



thruMYeyes

with PROF. BOLAJI AKINYEMI

THE WEEKLY FOREIGN-POLICY BRIEFING

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FROM THE ARCHIVE · THE WEEK IN REVIEW

WHEN SYSTEMS RESPOND

Kamala Harris picks a running mate the Professor calls near-perfect — while Britain's courts and Ukraine's incursions test what response means.

Session 194 · Thursday 8 August 2024

tmeinsights.com · profbolajiakinyemi.com

Session 194 — a week of systems tested, some passing, some not.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

When Systems Respond

Kamala Harris picks a running mate the Professor calls a near-perfect choice, Britain's courts sentence rioters within 24 hours, and Ukraine carries its war onto African soil — a week about what happens when institutions actually work, and when they don't.

The Professor declares his bias upfront as a self-described liberal, then walks through Governor Tim Walz's credentials as Kamala Harris's running mate point by point — teacher, 24-year National Guard veteran, legislator, governor — before turning to Britain's swift sentencing of rioters, Bangladesh's Nobel-laureate interim leader, and Ukraine's incursion into both Russia and, more surprisingly, the Sahel. **A closing audience Q&A brings in outside voices to test what the Professor calls, more than once this evening, the case for African states negotiating collective security before a crisis rather than after.**

An archive edition, recorded 8 August 2024, in the week Kamala Harris named her running mate, Britain moved to sentence rioters swiftly, and Bangladesh installed an interim government. Events and figures are described as they stood that week. This is a solo-format broadcast (moderator and Prof. Akinyemi) with an audience Q&A segment near the close; two contributors who unmute themselves are not clearly identifiable from the recording and are flagged below.

01 · KAMALA HARRIS PICKS HER RUNNING MATE, AND THE PROFESSOR CALLS IT A NEAR-PERFECT CHOICE

Declaring his own bias upfront as a self-described liberal, the Professor walks through Governor Tim Walz's selection as Kamala Harris's running mate as evidence of good judgment under pressure — a

choice made calmly from among four formidable rivals, then defended point by point on her own social media account like the lawyer she trained as.

He credits two specific traits with doing the real electoral work: Walz's background as a former schoolteacher, a profession he says Americans hold in almost parental esteem, and 24 years of National Guard service, set against Donald Trump's own avoidance of military service. He draws a direct parallel to the Kennedy-Johnson ticket of 1960 — Kennedy's own war-hero record after his PT-109 boat was destroyed, paired with Lyndon Johnson's Senate experience — and points to the large, enthusiastic Philadelphia rally at Temple University (his own alma mater) and a subsequent endorsement from the United Auto Workers union as concrete evidence the pick is already paying off.

“By picking a former school teacher, immediately the base of her support, I would say, multiplied double overnight.”

— Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi

GRADING THE PICK

WHAT MADE THE PROFESSOR CALL IT NEAR-PERFECT

● Working-class appeal — a former schoolteacher on the ticket	MET
● Military credibility — 24 years in the National Guard	MET
● Legislative depth — congressman, then governor	MET
● A 1960-style war-hero pairing, echoing Kennedy-Johnson	MET
● Momentum — a packed Temple University rally, a UAW endorsement	MET

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The criteria the Professor credits with making the pick land, drawn from his own running commentary — not an official campaign scorecard.

02 • BRITAIN'S RIOTS, A SWIFT JUDICIARY, AND THE TRIAL NIGERIA NEVER GOT

Turning to weeks of far-right riots across the UK, the Professor praises ordinary communities — men, women, and mothers with children in tow, by his account — for physically standing between rioters and vulnerable neighbors, and endorses the Prime Minister's zero-tolerance response without qualification. What strikes him most is the judiciary: magistrate's courts relocated into police stations and sitting outside normal hours to sentence rioters within 24 hours, proof, in his words, that a legal system can move quickly when it wants to.

An audience comment read aloud on air, from a viewer identified as Ademola Onitiju, presses the contrast: similar dispensation requested from Nigeria's federal government and chief justice to fast-track Boko Haram terrorism trials never materialized. The Professor's response is a specific, still-raw example: a Lagos corruption trial where the presiding judge, promoted mid-case from the High Court to the Court of Appeal, was given special permission to return and deliver a guilty verdict — only for the Supreme Court to later void the entire judgment on the technicality that the judge was no longer serving on the original court. One beneficiary of that reversal, he notes, now sits in Nigeria's Senate.

“When the legal system wants to work, it can work.”

— Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi

03 · BANGLADESH'S GOVERNMENT FALLS, AND A NOBEL LAUREATE STEPS INTO THE VACUUM

Bangladesh's government has changed through what the Professor calls illegal and unconstitutional means — his framing, not a judgment he elaborates on the legality of, though he reads it as proof that an unresponsive government eventually becomes a target of the very grievances it ignored. He is struck less by the manner of the change than by the choice of who now leads the interim administration: a Nobel Peace Prize-winning economist and pioneer of microfinance for the poor, referred to on the recording as 'Professor Woodness' but almost certainly Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank model.

