

Africa in the Twenty-first Century: An Alternative Vision for the Second Struggle for Liberation

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The end of colonial rule in Africa, beginning in the 1950s, also brought the newly independent African states into the center of a Eurocentric ideological struggle involving neocolonial forces in the area of economic development or modernization. Capitalist powers in Europe and the United States were keen to demonstrate that the road to sustained economic growth lay in a replication of Western historical experience. The inherited chain of economic dependence forged during the colonial era ensured that economic, political, and educational models central to capitalist expansion would continue to play a hegemonic role in determining post-independence African development strategies. As a consequence, since the 1950s, the issue of development has engaged the attention of all independent African governments, making Eurocentric development strategies the foundation of policy decisions in post-colonial Africa. However, after nearly a half century of firm belief in and adoption of imported Western development ideologies and strategies in efforts to achieve modernization, it is painfully evident that Africa continues to be underdeveloped, poor, heavily indebted to its colonial masters, and struggling with insurmountable internal socio-economic problems (Abrokwaa 1999:646).

Introduction

The problems of modern Africa in the post-colonial period are a mockery to the so-called independent or liberated Africa. The conditions of the African

people are worse than the colonial period. These conditions do not just need 'reformation' or World Bank or IMF inspired assistance. They demand an alternative outlook or vision from cultural or foreign motivated development strategy to an inward or indigenous strategy. This alternative indigenous strategy of development should reflect the needs of the indigenous people, socially, economically, politically and spiritually. This alternative vision will enable us to look inward for economic problems and not outward for aid, foreign investments or loans. This alternative vision should also suit local conditions of the African people. An unevenly developed African continent has specific characteristics for each region if not for each country which must be taken into account for any development. Strategy is to be formulated. Africa has been made a prototype of Europe for too long and the same European strategies have failed to raise the socio-economic conditions of the African people. African leaders therefore must make their own analysis in organizing a radical development strategy suitable for their communities. African leaders must take political and economic leadership, and stop subjecting the fate of African people to foreign investors. Africa needs liberation from the different forms of imperialism it has been subjected to – i.e. by and through the IMF, World Bank or so-called 'foreign aid' agencies.

African leaders fit well into the description of Adam Curle (1971:116) as:

... the local agents of the foreign corporations, officials who smooths .. the way, ministers and others whose good will it [is] desirable to purchase labour leaders who [can] control workers.

Chango Machyo (1996:57ff) shares the same sentiments:

The white guards were replaced by black ones, otherwise everything operated as usual. The only difference was that the black guards were not as experienced and therefore not as confident as the white guards. The mess they made is due to lack of experience in the management of the system. That is why, they have had to depend on white 'experts' to advise them on how to manage the colonially

erected system. It is therefore correct to assert that since the colonial system never changed, the real riches of Africa remain the ruling class of the former colonial powers; the African who took over from the white officials have remained mere governors – agents of the foreign ruling class. That is why, apart from Libya (which has since 1969 revolution maintained a very high standard of living for all its citizens), no government in Africa, whether civilian or military and regardless of the quality of leadership, has brought about any fundamental change. Hence the appalling State and conditions of Africa people today.

Without any alternative change in the system, no genuine liberation, development and progress can be expected. Alternative vision must lead to the renaissance of the African people. Paul Baran (1960:13) asserts that:

... only a sweeping reorganization of society, only an all-out mobilization of all its creative potentialities that can move the economy off dead center.

African renaissance will be a mere political rhetoric if it cannot come with an alternative vision for African development in this post-colonial but also neo-colonial period. Failure to do this will be neo-colonial perpetuation. The only alternative therefore is change or revolution. African leaders must identify ways of getting rid of their foreign dependence, economically, culturally, politically and otherwise. This is the challenge of African renaissance at the dawn of the twenty-first century. According to Chango Machyo (1996:54) poverty has made Africans undignified beggars. He wrote:

African governments, churches and what have you elevated begging to a profession. Because all of us are beggars, we have no respect for each other, no mutual trust. We therefore loathe to learn from each other's experience. We all look to the masters, the donors, all the time to tell us what to do.

