circumstances surrounding the organizations Structure.

The study has tried to show, through data qualitatively derived, that elite theories as formulated by Western scholars, should be applied with caution in Nigeria social context. By trying to conscientize the public, the study expects people to cultivate the culture of questioning the unconstitutional roles of the elites especially with regards to the ideals of 'common' cause.

INTRODUCTION

Public enterprises are those formal organizations, established by an Act of Parliament, a decree or legal instrument to serve such diverse needs of the society as: income redistribution (Kayode 1980; Chinweuba 1990: 233);

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