The Professor frames Yunus's microfinance work as less an invention than a formalization of an older cooperative lending tradition — rotating community savings groups that let small tradespeople avoid predatory bank interest rates — one that IMF and World Bank development orthodoxy had displaced. He notes Yunus faced a corruption prosecution widely seen as political retaliation before his selection, and warns that Bangladesh's opposition pushing for elections within 90 days may not give him time to do the job, drawing a cautionary parallel to Ghana, where reforms driven by outside pressure faded once the reformers left power.

"It's almost like, why haven't we thought about this before?"

— Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi, on Muhammad Yunus's selection to lead Bangladesh's interim government

04 · UKRAINE CROSSES INTO RUSSIA — AND, MORE SURPRISINGLY, INTO THE SAHEL

Asked about Ukraine's shift from a purely defensive posture to incursions onto Russian territory, the Professor is unambiguous: he calls it the right strategic move, arguing that inflicting heavy enough costs on an aggressor is itself a deterrent, regardless of whether Ukraine can outright defeat Russia. He connects Western caution — the earlier condition that Ukraine could only use donated weapons defensively — to a concept he calls diplomatic deniability, letting NATO and the US quietly benefit from Ukrainian escalation without being directly implicated.

The same week produced a stranger twist: Russia has accused Ukraine of opening an African front, and Niger and Mali have both cut diplomatic ties with Ukraine over claims it supported Tuareg rebel forces and inflicted losses on Russian Wagner mercenaries operating in the Sahel. The Professor reads this less as an indictment of Ukraine than as evidence that Wagner's presence itself, which replaced departing American and French forces, has now made those same countries a target — jumping, in his words, from the frying pan into the fire.

"I would say hooray for Ukraine. If you are going to die, die like a man. If the Russians are going to defeat you, let the Russians pay a heavy price for it."

— Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi

05 · ISRAEL, IRAN, AND A KILLING ON IRANIAN SOIL

On the assassination of a senior Hamas figure on Iranian soil — not named explicitly on this recording, but widely reported at the time as Ismail Haniyeh — the Professor calls the killing's location a deliberate provocation, arguing Israeli intelligence could easily have reached the target elsewhere. He reads Prime Minister Netanyahu as actively seeking to drag Iran into direct military confrontation, calculating that this would in turn pull the United States into a regional war.

His advice to Iran is to absorb the insult rather than retaliate, on the reasoning that no one can predict how a war, once started, will actually end — a piece of advice he frames as difficult but necessary given Washington's consistent backing of Israel.

"Killing him on Iranian soil was a provocation."

— Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi

06 · THE AUDIENCE WEIGHS IN: AN "AKINYEMI DOCTRINE," AND ECOWAS'S NEXT MOVE

The broadcast closes with two unmuted audience contributions. One, from a speaker the recording renders as 'Professor Akintemi' or 'Akitemura' (unconfirmed, possibly Prof. Bola Akinterinwa), warns that Ukraine's strikes inside Mali extend a precedent set by Israel — outside powers treating African sovereign territory as an extension of someone else's conflict — and argues that only a standing, pre-negotiated ECOWAS security policy, rather than reactive diplomacy after a crisis, could have deterred it. He credits what he calls the 'Akinyemi doctrine': the idea that Nigeria's support should be negotiated with partners before trouble starts, not requested only once a crisis is already underway.

A second contributor, identified on air as 'Ambassador Dr. Egali' (unconfirmed, possibly Ambassador Godknows Igali, a recurring contributor in earlier sessions), closes the broadcast by arguing that Ukraine's ability to operate inside Mali makes it more urgent than ever for ECOWAS to bring Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso back into the bloc through active diplomacy rather than continued suspension.

"Consult with us, discuss with us, but don't run into trouble first."

— The "Akinyemi doctrine," as summarized by an audience contributor

THREADS TO PULL

- If Britain's judiciary can sentence rioters within 24 hours when it chooses to, what does the routine multi-year delay in prosecuting Boko Haram suspects actually reveal — capacity, or political will?
- Muhammad Yunus's microfinance model was largely a formalization of an older cooperative lending tradition that IMF and World Bank orthodoxy had displaced — what does it say that reform sometimes means rediscovering what a society already knew?
- If external strikes against Wagner forces inside Mali extend the precedent Israel set for treating another country's soil as an extension of one's own war, does African security improve by staying outside regional blocs like ECOWAS, or only by ceding some sovereignty to them?
- The Professor argues Ukraine should absorb heavy losses to make Russia's aggression too costly to sustain — does that same logic justify the risk Iran is being asked to absorb by not retaliating for a killing on its own soil?
- If the 'Akinyemi doctrine' is right that African states need collective security commitments negotiated before a crisis rather than after, what has actually stopped ECOWAS from adopting it, given the idea itself is apparently not new?

Watch Session 194 in full on the Syncterface Media channel. New episodes every Thursday, 7pm WAT (7pm UK, 2pm ET).

More analysis: tmeinsights.com · profbolajiakinyemi.com

Broadcast contributions are quoted with attribution, as announced on air. Two closing audience contributors' names could not be reliably confirmed from the recording and are flagged above; the identifications of Muhammad Yunus and the

Hamas figure referenced in section 5 are drawn from public reporting at the time rather than stated explicitly on air, and are flagged for producer confirmation before wider circulation.

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