African Intellectuals' Liberation: Ideological and Political Dimensions

One of the biggest obstacles to revolutionary fundamental changes in Africa is mental colonialism, conservative, reactionary and dependent thinking of the African intellectuals on so-called educated class. Trained by colonial masters, African intellectuals are mere students ready to carry out orders of their masters. Their intellectual training has bred a dependency syndrome on them, and left them with the pride of Cambridge, Oxford, London Universities where they have been trained to be better colonial agents. Hence they cannot be contrasted with the mission of liberating the African continent. Chango Machyo explains the condition of the African intellectuals:

Generally speaking, the educated African is not a revolutionary. And the higher up in the educational ladder he or she climbs, the more conservative, revolutionary and dependent he she becomes. The role of the educated African is to seek to be on the 'the safe side' ' where the chances of falling into things, of 'eating' are brightest. Those who seemed to be revolutionary during their youth, slowly but surely shed their revolutionary outlooks as they grow up. They change their colours, and preach 'moderation' and 'must be realistic' joining the continuing efforts being made to de-revolutionize the masses – the peasantry, and workers – and urging them to forgive and forget (Machyo 1996:58f).

The same sentiments are expressed by Chancellor Williams (1987:333):

... often, a 'black official', once elected to office, turns out to be as conservative and reactionary as any [white] congressman from the back woods of Mississippi.

African intellectuals and revolutionaries therefore on ascending political power became as conservative as their ex-colonial masters and sometimes rude in carry out the instructions of their ex-colonial masters. Their intellectual dependence has betrayed the African revolution for political emancipation. Their intellectual training has not only tamed them, but made them better civil servants of the colonial system. It has not made them to be better leaders, radical policy makers and project initiators and developers. Not critical thinkers and developing personalities but mere puppets ready to be manipulated by the West and thinks them with crumbs for tables of their

masters to keep them happy. This is the kind of education that Walter Rodney (1976:264) describes as 'education for subordination, exploitation with creation of mental confusion and the development of underdeveloped'.

This kind of thinking about the better whites for guidance is also expressed by African-American scholar Walter Mosley, when he was reflecting on the experience of black people in the United States in the last hundred years. He writes:

As far back as we can go, there was a white face that we looked to for the source of pain. The white man enslaved, the white man freed, the white man opened the school door, the white man tested me and found me lacking. The dynamic is the same (cited in Seepe 1998:10).

The history of the struggle for liberation in Africa was intended to change this white paternalism still embraced by African leader and intellectuals. The 'talking on behalf of blacks' and the 'thinking on what is best for them' that was acted by colonial masters is still continuing even after colonialism. White people in Washington, London, Paris decide black implement the decision. When those decisions do not bear fruit they (blacks) are chastised for being dictatorial, corrupt, inexperienced, communists, and undemocratic. And the same black people continue to ask for more advice and expertise which at the end does not work in the African context. Sometimes they even make as their own 'the ideologies and value system of the oppressors ... even when the result is demonstratively against themselves (Williams 1987:331). In Africa foreign ideologies and value system are embraced in the name of religion, progress, modernization even globalization (Machyo 1996:60). African intellectuals according to Sekou Toure must be conscious and committed representatives of their people. For him 'the political leader is by virtue of his communion of idea and action with his people, the representative of his people, the representative of a culture' (Toure 196:2). African intellectuals must also aid in the decolonization and rehabilitation of Africa and African personality: 'It is in terms of that decolonization that the African intellectual will bring to Africa an effective and valuable aid.' (Toure 1996:12). Julius Nyerere, one of the Pan-Africanist advocates recognized that African intellectuals have a contribution to make for the development of Africa and its people. He wrote:

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... that intellectuals have a special contribution to make to the development of our nation, and to Africa. I am asking that their knowledge, and the greater understanding that they should possess, should be used for the benefit of the society of which we are all members (Nyerere 1974:28).

Genuine African development will take place the day African intellectuals play a vital role of determining the destiny of their people – that day that African intellectuals take charge of determining the African future. Their education should not serve interests of their Western mentors and isolate them from their people. Julius Nyerere (1974:27) speaking to the African intellectuals observed:

We can try to cut ourselves from our fellows on the basis of the education we have had; we can try to carve out ourselves an unfair share of wealth of the society. But the cork to us, as well as to our fellow citizens, will be very high. It will be high not in terms of satisfaction forgone, but also in terms of our own security and well-being.

The problem with African intellectuals is that they want to operate in isolation from the ordinary people, and yet demand the support and vote of the same people. Their social class places them above ordinary people sometimes even makes them undermine ordinary people. Sekou Toure asserts that no social class or stratum is above the people and that they have the capacity, politically and consciously to guard their power and win the liberation struggle. He writes:

... no social strata, no group of workers, no proletarian category can pretend to be more revolutionary than the people, because the people are highly conscious of their needs and aspirations, determined to transform the conditions of their existence, jealous of their sovereignty and resolved to effect their complete emancipation (Toure 1972:12).

The renaissance of Africa will only be possible when her intellectual work

together with the ordinary people for their advancement. The tragedy in which Africa is today is because her intellectuals have absconded from their responsibility of developing their people. The purpose of education is to liberate and develop. It is to make a person fully human. This is a challenge to African renaissance as we enter the twenty-first century. Only intellectually free Africans can free themselves from Western intellectuals' tentacles of intellectual superstition. Antonio Gramsci (1971:335ff) has this to say about the dialectic between intellectual and mass development:

The process of development is tied to a dialectic between the intellectuals and the masses. The intellectual stratum develops both quantitatively and qualitatively, but every leap forward towards a new breath and complexity of the intellectual stratum is tied to an analogous movement on the part of the mass of the simple, 'who raise themselves to higher levels of culture and at the same time extend their circle of influence towards the stratum of specialized intellectuals, producing outstanding individuals and groups of greater or less importance.

African Leadership must Chart Political Direction for Democracy

To say African leadership must chart political direction in Africa is recognition of the fact that there is a rejection of the current state of affairs, where African leaders are not leaders but followers, agents and messengers of Europe. One of the main criticisms of Africa since independence has been one-partyism, dictatorships and military coups. However most African countries have since gone the multiparty route with elections held regularly, thus introducing the so-called democracy which is said to be leading in one-party states, dictatorships and military governments. Democracy in Africa however did not really mean the government of the people, by the people, for the people. It was a democracy designed by Europe in order to perpetuate European domination in Africa. It was never an African democracy designed by Africans to suite the African context. Neither was the democracy patriotic and dependent on African national interests. Even the policies that came out of such democracies were not in the interest of the African people but the

IMF or World Bank or Europe for their benefit from the wealth of the continent. Democracy which means the ability of the people to determine their destiny was never such in Africa. Instead Africa has continued to be a puppet of Europe with her leadership always ready to take instructions about her people. The democracy that Africa has experienced failed to establish the hegemony of the people. The objectives according to AM Babu (1996:96):

... can be realized only if the following is adhered to society: commitment to unity all the popular forces that seek to suite them or those who seek to sell the country to external bidders. They must commit themselves to struggle against those who seek to obstruct the democratic process or seek to hamper people's economic aspirations or undermine their well-being through exploitation for individual interest of the more powerful and more privileged.

African leadership must lead the movement to conserve African national heritage, direct national asserts and natural resources to the African people and develop African economy. The political objective of such new African democracy must be to achieve state power which African leadership does not have at the moment. The power given to African leadership through democratic means has been minimized by the IMF and World Bank, together with imperialists in Europe. Africa won its independence on the strength of its political nationalism. This African nationalism was anti-imperialist, and anti-predatory – it was a nationalism of resistance and therefore, progressive in essence. This African nationalism must be extended to our democracy. African democracy must strengthen African nationalism that while we remain internationalists in outlook we must base our internationalism on our African nationalism. African nationalism must assist African to survive international assimilation. African democracy must be about the unity of the African people. African leaders must prevent European policies and interests, not just to isolate them from their people but also divide their people into different social strata, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, civilized and uncivilized, moderates and radicals. African unity must be about unity and serving a common African cause. African renaissance will be a rhetoric if Africans cannot take charge of their destiny. The primary

objective of African democracy should be to change the current democracy in Africa from colonial orientation.

The Dakar Conference and its Significance for African Intellectual Emancipation and Thought: Molefi Kete Asante's Views

The recent conference of African intellectuals held in Dakar, Senegal has to be welcomed as one of the greatest achievement in African political and intellectual unity. In this conference of African intellectuals, five hundred intellectuals from Africa and the Diaspora participated in this event organized by the African Union. For the first time African heads of states engaged African intellectuals of all professions and experts on matters affecting Africa as a continent and the African Diaspora. This kind of an initiative is long overdue and will advance the African course. Molefi Kete Asante (2004:31) explains:

The African heads of state and intellectuals referring to the legacies of heroes such as Zimbi of Brazil, Yanga of Mexico, Nat Turner of US and Nanny of Jamaica, spoke with vigour and enthusiasm about the possibilities of an African renaissance. We had come together to see how African intellectuals could envision the future

Molefi Kete Asante (2004:31) commenting on the Dakar conference also has this to say about African intellectualism and the vision for the future.

If there must be material advantage to scholarship let Africa set the terms, let the governments of Africa establish the awards that will attract the best minds of Africa.

We must assume an Afrocentric stance on everything that affects Africa. I ask you to question all ideas that are non-African, not to dismiss them for being foreign but to see if they are consistent with our goals and aims. We must all learn to be the people of our ancestors, not the servants of international imperialist masters. This is the source of our victory and the revival of the glory that bring us together with each other. We must talk and we must act. We must

harmonize and we must be ready to create chaos in the lives of those who will seek to retain control over African people.

According to Asante African intellectuals and politicians must not be allowed to abandon Africa to the nightmare of the imperialists who seek to regain control of Africa. The best way to do this is through an Afrocentric ideology. He describes Afroncentricity as a quality of thought or action that allows the African person to view himself or herself as an agent and actor in human history, and not simply objects who are acted upon. This according to Asante will give Africans 'a perspective as a subject, not from the margins of being victims or being an object in someone else's world. We are creators, originators and sustainers of our ethics, values and customs. We seek to replace no one we seek only to be for ourselves as a way of being for the world' (Asante 2004:31). For Asante the question of African determination is very important in their quest for freedom. He writes:

We must act like we are owners of ourselves before we claim our birthright as Africans in the traditions of our ancestors. We must not allow others to define us as outside of history or the world. We must put ourselves firmly into our own experiences. Our political leaders must have good strong, bold and loyal intellectual guidance (Asante 2004:31).

Asante also wishes for a Pan-African solidarity within the African world community, a desire for the revitalization of Africa, a consciousness of victory and some accountability to the objectives of African renaissance. The hegemony of the West in all its forms, whether capitalist, Marxist, Christian, secular, socialist and globalist has to be challenged by the African consciousness. Africa he argues must determine its own destiny and not rely on saviours from outside Africa. Africa he argues cannot be saved by grants and develop on handouts and restricted gifts from the West (Asante 2004:31).

African Leadership must Chart Economic Direction in Africa

It is an open secret that political independence did not bear any fruit for African people due to poor economies or lack of economic prosperity. AM

Babu (1996:97) sums up obstacles that blocked the way to Africa's economic prosperity:

- dependence on the developed world to help our development
- excessive use of our socially necessary labour time in the production of useless goods for export, instead of producing useful goods for our own human and development needs.
- Continued deterioration of commodity prices which weakens our capacity for capital formation.
- Unproductive use of borrowed money (and the corruption that entails) and the consequential debt-servicing at very high and unjustified rates.
- Poor energy policies that make our countries heavily dependent on oil-imports for our needs thus depleting our meagre foreign exchange earnings; and
- An irrational world economic order which cannot change from a position of weakness.

African leaders must change the economic structure from its present imperialist orientation. Africa must develop an independent, self-sustaining economy out of the current IMF and the World Bank's economic policies have benefited the West by ensuring a steady flow of wealth from the poor African continent with effect of debt-servicing. Africa therefore has no choice except to find an alternative way of starting the capital accumulation process, which includes stopping such massive wealth leaving the African continent. The not gatefold of 200 million dollars from Africa alone to the West, if retained can enrich Africa. African leadership need to discard an illusion that development is only possible through foreign aid. Africa has capacity to accumulate wealth and capital from within her shores. The only problem that retard such accumulation is the hostility of the IMF and World Bank to those operating outside their debt schemes. It is true that we live in the global and interdependent world. However it is the interdependence of the exploiter and the exploited, whereby only one section benefit. African participation in the global economy has not been on the precondition of her benefit and prosperity but that of the imperialists. This economic imperialism in Africa must be stopped. As M. Babu (1996:116) said:

We made a fatal mistake right at independence. We had a choice then between siding with the merging world socialist movement and (merciful), being cut off from the capitalist 'world economy' or remain junior partners in an economy dominated by the US and the ex-colonies powers from whom we had just emerged from colonialism. In Asia, only China, North Korea, and Vietnam chose to join the world socialist movement which sought to bring about a completely new world order, a socialist world. In Africa none went that way, although we invented various forms of 'socialisms' (African socialism in Tanzania, 'worker' or people's republic in Guinea, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Somalia etc.) to fool the masses while we were putting them more firmly under the grip of Western domination

Modern economic order to which Africa is a slave was designed to wage war against socialism and to provide alternative to socialism especially in poor countries. Providing international military stabilization was not the only objective of the IMF and World Bank but also to strengthen the Western grip on the world economy. African countries became members of those institutions after independence. Three decades after independence Africa as AM Babu (1996:117) asserts, has 'been demoted from the status of independent and honorable members of these institutions to that of their 'obedient' servants It is disappointing that African leadership is still insisting on these systems even though they never worked for Africa. Africa is the richest continent in natural resources, which could have long propelled the continent to the level of an economic colossus. The end of colonialism in Africa it seems left Africa without a significant pool of managers and administrators. There was only an over supply of politicians, who immediately assumed position for which they were unsuited. Instead of building on the economic foundations laid down by the colonialists and adjusting them to suit the needs of their people, they depleted whatever they found by overspending on military and others useless, projects. The ordinary people could not benefit from foreign loans. The loans of the IMF and World Bank could not produce modern infrastructure such as housing, schools or hospitals. Those in power, their relatives, and cronies were the sole beneficiaries of the resources meant to benefit the downtrodden. Therefore

Africa was not just a victim of circumstances beyond their control but also self-inflicted corruption and greed of its leadership. Since independence Africa has suffered from lack of honesty, committed and responsible leadership. Those in power have always served their own interest instead of the interests of the people. Coups, one-party states, life presidencies and centralization of power must all be understood against this background. It is such atmosphere that plundering the economy of a country occurs, without any sense of shame. For Africa therefore to prosper from present position, corrupt and greedy leadership will have to be discarded. Only competent leadership is vital for successful economic reform. African leadership cannot improve the conditions of their people without understanding how their economies are run. When an economic crisis emerges in Africa, the African leadership usually fail to acknowledge that the problem is both internal and external. Rather, they insist that the causes are neo-colonial and imperialist conspiracies. To succeed in repairing Africa's economy the African leadership will require not only economic competence, but the capacity to change when things are obviously wrong and not working.

Lifting the Foreign Debt in Africa

A number of world leaders have called for the cancellation of foreign debt in Africa. Groups such as Jubilee 2000, the pope, top world politicians and celebrities have called on the rich western countries to write off the debts of African countries as a millennium gift. The United States of America has already cancelled the debts in that it will enable poor African countries to concentrate more on internal developmental issues such as education, job creation, health etc. The debt burden made African countries even weaker while correspondingly creditor, under the IMF and World Bank leadership benefited through their insistence on conditionality and reliance on the old divide and rule policy over debtor countries have a choice either to renounce the debts on the 'odious principle', which is a perfectly legitimate ground in international law, because the people were not consulted when the debts were made and the governments that contracted the debts were mostly illegal either because they were military regimes who came to power through coups, or one-party dictatorships or apartheid governments like in South Africa which did not enjoy the mandate of the people. These loans therefore

were corruptly contracted therefore African people were not obliged to honour them. The West also has to account for the past plundering and present exploitation of Africa's vast wealth and treasures. Therefore if properly thought it is actually the West which owe Africa.

Can the West Help Africa to Resolve her Problems?

It must be stated categorically that the West is not responsible for assisting Africans to resolve their problems. Africans must clean their own mess. It is the West that has contributed to Africa's economic decline. Therefore the best thing that the West can do is to leave Africa alone. Africa at the moment is not ruled by Africans but by the West through its international bodies and multinational co-operations. Though the West has always championed itself as a democracy in Africa, the democracy it pursued was a hindrance to Africa's development. The West never understood the complexities and nuances of African problems. America has been the worst with the tendency to prescribe simplistic solutions. As George Ayittey (1992:348) wrote:

It would be helpful if Westerners would listen to what Africans themselves have to say about their own problems. But the arrogant we-know-best attitude of some Westerners stands in the way. Even when the West chooses to act, it is hobbled by colonial, racist, and imperialist baggage that renders its help suspect and ineffective. It is annoying when Westerners cannot denounce African dictators for reasons of 'racial sensitivity' but then stand in the way of true African democrats who want to get at these hideous tyrants.

Foreign aid in Africa also seems not to be working for Africa. Foreign aid has become a Western instrument of subjugation with a baggage of conditions fitting Western interests. It has become a means to control the local affairs of Africa with threats of withdrawal of such aid where such control is resisted. In fact the West has used foreign aid, diplomatic channels and economic levers to suit the arms of poor African countries. Hence the West has been responsible in Africa not just for economic disaster but also for maintenance of dictatorships in Africa for its own interests. Its economic interest in Africa has prevented it from condemning black tyranny. George Ayittey has this to say:

In struggle for democracy you lead, follow, or get the way. If it were up to this author, the West could stay out of the political arena in Africa and concentrate on promoting its own Western economic interests. It cannot do 'business as usually' and then hand over the money to African dictators, hoping that they will reform themselves. As we saw ... this is not only futile but worse, it impedes the African struggle for freedom. More significantly, the demonstrations and strikes that forced political changes in Benin, Cape Verde, Sao Tome, and other African countries, were all internally generated, occurring with little or no help from the Western help or Western governments and intellectuals to make up their minds. Africans initiated the action and took to the streets themselves (Ayttey 1992:349).

In view of Western hindrance of progress in Africa, it would be best if Africans make their own case for reform. Internally generated reform usually has a better chance of lasting success. Essentially it is up to Africans to decide which political and economic system are most workable for Africa. As Stuart Fowler wrote:

The simple reality is that there are no philanthropists in the world of international politics and economic relations. There are only hard-headed political realists who, at best, may do some good for others provided it also serves their own interests (Fowler 1992:122).

Any Western involvement is always portrayed solely in terms of humanitarian aid selflessly given to help the victims of poverty and barbarity in Africa. This is the picture that is good for Western ego, but in reality hides the real intention of Western involvement. It also needs to be remembered that neither the IMF nor the World Bank exists for economic justice. They were designed to maintain a stable environment for international economic order that is dominated by the industrialized nation of the West. Even ethical considerations played some part but in reality decisions will always give priority to the interests of the dominant nations that control these institutions.

How can Africans Help Themselves? Recommendations and Prospects for the Future

One of the legacies of colonialism that stands in the way of Africa's liberation and development is a syndrome of dependence. Its most obvious symptoms are intellectual, economic and cultural dependence. With this syndrome of dependence colonialism has left the legacy through which Africa will remain a perpetual slave of the West, and whenever they are confronted with problems will turn to their former masters for solutions. Africa has remained a property of the West. This is evident in African countries belonging to bodies like the Commonwealth which is nothing else but a communion of the former colonial power and her previously colonized. For Africa to be genuinely free and solve her problems, Africa must debunk all Western intellectual dependence and take the initiative to solve her problems. As Stuart Fowler (1995:156) says:

I do not wish to imply that no independent African thought exist. It does, and it is encouraging. However, there is still too much tendency to depend on Western models in African intellectual, social and economic development. Again, this is not to say that these should not be interaction with the Western world in which Africans, learn from the West. However, the key word is interaction, in which a two way traffic of ideas replaces the one way traffic from the Western world to Africa.

Africa for too long has been a consumer of Western ideas even sometimes to her own detriment. Western intellectualism has not helped Africa solve her problems of poverty and underdevelopment. Instead it has plunged her further into poverty. The only solution therefore is in African initiative and independent action. Africa cannot move forward and begin the process, by continuing its intellectual dependence. This has made African leadership to seek outside 'approval' for whatever projects they initiate while they become unpopular with their people, their electorate, and not the West. As Ntuli (1999:186) says:

While Westerns are practically searching for new paradigms to fashion their lives, we as African people continue to be caught in the

West's mirror of fascination. Africa has entered into the era of post-colonialism with its multiple discourse. The issue of identity is of critical importance, since this affects the direction(s) in which Africa must transverse and who determines this direction(s).

An African initiative will enable Africans to take their destiny into their own hands, thus preventing Africa from a place for the attainment of Western interests. Africa cannot afford to continue to serve the West even otherwise after independence. The other thing that Africans can do to solve their own problems is to build strong social structures independent of the political order to check on the power of the political order (Fowler 1995:157). One of the serious problems of post-colonial Africa is that there are no checks and balances. Since independence in the 1960's there has been a systematic curtailment and virtual banishment across Africa of freedom and civil liberties. African freedom has remained a fantasy. Independence did not bring a better life or even greater political and civil liberties. Hence George Ayittey (1992:10) wrote:

Africa has been betrayed. Freedom from colonial rule has evolved into ghastly tyranny, arbitrary rule, denial of civil liberties, brutal suppression of dissent, and the wanton slaughter of peasants. This malicious betrayal drives the deep sense of disillusionment, despair, and anger pervasive among Africans. It is difficult to convey to Westerners a sense of the depth and breadth of this betrayal.

This strong social structure can be the network of community organization, media, professional bodies, churches and other interest groups. Only such organizations independent of the state and its politics can be an effective watchdog against state abuse of power, corruption, human rights violations, and tyranny. Political parties whether opposition or democratic cannot be entrusted with the watchdog mission. Some opposition parties in Africa have become corrupt in the process. In the history of Africa state inhumanities have failed to provide effective check on how the state exercises its powers, Africa has inherited from colonialism, political structures based on arbitrary, authoritarian exercise of power (Davidson 1992:208). As result, African leaders inherited such structures and continued where their colonial masters

left. Even where regular elections took place, they never changed these political structures. Democracy in Africa did not bring effective political accountability to those who are governed. Democracy in Africa was just an illusion hence Africa needs a second liberation.

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